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TEST DRIVE

HYUNDAI SONATA

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Back in the nineties, I remember the white body black bumper Hyundai Sonatas plying our roads, some of which were commissioned by the government. Those were miserable cars. Times have changed. In 2011, the sixth generation Sonata was out, which was nothing short of radical flamboyancy. With mixed reactions from this model, Hyundai revisited the sketch room for the seventh generation of this mid-sized saloon. The latest iteration is more conservative, yet bold and more refined than the last one. The fact that such quality is locally assembled got us all excited and we had to have a go at it.

Design wise, the flagship brand Genesis design cues are prevalent in the large wide grille and streamlined headlamps. Reminiscing the sixth generation's laid back coupe-like style, the roofline blends with the C pillar into a subtle opera window and into the short boot lid. Huge 18" alloys, straight horizontal body lines and exquisite exterior detailing gives the Sonata a high segment appeal.

Climb into the cabin and a plush brown leather interior greets you. The contrasting black dashboard and center console works brilliantly as well. Hyundai redesigned the center fascia with an ergonomic driver-oriented layered dash set up - LCD screen with stereo controls in the top and climate controls at the bottom. There's a miniature supervision cluster between the glowing white dials that display the vitals of the car. There is no



drama in the center console, which houses the leather-clad shifter and a few buttons, the drive mode selector being the highlighted one.

Although the driver's seat is electronically controlled, the passenger's one is not. But who cares about that when you get ventilated front seats? A panoramic roof makes up 3/4th of the roof. Hyundai claims a 2+3 seating arrangement, but we can fit in an entire extended family in the Sonata. The rear passengers have the luxury of rear AC ventilation, door curtains, and electric backlit curtain. From

the exterior, it seems as if the boot space is limited, but open the trunk and you will be surprised at the vast emptiness that will eat your luggage and groceries away at ease.

Do you want to drive it or be driven in it?

The Sonatas offered in Bangladesh come in 2.0 and 2.4 liter 4 pot petrol motors - we got the latter one. The figures are respectable - 185 hp and 178 lb-ft of torque, but with lazy delivery with the drive mode at normal. With most modern cars, a sport mode is merely a marketing



gimmick, which does practically nothing to the drive train but alters the handling for a sportier feel. In the Sonata, however, the sport mode juiced in life to the dreary RPM and speed needle simultaneously - the revs build up more before the gears decide to change. Yet, despite the speed building up, you will not feel the punch of a 185 hp motor. Not even with you taking control of the gear changes via the tiptronic option.

That is purely because of the weight of this thing, great exterior sound deadening is partly at fault. The Sonata's driver view is great considering it's a large sedan. The large 18" wheels do well at hugging the road, although the car lacks a bit of steering feedback. I drove the car through some trench sized potholes near a construction zone at ease and the Sonata's relatively large wheelbase did not scrape at all - indicating good suspension set up.

Having said all these, the plethora of options, comfort and luxury at the back seat far outweighs the driver's.

VERDICT

The Sonata is not for you if you want to have a fun weekend car to drive around. It is, however, a great choice if you like being chauffeured daily to your work and to your country home or the golf course in the weekends.

Also, you can adorn your garage or your office façade with this pretty thing. Got to admit, Hyundai has done well at designing the Sonata.

SPECS

Engine: 2.4 litre GDI 4 cylinder petrol (185 hp and 178 lb-ft of torque).

Transmission: 6 speed auto, Speedtronic, Front Wheel Drive. **Suspension:** MacPherson Strut front, Independent multi-link rear.

Features: ABS, EBD, TCS, front-side-curtain airbags, keyless entry, panoramic roof, rear AC, climate control, heated seats, power seat for driver, leather interior.

For pricing and other details, contact Hyundai Motors Bangladesh limited.



COLLECTIBLES



BARE BODIED RACER FERRARI F40

The F40 debuted in 1987 as the successor to the beautifully sculpted 288GTO, a car itself a legend. The F40 was also made to celebrate Ferrari's 40th anniversary by becoming the fastest, quickest, lightest, coolest and every positive adjective with 'est' behind it. Except being the prettiest because that title belongs to the 1964 Ferrari 250 GT Lusso.

Every car geek wants an F40 in his or her collection. The real thing costs close to a million USD and it doesn't even come with a spare tire. But you can get your 1:43 scale from Kyosho under \$35. The one we have here today shows how bonkers Kyosho goes over detailing. Scale mesh grills, engine wiring and shiny drilled brake discs. Where it lacks is the fitment of both front and rear opening parts. They don't sit perfectly right. In real life this car is a loud, uncomfortable and torturous. But it is undeniably cool. Head on to our site for more on this and other scale model F40s you can get.

WORDS & PHOTO: E.R. RONNY

AUTO NEWS



ASTON MARTIN AM-RB-001

Legendary British automotive marque Aston Martin and legendary Austrian...power drinks marque/Formu1 race team Red Bull Racing has teamed up and created the ideal...Pagani Zonda. It's supposed to show the world what an Aston Martin of the future would look like, complete with race-car aero and propulsion technology, and it does that by combining a high revving mid-mounted V12, lightweight carbon structure, and a transmission designed completely from the ground up by Adrian Newey, Chief Technical Officer of RBR. The development team was tasked with designing the car with a 1:1 power to weight ratio. Will it have the necessary oomph to land square in the middle of LaFerrari-McLaren P1 territory and survive? In terms of rarity, it might - total volume will be between 99 and 150 road cars inclusive and 25 track-only versions, with first deliveries commencing in 2018.



FERRARI LAFERRARI APERTA

Ferrari has released photos of the topless LaFerrari. While that should sound pretty dirty to pretty much anyone, it's a special kind of joy for petrolheads everytime a convertible supercar or hypercar is released - especially if it's the LaFerrari. Unlike a 3 series convertible, the difference between a regular LaFerrari and the Aperta is a thin strip of metal roof between the wind-screen and the rear bulkheads, with the main canopy having the same taut features as the coupe. It looks good, if not better than the hardtop, there's something profoundly exciting about looking at a car that can do 200 mph+ with the roof down. The LaFerrari Aperta will be exactly the same mechanically as the Coupe, but with chassis modifications that try and minimise the effects of losing that roof - Ferrari is saying the body rigidity of the Aperta will be exactly the same as the coupe.