

Manufacturer 800 Number Directory

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A Trusted Companion: The All-New Ford Expedition XLT

By Adam J. Dixon

I was on assignment and needed a vehicle I could trust. My mission was to transport supplies from Washington, DC, to Detroit. I had to be on time no matter what the weather.

Because of the impending snowstorm, it was a big assignment for me, but a small task for the all-new 1997 Ford Expedition.

Sized somewhere between the roomy Chevrolet Tahoe and the huge Chevrolet Suburban, Ford's replacement to the Bronco, is based on the full-sized Ford F-150 pickup truck and offered only as a four-door.

I enjoyed driving the 5,136-pound Expedition on the highways, which posed no problem. But navigating the giant sport-utility vehicle on the narrow city streets took some getting used to. The optional load-leveling air suspension offered an exceptionally smooth, comfortable ride.

Variable-assist steering provided great control and feedback from the road. The Expedition could also make sharp turns for a sport-utility vehicle.

I had no problem driving from the office to my apartment on Capitol Hill. However, finding an on-street parking space for the 17-foot long vehicle wasn't easy. Although it's bigger than the Explorer, Ford says it's "garage able." Meaning if you have a garage, it might fit.

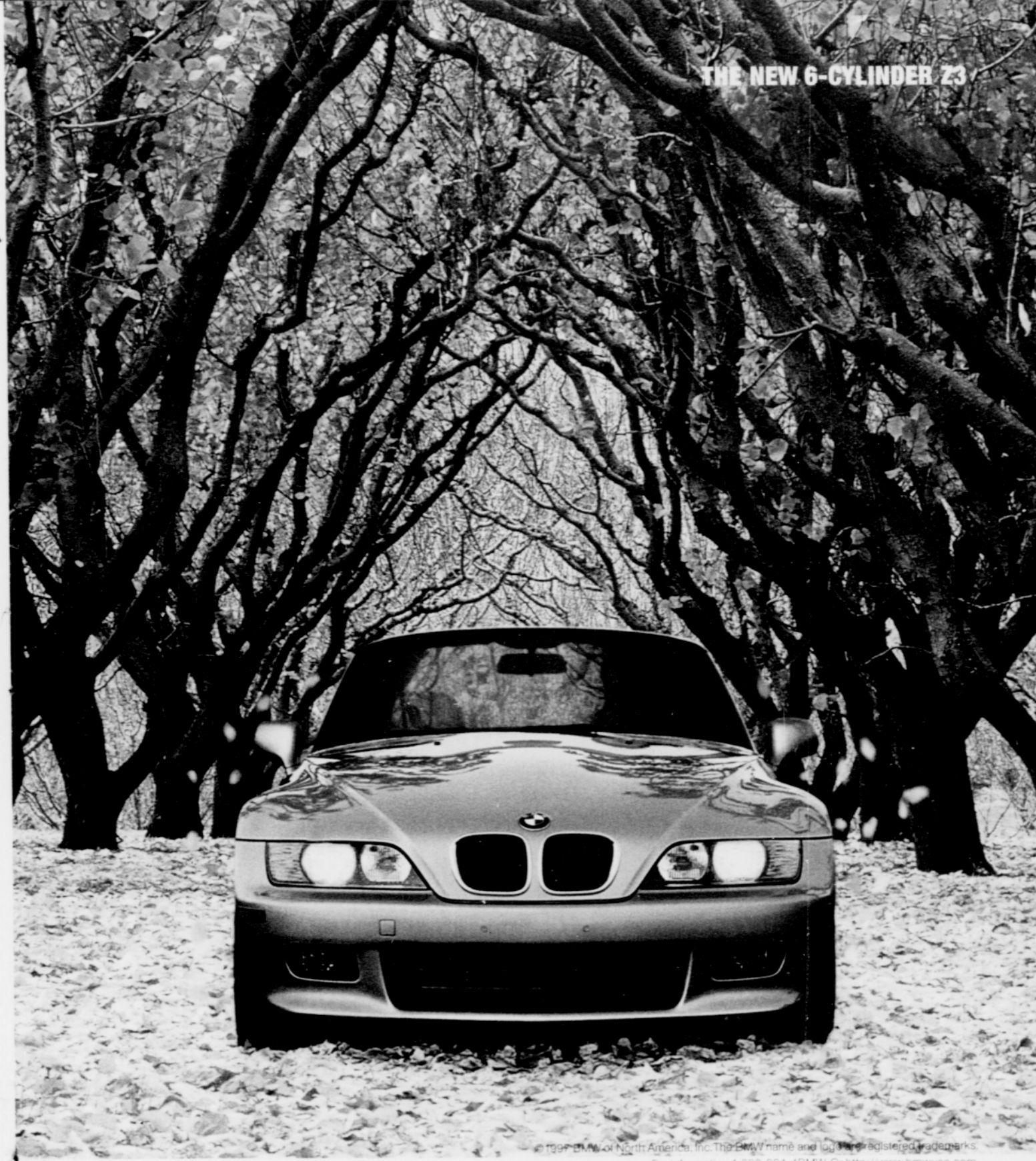
Ford equipped the Expedition with its new overhead-cam 4.6- and 5.4-liter V-8, which is quite smooth for a truck-based vehicle.

The optional leather six-way power "captain's chairs" were quite comfortable on the eight and one-half hour drive to my destination. All controls on the dash were easy to grasp and required little effort to operate. The cupholders can hold a 2-liter soda, and there is plenty of interior room to throw stuff around without getting that "cluttered" feeling.

With the "AutoSet" feature on the car radio I could automatically program the six strongest signals in each state I crossed without deleting the previously programmed home stations. Ingenious!

After arriving to Detroit, the bond between the Expedition and myself had grown, as I watched it maneuver with ease on several snow-covered side streets. The Expedition is like a naive friend whom you can coax into going anywhere. But once you make that expedition, you've got yourself a trusted companion.

THE NEW 6-CYLINDER Z3



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An open top to open your mind. An impassioned, 2.8-liter power plant to liberate your soul. And physics-defying agility to inspire awe. To drive the new Z3 is to feel 110%, certifiably free. Now instead of pursuing happiness, you can catch it.

