

Portland Observer Auto Review

News and reviews on new motor vehicles

2010 Lincoln MKZ

BY KATHLEEN CARR

The 2010 Lincoln MKZ, which features a new look outside and in and a host of refinements with better fit, improved materials, and premium leather.

Lincoln's now-signature split-wing grille highlights the exterior modifications, which include new sheet metal from the A-pillar forward, a redesigned decklid, and larger LED taillamps.

Lincoln has adjusted the 3.5L, 263-hp V-6, recalibrating

also incorporates intake variable cam timing for smooth idle and an impressive broad torque curve with good power. The six-speed SelectShift Automatic transmission, which is front-wheel drive and optional all-wheel drive is standard on all 2010 MKZ's.

The MKZ's ride and handling was improved when Lincoln retuned the springs and dampers, tweaked the rear suspension geometry, and, for enthusiasts, added an available

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the ECU, incorporating a new induction system, and changing the shift points, resulting in a more pleasant sounding engine as well as a quicker 0-to-60 time, which drops from 7.7 sec to 7.1., according to Lincoln. The all-aluminum engine

sport package that includes firmer springs, larger anti-roll bars, and 18-in. alloys with 225/45 Goodyears (versus 225/50R17Michelins). A new variable-assist power steering system and larger brakes round out the chassis upgrades, how-



Tested Vehicle Information: 3.5L 24 V6 Duratec engine; 6-speed selectshift automatic transmission; 17 city mpg, 24 highway mpg; MSRP \$36,005 Test Vehicle MSRP \$43,245.

ever the all-wheel drive remains an option with a price of \$1890. the sport-tuned suspension and 18-inch wheels of the Sport Appearance package makes the MKZ's surprisingly nimble and far more fun to drive.

The interior of the MKZ ambiance is warmer, richer, and quieter than before. The changes to the interior from the old retro style dash to the modern, round

dials, an 8.0-in.-high-res navigation screen, real aluminum or wood trim, and an elegant, flowing dash reminiscent of that in the top-tier luxury vehicle. Lincoln MKZ offers the usual array of items such as automatic climate control, a moonroof, Sync voice activation, Bluetooth, keyless start and rear back-up sensors. Options include chrome wheels, an optional surround-sound audio system, a voice-

activated navigation system, real-time traffic, ventilated seats and back-up sensors.

The MKZ is fun to drive, it offers increased power and a more luxurious look and presence. It improvements to the interior of the vehicle brings in into the luxury market from the past models. The refinements to the powertrain are complemented by improvements to cabin noise levels.

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