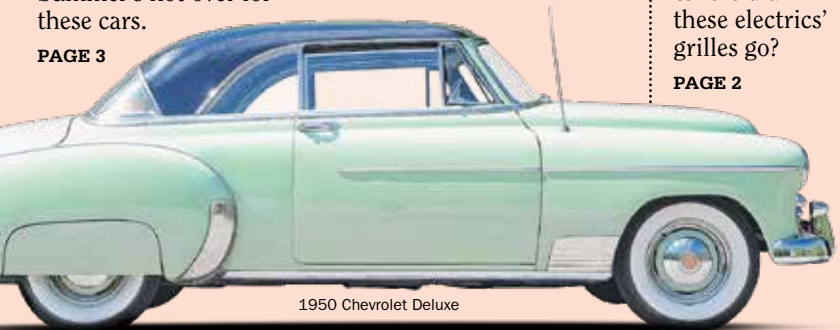


Car show calendar

Summer's not over for these cars.

PAGE 3



1950 Chevrolet Deluxe

Nose job

Where did these electrics' grilles go?

PAGE 2



Funny money

Some creative financing for this three-wheeler

PAGE 2



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TEST DRIVE

Sizing Things Up

2019 Mazda CX-3 Grand Touring AWD

DAN LYONS | text
Special to the Times Union

The last time we drove the CX-3 was also the first time, when it made its debut back in 2016. It was Mazda's entry in the then-fledgling compact crossover segment. As we return to it now, that market is fully populated with the likes of the Honda HR-V, Jeep Renegade, Ford EcoSport, Subaru Crosstrek, Nissan Kicks and the Hyundai Kona, among others.



For 2019, CX-3's lineup remains the same. Three trim levels are available: Sport (MSRP:\$20,390), Touring (\$22,475) and Grand Touring (\$25,745). Front-wheel-drive is standard; AWD can be added to any model for an additional \$1,400. My test car this week was a top-trim Grand Touring AWD. With three options — Soul Red paint (\$595), rear bumper guard (\$100), door sill trim plates (\$100) and the \$710 Premium

2019 Mazda CX-3 Grand Touring AWD

Base MSRP: \$ 20,390 (Sport FWD)

As Tested: \$29,625 (Grand Touring AWD)

Package (six-way power driver's seat w/lumbar and memory, heated steering wheel, auto-dimming rearview mirror) — it had an as-tested price of \$29,625.

Loud and lively — that's the short take on the Mazda's engine. The powertrain combines a 2.0L four-cylinder engine with a six-speed automatic transmission. Horsepower is a hair higher this year (up two, at 148), while torque output remains at 146. The former peaks at 6,000 r.p.m., meaning the CX-3 has to be wound-out for maximum performance.

Engine noise is noticeable any time that your foot is on the throttle, and the motor sounds ragged at full-throat. The compensation is that it's one of the quicker cars in its class (0-60 should be in the low 8-second range). "Manumatic" shifting is possible via steering wheel paddles (only on GT models). While the delay between gear call and response dampens the fun factor, you can use the manual mode to hold onto a given cog. Or just leave the transmission in automatic and switch to the Sport mode, which remaps (extends) the shift points.

Fuel economy estimates for the CX-3 are 27 city/32 highway/29 combined. I logged 28 mpg's, in mixed driving. Road handling is a strong point. The Mazda is small



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE MANUFACTURER

THE CX-3 DEBUTED IN 2016 as Mazda's entry in the compact crossover segment. Available in three trim levels, it sports a 2.0L four-cylinder engine that produces 148 horsepower.

and nimble and fun to drive. The 18-inch tire/wheel combination found on Touring and Grand Touring models looks sharp and grips well. Ride quality is generally good, though road bumps and bruises are more likely to be transmitted to the passenger compartment here than they are in Sport trim models, which are shod with a smaller (16 inches) tire/wheel combination.

Interior updates for 2018 include the replacement of the former, mechanical parking brake with an electronic brake. The move frees up a little space on the center console, which allowed the addition of a small, center console bin. The bin is covered, and said cover doubles as an inside armrest, though doing so covers up one of the two cup holders. HVAC functions are con-

trolled by a trio of rheostats mid-way up the center stack. They're in easy reach and not very distracting. Many other functions are accessed by means of the 7-inch touchscreen, in concert with a console mounted dial and surrounding buttons. The process works well enough, but like all such systems, it takes longer to drill down to and make adjustments, than it would with conventional controls.

New to the standard equipment list is a tire pressure monitoring system. Not new but also standard on all trim levels is blind spot monitoring with rear cross traffic alert. Nice to see these features on an entry level car when some luxury brands still make you pay extra for them.

The infotainment system is not compatible with
Continued on page 2

The Mazda CX-3 is small and nimble and fun to drive.

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