



car shopping made easy!™



Used Cars

New Cars

Dealers

Sell

Blog

Financing

Insurance

Parts

Sign In

Help

Search

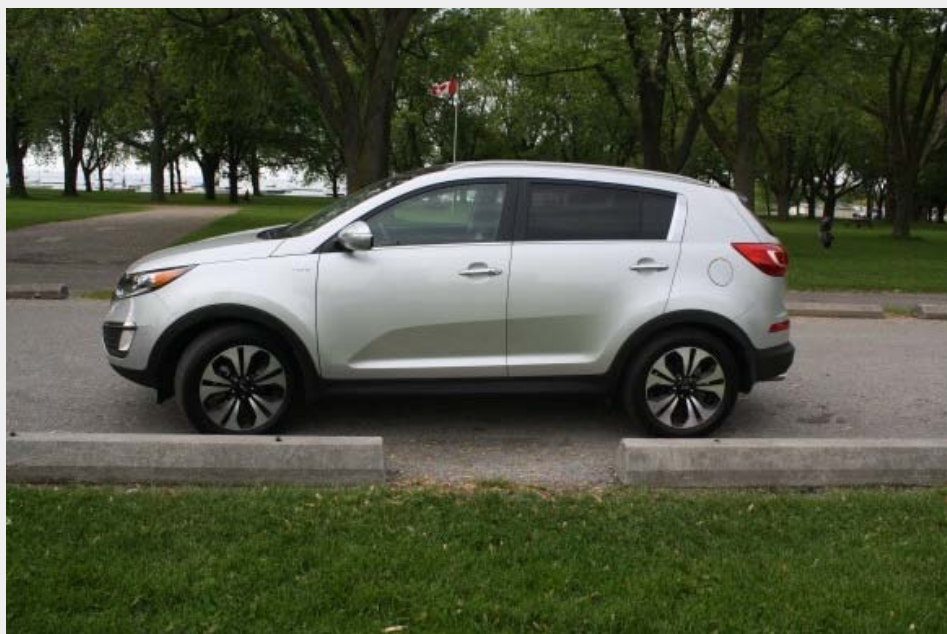
Sign In EMAIL

PASSWORD

ADVERTISEMENT

2011 Kia Sportage SX Road Test

by DAN HEYMAN on JUNE 13, 2011 · 0 COMMENTS



The turbocharged Sportage SX. Mmmmm...(all images by the author)



Recently, we had the opportunity to test the [Kia Sportage crossover](#) trimmed in the EX-Luxury package, which was top spec for the time.

In that story, we mentioned that there was an even peppier (read:

turbocharged) version on the way.

And here it is.

The EX-Luxury with Navigation package has been supplanted by this: The SX. And, if I may, it is one cracker of a crossover.

It gets the universal 2.0 Litre—called “T-GDI” here—that got its start, as we mentioned in our previous test, in the [Hyundai Sonata 2.0 T](#). Power is down a few ticks in the case of the Sportage, but I’m fairly certain drivers won’t be missing the 18 horsepower once they get to know the SX.

BLOG MENU

[Home](#) | [Feedback](#) | [RSS Feed](#)



SEARCH THE BLOG

RECENT POSTS

[2011 Kia Sportage SX Road Test](#)

[CAA SCO launching 'Watch for Bikes' campaign](#)

[Chevrolet Camaro Homecoming Weekend attracts thousands of enthusiasts](#)

[2011 Jeep Compass Road Test](#)

[How to fix a scratch on your car](#)

· ADVERTISEMENT ·

CARPAGES.CA ON YOUTUBE

[How to Spot a Curbsider](#)

The 260 hp on the SX is up 86 (!) ponies on the EX we drove and they can be felt right away. It comes with [Kia's](#) six-speed manual transmission (called Steptronic here), and I found myself slapping the leather-wrapped shifter sideways to engage it at more than one red light or entrance ramp just to feel the urge from that powerplant, and this was the best way to do it. It does require some shifting accuracy, however—if you eclipse the 6,500 RPM redline, even by a hair, it will automatically shift up for you. This can leave drivers a gear higher than expected, as they may sometimes nudge the shifter upwards a split-second after it had already shifted, as I did on occasion.

No matter; the thrust from the engine, coupled with the grippy AWD system was worth it every time.

The T-GDI features a twin-scroll turbocharger, meaning that it doesn't suffer from "dead-throttle" turbo lag issues that others turbo'd motors sometimes do. Better still, thanks to creative engine mapping, direct injection and new piston head design, this turbo motor—did I mention it makes 260 healthy horsies?—can run on regular fuel. That's right. The one all the way to the left when you pull up to the pump. The cheap one.



2.0 Litre T-GDI (Turbo-Gasoline Direct Injection) unit is a firecracker of a motor

And it works. Seamlessly.

Never once did I experience any lag whatsoever—even on those quick bursts from the stoplight—just instant thrust. It is, however, a bit of a double-edged sword; while I had no trouble in passing manoeuvres and the like during my time with the SX, you also miss out a little on that pressed-back-into-your-seatback urge that a sudden burst of turbo-aided acceleration gives you. Nor do you ever hear the turbocharger whistle on boil, nor is there any gauge indicating turbo boost pressure as there is in a turbocharged [VW Tiguan](#), for example (it runs on Premium fuel, by the way). So some aspects of the SX may not tweak your boy/girl racer nerve.

Not to worry, however, because many others will.



18-inch wheels mean business, as to the 235-section tires in which they're wrapped

Have a look at those wheels, for example; those are some beauty 18-inchers that fill the arches well, giving the SX a hunkered down look in the process. What I also noticed about the wheel and tire setup is the sheer *width* of the rubber; at 235 mm, the tires provide an ample contact patch and traction aplenty. And they give the overall package a look of sturdiness and purpose—couple the wide footprints with the fat twin oval-shaped exhaust tips and you have a little SUV that means business.

The suspension setup, meanwhile, is similar to that which is found on other Sportage models but there is are two important aspects of the SX that does change things a little.


First of all, being a quarter of a litre down on the EX, the T-GDI motor is actually lighter than its brethren. It sits fairly evenly over the front wheels, so, in effect, the steering rack and axles

Carpages.ca - 2011 Chrysler 200 Limited Road Test

CATEGORIES

- [Ask The Mechanic](#)
- [Automotive News](#)
- [Buying and Selling](#)
- [Car Care Tips](#)
- [Car Reviews & Road Tests](#)
- [Insurance](#)
- [Motorsport](#)

Find us on Facebook




Carpages.ca

[Like](#)

You like **Carpages** Page · Insi

You like this. 1,028 Page · Insi

[Confirm](#)



Carpages.ca

2011 Kia Sportage SX Turbo Road Test

www.carpages.ca

Recently, we had the opportunity to test the Kia Sportage crossover trimmed in the EX-Luxury package, which was top spec for the time. In that story, we mentioned that there was an even

Facebook social plugin

RECENT COMMENTS

- [Jaeny on Forthcoming Mini Cooper Coupé stretches its legs on the track](#)
- [Jeff Garvin on Tesla launches Model S reservations](#)

actually have less mass to move in the twisties, meaning more instant response, both going east-west and north-south.

Secondly, the spring rates of the SX have been adjusted as well—the rebound is set a little stiffer, meaning the chassis tends to regain its composure quicker. Again, help in the twisties.



Honeycomb grille surrounded by two tone black and chrome help define Kia's sportiest Sportage up front...



...while fat oval tail pipes and chunky tires do a similar job out back

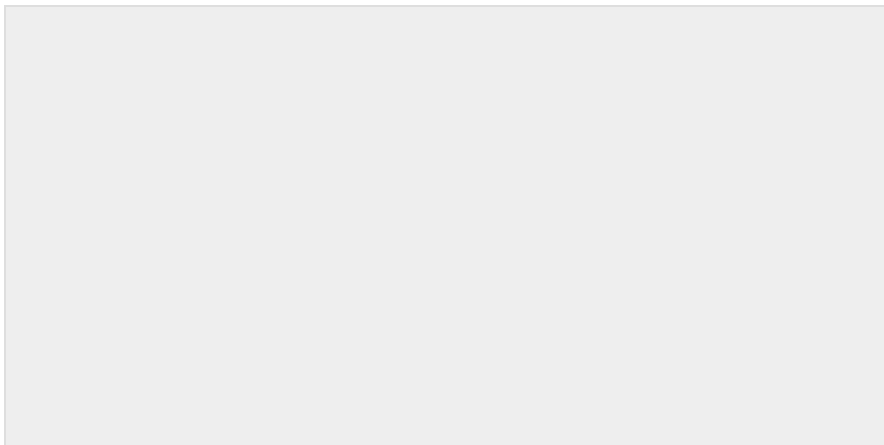
Of course, while drivers have less mass to pull through the bends, road imperfections have less mass to upset. This means that, coupled with the stiffer spring rates, the SX rides a little stiffer than its siblings.

Kia does offer dynamic dampers on the Sportage's big brother, the [Sorento](#), and I can't help but think they would come in handy in this application. In the Sorento, the dampers can sense both road conditions and driver inputs and adjust accordingly.

Steering is also very direct, which I found to be a bit of a blessing and curse. The setup is well weighted, so you have a good idea of what's happening underneath the tires, and turn-in is immediate—that's good. However, I did find it almost *too* direct for certain applications; like on a highway, for example. I often found myself having to correct the lively steering, lest I veer into the opposing lane or shoulder—not so good. There's hardly any "dead-zone" in the steering, whereby the wheel can be turned a few degrees without the chassis responding at all.

I would still say that when it comes to the bottom line, it definitely walks the walk handling-wise, and can talk the talk styling-wise as well.

Exterior details used to differentiate SX models from their non-so-endowed stablemates are subtle, but effective. Take two photos—on of an EX, say, and one from an SX—and proceed to play a game of the "spot the difference" variety that we all knew and loved (well, I did, anyway). A honeycomb grille surrounded with a thin band of chrome which is surrounded in turn by a black band are the most revealing aspects up front, while those serious tail pipes belie the SX's sporting intentions at the rear. Really, though, Kia design boss (and former [Audi](#) man) Peter Schreyer has done such a bang-up job with the Sportage design that there is no real need to "sportify" things any further. It even has a row of bright LEDs below the headlamps that "wink off" when the turn signal is on—just like an Audi!



[in Canada](#)

[Tim on Texting + Driving = Danger!](#)

[AK on 2011 Mitsubishi Lancer Sportback Road Test](#)

[subaruRH on 2011 Subaru Forester 2.5X Road Test](#)

ARCHIVES

[June 2011](#)

[May 2011](#)

[April 2011](#)

[March 2011](#)

[February 2011](#)

[January 2011](#)

[December 2010](#)

[November 2010](#)

[October 2010](#)

[September 2010](#)

TOOLS

[Fuel Economy Calculator](#)



SX gets bright "SuperVision" gauges; panoramic sunroof, dual-zone climate control and sharp Navi screen are shared with EX-Luxury w/Navi



Inside, the SX doesn't make any huge departures from the EX, but it does add Kia's "SuperVision" gauges—the digits on the tacho, speedo and gas gauges are given a much heartier glow in this application, without being distracting during night driving. Also helpful is the navigation screen that automatically changes to a black background at night so as not to compromise night vision.

Sure, we can talk about the soft and well side-bolstered sport seats (of which the driver's side is both heated *and* cooled) finished in nice, perforated leather, or the nice dash styling that subtly mimics the "Tiger Nose" theme on the rest of the car, the dual sunroofs, the chunky, leather wrapped steering wheel—yes, we can but really, this baby is all about the engine. It's a stonking unit, one that encourages drivers to roll the throttle to their heart's content without as much of a worry about the hit to their pocket book.

What fun.

2011 Kia Sportage Turbo SX Specifications

Price as tested: \$38,745

Body Type: 5-door, 5-passenger crossover

Powertrain Layout: Front engine/all-wheel drive

Engine: 2.0-litre inline-4 DOHC w/Turbo

Horsepower: 260 @ 6,000 rpm

Torque (lb-ft): 269 @ 1,850-3,000 rpm

Transmission: 6-speed auto w/Steptronic

Curb weight: 1,635 kg (3,605 lb)

Fuel consumption: City: 9.7L/100 km (29 MPG)

Highway: 7.2L/100 km (39 MPG)



You like this. · [Add Comment](#) · [Admin Page](#) · [Insights](#) · **Error**
You like thisBe the first of your friends to like this. · [Add Comment](#) · [Admin Page](#) · [Insights](#) · **Error**

Share:   

Leave a Comment

Name *

E-mail *

Website



PREVIOUS POST: [CAA SCO launching 'Watch for Bikes' campaign](#)

[About Us](#) [Contact Us](#) [Cities We Service](#) [Privacy Policy](#) [Advertising](#) [RSS Feeds](#)

Copyright ©2003–2011 Carpages.ca (div. of Autopath Technologies Inc.), All Rights Reserved.

Please read our [Disclaimer and Terms of Service](#).

[XML](#)