



CARS

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February 8, 2013

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The C300 4MATIC excels at anticipation.

For instance, it knows when bottoms are happy and automatically turns off seat warmers. That's not to sound flippant: such minutiae underscores the attention Mercedes-Benz's engineers paid to the truly important aspects of the ride.

Want a touch of slip? Switch off the anti-skid technology without taking your hands from the multi-function steering wheel or your eyes from the road. The 7G-Tronic Plus seven-speed automatic transmission is thrillingly different in sport mode. Milk the power with the leather-bound shifter that connects you to the 6-cylinder engine which emits 247hp.

Tasteful materials pamper the occupants. The doors and caches, from the armrest to the glove compartment, all close with a soft but satisfying thunk. Supple black leather upholstery is complemented by dark ash wood accents. Tinted windows keep things private while the glass sunroof admits loads of mood-enhancing daylight — both these features come with the base price.

Oddly, that price doesn't include a reverse camera or parking radar. Still, it parks fairly easily and negotiates tight spaces comfortably with a turning circle of just 10.84 meters. The signature Mercedes-Benz infotainment system in this model is not touchscreen, but is easy to master.

Eco mode saves energy by upshifting sooner. It's something you'll want to get used to because the C300 4MATIC's big engine likes a drink. (At the time of writing, gasoline in this province rose 5¢ in the past three days.) Government of Canada fuel consumption numbers report 10.5 L/100km in the city and 7.3 on the highway but I was regularly above those, even using cruise control for most of the country driving.

Nonetheless, once you've dropped off any passengers, you'll be tempted to play with the sport mode (Sport Package, \$1,200 extra, definitely worth it) on hills and in turns. The suspension is noticeable but still comfortable and the sport steering almost feels like another car. It's hard to say whether the all-wheel drive is necessary but you can't get the 6-cylinder engine without it unless you upgrade to the rear-wheel C 350. So enjoy. If you have too much fun, there's a first aid kit in the ample trunk – very civilized.

2013 MERCEDES-BENZ C300 4MATIC SEDAN


BASE PRICE: \$39,990


AS DRIVEN: \$45,790

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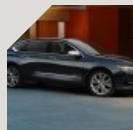
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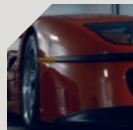
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PUBLISHED ON 2013-04-30 10:25