

Behavioral science by Joe Sage

For those who have decided an SUV serves their needs, there are the proverbial million choices. For those who prefer a minivan (with sliding doors often the key differentiator), there are the same few there have been for years. Among those, the Chrysler Pacifica stands out, the newest iteration of the vehicle that started and defined the revolution 35 years ago. Within the Pacifica lineup, the Pacifica Hybrid stands out, for its smooth, well-developed powertrain and handling, remarkable fuel economy, and even the ability to drive in fully electric mode within certain parameters.

Chrysler made an interesting decision with the Pacifica Hybrid. It's actually a plug-in hybrid—a vehicle type that receives universal praise but challenges a bit with explanation—so they kept the name simple, just Pacifica Hybrid. This avoids confusion for more people than not, and they can then just mention the plug-in part as another of its neat tricks. This has clearly worked well, as sales have been strong since day one, as has the vehicle's talent for winning utility and family vehicle awards.

The combined powertrain enables you to always plug it in and drive more than 30 miles in pure EV mode, enough for some people's complete needs; or to drive with a full charge plus a tank of

gas for a range of more than 500 miles; or to never plug it in and just drive with the efficiency of a non-plug-in hybrid. The varied system gets one fuel mileage rating from the EPA: 82 MPGe, which itself underscores the benefits of this approach.

Two motors supplement the gasoline engine's power, for an effective 360 hp total, which is performance car territory, no surprise from the manufacturer that overall also delivers Chargers, Challengers, Trackhawks and other potent machines.

An eFlite Si-EVT (single input electrically variable transmission) combines a power inverter module with two electric motors—one a primary drive motor for the front wheels, while the other provides some drive assist and charges the batteries.

There are just two things that could push you to the all-gasoline Pacifica—its option of 8-passenger seating and its 3600-lb tow capacity (Pacifica Hybrid is 7-passenger-only and does not tow).

The Pacifica family is so well executed, it went virtually unchanged for 2019. Available as always are the long-hosed Stow 'n Vac built-in vacuum, Stow 'n Go seating and storage (with upgrades this year); and hands-free sliders and liftgate that work with the kick of a foot. The S Appearance Package on our top-trim Limited sample is new, as is an available 35th Anniversary package (finishes, wheels, 13-speaker Alpine audio for the Hybrid, and more), celebrating Chrysler's minivan revolution of 1984, a success story that remains unbroken. Act fast if you want that 35th Anniversary package, as 2020 models will be rolling in soon. Act fast, anyway—these are very popular. ■

SPECIFICATIONS

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| STRUCTURE | steel unibody w hinged front doors, aluminum-skinned sliding side doors, magnesium-structured aluminum-skinned rear liftgate w gas props |
| SEATING CAPACITY | seven (2/2/3) |
| ENGINE | 3.6L Pentastar V6 eHybrid (Atkinson cycle) |
| TOTAL SYSTEM POWER | est 360 hp |
| DRIVETRAIN | transverse front engine, FWD |
| TRANSMISSION | eFlite electrically variable |
| MOTOR A | est 84 hp |
| MOTOR B | est 114 hp |
| BATTERY PACK | hi-voltage 96-cell Li-Ion, 16kWh, 360v |
| SUSPENSION | F: indep MacPherson strut, coils over gas shocks, stblzr bar w hydroformed steel perimeter cable; R: indep twist-blade w coils, twin-tube shocks w integrated rebound springs |
| STEERING | electric rack & pinion |
| BRAKES | 4-whl pwr-assist antilock disc regen, vacuum assist; F: 13.0x1.1 vented, single-piston floating caliper; R: 13.0x0.47 solid, single-piston floating caliper |
| WHEELS / TIRES | 18x7.5 cast alum / 125/65R17 AS |
| LENGTH / WHEELBASE | 203.8 / 121.6 in |
| TURNING CIRCLE | 39.7 ft |
| GROUND CLEARANCE | 5.1 in |
| HEADROOM (F/2/3) | 40.1 / 39.6 / 38.7 in |
| LEGROOM (F/2/3) | 41.1 (seat travel 8.7) / 39.0 / 36.5 in |
| CARGO CAPACITY | 32.3 / 87.5 / 140.5 cu.ft |
| WEIGHT | 4987 lb |
| FUEL / CAPACITY | unl reg 87, or E0 to E15 / 16.5 gal |
| MPG (MPGe) | 84 (comb city/hwy cycle) |
| BASE PRICE | \$45,545 |
| INCL: | 760w 20-spr Harman Kardon audio, Uconnect theater w wireless streaming, Blue-ray/DVD player, seatback video screens, dual HDMI ports, USB video port, 115v outlet, 3-channel video remote, 3-channel wireless headphones, hands-free power sliding side doors, hands-free power liftgate, heated-vented front seats, heated leather wheel, easy clean floor mats and more. |
| S APPEARANCE PKG: | Nappa leather bucket seats w "S" logo, 18x7.5 black noise painted wheels, black badging, black window moldings, black mirrors, black Stow 'n Place roof rack, gloss black grille surround, "S" badge795 |
| ADVANCED SAFETYTEC GROUP: | 360° surround view cameras, full-speed forward collision warning plus, adaptive cruise w stop&go, lane depart warn plus, parallel & perpendicular park assist, ParkSense front-rear w stop, adv brake assist, rain-sense wipers, auto high beam995 |
| TRI-PANE PANORAMIC SUNROOF | 1795 |
| DESTINATION CHARGE | 1495 |
| TOTAL | \$50,625 |

