

SUPERHERO

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...in a Business Suit

Cadillac

My mind just cannot seem to wrap around the surreal experience my body is experiencing...

I am hurtling through time and space at near-death speeds surrounded by leather, comfort and luxury. I am at our home track, Road America in Elkhart Lake belted in to the passenger seat of Cadillac's latest (and greatest) CTS-V. One of GM's test drivers is at the wheel and he's been giving hot laps all day long which means if he wasn't familiar with the track before, he is now. But none of the blurring scenery and tire howling makes any sense.



The CTS-V is a 4,100-pound behemoth yet it is clinging to the track like a claw-filled house cat holding on to a brand new catnip-filled fuzzy toy. There is no slop from the chassis, no sliding uncontrollably, no unnerving sensations at all as we put down lap times equal to that of the world's fastest sports cars from just a few years ago. My escort has the built-in Performance Data Recorder (PDR) running so I'll be able to watch the lap back on video with speeds and g-forces on the screen for good measure. It's as if the engineers at GM figured out how to suspend the laws of physics when you hit the start button in this monster family sedan.



The recipe hasn't changed all that much since the first V-Series CTS back in 2004. Throw a small block V8 from the Corvette (Z06 with the first generation CTS-V, ZR1 for the second generation and Z06 for this current generation) into the engine bay, beef up the suspension and wish new owners luck. What has changed is the ability of the car to cope with the added power and performance add-ons along with more refinement inside the cabin.

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When the CTS-V first came out it looked far more aggressive than the standard car on which it was based. The second gen CTS-V looked even more aggressive and was offered in sedan, coupe and wagon form. That wagon remains one of the best sleeper cars ever built. This current car is, once again, only available in sedan form but it has lost some of its aggressive edge...at least in appearance. That is not to say it is not a good-looking car, the CTS-V is bordering elegant in its execution. The hard edges and creases of Cadillac's "art and science" design language have been replaced by softer lines and a more upscale look enhanced by some bright work on the grill and window surrounds and the wheels. The headlights, running lights and taillights are more noticeable with these newer lines and they highlight the edges of the design.

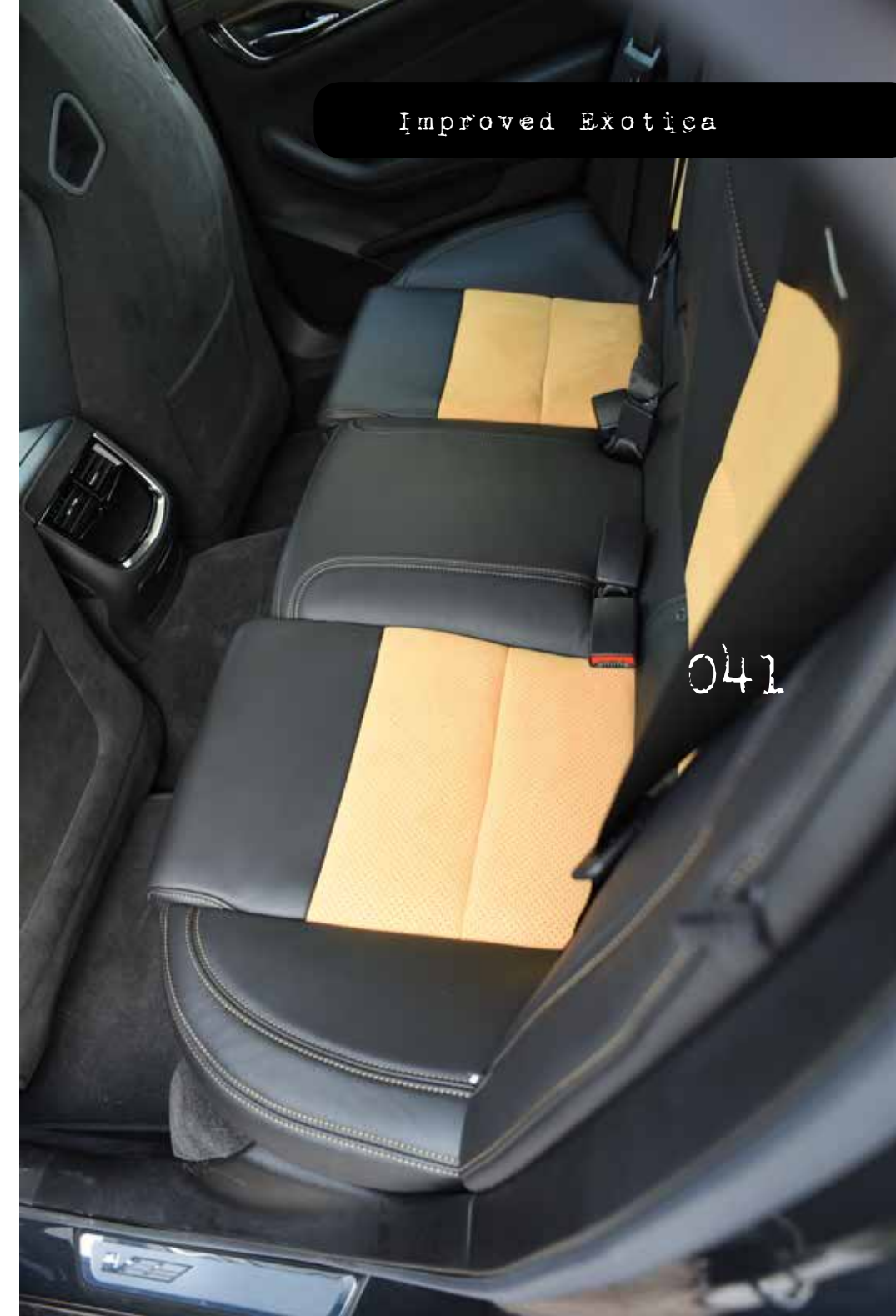
The interior is...clean. When the car is running and Cadillac's CUE system (Cadillac User Experience...the company's touchscreen/interface on the center console) is lit up, the cabin is attractive and welcoming. When the car is turned off and the screens are off, it is like a black hole waiting to swallow you up. The interior is available with seats in a light grey (Cadillac calls it "Light Platinum") or in black with a tan sueded insert (called "Saffron") instead of the standard all-black hole. I highly recommend getting something other than all black unless you like the Batman treatment...all black. The standard seats are 20-way powered contraptions and I cannot speak to their comfort as our car was blessed with the optional Recaro sports seats, which do firmly hold your hind parts in place.

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Cadillac claims the CTS-V is two cars rolled into one...sportscar and comfy sedan.



The cabin was a serene place to be while taking in the blurred view around the track.

Back at Road America, only a couple of minutes separate our launch from pit lane to our return. The CTS-V performs flawlessly and, as previously mentioned, the car has been doing this all day long with only an occasional stop for fuel. Think about that for a minute. A 4,000-plus pound family sedan doing hot laps at a 4-plus mile road course from 9am until 4pm with no brake fade, no overheating, no change of tires, just fuel. And don't for one minute think that because we were doing

hot laps that the air conditioner wasn't running. The cabin was a serene place to be while taking in the blurred view around the track. Astonishing!

So the CTS-V can do track duty, but how does it handle the real world? Cadillac claims the CTS-V is two cars rolled into one...sportscar and comfy sedan. Is it? We find out in the best and worst of ways.

Cadillac's CUE system works far better than it had in its debut many moons ago. It incorporates climate



control, audio system, navigation and your smart devices in one large center screen. It is functional but even with its haptic feedback I would still much prefer some good old-fashioned knobs and switches. CUE also uses a proximity sensor to detect when you are reaching for it to prepare for your guiding touch. The trouble with systems like these, and I don't know why car companies cannot seem to pick up on this, is that it still takes your attention away from the all important focus of driving.

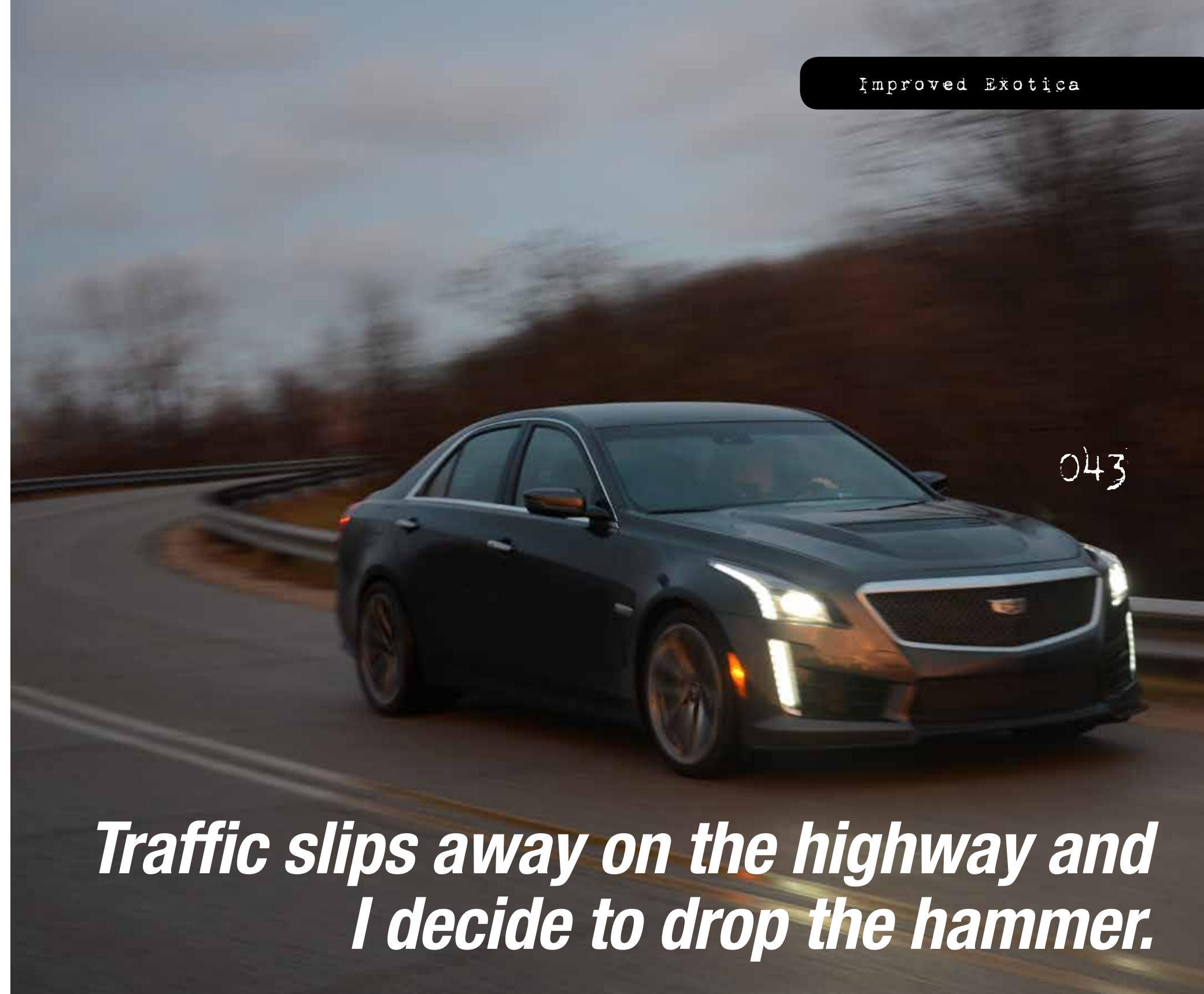


I mean, come on, here is a huge sedan with 640hp and 630lb-ft of torque from a 6.2-liter supercharged V8 being dumped into the rear wheels through an eight-speed gearbox and you want me to look AWAY from the road?

I head out onto an interstate and start cruising. The suspension that was so direct and adamant on the track is now comfortable and absorbing, such is the glory of Magnetic Ride Control. The steering is a little "off" to me. It is an electronic power-assist rack from ZF and is supposed to adjust to driving styles and the demands put on the chassis. I will admit to never having been a fan of adjustable steering systems and typically find them lacking in control or feedback. This one feels better to me than some other ones, however there is still a disconnect at the helm.



Improved Exotica



Traffic slips away on the highway and I decide to drop the hammer.

The CTS-V provides several different options for driver adjustability. Drivers can select Touring, Sport, Track and Snow/Ice. In Race mode, there are an additional five levels of Performance Traction Management (PTM) gradually taking away intrusion from the safety net of traction control and electronic stability control. I leave the car in Sport...for the moment.

Traffic slips away on the highway and I decide to drop the hammer. I swear that with all the windows shut my hair went flying back as if the car was a droptop. The HUD (heads up display) flashes numbers in front of my eyes but they roll so fast that they are hard to discern. The supercharger whine is not intrusive, but fun to listen to. The exhaust note is a little subdued

for my taste, but it certainly lets others know that this is no ordinary CTS.

The Caddy does daily duties quite well. There is ample room throughout the cabin, both front and rear, and the trunk is spacious allowing for more than a dozen paper grocery bags. Fuel mileage is the only real detriment to using this car as an every day appliance. Or so I thought.

Improved Exotica

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Cadillac CTS-V

We had a family event to attend out of town and I thought this would be the perfect opportunity to see how the CTS-V would handle family duties. We load up on a Friday and head out on the road. The drive is sublime with the Bose Surround Sound stereo pumping tunes that appease all four of us and we arrived at our destination in record time. Unloading was a cinch and we parked the car for overnight.

Then the storm hit. Not a rain-storm, but a winter storm of epic proportions. We're talking eight to twelve inches of snow in less than eight hours. This made me a little nervous and it was with that little bit of trepidation that I walked out to the car mid-morning on the next day. The resort staff was busy with their four wheelers and snow blowers trying to unbury the parking lot, and the CTS-V...parked

away from the crowds of course...was a bit challenging to get to.

With a little help we were able to clear a path for the CTS-V to make its exit and I put the car in Snow mode. After loading back up we set out on a non-record-breaking drive back home. During portions of the drive I put on the PDR just to document the fact that we were driving a rear-wheel-drive, high-horsepower sport sedan through snow



Fresh snow and only one person inside the car combined with the promise of all 640 of those horses under the hood was just too good to pass up.



and ice covered roads. This was almost as surreal as the experience at Road America and yet the big Caddy does not misstep even once. Had the car been wearing sport tires as opposed to the all-seasons I was incredibly gracious to be steering, we might have had some issues. But the CTS-V was, yet again, amazingly surprising in its ability to simply deliver on that which it was asked.

Once my family was safely back at home I had to go out for one more drive. Fresh snow and only one person inside the car combined with the promise of all 640 of those horses under the hood was just too good to pass up. Putting the V back into Sport mode (with full traction control and ESC active) I explored some limits in a vacant, and rather large, parking lot. The CTS-V delivered, yet again. It was a hoot to swing around that much mass on a low friction surface. I didn't stop smiling for days. That smile wasn't just the result of some snow play, but in the fact that GM has finally produced a sport sedan that is not only competitive with the best machines that Europe has to offer, but it can best them as well.

The CTS-V has commonly been referred to as a, "four-door Corvette." I disagree for once simple fact... it is better than that.





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Specs

Base Price: \$83,995
 Body style/driveline: 4-door sport luxury sedan (RWD)
 Construction: unitized welded steel body with direct-mounted front cradle and rubber isolated, multi-link independent rear suspension
 GM vehicle class: midsize luxury sedan

Engine
 Displacement (cu in / cc): 376/6162
 Bore & stroke (in / mm): 4.06 x 3.62/103.25 x 92
 Block material: cast aluminum
 Cylinder head material: cast aluminum
 Valvetrain: overhead valve, two valves per cylinder
 Fuel delivery: direct injection
 Lubrication system: wet sump
 Compression ratio: 10:01
 Horsepower (hp / kW @ rpm): 640/477 @ 6400 (SAE certified)
 Torque (lb-ft / Nm @ rpm): 630/855 @ 3600 (SAE certified)
 Max. engine speed (rpm): 6600
 Recommended fuel: premium required
 Estimated fuel economy (city/hwy): 14/21

Transmission
 Type: Hydra-Matic 8L90
 paddle-shift eight-speed, electronically controlled, automatic overdrive with torque converter clutch
 Gear ratios (:1):
 First: 4.56
 Second: 2.97
 Third: 2.08
 Fourth: 1.69
 Fifth: 1.27
 Sixth: 1
 Seventh: 0.85
 Eighth: 0.65
 Reverse: 3.82
 Final drive ratio: 2.85

Chassis/Suspension
 Configuration: rear-wheel drive
 Differential: electronic limited-slip
 Front suspension: MacPherson-type with dual lower ball joints and direct-acting stabilizer bar; Magnetic Ride Control with monotube inverted struts
 Rear suspension: independent five-link with Magnetic Ride Control
 Steering type: ZF rack-mounted electric, power-assisted and variable assist
 Steering ratio: 15.5 (on center) to 11.2 (full lock)
 Steering turns, lock to lock: 2.37
 Turn circle (ft / m): 40.3/12.3
 Chassis control: four-channel StabiliTrak w/ brake assist and traction control; Performance Traction Management

Wheels and Tires
 Wheel size and type: 19 x 9.5-inch front/19 x 10-inch rear aluminum
 Tire size: front: 265/35ZR19 Michelin Pilot Super Sport rear: 295/30ZR19 Michelin Pilot Super Sport

Brakes
 Type: four-wheel disc; four-channel ABS/TCS w/ DRP; Brembo brakes with staggered six-piston calipers (front) and four-piston calipers (rear)
 Rotor type and thickness (in/mm): front: 15.35 x 1.41 (390 x 36) vented, with Ferritic Nitro Carburized process for corrosion resistance rear: 14.37 x 1.10 (365 x 28) vented, with Ferritic Nitro Carburized process for corrosion resistance

Dimensions (Exterior)
 Wheelbase (in/mm): 114.6/2910
 Length (in/mm): 197.6/5021
 Height (in/mm): 57.2/1454
 Width (in/mm): 72.2/1833
 Track (in/mm): front: 62.1/1577 rear: 61.2/1554
 Curb weight (lb / kg): 4145/1880
 Weight distribution (% front / rear): 52.7/47.3

Dimensions (Interior)
 Legroom (in/mm): front: 45.7/1160 rear: 35.4/899
 Headroom (in/mm): front: 40.4/1026 rear: 37.5/952
 Shoulder room (in/mm): front: 56.9/1446 rear: 54.8/1392
 Hip room (in/mm): front: 53.8 / 1366 rear: 53.3/1353

Capacities
 Seating capacity (front/rear): 2 front/3 rear
 EPA passenger volume (cu ft/L): 97/2746
 EPA trunk volume (cu ft/L): 13.7/388
 Fuel tank (gal/L): 19/72
 Engine oil (qt/L): 10/9.5
 Cooling system (qt/L): 11.9/11.3