

Geneva show highlights

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TEST DRIVE

Fresh Flagship

2019 Kia K900

DAN LYONS | text
Special to the Times Union

K900 sits atop a six-sedan lineup for Kia. The flagship four-door is fully redesigned for 2019. The new version borrows some mechanicals from the sporty Stinger midsize, including engine, transmission and all-wheel-drive system.

While Stinger can be had with either a 2.0L turbo four or a 3.3L twin turbo V-6 — the latter, larger motor is the sole offering for K900, where it's paired with Kia's eight-speed automatic transmission. In both cases, the twin turbo six is rated at 365 horsepower and 376 lb.-ft. of torque.

I've explored this engine in Stinger (in locations and weather less restrictive than my recent late February drive) and it's very responsive, with 4.7 second speed from 0-60. K900 is a bigger car (at 4,733 lb., about 600 pounds heavier than Stinger), so it figures to be a tick or so slower. But, that's still plenty quick, and the motor has a smooth, refined feel



2019 Kia K900

MSRP: \$59,000 (Luxury) · As Tested: \$64,895 (VIP)

that's in line with luxury expectations. Fuel economy is estimated at 18/25/21 by EPA, and I logged 20 miles per gallon in a week's time.

All K900's have all-wheel-drive. This, too, is the same system as found in Stinger, and it's a good one. The torque vectoring system is rear-wheel biased, sending torque fore and aft, left and right as required to maxi-



THE KIA K900 is the top of the Korean maker's line. This new version features the transmission and all-wheel-drive system from the Kia Stinger, as well as the 3.3L twin turbo V-6 rated at 365 horsepower and 376 lb.-ft. of torque.

mize grip. Up to 50 percent of available power can be channeled to the front; up to 80 percent can be shifted to the back tires.

The system pays dividends in wet or dry conditions, though in the luxury leaning K900 (and especially in this market), it's largely here to impart the luxury of not worrying about winter travel. Selectable Drive modes are accessed via console mounted dial. Each setting makes corresponding adjustments to steering, shock dampers and shift points. Sport mode isn't convincing — the car is designed for luxury, not corner carving. Eco dulls the car's senses. Comfort (or the automatically adjusting Smart mode)

are the way to go. So set, the K900 handles confidently and provides a cushioned, comfortable ride.

K900 handles confidently and provides a cushioned, comfortable ride.

The interior has a classy, progressive look about it. The list of standard equipment is extensive. Among the highlights, the seats (20-way power driver, 16-way power passenger) are trimmed in Nappa leather, and buyers can choose from four handsome wood trims. All are given a matte finish, which I prefer to the too-glossy look often seen, which makes even real wood look fake. The steering

wheel and seats (front and outboard rear) are heated. A head-up display puts key information right under the driver's nose. A 12.3-inch touchscreen is top center

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