

# DOMINATION

INFINITI'S BIG, BIG SUV REVISITED

JOE SAGE



When Infiniti was ready to freshen their big SUV, the QX, they had to analyze a shifting market. We had driven the QX56 at launch (July/August 2010 issue), and they had addressed this then: 2009 had been a dismal benchmark for vehicle sales, yet Infiniti had posted a year-over-year increase of 46.2%. Figures for the QX were far more dramatic: first-quarter sales were up a whopping 216% year-over-year. The buying public had voted for the QX with their wallets, and dealers were reporting a very high interest level in the QX. Sure, we're all watching gas prices, and smaller vehicle segments are blossoming, but the big SUV still has legs.

The stated premise of the Infiniti QX56 is that it provides its occupants with the experience of a private executive jet. It's a nice benchmark, and whereas we'd take the jet, we're confident its pilot would feel very satisfied deplaning and getting back in the QX.

We had already pushed the vehicle toward—if not quite to—its limits at the launch drive in Kentucky

(which included near-tornadic weather on winding riverside roads and through horse country hills). Safety features are extensive, including some extremely high-tech specialties—for example, a tire monitoring system that provides an audible beep when you're down by the wheel trying to re-achieve perfection, or a brake system that is supposed to stop you before you hit someone, a system we were interested in but didn't take to its limits. Creature comforts are tops, as is fit and finish. The vehicle looks big on the road—and it is—yet, inside it feels right-sized, even trim and compact, especially in its side-to-side dimensions. Comfort reigns supreme.

Technology extends to Infiniti's All-Mode 4WD® and optional hydraulic body motion control, though we felt a surprisingly light front end at times, at lower speeds.

Yes, the QX's technology is rampant. Our logbook notes, which can tend toward the Andy Rooney side, frequently mentioned instances of tech features that weren't fully intuitive, and we visited the manual many

more times than typical. In such cases, though, we are aware that an owner with a commitment over time will master it all, and we would anticipate plenty of joy in the features. All with seven passengers and their gear along for the ride, if need be.

### OUR TEST INFINITI QX56

ENGINE .....5.6L DOHC 32-valve V8: 400hp, 413 lb-ft  
TRANSMISSION .....7-speed automatic  
DRIVE.....All-Mode 4WD®

SAFETY/SECURITY: Airbags galore, rollover sensor, advanced seatbelts, active head restraints, child seat fittings and rear door locks, 4-wheel ABS, brake assist, brake distribution, dynamic and traction control, individual tire pressure monitoring and inflation indicator, zone body construction, vehicle security system and more.

COMFORT/CONVENIENCE: Extensive seat features, individual smart keys, entry/exit assist, huge console, burl trim, tricked out steering wheel, tricked out audio with voice recognition, front/rear monitors and sonar, tri-zone climate, sequential welcome lighting and more.

EXTERIOR: HID xenon headlights, rain-sensing wipers, deicer, power folding mirrors, running boards, roof rails, 20-inch wheels, power liftgate, class IV towing, more.

Base price.....\$ 59,800

Roof rail crossbars .....320

THEATER PACKAGE: Two 7-inch displays, wireless headphones/remote, aux A/V input, 120V outlet .....2,450

TECHNOLOGY PACKAGE: Intelligent cruise, blind spot and lane departure warning, distance control, brake assist, forward collision warning, front pre-crash seatbelts, adaptive front lighting, auto-leveling headlights..2,850

DELUXE TOURING PACKAGE: 22-inch wheels, body motion control, heated/cooled front seats, remote-tilt heated 2nd-row seats, upgraded leather, burl, climate control, 2nd-row footwell lights, headlight washers.....5,800  
Illuminated kick plates.....390  
Destination charge.....950

TOTAL.....\$ 72,560

The Infiniti QX56 delivers what it promises: a spacious, thoroughly modern, highly featured personal yet 7-passenger vehicle with extremely high road capability. Its V8 is a top performer, and the engine's rumble and roar will delight. Though the QX56 provides a posh experience overall, our favorite logbook note may have been: "Hoo wee! This sucka has some power!" ■

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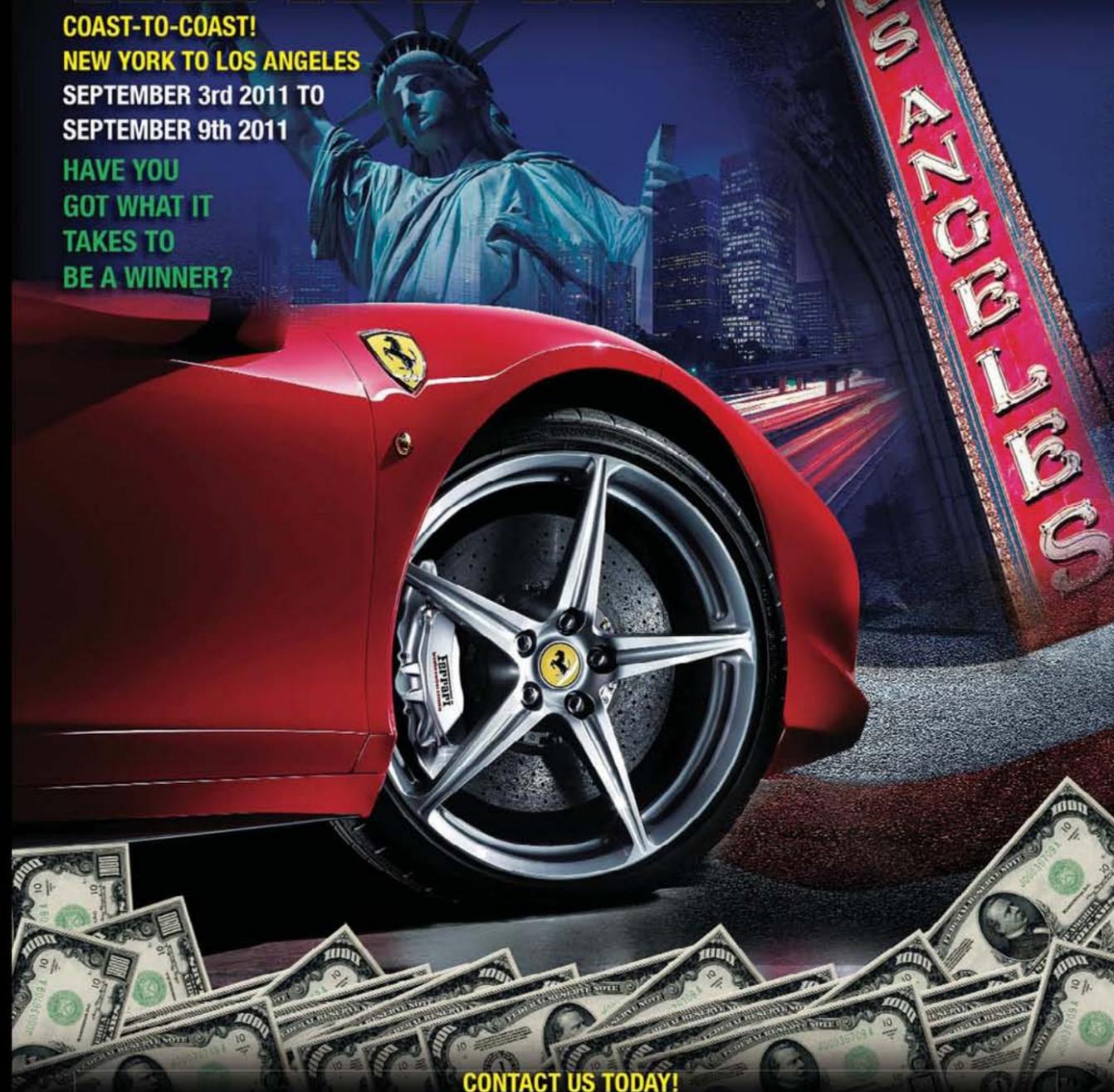
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