

Easily compared. Or is it?

BY JOE SAGE

The 2022 Genesis G70 arrived here just two weeks after the GV70 crossover, a vehicle winning many accolades and which we liked so well, we put on our cover—one point of comparison now for the G70.

With the presence of a \$70,000 European or Japanese premium brand, this car has solid horsepower, tuned suspension, Brembo brakes and a performance-oriented rear- or all-wheel-drive platform, yet costs from the upper \$30s to the lower-to-mid \$50s—another point of comparison.

Genesis has been a bit slow to gain traction and build out its infrastructure as an independent brand since spinning off Hyundai six years ago. They seem to be following the Korean automakers' handbook of 15 to 20 years ago, whereby tremendous value is

affirmed and promoted via favorable pricing. Sales follow, and the brand builds.

Ours has the upper of two engines, a 365-hp 3.3-liter twin-turbo V6, base price \$42,100. Trim levels above that are achieved as option packages, and ours has both—Sport Advanced and Sport Prestige (see sidebar)—making this the top model (bar a special Launch Edition), but without AWD.

Genesis is a lower volume brand (increasing from 7,000 units in 2016 to 40,000 in 2021, thanks to a growing crossover lineup). Evolution is thus gradual, but brand identity has been solidifying around what they call an Athletic Elegance design aesthetic—strong, distinctive and readily noticeable by the newer V-bottomed grille, Quad Lamps front and rear, and a tip-to-tail Two Lines suggestion as front and rear lamps echo each other.

Our sample joins a trend of subtly color-shifting

paints. One of three whites available for the G70, this one is called Siberian Ice, vivid white turning a shadowy pale blue in certain conditions or depending upon what it's parked next to.

As is common, the key to our enjoying the vehicle was turning off a lot of its special features—the auto-sliding seat and its little song, and as many of the overly argumentative driver assist features as practical and/or safe. Some settings were in unusual places—for example, the seat override was in the binnacle with service intervals—and some were persistent even after our mission.

Once the obstructions were defeated, the drive was great. These were our wheels for NASCAR weekend—long freeway runs, ramp acceleration, stop-and-go surface streets and more. The twin-turbo V6 is quick and powerful. We started with a sport setting, which has great engine acoustics, and stuck with it. The eight-speed transmission is smooth, well-spaced and generally transparent.

Steering was accurate, but did fight us for auto-

control between the lines even after we thought we had turned its opinion off. Brakes were strong and smooth, though we noted an unusual feel, as though there may be a regenerative feature not spoken of, with a drag at slower speeds. Though we didn't use it, eco mode has a coasting mode, decoupling engine and transmission for better fuel economy (something we were trained as teens to never do, though this kicks back in if needed).

The interior was comfortable and spacious for our hour-long runs, from a driver's position (specs confirm generous front legroom, less so in the rear, though headroom is low-slung for ingress-egress).

The interior is nicely laid out and cleanly presented in the continuum of premium feel, though compared with those European or Japanese lines, seems in some ways closer to a \$35,000 mainstream brand than a \$70k luxury cousin. Features are plentiful, but surfaces and finishes are generally a lot plainer than we might expect.

This suggested to us one more point of comparison: its own cousins at Hyundai, where Sonata is

the closest model. The Genesis G70 offers more powerful drivetrains and rear- or all-wheel drive versus Hyundai's front-drivers. G70 prices start just above where Sonata leaves off. Together, they form their own smooth continuum, with Genesis in the upper range largely due to its powertrain.

We generally avoid looking at others' reviews, but with a little digging, we found we were not the only ones to contemplate that last point. The newest Hyundai has received high praise for styling, technology, finishes and materials, notably on the interior, remarkable partly due to its lower pricing and expectations, but viewed objectively. Genesis surely aims to be the more prestigious name, and the vehicles are rarer on the road. But while they are firmly knocking on the doors of the premium Europeans and Japanese, Hyundai may be knocking firmly on theirs. It's one more intriguing comparative we hadn't been expecting, but in the end, we could not ignore. ■



SPECIFICATIONS

ASSEMBLY	.....Ulsan, South Korea
CONTENT	.....5% US/Canada, 85% S Korea
ENGINE/TRANSMISSION	.....S Korea
ENGINE	.....3.3L single-scroll twin-turbo V6, mid-position lock CVT, dual-stage variable oil pump, integrated exhaust manifold head
HP/TORQUE	.....365 hp / 376 lb-ft
COMPRESSION RATIO	.....na
DRIVETRAIN	.....RWD (AWD avail)
TRANSMISSION	.....8-spd shift-by-wire auto
SUSPENSION	.....F: MacPherson strut; R: multi-link
STEERING	.....rack-mounted motor-driven pwr
BRAKES	.....Brembo braking system
WHEELS	.....19" sport alloy
TIRES	.....F: P225/40 ZR19 / R: P255/35 ZR19
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	.....184.45 / 111.61 in
GROUND CLEARANCE	.....na
TURNING CIRCLE	.....na
HEADROOM (F/R)	.....(with snrf) 38.5 / 36.9 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	.....42.64 / 34.8 in
CARGO CAPACITY	.....na
WEIGHT	.....na
FUEL / CAPACITY	.....prem / 15.85 gal
MPG	.....18/27/21 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE	.....\$42,100
SPORT ADVANCED PKG:	19" sport alloy wheels, alum trim w sport pattern, vented front seats, wide sunroof, Lexicon 15-sprk premium audio, wireless device charging (eliminates one front USB port), dark chrome grille & window trim, variable exhaust valves, power driver seat bolster & extension, parking distance warning fwd & rev, Genesis digital key.....4300
SPORT PRESTIGE PKG:	heads-up display, surround view & blind-spot view monitors, Nappa leather, microfiber suede headliner, headed steering wheel, Brembo brakes, limited-slip diff, electronically controlled suspension.....4000
DESTINATION CHARGE	.....1045
TOTAL	.....\$52,445

2022 GENESIS G70 LINEUP

	RWD	AWD
2.0T : inline-4 turbo GDI, 252 hp, 260 lb-ft		
Standard	\$37,525	\$39,625
Prestige	41,525	43,625
3.3T : twin-turbo V6, 365 hp, 376 lb-ft		
Standard	\$42,100	\$44,200
Sport Advanced	46,400	48,500
Sport Prestige	50,400	52,400
Launch Edition	52,500	54,500

2022 HYUNDAI SONATA LINEUP

2.5L : inline-4 GDI, 191 hp, 181 lb-ft.....FWD	
SE	\$24,150
SEL	25,950
1.6T : inline-4 turbo GDI, 180 hp, 195 lb-ft.....FWD	
SEL Plus	\$31,150
Limited	34,100
2.5T : inline-4 turbo GDI, 290 hp, 311 lb-ft.....FWD	
N Line	33,450
N Line Night Edition	34,750