

Lyons on Wheels

by Dan Lyons • *Special to The Daily Gazette*

2024 Land Rover Range Rover Sport

MSRP: \$83,700 As Tested: \$105,360 (Dynamic SE)



Redesigned in 2023, Range Rover's 2024 lineup is highlighted by the addition of a new, performance model (Sport SV) as well as upgrades to the available powertrains. This week's test drive is in the Range Rover Sport Dynamic SE. The Land Rover name conjures up images of its ancestors – big, square shouldered SUV's, that packaged exceptional off-road prowess with uncommon levels of luxury. Today's fifth generation Range Rovers are the modern descendants of those Utes. While to goal is still elegant, all terrain transport, the look is miles removed from the past. Observed in profile, you can still see traces of the traditional design. But, the

overall look now is lower and wider than traditional Utes, with taller wheels and squinty headlights that lend a sinister touch.

All the bells and whistles in a luxury vehicle required switchgear for adjustments. So, over the years, we've seen endless takes from different automakers, each looking for the best way to organize the controls. Some premium cabins threatened to rival the cockpit on a commercial airliner. Slide inside and it was switches and gauges, as far as the eye could see. By contrast, the cabin in the Range Rover Sport is decidedly minimalist in approach. Virtually all of the system controls are made via center touchscreen, with steering wheel embedded switches or voice commands as alternates. To me, it makes more sense to keep functions that drivers use most – like HVAC – separate from touchscreens, and with physical buttons/dials. It allows for faster adjustments with less distractions.

Interior materials are first rate. It is a quiet, comfortable cabin, with adult-sized room



Photos are courtesy of the manufacturer.



in both rows, and a goodly amount of their belongings. Cargo capacity ranges from 32-66 cu.-ft., depending on how you configure the back section. Said, rear seatbacks power down to a mostly flat load floor, via switches in the cargo bay. A 360 degree surround view camera system is standard on this model and makes parking the big Ute in tight quarters virtually stress free. Several Meridian sound system options are available, with up to 1,430 watts and 29 speakers. Conversely, the system employs active noise cancellation, for those times when your preferred playlist choice is the sounds of silence.

Under the hood of the SE is a 3.0 litre inline six cylinder engine. Turbocharged, supercharged and fitted with a 48-volt, mild hybrid system, it's rated at 395 horsepower and 406 lb.-ft. of torque. Based on results with similar Range Rover models, I would expect that the 0-60 time is in the low, five second range. Fast for its size to be sure, though deceptively so, because of the quietness of the cabin. Fuel economy is estimated at 19/25/21, and I logged 22 mpg's, which is consistent with vehicles in this class. The engine connects to an eight speed automatic transmission that shifts smoothly, and all Range Rover models are All Wheel Drive. True to the brand's heritage, there's doubtless rugged off-road capability here. More, it's safe to say, than most of its owners will ever need. Given its heft, Range Rover Sport doesn't feel especially agile in its handling, though in fact it corners confidently, and has a suitably premium ride quality.

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