

The Kia fit for a king

By Joe Sage

This is a full-size, rear-drive, premium V8 sedan that is lacking nothing, other than perhaps brand envy enjoyed by those who came before. It lacks the world's most lyrical nameplate, surprising considering the catchy names in the rest of the Kia lineup.

The Kia K900 delivers more than everything you hope a flagship will, and at a price the previously-enthroned can't, or won't.

Sixty grand is not bargain basement territory, but for that price, this car is handsomely and capably equipped. Our car's one six-grand package (sidebar) takes the car even higher, though with features from full Nappa leather to the Lexicon 900-watt sound system standard, you could be happy at \$59,500. To fully grasp the deal, go ahead and option up the competitors to this level. It's easy to add 30 or 40 grand to those (and hard to find a stripper on the lot, even if you wanted one).

The K900 weighs over two tons, but feels as nimble as it does solid. Handling is direct, with good road feel—a driver's car with comfortable luxury. The chassis is very rigid,

with 75 percent high- and ultra-high-strength steel. NVH was tackled via more than 200 sound origination points, variously coated, covered or freed from friction, and there is extensive insulation and noise-reduction, including laminated windows, plus an underbody airflow system.

The hydraulic component delivers well above typical electric power steering. Shift points on its 8-speed automatic—designed and developed in-house—are well-spaced, with a straight power curve you can enjoy or ignore, depending upon your driving purpose and style.

Kia built up to this car, with the front-drive Cadenza sedan, which we called a flagship a year earlier. And a quantum leap in quality, value and content in the Optima, prior to that, had also set the stage. With the K900, Kia in one bold stroke has become a luxury carmaker, expanding the brand from a value equation to upper niche lust. ■

K900: Kia's highly-appointed rear-drive flagship powerhouse.



Kia K900 brand ambassador LeBron James

SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE.....	5.0L direct injection V8
POWER/TORQUE	420 hp / 376 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION	8-speed automatic
DRIVETRAIN	RWD
STEERING	electro-hydraulic
SUSPENSION.....	multi-link front/rear
BRAKES	4-wheel disc, ABS
WHEELS	19x9.0
TIRES	245/45R19 front / 275/40R19 rear
WEIGHT	4555 lb
MPG	15/23 (city/hwy)

INCLUDED: Nappa leather seats/trim, wood accents, seats vented front heated front/rear, 12-way power driver's seat w lumbar/memory, keyless start/entry, illuminated door plates, power tilt/telescope heated wheel w leather/wood, leather shifter, dash, console, door panels, power close trunk, power rear sunshade, manual side sunshades, rear seat ski passthrough, panoramic sunroof w power shade, adaptive LED heads, markers, fogs, power fold auto-dim mirrors, hydrophobic front windows, rain sense wipers, chrome exhaust tips, LED taillamps, shift-by-wire, Lexicon Logic 7 900-watt 17-speaker surround audio, UVO eServices, nav w 9.2" display, 3 months SiriusXM, 3-zone climate, advanced airbags w seat side and side curtain, ABS, traction, ESC and VSM, blind spot, rear cross traffic, lane departure, front/rear cameras, front/rear parking sensors/guide system.

WARRANTY:

10-year/100,000-mile limited powertrain
5-year/60,000-mile limited basic warranty
5-year/60,000-mile roadside assistance

BASE PRICE.....\$59,500

VIP PACKAGE: soft-close power doors, driver's seat cushion extend, front power headrests, power recline rear seats, vented rear seats, lateral adjust rear headrests, rear seat lumbar, 12.3" LCD display, heads-up display, surround view, smart cruise, active vehicle safety mgmt.....6000

FREIGHT AND HANDLING:.....900

TOTAL**\$66,400**

