

Spruced up Mazda ups the pace

By [Henrie Geyser](#)

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The top-selling Mazda CX-5 range has been richly spruced up with sportier looks, upgraded safety features, a much smoother ride, richly refurbished living quarters and the introduction of automatic transmission in four of the seven-model lineup.



The previous range sold about 350 units on average per month and the new smarter, sportier and safer version is expected to maintain (or even increase) that sales figure, in spite of a rather plodding economy.

Features which have made the CX-5 so popular include fuel efficiency, driving fun, attractive looks and top-notch safety features — all of which the new range offers in abundance.

Features

Stepped up features vary from model to model, but even the entry-level Active FWD Manual is armed with LED headlamps and fog lights, auto headlights and headlight levelling, 17-inch alloys, dual-zone aircon, 7-inch display-MZD connect system, hands-free Bluetooth, radio/CD/Aux and USB (also for the rear centre armrest) cruise control, BOSE with 10 speakers, front and rear parking sensors, Adaptive headlights, Satnav, head-up display and power lift tailgate, cruise control and more.

The above are features on the entry-level CX-5, 2.0-litre Active Manual and from here it increases every step of the way through the model range to the flagship CX-5 2.2-litre DE Akera AWD auto version which produces 129kW and 420Nm.



Take a deep breath and tick off features such as G-vectoring control (GVC), adaptive LED headlights, lane departure warning, lane keep assist, smart city brake support, blind spot monitoring and much, much more.

But what's it like to drive?

But technical brain-straining aside, what is the CX-5 like to drive? Easy to answer: Absolutely delightful. The Mazda's keenness to trot is an impressive match for its slick new looks that include a lower roofline, sleeker sides, sporty trim, hot-to-trot alloys, fat rubber running shoes and ritzy colour options such as Soul Red Crystal and Machine Gray Metallic.

I spent some time in the flagship model on the tight Gerotek test track and enjoyed the sporty cling of this recreational vehicle, its refined ride and responsive engine. This crossover SUV clings to the tar like it was nailed to the ground. It takes even the tightest corners in its stride. Steering input is quick and amazingly direct for a vehicle of this shape and size.

To illustrate the many new efficiencies of the latest CX-5, we drove the new version and the model it replaces back to back and the stepped-up model clearly illustrated how much it has advanced.

Punishing opposition

The latest Mazda CX-5 will undoubtedly punish the opposition in this tough market segment, for it delivers more bang for bucks than the opposition which will be hard pressed to match let alone improve on what the new CX5 has to offer.



The models and prices, which include a three-year unlimited kilometre service plan, a three-year factory warranty, three-year roadside assistance and a five-year corrosion warranty, are:

- Mazda CX-5 2.0-L Active FWD Manual – R379,900
- Mazda CX-5 2.0-L Auto – R391,900
- Mazda CX-5 2.2-L DE Active Auto FWD – R459,400
- Mazda CX-5 2.0-L Dynamic FWD Manual – R404,900
- Mazda 2.0 –L Dynamic FWD Automatic - R416,900
- Mazda CX-5 2.5-L Individual Auto FWD – R491,900
- Mazda CX-5 2.2-L DE Akera AWD Auto – R557,500

ABOUT HENRIE GEYSER

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