

DAEWOO LANOS SX 2000

The Lanos is the smallest car Daewoo sells in Canada. It is available as a hatchback and a four-door sedan, in two trim levels, each of which has its own four-cylinder engine, a 1.5 litre for the “S” and a 1.6 litre for the “SX”. We tested a sedan in SX trim.

Interior and trunk

The narrow doors complicate access to the interior, especially for tall people. The front buckets are comfortable but the rather short cushion doesn't suit all body shapes. The driving position is generally good, but the pedals are close enough together that you have to be careful not to press both at once.

Getting in and out of the rear seat of the Lanos requires about the same degree of flexibility as for other similarly sized vehicles. There is room for two adults, with good head and leg room. As the cushion is relatively flat, a third, preferably small person could be seated in the middle for short distances.

The trunk is roomy for a car this size, and the 60/40 split seat back folds to provide more space. The trunk opening is quite narrow.

Safety and convenience

Except when accelerating hard, the Lanos is surprisingly quiet. The fit and quality of interior materials is less satisfactory. Our test vehicle had some creaks and rattles and it was hard to insert the key into the ignition.

There are plenty of storage spaces but like the glove compartment, they are rather small. The cup holder is too big and too shallow. Like some Mercedes-Benz models a few years ago, only the right-hand mirror is power adjusted. The manually adjusted left-hand mirror has a balky, imprecise lever, and the power window controls are not illuminated at night.

The Lanos shares with the Nubira the same radio and climate control problems in that the heater is slow, the fan is anaemic unless it is moved up to third speed, and the radio buttons are too small.

Safety-wise, the Lanos comes with dual air bags, quite powerful headlights, and front head restraints that lock in place but cannot be raised high enough for tall individuals. The two horn buttons are small and the wide roof pillars obstruct the view.

Engine and transmission

Each of the two versions of the Lanos has an engine of its own, a 1.5-litre for the “S” and a 1.6-litre for the “SX”. The SX we tested accelerated satisfactorily from a standing stop and provided good though noisy passing acceleration above 3,500 rpm. The Lanos is relatively quiet at highway cruising speeds.

The well-gearred automatic transmission has a “Power” position which delays gear changes for more sporty driving. The same position can be engaged to facilitate starts on slippery surfaces.

On the road

Thanks to its relatively long wheelbase and compliant suspension, the Lanos has a surprisingly smooth ride. The downside to the soft ride is run-of-the-mill roadholding which makes sporty driving on winding roads much less attractive.

The power steering is heavy at low and moderate speeds and the Lanos has a tendency to weave on the highway, especially in a crosswind. Braking is good at all times.

An inspection at the CAA-Quebec test centre revealed that, in general, the Lanos is very well assembled with good corrosion and connecting line protection. However, the brake plates are too small to shield the discs completely, and a lot of dirt can get into the engine compartment through the big openings in the wheel wells for the rack and pinion steering linkage.

Conclusion

The Lanos is a surprisingly roomy little car with a comfortable ride, and is nicely equipped in the LX version. However, the Lanos doesn't seem as well balanced as the Nubira, and the Korean auto maker should upgrade the quality of assembly and certain materials. As the dealership network is rather limited at present, it's to be hoped that the Lanos proves reliable.

FOR

Smooth ride
Generous standard equipment (SX)
Surprisingly roomy
Front-seat comfort
Good brakes
Soundproofing

AGAINST

Limited storage spaces
Narrow door openings
Small horn buttons
Poorly calibrated steering
Rather slow heating
Pedals too close together

2000 DAEWOO LANOS

Engine: 1.5-litre 4 cyl.; 1.6-litre 4-cyl.

Torque: 96 lb.-ft. @ 3,400 rpm; 106 lb-ft @ 3,400 rpm

Suspension: independent (fr.)/rigid axle(r.)

Length: 407.4 cm; 423.7 cm (4-door sedan)

Height: 143.2 cm

Weight: 1,110 to 1,177 kg

Towing capacity: Non-recommended

Horsepower: 86 h.p. @ 5,800 rpm; 105 h.p. @ 5,800 rpm

Transmission: 5-speed manual; 4-speed automatic

Brakes: disc/drum

Width: 167.8 cm

Wheelbase: 252 cm

Tires: 185/60R14

Air bags: Standard dual

Fuel consumption (1.6-litre engine and automatic transmission):

- Transport Canada rating: city: 10.2 L/100 km (27.5 mpg); highway: 6.4 L/100 km (44 mpg)
- Test result: 9 L/100 (31 mpg)

Fuel tank capacity: 48 litres

Acceleration: 0-100 km/h : 10.5 seconds 60-100 km/h : 7.5 seconds

Competition: Chevrolet Metro, Hyundai Accent, Suzuki Swift and Esteem, Toyota Echo

Maintenance (amount may vary from dealer to dealer):

Frequency: 3 months/6,000 km; total cost to 100,000 km: \$1,259

Warranty:

- Full basic coverage: 3 years/60,000 km
- Powertrain: 5 years/100,000 km
- Surface corrosion: 3 years/60,000
- Perforation damage: 5 years/unlimited mileage
- Emissions control system: 3 years/60,000 km (full coverage); 8 years/130,000 km (catalytic converter, electronic control module)

Factory replacement parts:

Rear bumper: \$459

Front brake disk: \$39

Brake pads: \$77

Muffler: \$192

Front fender: \$114

Average insurance premium (Quebec City, replacement cost endorsement, claim-free insurance record, female driver or male driver 30 to 40 years old): \$549 to \$723

Price according to trim line:

S Hatchback: \$12,495 SX Hatchback: \$15,295

S Sedan: \$12,995 SX Sedan: \$15,795

Main options:

Auto. Transmission: \$950 Value package (SX only): \$1,150 (hatchback); \$350 (sedan)

Price as tested: \$16,145

Freight and preparation: \$750

Dealers: Quebec: 12

Canada: 24