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TEST DRIVE

Two by Four

2018 Infiniti Q60 Red Sport 400 AWD

DAN LYONS | text and photos
Special to the Times Union

Recently in this column, I've mentioned how the landscape has changed with four-wheel-drive. Once found only in sport utes and light trucks, the mechanically based 4WD systems have been overshadowed more recently by sophisticated spin-offs.

These electronically enhanced all-wheel-drive systems are evolving ever smarter, and now underpin an expanding variety of vehicles. The Dodge Challenger GT (reviewed in the June 16 edition of this column) is one example of this trend, and this week's test car is another.



The Infiniti Q60 is a two-door luxury coupe, offered in four trim levels — Pure, Luxe, Sport and Red Sport 400 — with prices running from \$39,950 — \$54,000. All models are rear-wheel-drive, with AWD available for an additional \$2,000. Base (Pure) models

2018 Infiniti Q60 Red Sport 400 AWD

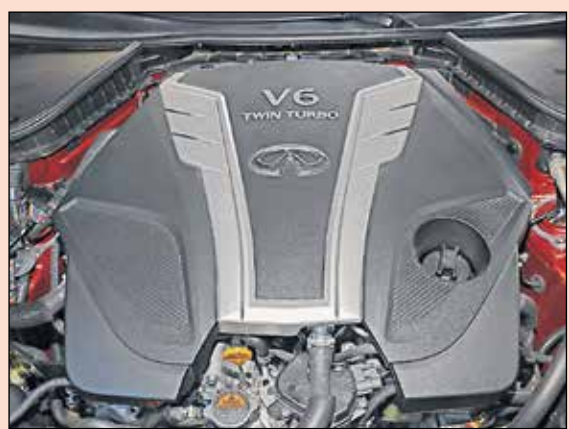
MSRP: \$ 54,000 · As Tested: - \$65,705

get a 208 h.p., 2.0-liter four-cylinder engine. So, too, do luxe models, though they can also be had with a 300 h.p., 3.0-liter V-6 (\$2,200). Sport models run the 300 horse, 3.0L. Red Sport 400's pack a 400 horsepower, 350 lb.-ft. of torque version of the 3.0-liter six.

Four hundred is a healthy amount of horses, and the turbocharged six takes less than five seconds to reach sixty from a standstill. Fast it is and it needs to be, con-



THE INFINITI Q60 is a two-door luxury coupe offered in four trim levels, all of which are rear-wheel-drive with an AWD option. This top of the line Red Sport 400 edition offers a 400-hp version of the Q60's 3.0L six-cylinder engine.



sidering the company it keeps. The Q60 competes with the likes of the Audi A5, Cadillac ATS and Mercedes-Benz C Class Coupe. The sole transmission choice is a seven-speed automatic. It shifts smoothly and offers steering wheel mounted paddles for those in a 'manumatic' frame of mind.

But shift response times to manual input aren't as immediate as those possible with a dual-clutch automatic transmission, which dampens the fun factor. As with the C Class, there's no manual transmission option for the Q60. Yes, take rates are low on stick shift cars, so this is understandable based on sheer dollars and sense. But, take rates for luxury coupes in general are relatively low, and both Audi and Cadillac continue

to offer buyers a manual shift option in this space. EPA estimates for fuel economy (19/26/21 for a Red Sport 400 with AWD) are in the ballpark with its classmates.

Styling is a strong point on Infiniti's lone coupe offering.

The Drive Mode offers five settings (Standard, Snow, Eco, Sport, Sport+) — each with corresponding parameters for throttle response, shift mapping and steering effort. I worked with Sport+ and found that the most noticeable adjustment was the shift points. Downshifts are rev-matched; a nice touch.

My test drive was spent locally, and while the lack of track access kept me from pushing the performance envelope in the Q60 flagship, the car feels stable and planted, and corners confidently. For 2018,

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