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### TEST DRIVE

# Crossovers, Coupes & Shoehorns

## 2018 Mercedes-Benz AMG GLC43 Coupe

DAN LYONS | text  
Special to the Times Union

So popular are crossovers, that new variations seem to emerge every few years.

Mercedes-Benz branched off from the crossover tree in recent years with the introduction of their GLC Coupe: a five-door hatchback rolling on the GLC crossover chassis. This stylistic limb is also shared by BMW (X4). Strictly speaking, neither car is a coupe (the traditional definition calls for a hardtop with two doors; both of these models sport four). And while we're splitting hairs, the BMW refers to itself as a Sport Activity Coupe. Names notwithstanding, the GLC Coupe and X4 share similar body styles and the same microsegment.

No sooner did the crossover coupe branch sprout, than new offshoots appeared. The latest strain injects progressively higher levels of performance into these models. Mercedes' GLC300 4Matic Coupe spun off a

**2018 Mercedes-Benz AMG GLC43 Coupe**  
MSRP: \$60,400 · As Tested: \$75,745

high performance version (AMG GLC43) and has two versions waiting in the wings (AMG GLC 63 and GLC 63 S Coupes, both due by mid-2018). This week's drive is in the first of this crop of AMG coupes — the GLC43.

As mentioned before I got all entwined in that tree analogy, the Mercedes-Benz GLC is part of a microsegment that (at the moment) includes only one other manufacturer (BMW).

Both entries in this compact crossover coupe class offer standard and high performance variants. In the case



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE MANUFACTURER  
**THE 2018 MERCEDES-BENZ AMG GLC43** is a five-door hatchback based on the GLC crossover chassis. The high performance version's AMG-tuned 3.0L biturbo V-6 (left) is paired with an enhanced 9G-tronic automatic transmission.

of the BMW, the X4 xDrive28i stickers for \$47,600, and the X4 M40i lists for \$59,250. The base Mercedes-Benz GLC 300 4Matic Coupe has an MSRP of \$46,600, and it's matched with the AMG GLC43 Coupe — priced at \$60,400. Both 'Benz models eschew trim levels in favor of an a la carte approach. Buyers browse the menu and pick from a passel of packages and stand-alone items. Fitted with five packages and seven individual options, my test car had an as-delivered price of \$75,745.

The powertrain of the base model GLC matches a turbocharged, 2.0L four-cylinder engine with a nine-speed automatic transmission. The ratings of 241 horsepower and 273 lb.-ft. of torque compare closely with the X4 (240/260). The automaker's estimates for 0-60 mph speed give the edge to the BMW (6.0 vs. 6.4 seconds),

while the EPA estimates for mpg's shade towards the Mercedes (22/27/24 vs. 20/27/23).

AMG models are a different animal. Here, the drivetrain employs an AMG-tuned 3.0L biturbo V-6, paired with an "enhanced" 9G-tronic automatic transmission. The engine produces 362 horsepower and 384 lb.-ft. of torque, and the company estimates a 0-60 time of 4.8 seconds, with fuel economy of 18/24/20. BMW's M40i counters with a twin turbo inline 6, connected with an eight-speed automatic. That engine makes 355 h.p. and 343 lb.-ft. of torque. BMW estimates the car's 0-60 time at 4.7 seconds, and the EPA predicts fuel economy to be 18/25/21.

In practice, the GLC43 is quite lively, as you might expect, with ample power on tap at any engine speed.

Continued on page 2

The expanding family of crossover coupes is an interesting addition to the Mercedes-Benz lineup.

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