

by Dan Lyons • *Special to The Daily Gazette*

2023 Ford Bronco Sport Heritage Limited Edition

MSRP: \$44,655 As Tested: \$46,400



Ford marks year three for its compact SUV with the introduction of two, new special editions. The Bronco Sport Heritage Edition and Heritage Limited Edition offer a visual, tip of the cap to Broncos past. Vintage design cues found on Heritage Limited models like this week's test vehicle include an Oxford White painted roof, grille and metal, script Bronco badges on the front fenders. Limited's are shod with larger (29") all terrain tires, wrapped around 17", painted, aluminum rims.

Color choices on Limited are limited to three: Yellowstone Metallic, Peak Blue Metallic or Robin's Egg Blue. The retro call-outs continue on the inside. Heritage Limited Broncos sport leather trimmed seats with plaid inserts, and the micro-suede center console is capped with a throwback, Bronco plaque.

Heritage Limited models are based on the Bronco Sport Badlands – the most trail worthy of Bronco Sport offerings. The Limited's lean into that, with additional, off-roading enhancements. This includes chunkier tread and a beefed-up suspension and AWD system, with lockable, center clutch pack, and a torque-vectoring rear differential. Bronco Sport models are powered by either a 1.5L, turbocharged, direct-injection three cylinder engine, or a 2.0L turbo four cylinder engine. Both motors are matched with an 8-speed automatic transmission. I've driven the 1.5L previously, and with 181 horsepower and 190 lb.-ft. of torque, I found the engine to have adequate power. The 2.0L supplies 250 horsepower and 277 lb.-ft. of torque. The power difference is significant (+ 69 h.p., + 87 lb.-ft.); and it feels more comfortable for this platform. EPA mileage estimates are 21/26/23, and I logged 22 during my week behind the wheel. While I've not had Badlands or Heritage Limited models



Photos courtesy of the manufacturer



seriously off road, there's more trail capability here than 99% of all drivers will ever require. On pavement, Heritage Limited and Badlands models have a firmer ride, and the blocky tire profile is noisier than on other Bronco Sport models; trade-offs for their added off-road capability. Limited (like Badlands) can be equipped to tow up to 2,200 lb., with the Class II Trailer Tow package with trailer sway control. The seven driving modes in the Terrain Management System can be tailored to your specific driving conditions.

Beyond the nostalgic cues, Bronco Sport's cabin gets high marks for its straight forward HVAC control panel.

All models get a standard set of driver safety features that Ford collectively calls Co-pilot 360. The baseline cabin technology includes Ford's Sync 3 infotainment system, with an 8-inch LCD capacitive touchscreen in the center stack, and Apple CarPlay/Android Auto compatibility. Heritage Limited models exclusively get a 6.5-inch color LCD instrument panel, a 10-speaker, Bang & Olufsen sound system and a rear, under seat storage bin.

With seats at full pushback, there's enough legroom room for six footers up front. So set, the remaining space in back makes for tight legroom for similarly sized passengers. Headroom is plentiful in both rows. Rear seatbacks fold forward to a split level load floor. Said seatbacks are rubberized for easy cleanup, and a matching, rear cargo floor mat is optional. The 32-65 cu.-ft. cargo capacity is big enough to house a pair of mountain bikes inside (with the optional holder). The rear window flips open separately from the hatch, liftover height in back is comfortably low, and the cargo bay opening is wide.

The retro styling cues on the two, Heritage Editions make interesting, new alternatives for Bronco Sport buyers (particularly those with enough miles on their odometer to remember what the original Broncos looked like). Just remember that the Heritage Limited edition leans towards off-roading, while Heritage is more suited to the street.

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