

# Portland Observer Auto Review

News and reviews on new motor vehicles

## 2008 Nissan Altima 3.5 SL

### Performance and Luxury for All

BY KATHLEEN CARR

When Nissan redesigned the Altima sedan last year, it focused on keeping the car's sporting credentials intact while simultaneously addressing its faults. The new Altima's significant dynamic and interior improvements contributed to a powerful five-seater that provided plenty of comfort and driving excitement for those looking for a lot more than basic transportation.

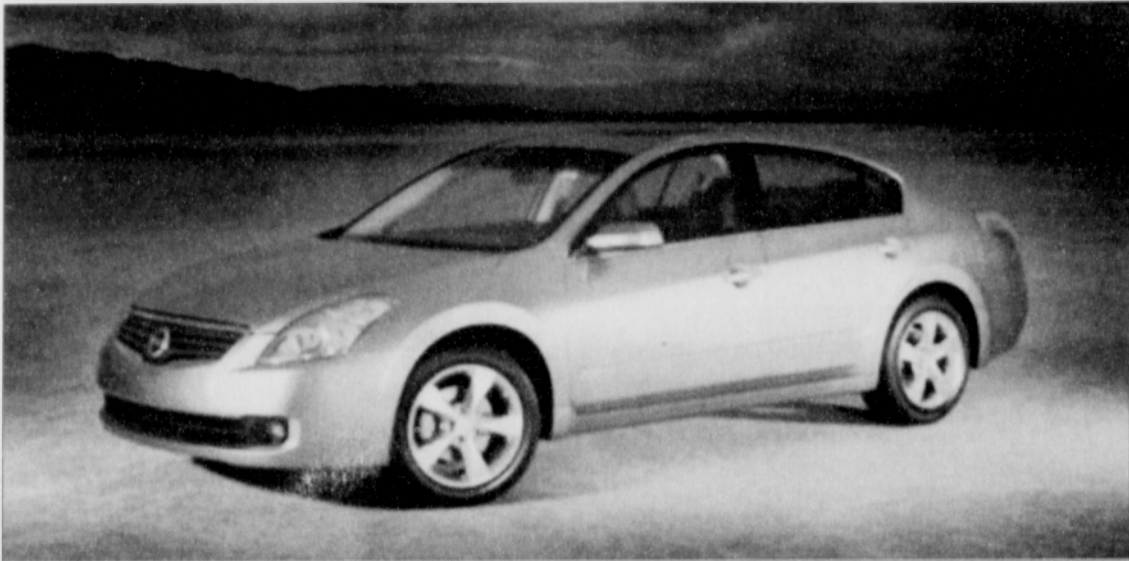
The 2008 Nissan Altima adds to this pedigree with an all-new coupe model. The two-door features unique body panels, a shorter wheelbase and overall length, and a revised suspension for even sportier handling.

Both the coupe and sedan come with a long list of available luxury and technology features, but they are put into large, expensive packages that often must be lumped together with other packages. The Technology Package on the 3.5 SE is \$6,400. If you want to keep the

price low, we'd normally suggest going light on options, but unfortunately, Nissan makes it just about impossible to do this. It's like going to a salad bar and being offered a choice of either dry lettuce or a 4-gallon bucket of Ranch.

Although its options pricing is a little shady, the 2008 Nissan Altima is now an even more versatile (and attractive) choice in the always competitive midsize segment. Providing a compelling mix of sport and practicality the Altima sedan continues to be a very desirable midsize family car, especially for those who want one with a good amount of sporting potential. Either body style should be near the top of a shopping list.

The 2008 Nissan Altima is available as a midsize sedan or coupe. Nissan recently began sales of the '08 sedan. The Sedan is available in four trims, with the number indicating its engine: base 2.5, 2.5 S, 3.5 SE and 3.5 SL.



Specifications: 6-Cylinder, 24-Valve 270-hp @ 258 lb-ft .torque, 3.5-Liter Engine; Xtronic CVT Automatic Transmission; 19-City 26-Highway MPG; \$32,485.MSRP

The 3.5 SL goes the full luxury route with leather seating, a moonroof, dual-zone automatic climate control, heated seats, Bluetooth connectivity, an auto-dimming rearview mirror, 16-inch alloy wheels, xenon HID headlights and a Bose audio system with CD changer and a choice of satellite radio providers. With the Technology Package Nissan bundles a navigation system with real-time traffic and a rearview monitor.

The Nissan Altima is powered by either a 2.5-liter inline-4 with 175 horsepower and 180 pound-feet of torque (on the 2.5 trims) or a 3.5-liter V6 with 270 hp and 258 lb-ft (on the 3.5 trims). All but the 3.5 SL Sedan come with a six-speed manual transmission, while a CVT is standard on that trim and optional on all others

except the base sedan. Front-seat side airbags and full-length side-curtain airbags are standard on every 2008 Nissan Altima. Antilock brakes are standard on the 3.5 sedan trims and all coupes, and optional on the 2.5 S sedans. Only the 3.5 trims are eligible for traction control (standard) and stability control (optional). In National Highway Traffic Safety Adminis-

tration crash tests, the Altima sedan received a top five-star rating for its protection of front occupants in frontal and side impacts. Rear passengers received a four-star rating for side impacts.

With its sporty suspension tuning and quick steering, the 2008 Nissan Altima provides enthusiasts with one of the most enjoyable midsize coupes and family sedans available. Ride quality is still comfortable throughout the line, and road and wind noise are subdued.

Strong performance from the V6 models should more than satisfy those who like a kick in the pants when they boot the gas, and the four-cylinder provides perfectly adequate acceleration. We don't make this recommendation often, but we'd opt for the continuously variable transmission. Easily the best we've come across, this CVT does an excellent job of maximizing each engine's power, while responding rapidly to throttle inputs.

The 2008 Nissan Altima 3.5 SL will inspire enthusiast to take an impromptu road trip.

## Roosevelt Theatre Comes Alive

continued ▲ from Metro

of "Oklahoma!" has the advantage of simplicity compared with other musicals that high-school companies often attempt.

Most theatres these days can program their light boards, but outdated technology limits Roosevelt's program to more basic changes in mood. In another vein of improvisation, the leftover costumes from a decade ago suit the romantic intrigues of Great Plains agriculturalists.

Back in one of her four Beginning Theatre classes, Lane emphasized principles like motivation, dramatic tension, dynamic position and movements that indicate a story



PHOTO BY RAYMOND RENDELMAN/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER  
Roosevelt High School theatre instructor Jo Lane sorts through some well-worn costumes that could work for an upcoming production of "Oklahoma!"

accurately without any words, props or costume. By year four of her career at Roosevelt, she hopes to offer Intermediate and Advanced Theatre, along with a class detailing technical aspects of the discipline.

Student Shannon Duncan initially had reservations about the program but began seeing it as more than a credit fulfillment when she realized, "I do this all the time." Duncan says, "I'm growing onto theatre because I can be myself in it."

Duncan's partner in class that day, Gloria Valdez, agreed saying, "I like to dance and I like to sing; I do that all the time and sometimes I do that here."

## Say Hey Turns Five

continued ▲ from Metro

to help them connect with a multicultural community of fellow professionals, community and professional resources and a friendly face or two.

Everyone is welcome to attend! It is fun, multicultural and a great opportunity for newcomers (and those of us who are "not so new") to enjoy an evening of meeting new friends and learning about what makes our community a great place to live and work.


The group is always on the lookout for new professionals of color who have relocated to Oregon or Southwest Washington in the past 18 months to intro-

duce and welcome at Say Hey events.

If you are new or would like to suggest the group contact someone new to the area, e-mail Vicki Nakashima, Partners in Diversity, nakashimav@mac.com or call 503-516-3505. Past Say Hey honorees are also encouraged to contact Nakashima for the anniversary celebration.

Parking is available within a block of the Gerding Theater on Northwest 12th and 13th Avenues. Elevators take you into the M Financial Building lobby directly across from the Armory or into Whole Foods on the corner of Couch and Northwest 12th.

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### Dear Deanna!

I'm stressed over my relationship and don't know what to do. My boyfriend plays mind games with me and I never know where I fully stand. One day he seems to love me to death and others he seems as if he wants to walk out the door. I feel suspicious that he may have someone else but I can't confirm it. He comes home every night and he may be moody or short-tempered most times but at least he's at home. Can you help me figure out what I'm doing wrong? --Trinae; Dallas, Texas

### Dear Trinae:

You're making the mistake of wasting your time hoping this man will trip and fall in love with you and tell you what you want to hear. He's not connected to you and there's someone or something else pulling him away. He may be with you each night but his attitude and temperament indicates he doesn't want to be there. The end of your relationship is near and you should enjoy the ride and prepare to move on because the end is certainly on the horizon.

**Ask Deanna!**  
  
Real People, Real Advice  
An advice column known for its fearless approach to reality based subjects!

### Dear Deanna!

My wife has become a stranger that I don't recognize anymore. She's defensive when I ask personal questions and always has a chip on her shoulder. I love her, but I am not going to be mistreated, used or disrespected. She is pushing things too far now because she's embarrassing me in front of her friends. I don't

know what is happening, but her appearance, her mood and everything about her is different. How can I get to the bottom of these changes? --Anonymous; On-Line Reader

### Dear Anonymous:

Your wife is showing guilty signs of having an affair. Whomever she is seeing has boosted her self-image, her confidence and she's become happy and bold. However, when she returns to reality and sees your face, she becomes deflated and rude which causes her to lash out at you over simple things. You need to be a real man and share your concerns, point out the changes and either accept or reject her explanations and keep it moving.

### Dear Deanna!

I loaned money to my girlfriend's husband and now he won't pay the money back. I did this personal favor without talking to my friend first. He is now telling me to stop harassing him or he's going to accuse me of trying to sleep with him. I've been sending

him e-mails to call along with text messages and I've called his cell phone. I thought I was doing the right thing by not mentioning the loan. How do I get my money without jeopardizing my friendship? --Miss CeeCee; Atlanta

### Dear CeeCee:

It's to your advantage to go ahead and write the money off unless you're willing to bring drama in your life. If there's no promissory note or paper trail indicating you loaned the money and it would be paid back, you're stuck. You're being blackmailed and it's going to get worse. Tell your friend about the loan, stop looking for payment and whatever happens in their relationship is not your fault because you chose to be honest and have integrity.

Ask Deanna is written by Deanna M. Write Ask Deanna! Email: askdeanna1@yahoo.com or 264 S. LaCienega Blvd, Suite 1283 Beverly Hills, CA 90211. Website: www.askdeanna.com

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## Airport Offers Valet Parking

Portland International Airport has a convenient, new parking option as travelers head into Thanksgiving and the busy holiday season.

Gold Key Valet will allow travelers to drop off their vehicles in front of the airport terminal building, and pick up their vehicles at the same location when they return from their trip.

New signs will guide travelers to

the Gold Key Valet drop-off booth, located on the "departures" roadway. There, the traveler simply turns over the vehicle key, and provides flight and contact information, so the vehicle will be ready when the traveler returns from the trip.

The service will cost \$30 per day, and complement other parking options available in the economy and long-term parking

lots and the short-term parking garage. Reservations are not required, and vehicles are stored in a safe and secure lot.

Other parking improvements at the airport include a new parking guidance system now serving motorists in the existing parking garage, and an automated parking payment system called "Quick Pay."

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