

by Dan Lyons • *Special to The Daily Gazette*

## 2024 Mazda CX-90

**MSRP: \$39,595 (Base - 3.3 Turbo) \$49,945 (PHEV) As Tested: \$58,920 (PHEV Premium Plus)**



The largest of Mazda's crossovers, the CX-90 is the successor to the recently retired CX-9. The latest, three row Mazda is the first to ride on the company's new, large platform. The standard, CX-90 3.3 Turbo (MSRP: \$ 39,595) is offered in five trim levels. The midrange CX-90 (\$49,945) - a Plug-in Hybrid - fields three trims, as does the range-topping, CX-90 3.3 Turbo S (\$51,750). Fully equipped with the Premium Plus package, my PHEV test driver had a sticker price of \$58,920.

Mazda's trio of powertrains is as follows. The base model runs a 3.3 L turbocharged, straight six engine (280 h.p., 332 lb.-ft. of torque). The top, Turbo S model is equipped with a (340 h.p., 369 lb.-ft. of torque). The mid range model is a Plug-In Hybrid, combining a 2.5L, naturally aspirated, four cylinder gas engine, with a 17.8kWh battery pack, for a combined 323 horsepower, and 369 lb.-ft. of torque. All three are linked to an 8-speed automatic transmission, and all are estimated to return a combined average of 25 miles per gallon. The PHEV is rated at 56 MPGe electric and gas, with an estimated, electric-only range of 26 miles, and a total range of 490 miles. A full recharge takes about 11 hours on typical, home plug power, or roughly 2½ hours, with a Level 2, Home charger. The difference in towing capability is substantial. A CX-90 PHEV can be equipped to tow a maximum of 3,500 lb., while the two, turbo gas engines max out at 5,000 lb. Five, drive modes can be selected, to optimize power delivery for your conditions: Normal, Sport, Off-Road, Towing, and EV mode.

Despite its added weight (about 300 lb. more), the PHEV is a step quicker than the 3.3 Turbo S. I've seen a posted, PHEV 0-60 time of 5.9 seconds by a reliable source, which was almost half a second faster than the top, turbo motor. Power flow is generally



*Photos are courtesy of the manufacturer.*



smooth: stronger at low speeds, owing to the "instant on" advantage of electric power. Though many Mazda's are known for their sporty feel, the CX-90 is geared towards comfortable, family transport. It performs that task admirably, and corners confidently. Regenerative braking takes some of the energy used in the braking process to recharge the battery. Drivers choose from two settings (Normal, High).

In Premium Plus trim like my test car, the interior has a decidedly upscale look and feel. Extras include Nappa leather trim for the seats, an 8-way adjustable power seat for the driver, heated second row seats, and the desirable, 360 degree monitor. The rear cross traffic alert system is joined here by a rare, front traffic alert as well. The head's-up for both directions is fine, conceptually, though I found the system to be a little too sensitive; warning me when there wasn't anything to be worried about. PHEV models seat seven or eight. Premium and Premium Plus trims are the former, with a pair of captain's chairs in the second row, replacing the bench. An optional center console can be added between the seats. A strip of buttons in mid dash allow control of HVAC functions. The layout is straight forward and not distracting. Infotainment controls are accessed by a combination of console dial and virtual buttons on the touchscreen. It works well, though making adjustments takes more time than it would with a more direct design. First and second row seats fit adults comfortably. The third row is more suited to kids, owing to the limited legroom. Cargo capacity is 15/40/74 cu.-ft., depending on how many seatbacks you fold forward.

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