

Easy choice

Clear lineup, clear options BY JOE SAGE

While Malibu is the only remaining “car” in the Chevrolet lineup (Corvette has its own category of one), their SUVs and crossovers are many—fully nine, counting two EVs. Equinox, driven here, is bigger than Trax and Trailblazer, smaller than Blazer and Traverse. Tahoe and Suburban remain of course the biggest of all, but setting those aside plants Equinox firmly in the center of the scale, despite its nominal status as a compact.

Through both steady evolution and more abrupt changes in the lineup—names disappearing, reappearing or transferring to a different type of vehicle—Equinox has stayed true to its concept, mission and image. Born in model year 2005, Equinox entered its third generation in 2018 (for which we attended a launch drive in the Carolinas—and on the vernal equinox, as fate would have it).

Here, we have its fourth generation for 2025.

The solar equinox, vernal or autumnal, is a signal of great change, a bookmark between the seasons. Chevy’s new gen-four Equinox is somewhat

the same—a totally new build based on a new platform adaptation. We might have thought this would be shared with its EV variant (the two EV crossovers are badged as Equinox and Blazer), but they are quite different, including their platforms.

While Chevy’s overall stairstep of SUVs is so diverse, variables within just the Equinox model are quite simple—an approach that makes shopping much easier. Equinox has six versions, but it can be seen as simply as two—the most affordable LT, starting in the \$20s, or a top trim for only \$4,400 more. “Two” becomes six [a] because in each case, there is a choice of FWD or AWD (\$2,000 more on any), and [b] because top price actually brings a choice between two top trims—either the RS or ACTIV, either at the same price, making the choice simply about taste and purpose. RS is more urban, ACTIV more outdoorsy, each one mostly defined by styling details, plus with ACTIV equipped with dirt-purposeful 17-inch wheels and all-terrain tires.

The front-drive-vs-AWD decision goes beyond the obvious, with the all-wheel-driver sporting a conventional automatic versus the FWD’s CVT, also with a much lower final drive ratio, a higher

tow capacity and—surprisingly, given typical additional AWD hardware—a bigger fuel tank.

We would tend to favor AWD in general, all the moreso with those variables. Plus we experienced a possible bonus reason—though a great handler and potent performer overall, we noted occasional classic front-drive-based torque steer when it mattered most, such as diving into a multi-lane boulevard from a side entry, having to precisely hit a lane while applying a sudden burst of speed. We figured sport mode might conquer that (as is often the case in many), but modes only include normal, snow-ice, or (on ACTIV only) off-road. We did find success, however, with its AWD lock-in button.

The lightweight Equinox feels considerably more powerful than its numbers, and the vehicle itself sits at a value point in the Chevy SUV lineup. We were reminded of a real estate maxim, that you achieve the best value by buying a less expensive home in a more expensive neighborhood. Among their SUVs overall, this achieves that. And then within the Equinox lineup itself, you could say this top trim achieves its value by the opposite approach. This all seems to add up to a win-win. ■

2025 CHEVROLET EQUINOX LINEUP

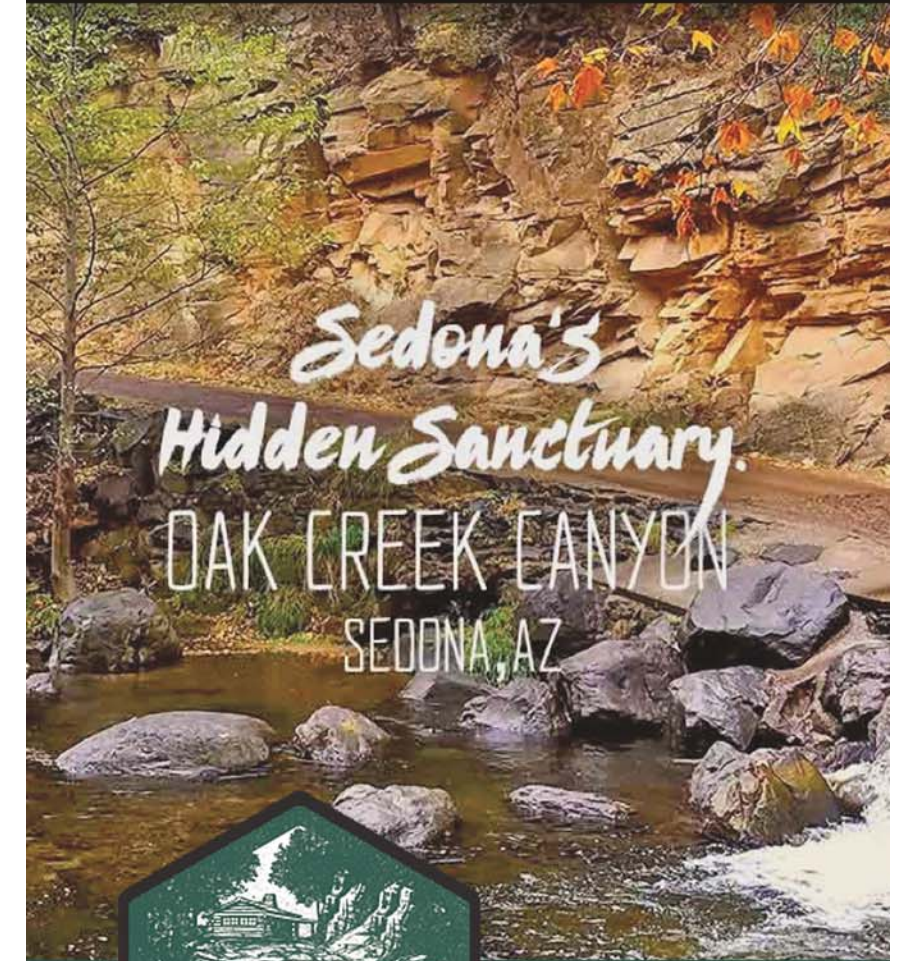
	FWD	AWD
LT	\$28,600	\$30,600
RS	33,000	35,000
ACTIV	33,000	35,000
+ EQUINOX EV (nominally related)	...from \$41,900	



SPECIFICATIONS

ASSEMBLY	San Luis Potosi, Mexico
ENGINE/TRANS BUILD	Mexico / US
PARTS CONTENT	US/Can 15% / Mexico 49%
ENGINE	1.5L 4-cyl turbo DOHC 16v, dir inj VVT, alum
HP/TORQUE	175 hp / (AWD) 203 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION	(AWD) 8-spd auto Hydra-Matic 8T45
DRIVETRAIN	(opt) AWD
SUSPENSION	F: MacPherson strut w specifically tuned coils, direct-acting stblzr bar; R: four-link indep
STEERING	dual pinion rack elec pwr
BRAKES	4-whl disc, Duralife rotors, low-drag calipers
WHEELS/TIRES	17-in alum / 235/65R17 A/T
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	183.2 / 107.5 in
HEADROOM (F/R)	(pano rf) 38.2 / 37.8 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	40.9 / 39.9 in
GROUND CLEARANCE	tba
TURNING CIRCLE	37.1 ft
CARGO CAPACITY	29.8 / 63.5 cu.ft
TOW CAPACITY	(AWD) 1500 lb
WEIGHT	(base LT) 3428 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY	reg unl / (AWD) 15.6 gal
MPG	24/29/26 (city/hwy/comb)
BASE PRICE	\$35,000
PANORAMIC SUNROOF	1495
SAFETY & TECHNOLOGY PKG:	HD Surround Vision, rear pedestrian alert, traffic sign recog, front fog lamps, rear camera mirror, rear camera mirror washer
	1085
CONVENIENCE PKG III:	8-way pwr & 2-way pwr lumbar front pssngr seat, vented front seats, memory settings, heated outboard rear seats
	950
SUMMIT WHITE ROOF	incl
(UNIVERSAL HOME REMOTE NON-FUNCT.)	(credit: 50)
DESTINATION CHARGE	1395
TOTAL	\$39,875

TRAVEL SITES TO BE SEEN



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SEDONA, AZ



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