



**The dream of flying cars dies hard.**

PAGE 3

**Click and cars**

There's a new local website for all your car shopping needs.

SEE INSIDE



**Volkswagen readies a new crossover**

PAGE 2



**The area's most complete automotive resource and listings.**

1,478 vehicles for sale inside — plus more than 7,000 online at [timesunion.com/cars](http://timesunion.com/cars)

# Automotive

[timesunion.com/cars](http://timesunion.com/cars)

**Detroit's truck war rages on.**

PAGE 2

**TEST DRIVE**

## Multinational Hatch

### 2018 Infiniti QX30

DAN LYONS | text  
Special to the Times Union

**L**exus is to Toyota, as Acura is to Honda, as Infiniti is to Nissan. All of Japan's Big Three automakers have a parallel line of premium cars. The process creates cousins: upscale versions of the same vehicles found in the standard car lineups.

With that as a backdrop, what's interesting about this week's test car isn't that it shares components, but rather the source of those components. Beneath the swoopy, styled-by-Infiniti sheet metal, the platform and powertrain of the QX30 are shared with the Mercedes-Benz GLA-class (as well as the Euro-only A-Class). Introduced to the lineup last year, the QX30 is classified as a premium, subcompact crossover, though it's more accurately described as a hatchback with available AWD.

The smallest of a trio of Infiniti crossovers, it carries over for 2018 largely unchanged. Six models are of-



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE MANUFACTURER

**THE 2018 INFINITI QX30** is the Toyota premium brand's subcompact crossover, available in front- and all-wheel-drive. The QX30's 2.0L turbocharged engine is shared with the Mercedes-Benz GLA-class.

**2018 Infiniti QX30**

MSRP: \$29,950 · As tested: \$43,560

ferred: base, Luxury, Luxury AWD, Premium, Premium AWD and Sport. My test vehicle was a Premium model with front-wheel-drive. Four option packages and a \$995 destination charge raised the as-tested price to \$43,560.

The 'Benz engine is a turbocharged, 2.0L four-cylinder which is rated at 208 horsepower and 258 lb.-ft. of torque. Its torquey nature makes it responsive at low speeds, and its mid-six second quick from 0-60. Fuel economy is estimated at 24/33/27 (FWD); 21/30/25



(AWD). The sole transmission is a seven-speed dual clutch automatic (DCT). Infiniti's drive mode selector offers Manual, Sport and Eco modes. Manual driving is straight forward: push the button to M, and shift it yourself, using the steering wheel-mounted paddles. The DCT responds fairly quickly to paddle shift input, and you can hold a given gear to keep the engine in the sweet spot.

The shift mapping for Sport mode is fairly aggressive. It's geared to keep engine revs up when the throttle is prodded. While it's a good, automated choice for a twisty road, it's arguably a little over-eager for normal driving.

The Eco mode is decidedly different. The logy transmission response in Eco is consistent with fuel frugal driving, but too conservative for normal driving. And

it's the default setting, so every time you restart, you do so in Eco. I found myself wishing for a middle ground mode between Sport and Eco.

**Any time a model can be had with all-wheel-drive, it raises the question of whether you should opt for it.**

My test vehicle was a front-drive model, and navigated the snowy roads that it was handed mid-way through the test week competently. However, any time a model can be had with all-wheel-drive, it raises the question of whether you should opt for it. That's particularly true in a vehicle that's marketed as a crossover; ditto and more so when it's a premium model to boot.

In this case, the luxury to be gained is the luxury of less stressful driving. During those times that pop up every winter, when road conditions are deteriorating, but you simply have to

*Continued on page 2*

# GO AHEAD. OPEN IT UP.



The Times Union Auto section indulges your need for all things fast and furious.

[timesunion.com/cars](http://timesunion.com/cars)

**TIMES UNION**