

# Portland Observer Auto Review

News and reviews on new motor vehicles

## 2008 Nissan Quest 3.5 SE

A modern space for family life

By KATHLEEN CARR

Nissan restyled its Quest minivan, outfitting it with a new instrument panel, a new center console and revised exterior panels, including new front and rear treatments for a cleaner look than before.

A new color - Lakeshore Slate - is available for 2008, but otherwise not a lot has changed on the outside. It still features a low beltline in front that rises as it moves toward the rear. Strongly defined wheel arches continue to set the Quest apart from the rest of the minivan field.

For 2008, the Quest returns in essentially the same form as 2007. It continues to be powered by a 240-horsepower version of the same 3.5-liter, DOHC V-6 used in both the Maxima and Altima, tied to a standard five-speed automatic. The big V-6 provides ample torque, giving the large (seven-passenger/three-row) Quest confident acceleration and passing power.

Nissan says the Quest is one of the roomiest front-wheel-drive minivans in the market. The second- and third-row seats fold flat



Specifications: 3.5-Liter V-6 235-hp @ 240 lb-ft. torque engine; 5-Speed Automatic transmission; 16-City 24-Highway MPG; \$38,260.MSRP.

into the floor, creating a large 148.7-cubic-foot cargo area. This year, the third-row seat also gets automatically folding headrests and a spring assist that makes it easier to fold.

The Quest has front bucket seats and an optional fixed center console between the driver and front

passenger that includes a hidden storage compartment. (Those who don't choose that option get a folding tray table in the same position.)

Trim choices include either a faux wood style or a brushed, metal look, and there are chrome bezels around the gauges. Rear skylight windows are optional.

The 2008 Quest is offered in four well-equipped models - 3.5, 3.5S, 3.5SL, and 3.5SE. The S versions now can be ordered with rear parking assist; SL versions get a standard power sliding side door, rear-view monitor, dual-zone climate control, and automatic headlights. The SE versions get Bluetooth and

XM hardware standard, though the satellite radio subscription must be paid separately.

A 265-watt, ten-speaker audio system can be ordered, as can Bluetooth and 19-inch wheels and

run-flat tires. The '08 Quest retains its signature Skyview fixed roof panels.

The 2008 Quest's windows assist in safe driving. By allowing drivers to enjoy terrific visibility, thanks to; a long side glass, side mirrors that are ample, and an enormous windshield. We also appreciate the windshield which makes for an expansive view out the front, while the side mirrors easily allowed for confident lane changes.

All Quests have anti-lock brakes; side-impact airbags for the front seats, three-row side curtain airbags, active head restraints for the front seats and traction control are standard and tire-pressure monitors. An electronic stability system is optional.

Though the minivan class leaders offer a more luxurious interior ambience, the current Quest has more than a few things in its favor. With its peppy acceleration, composed (even entertaining) handling and roomy cabin, the current Quest is a solid pick for families looking for a minivan that breaks from the mainstream. And although we'd like to see Nissan improve the breadth of the van's safety features, there's no arguing with the Quest's top safety scores in NHTSA and IIHS crash tests.

The 2008 Nissan Quest provides families with a modern space for life; and living.

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