

2005 INFINITI G35x



Last year, it was a new full-time four-wheel-drive system. This year, Infiniti has freshened up the G35 sedan with changes to the hood, trunk lid, bumpers, and lights front and rear. Inside, there's a modified dash and console. The V6 engine was bumped up to 280 horsepower with the automatic transmission and 298 horsepower with the manual gearbox. Two-wheel-drive models now have bigger brake discs.

Interior and trunk

There is a definite feeling of spaciousness the minute you enter the G35. The front seats are very comfortable and hold the occupant firmly in place. There is plenty of leg room, but with the sunroof, headroom is tight for tall individuals. The driving position is excellent.



An interesting element of the G35 is that the nacelle containing the controls and gauges tilts along with the tilt steering column.



The rear bench seat can comfortably seat two adults. Again, while leg room is good, headroom is tight for tall people. The seatback does not fold down but does have a small ski pass-through—too small to let the ski bindings through.

Though the trunk is quite roomy, the fender wells distort its shape. The trunk lid has no release or hand grip outside. If the trunk mechanism does not raise it slightly, it is hard to open.

Convenience and safety

While the finish is generally quite good, soundproofing allows road and engine acceleration noise to come through. The quality of some materials is not on a par with that of the European competition. Despite numerous storage spaces, capacity overall is average, in part because of the small glove box and centre console.

The location of some controls is somewhat unusual, such as the seat adjustment levers, beside the centre console. The audio system is excellent, but its controls should be

placed above those of the heat-ventilation, another system that works very well. Also unusual in a sports sedan is a pedal-type emergency brake instead of a lever between the front seats.



In terms of safety, the G35 comes with two front, two side and two curtain air bags. It also has active head restraints in front that move up and forward in certain rear collisions to reduce whiplash. Visibility is good in all directions, though it is hard to judge the distance when backing up. The xenon headlamps are powerful enough but leave some dark areas in their lighting path.

Engine and transmission

This year's 3.5-litre V6 engine produces 280 horsepower and 270 pound-feet of torque when mated to an automatic transmission. Acceleration, both from a standing stop and when passing is lively but progressive enough to attenuate the feeling of speed. The engine accelerates noisily.

The five-speed automatic transmission is well geared and generally smooth. However, some shifts can be abrupt enough to break the momentum of the engine. In manual mode gear shifts are a bit slow.

The AWD system can shift up to 50% of torque to the front wheels if the rear wheels slip. It also has a Snow mode that will hold a 50/50 torque distribution up to 19 km-h and smooth out acceleration.

On the road

A well-bred car with sporty pretensions must be built on a solid platform. For the G35, the engineers designed one they call "FM" for Front Midship. They then added 3% more weight to the front of the vehicle for a front/rear weight distribution of 53/47. This, they explain, provides more front-wheel grip into a turn, whereas in accelerating out of a turn, weight distribution shifts to 50/50, which is ideal. And it works, because the G35 handles just about any type of curve firmly and easily.

Very nicely calibrated with a slight tendency toward firmness, the suspension delivers a smooth ride that at low and medium speeds is occasionally betrayed by a firm, sharp reaction on uneven surfaces. Despite the G35's excellent suspension tuning, it still lacks that suave blend of compliance and firmness delivered by German sport sedans.

Heavy at low speed then very well weighted, the power steering is quick, steady and precise. However, it conveys almost no road feel and has a relatively wide turning circle. Braking is powerful and fade resistant.

Our inspection at a CAA-Quebec technical inspection centre showed that the G35 is sturdy and very well assembled, with good rust protection.

Conclusion

The G35 is a spacious, generously equipped sport touring sedan that should prove just as reliable as other Infiniti products. It will suit those who are not necessarily looking for or who do not like the sensations procured by German cars but appreciate an authentic sport sedan. It's too bad that the steering delivers so little road feel. With AWD now available, owners can enjoy their sport sedan all year long.

PROS: roominess, powerful engine, road holding, powerful brakes, generous equipment, comfortable seats

CONS: soundproofing, small trunk opening, non-folding rear seatback, paucity of storage, heavy low-speed steering, radio placed too low

2005 INFINITI G35 SEDAN

Engine: 24-valve, 3.5-litre V6

Horsepower: 280 hp @ 6200 rpm (manual: 298 hp @ 6400 rpm)

Torque: 270 lb-ft @ 4800 rpm (manual: 260 lb-ft @ 4800 rpm)

Transmission: 5-speed automatic; 6-speed manual

Suspension: fully independent

Brakes: 4-wheel disc

Length: 474.7 cm

Width: 175.3 cm

Height: 146.6 cm

Wheelbase: 285 cm

Weight: 1,579 to 1,664 kg

Tires: 215/55R17; 235/45R18

Towing capacity: 454 kg

Air bags: standard front, side and side air curtain

Fuel consumption (G35x):

– Transport Canada rating: city: 12.8 L/100 km (22 mpg); highway: 8.5 L/100 km (33 mpg)

– Test result: 13 L/100 (22 mpg)

– Temperature: -22°C to 2°C

Fuel tank capacity: 76 litres

Acceleration: 0-100 km/h: 7 seconds; 60-100 km/h: 5.3 seconds

Competition: Acura TL, Audi A4, BMW 3-Series, Lexus IS300, Mercedes C-Class

Warranty:

- Full basic coverage: 4 years/100,000 km
- Powertrain: 6 years/110,000 km
- Surface corrosion: 4 years/100,000 km
- Perforation damage: 7 years/unlimited kilometrage
- Emissions control system: 4 years/100,000 km (full coverage); 8 years/130,000 km (catalytic converter, electronic control module and onboard diagnostic device)

Factory replacement parts:

Rear bumper: \$745

Front brake disk: \$121

Brake pads: \$103

Muffler: \$455

Front fender: \$334

Average insurance premium (Quebec City, replacement cost endorsement, claim-free insurance record, male or female driver 30 to 40 years old): \$1,074 to \$1,781

Price according to trim line:

G35: \$39,900

G35x: \$42,800

Main options:

Premium package: \$2,900

Premium and Rosewood package: \$3,200

Premium and Aero: \$4,800

Premium and Navigation: \$6,300

Premium, Rosewood and Navigation: \$6,500

Premium, Navigation and Aero: \$8,200

Price as tested: \$45,700

Freight and preparation: \$1,267

Dealers: Quebec: 6; Canada: 25

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