

Value package by Joe Sage

Tiguan S is the base model in Volkswagen's compact SUV lineup, at \$24,890—a drop of \$1400 from 2015. Prices climb from there: another four grand for R-Line, six and a half grand for SE, nine and a half grand for SEL, a 46 percent climb. Any trim level is available with 4Motion all-wheel drive for \$1975. We often receive top trim models for review, and either can skew an impression, but not so much in this case. The 200-hp 2-liter turbo is uniform across the lineup, as is the suspension. It's a straightforward stairstep, with appropriate value found across the scale.

We are sometimes drawn to simpler vehicles, and this largely delivers that. The base model does have keyless entry, pushbutton start and a rear camera. Seats are manual (except for a power back tilt for the driver), and climate control is manual (not all bad, at least compared to some other with e.g. fan speed buried in a six-step screen interface). It's almost as though VW applied extra effort to simplifying the platform-sharing Audi Q5 to this level—but with the Q5 starting above \$40 grand, that would provide plenty of headroom.

Volkswagen promotes Tiguan as sporty (vs the

larger Touareg as premium). Tiguan looks stocky (and a bit stodgy), but at about 3400 pounds was more responsive than expected, ready to pounce upon and devour a lane-changing opportunity.

Styling is nine years old, and the base 16-inch wheels only emphasize that. Bigger wheels and tires are not a build option, though—19-inchers mean buying a top-trim SEL for \$36,420. But we're pretty sure a visit to the aftermarket for this would make all the difference when it comes time to park, walk away, look back and smile.

This is a swan song for the gen-one. A gen-two 2017 Tiguan was revealed at Frankfurt last fall, then shown in Detroit as the GTE Active Concept (we prefer the sketch at right, sexier than the built vehicle largely because that, too, had wheels too small for the times). The upcoming Tiguan will be 2.4 inches longer, an inch wider and an inch less high. Even with this year's price drop, a new model looming might help you negotiate even more value. ■

SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE.....	2.0L TSI 16v DI 4-cyl turbo
DRIVETRAIN.....	FWD
HP/TORQUE.....	200 hp / 207 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION.....	6-speed automatic
SEATING CAPACITY.....	5-passenger
WHEELS.....	16-inch alloy
TURNING CIRCLE.....	39.0 ft
CARGO CAPACITY.....	23.8 / 56.1 cu ft
WEIGHT.....	3404 lb
FUEL REQ / CAPACITY.....	Premium unleaded / 16.9 gal
MPG.....	21/26/23 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE	\$24,890
INCLUDED: Metallic paint, leatherette interior, ABS, ESC, crash response, auto headlights, heated folding power mirrors, rain-sensing wipers w heated nozzles, black roof rails, tilt/tele multifunction wheel, leather-wrapped wheel and shift knob, manual climate control, manual seats w power driver's recline, electric parking brake, rear camera, keyless entry and start, 5" touchscreen AM-FM-CD, 8-sprk audio, Bluetooth.....	incl
DESTINATION CHARGE:	865
TOTAL	\$25,755

