

by Dan Lyons • *Special to The Daily Gazette*

2023 Toyota Sienna XLE AWD Woodland Edition

Base MSRP: \$35,385 (check) (base LE) As Tested: \$46,565 (Woodland Edition)



Sienna marks its 25th anniversary in the marketplace in 2023. Toyota's minivan has sold more than 2.2 million units since roll out, and the company is celebrating the milestone with a 25th Anniversary Edition (MSRP \$46,670). It joins LE (\$35,385), XLE (\$40,695), XSE (\$42,945), Limited (\$47,645), Platinum (\$50,845), and this week's test driver, the Woodland Edition (\$46,195).

Decidedly more stylish than they used to be, modern minivans are still basically boxy. Boxes are the preferred shape for storing things. That (and their flexible floorplans) are the keys to the enduring popularity of the breed. Cargo capacity in Toyota Sienna line ranges from 33.5 - 101 cu.-ft., with seating for 7-8, depending on choice of seating, and seat placement. Woodland Editions are also fitted with a roof rack, for additional, topside storage. Wide, power sliding doors on both sides allow for easy ingress, egress and loading. The third row seats fold/store beneath the floor, creating a mostly flat load surface. Sienna's second row seats slide 25" up/back, so they fit most anyone, and can be moved as needed to accommodate people and cargo. They can't be removed, however (as they can on some competitive models). That's only a knock if you regularly use your van in full cargo/seating for two mode. Still on storage, a tow hitch is standard equipment on Woodland, and the minivan is rated to pull up to 3,500 lb.

Sienna's system controls are easy to reach and operate. Stowage spots large and small are positioned throughout the cabin. The center console bridges directly to mid-dash, and the shelf space beneath is a convenient landing spot for a purse,



Photos courtesy of the manufacturer

briefcase, backpack or tote. There are six USB charge ports sprinkled about the interior, as well as 18 cup/bottle holders. The option sheet includes a variety of driver assistance and entertainment options. Among the latter, a JBL premium sound system (12 speakers, 12 channel, 1,200 watts) is standard on Woodland, Limited and Platinum, and recommended. (My advice: crank it up, sing along and embarrass your kids!)

My Woodland edition tester was equipped with standard, electronic All Wheel Drive. Widely available on Crossovers and SUV's, AWD is less common in Minivans. Only Sienna and Pacifica offer it in this segment. Sienna's winter-friendly, AWD system is on-demand, automatically switching torque from front to rear wheels as needed to enhance traction. The suspension in Woodland models is slightly raised, giving them 6.9" of ground clearance.

Also uncommon in minivans are hybrid powertrains. Pacifica offers one optionally – a V-6 plug-in hybrid. All Sienna's are hybrids. The Sienna's system combines a 2.5L four cylinder gas engine with two, electric motors (three, on AWD-equipped models). The combined, net, hybrid system horsepower is 245. The Woodland's 0-60 mph time is in the high 7 second range. That's comparable to the Pacifica hybrid, and both are a step slower than the gas powered competition. In practice, there's enough power on tap for all normal driving situations, and Sienna cruises easily and quietly at highway speeds. When gas prices are disagreeably high (like now, for instance), the fuel economy advantage of hybrids is hard to overestimate. The EPA says that you can expect 36/36/36 (FWD), and 35/36/35 (AWD), and I logged 34 mpg's overall, during my week behind the wheel. The combination of 30+ mpg's, AWD and a roomy, flexible floorplan make the Sienna Woodland a most worthy family hauler.



A 40 year resident of the Capital District, Dan Lyons is the author of six automotive books, and photographer of more than 200 calendars.