

# Grand RX?

Really its own animal BY JOE SAGE

While Lexus buyers are generally their own breed, not upscale Toyota buyers, the two brands have much commonality in terms of quality, reliability and powertrain innovation. Even just for general orientation, it's hard not to look at what the equivalents are between the two. This has become equal parts easier and more complicated, as Lexus, which used to have fewer SUVs, has been catching up—they now have seven, just about as complex.

This one's easy. Lexus TX arrives in the same timeframe as Toyota Grand Highlander (see our previous issue). They are largely the same size and shape, and their sibling relationship is quite clear.

The relationship between the (non-Grand) Highlander and its Lexus cousin, the RX, is not at all as

apparent, with Highlander a classic two-box SUV and Lexus RX is a curvaceous, streamlined affair.

We note this because many had expected the Grand Highlander to look just like a Highlander, but longer. But it is really quite different, just sharing the core model name. The matrix of these four vehicles is ripe for comparison, but the Lexus TX distinguishes itself clearly from RX without even trying.

TX brings the Lexus lineup to three luxury SUVs offering three rows (along with GX and LX).

The name itself may just be happenstance, or it may be intentional. It's been 10 years since Toyota-Lexus announced a move from California to Texas and seven since their new Plano TX headquarters opened. But it took until now to add a TX model to their GX, LX, RX, NX and UX lineup. Coincidence?

The TX lineup includes three powertrains (including potent F SPORT hybrids), AWD on all with

an option of FWD on some, for nine versions total, from the mid-\$50s to upper \$70s. Ours is the 350, in top Luxury trim and with AWD, thus the top model of the only non-hybrid set. A TX 500h F SPORT Performance and a TX 500h+ offer hybrid and PHEV powertrains, respectively (see lower sidebar).

Our week with the TX was really a shared week, part TX and part UX (also in this issue). But we had time for a great drive up the Beeline Highway. It handled quite well on this curvy and hilly run at highway speeds, though we wanted its handling more precise for aggressive driving, so popped it into sport (or more accurately, into custom, which was already set for sport in each category). This also tamed notably frequent shifts we'd experienced in normal. Equally useful was manumatic, though it can take time to make friends with the electronic shifter, which has layers of interface that

could benefit from more transparency.

In town, we commended the TX 350's acceleration and handling. Though the 350 is not tops of the lineup by spec, it's quick, smooth and leader of the pack through corners and on freeway ramps.

We would like to study its brakes further. When applied for slowing from highway speeds to near-zero speed for turnoffs, they did do the job, but felt as though they might not. It's a vacuum system, rare these days, and maybe takes getting used to again. The 350 does have smaller front discs than the 500h or 500h+, the latter also adding high-performance, regulated pressure-on-demand.

Note that the 500h and 500h+ also add Dynamic Rear Steering (more complexity, and the turning circles are similar, but handling is its focus.)

The interior is generous—long enough and full of enough headrests, though, that we tried its TV

camera inside rear mirror. We don't favor these, as they require constant refocusing between distance and near vision (a real mirror is still distance viewing). But it was useful here—and the switch was easier than average to isolate on the fly, so we did change back and forth frequently.

We drove the TX many miles before realizing we had never readjusted the seat, neither at delivery nor since, unusual for us in both cases. They are firm, comfortable and accommodating.

Looking at the full TX lineup gives the best perspective. Handsome and accommodating in any trim or powertrain, the TX 350 mission starts with delivering the luxury model's essence for as little as mid-\$50s, and other TX 350 builds are natural spinoffs or upticks from there. Although we've yet to drive the 500h or 500h+, we suspect we might be considering that other \$10 or 15 grand. ■



## SPECIFICATIONS

ASSEMBLY	Princeton, Indiana
ENGINE	2.4L turbo-4
HP/TORQUE	275 hp / 317 lb-ft
COMPRESSION RATIO	11.0:1
TRANSMISSION	8-spd direct automatic
DRIVETRAIN	AWD
0-TO-60 / TOP SPEED	7.8 sec / 112 mph
SUSPENSION	F: MacPherson strut; R: multi-link
STEERING	elec power rack & pinion
BRAKES F	13.3 vented, floating single-piston
BRAKES R	13.3 vented, floating single-piston
WHEELS	20-in machined-fin alloys (avail 22)
TIRES	255/55 R20 SL
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	203.15 / 116.14 in
HEADROOM (F/2/3)	40.02 / 38.57 / 37.2 in
LEGROOM (F/2/3)	41.68 / 39.5 / 33.5 in
GROUND CLEARANCE	(AWD) 7.87 in
APPROACH / DEPARTURE	17.1 / 22.3°
TURNING CIRCLE	38.0 ft
CARGO CAPACITY	20.2 / 57.4 / 97.0 cu.ft
TOW CAPACITY	5000 lb
WEIGHT	4730 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY	premium / 17.83 gal
MPG	20/26/23 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE	\$61,200
CONVENIENCE PKG: front cross traffic alert, traffic jam assist (subscrip/3-yr trial), digital key (subscrip/3-yr trial)	895
COLD AREA PKG: wiper de-icer	100
AUDIO: Mark Levinson surround	1160
2ND ROW heated/vented captain's chairs	680
TECHNOLOGY PKG: 12.3-in display, pano view monitor, advanced park, digital rear mirror, heads-up display	2150
WHEEL LOCKS	85
LOGO SIDE PUDDLE LAMPS	175
CARGO MAP / CARPETED	150
DOOR EDGE GUARDS	155
DESTINATION CHARGE	1350

**TOTAL \$68,100**  
Prices have increased; see below.

## 2024 LEXUS TX LINEUP

<b>TX 350</b>	FWD	AWD
2.4L Turbo / 8-spd AT	0-60: 8.0 sec	7.8 sec
MPG (city/hwy/comb)	21/27/23	20/26/23
(base)	\$55,050	\$56,650
Premium/+	58,450	60,050
Luxury	59,600	62,350
<b>TX 500h F Sport Performance</b>	AWD	
2.4L Turbo Hybrid / 6-spd AT	0-60: 6.1 sec	
MPG (city/hwy/comb)	27/28/27	
Premium	\$69,350	
Luxury	72,650	
<b>TX 500h+</b>	AWD	
3.5L V6 Plug-in Hybrid / CVT	0-60: 5.9 sec	
MPG (city/hwy/comb)	29/28/29	
EV range	33 miles	
Luxury	\$78,050	