

PUT TOGETHER RIGHT

BY JOE SAGE

Evolution at Subaru is generally gradual and steady and always on brand. Anybody will recognize the Subaru Outback, fundamentally the same, yet constantly revised, renewed and updated, for a little over three decades. One reason it remains so familiar is that it's a survivor. Along the way, it has eclipsed the Legacy Wagon from which it was derived, also leaving an Impreza Outback in its wake. In its sixth generation (since 2020), the Outback spawned a Wilderness version (for 2022), enhancing its off-pavement credentials and in fact erasing some clearance advantages the smaller Crosstrek had—at least until Crosstrek received its own Wilderness treatment about two years later, subsequently also applied to Forester, although

that one did not continue for 2025 (though they are still building and selling the 2024 Forester Wilderness). We've had all three Wilderness variants in our fleet, but this is none of those.

Outback has its own beefy and highly capable feel, Wilderness trim thus seeming like top dog. But it turns out dirt is not everything to everybody.

Here we have the Touring XT, the actual top trim among fully nine versions (see sidebar). This version wears more of a city suit, ours in a crisp Cosmic Blue Pearl. The Touring level brings many style and function niceties—from power-folding satin chrome mirrors, black silica and body-color details, to power moonroof, a 180-degree front monitor, Nappa leather interior, vented front seats, a top Subaru Starlink infotainment system and more.

Atop that, XT brings a beefier engine. Also used on Wilderness, it's a 2.4-liter, smaller than the standard 2.5L, but adding a twin-scroll turbocharger and intercooler, bringing horsepower up from 182 to 260 and torque from 176 up to 277 lb-ft in any XT (as on Wilderness).

Considering a total Outlander price range from under \$30 grand to the low \$40s, you really can't lose—Touring XT is a tremendous value for all it includes, while others have their own value through various combinations of price and inclusions.

While this has the standard ground clearance of the overall Outback lineup (8.7 inches vs 9.5 in the Wilderness build), they all have the same high-spec suspension build. Either Boxer engine has a chain-driven camshaft. Both engines are paired with a CVT with 8-speed manual mode, though the XT variants (and the Wilderness) are higher-torque

units. Touring XT also moves to 18-inch wheels.

Any one of the Outbacks is ready for just about anything you can throw at it. Deferring perhaps to this one's stylish, refined appearance and its tire and wheel set—but more likely to our overall very busy week in town—we didn't take it off-pavement, though the specs show just where it falls, with advantages in the same key points as Wilderness other than wheel and clearance differences.

We did take a run up the Beeline Highway, a chance to open up its engine and try out its handling on climbs and curves at speed. To quote our own voice memos, "if there is any flaw of any consequence, we didn't find it." We equally enjoyed our Touring XT in town, where freeway ramp performance was tops—on 90-degree turns and

merges at speed, entering; or in that burst of newfound freedom, exiting. Lanes held firm, and power held strong. Whether you are a fan of CVTs or not, in this, we felt no noticeable pause or loss through shifts (better than many automatics).

It's not at all hard to see why the Subaru outback is so popular and its customers so loyal.

That original Legacy Wagon was of course an offshoot of the foundational Subaru Legacy sedan. The Legacy sedan is still with us for 2025, in fewer builds than the Outback wagon (see sidebar), and note that we do have the Legacy sedan scheduled here in a few weeks (see next issue). But according to Subaru, this will be the sedan's last year.

Thus the legacy of the Legacy will become not Legacy but Outback. At least for now. ■



SPECIFICATIONS

ASSEMBLY	Lafayette, Indiana
ENGINE/TRANS BUILD	Japan / Japan
PARTS CONTENT	US/Can 50% / Japan 30%
ENGINE	2.4L DOHC 16v 4-cyl BOXER, twin-scroll turbo, intercooler, alum/alum, chain-driven cams, dual active intake/exhaust valves, sequential multi-port injection w cylinder head dir inj & ETC
HP/TORQUE	260 hp / 277 lb-ft
COMPRESSION RATIO	10.6:1
TRANSMISSION	high-torque Lineartronic CVT incl 8-spd manual mode and paddles
DRIVETRAIN	active torque split AWD w electronically managed variable hydraulic transfer clutch, driver-selectable X-MODE w enhanced wheel spin logic
SUSPENSION	4-wheel indep, raised: F: MacPherson-type struts w internal rebound springs, alum lower L-arms, coils, stblzr bar, liquid-filled engine mounts; R: dbl wishbone, coils, stblzr bar
STEERING	variable-ratio elec pwr assist rack & pinion
BRAKES	F: 12.4 vented disc, dual-piston; R: 11.8 vented, single-piston
WHEELS	18x7 alloy, black w machine fin
TIRES	225/60R18 100H all-season
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	191.1 / 108.1 in
GROUND CLEARANCE	8.7 in
APPR / DEPART / BRKOVER	18.2 / 21.7 / 19.4°
TURNING CIRCLE	36.1 ft
HEADROOM (F/R)	(w moonrf) 39.1 / 39.1 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	42.8 / 39.5 in
CARGO CAPACITY	32.6 / 75.6 cu.ft
WEIGHT	3946 lb
TOW CAPACITY	(XT) 3500 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY87 oct reg unl / 18.5 gal
MPG	22/29/25 (city/hwy/comb)
BASE PRICE	\$42,795
ALL-WEATHER FLOOR LINERS	141
DESTINATION CHARGE	1420
TOTAL	\$44,356

2025 OUTBACK / LEGACY LINEUP

OUTBACK WAGON	
(base)	\$28,895
Premium	31,195
Onyx Edition	36,105
Limited	37,855
Onyx Edition XT	39,360
Wilderness	39,960
Limited XT	40,195
Touring	40,345
Touring XT	42,795
LEGACY SEDAN	
(base)	\$24,895
Premium	27,195
Limited	34,005
Sport	34,495
Touring XT	38,195

LEGACY SEDAN ENDS PRODUCTION

Production of the 2025 Subaru Legacy sedan will end in spring 2025. Created for the US market, it was the first Subaru manufactured in the US, at Subaru's new Indiana plant. The Legacy Wagon went on to become the basis for the Subaru Outback, which continues as of now. Subaru has said they will produce eight EV models by calendar year 2028. ■