

# Q ONFUSION?

## INFINITI'S NEW NAMING SCHEME ALMOST CONCEALS AN ALL-NEW MODEL

**W**e remind ourselves that this is not the G37 sedan. It's the all-new Q50. You have probably noticed by now that Infiniti has renamed its entire lineup. The Q50 seems almost G-sized, but is in fact a bit smaller and sleeker. (G models are now the Q60, but the G Sedan exits the scene.)

All Infiniti cars are now Q-numeric, and all the SUVs and crossovers are QX-numeric. The numeric portion of the equation no longer has anything to do with engine displacement, nor does it have anything to do with the prior models (for example, the big QX56 is now a QX80).

So meet the Q50. More properly, the Q50S, in this case, as this builds upon the top Q50 (sans S), a Premium model with 14-speaker audio and HomeLink, then adds 19-inch alloy wheels and sport brakes, to earn the S designation.

To be even more precise and complete, this is the Q50S 3.7 (after all this, the name is now not complete until the engine displacement sneaks back in at the end).

Nissan—premium-brand Infiniti's mainstream sister and parent brand—has seen significant market share gains recently. Infiniti is seeking the same, as they embark upon a complete restyling of the lineup over the next year or two. The name

game is intended to prepare us for this, and this car is the first to hit the pavement.

Our time in the Q50S gave us a mixed impression. In driving, we had times we were pleased with immediate power from the 328-hp V6, while other times (several other times), we noted more of a lag-and-lunge at critical times. We noted a high level of distraction when using the touchscreen interface, with basic tasks requiring too many levels of interaction. And the locks drove us nuts, at least when we had a passenger.

The Q50 is available in four trim levels—a base 3.7, an AWD version, a Premium and a Premium AWD—ranging from \$37,150 to \$41,800 base. Two Q50S models build upon the Premium and offer RWD and AWD models, at \$43,650 and \$45,450 base (our sample showed a slightly lower base price). There is also a 3.5-liter V6 hybrid lineup, in Premium, AWD Premium, S and S AWD trims. The hybrids range from \$44,400 to \$48,600 base.

A base Q50 3.7 rates 30 MPG highway, dropping only one point with the sport setup in our test sample. Hybrids are rated as high as 36 MPG, though an S AWD hits just 31 MPG, a negligible gain for its \$3150 price difference. ■

BY JOE SAGE



*The Infiniti Q50 is all new, from the name to the car itself. Yet it remains very familiar.*

### SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE.....	3.7-liter DOHC 24-valve V6
TRANSMISSION .....	7-speed automatic with manual mode with downshift rev match
DRIVETRAIN .....	rear-wheel drive
POWER.....	328 hp / 269 lb-ft torque
MPG.....	20/29/23 (city/hwy/comb)
SUSPENSION.....	sport-tuned independent F/R
TIRES.....	summer performance run-flats
WHEELS.....	19-inch alloy
<b>INCLUDED:</b>	One-touch power slide tinted glass moonroof, sport front fascia, LED auto headlights, LED fog lights, turn lamps and brake lights, leather appointments, aluminum interior trim, 8-way power/heated front seats, driver lumbar and torso power adjust, manual thigh extension, dual zone climate, welcome lighting door handles, keyless entry and start, rear camera, dual display, InTouch apps, InTuition memory for climate-audio-driving prefs per key, Bose 14-speaker premium audio, voice recognition audio-Bluetooth-vehicle info.

<b>BASE PRICE.....</b>	<b>\$43,200</b>
<b>NAVIGATION PACKAGE:</b> InTouch voice nav, SiriusXM Traffic, Infiniti Connection .....	1400
<b>SPARE TIRE PACKAGE:</b> Temporary spare and jack kit.....	200
<b>DESTINATION CHARGE:</b> .....	905
<b>TOTAL .....</b>	<b>\$45,705</b>



### LOGBOOK NOTES

The Bridgestone Potenza run-flat tires are very good, without the characteristics that have plagued so many so far. Nonetheless, we're happy to have that extra-cost spare, as long as we can afford its trunk space.

Brown is big this year; however—nothing against UPS—we'd chose a different color.

We would favor the car's RWD layout, yet it wanders at the slightest distraction—dangerous given the complex screen interface.

There is a remarkably dominant fuel economy display: the most prominent screen is half nav and half fuel economy. Given that we were achieving 16.4 MPG, we don't think it's worth this much prominent real estate.