

We first saw the new Toyota C-HR at a drive event for its close kin, the latest Toyota bZ (its name shortened from bZ4X) and bZ Woodland (a new more rugged and powerful variant), just a week before receiving this C-HR in our fleet for a week. (We also drove their cousin, the Lexus RZ, in our prior issue.) The entire group comprises new and evolved models and new and evolved powertrains, together creating a broader than ever full battery-electric lineup from Toyota.

To help you remember where the hyphen goes, or not, C-HR reportedly stands for compact high roof or coupe high rider (either one explaining the location of the hyphen) or cross hatch runabout (which does not), or various combinations thereof.

What have you been waiting for?

If EV-curious, very possibly this.

BY JOE SAGE

The C-HR lineup is extremely clean and simple, with just two trims (SE and XSE)—both AWD, same powertrain, just distinguished by wheel size (18- or 20-inch) and accordingly by EV range (287 or 273 miles), as well as by price (\$37k, \$39k). Ours is an XSE, in Tandoori paint (an India-Indian name for a color well suited to copper-famed Arizona).

It's useful to compare this simplicity to the wider variety of bZ offerings, too—see sidebar chart. The most obvious power, price, range and wheel variables aside, even where C-HR numbers may be a little less, they have appeal—it weighs a little less, it's a little shorter for tighter maneuvering, and a little less rear legroom is of near-zero concern to a lot of people, who only put their groceries

or jacket back there, anyway.

Within C-HR, other differences between SE and XSE include typical details—mirrors, available sunroof, seating materials and such, in some cases with each other's options back and forth.

Basically, any tradeoffs are familiar ones, and this is one of the simplest comparisons you'll ever face for a \$2,000 difference. For most buyers, it likely comes down to range versus tires. For style, bigger wheels usually win, while for range smaller ones usually do—although a buyer with tougher duty in mind might want the smaller wheels, anyway, for them a win-win.

The drive experience is equally simple. Performance and handling are absolutely tops, finding

power aplenty without even trying, just applying smooth pedal and learning it can leave luxury performance cars, at four times its price, in the dust.

We realized we hadn't even considered drive modes, which is actually how we like it—best performance, by default, seeming preferable to having to ask for it. (Of course, we know some may have other goals, like better range, and may not want to ask for it. And it does have an eco mode, as well as a snow mode.) It was then that we realized the C-HR has very effective regenerative braking—converting otherwise-wasted energy into stopping power, which is becoming more widely implemented, but again not having to ask for it, which is great, because we value it. And this is the best kind for most people. Full "one-pedal" regenerative braking—where stopping power is so strong, a letup on the accelerator pedal will lead to a full stop without needing to apply the brake pedal (golf cart-style, you might say)—is a neat

trick, and we are among those who do like it, at least as an option. Even for anyone for whom this tech could be unfamiliar, especially those new to driving, or going back and forth among multiple vehicles with different technologies, this implementation is, as Goldilocks would say, just right.

That detail carries the spirit of the whole C-HR. It makes the drive experience simple, powerful and effective, even exciting. These are near-universal goals. But more broadly, it makes the EV decision accessible. First question: are you interested in an EV? If so, Toyota C-HR is an easy answer to your question. If on the fence, however, this is a great place to start your search. You will quickly realize how many questions this answers without even having to ask or investigate further.

Then comes the icing on the cake—that easy lineup, two trims with minor differences, both almost equally affordable, and that's about it.

Just pick a color. And you're good to go. ■

SPECIFICATIONS

ASSEMBLY	Toyota Takaoka, Aichi, Japan
SEATING	five
MOTORS	dual, in front and rear eAxsles
ELEC MOTORS MAX OUTPUT	...(F/R) 167 / 88 kW
TOTAL SYSTEM OUTPUT	338 hp
TORQUE	(F/R) 198 / 125 lb-ft
BATTERY	lithium-ion 74.7 kWh 391V
DRIVETRAIN	AWD
TRANSMISSION	1-spd automatic; paddle shifters, regenerative braking
ZERO-TO-60 MPH	4.9 sec
SUSPENSION	F: indep MacPherson strut type, stblzr bar; R: multi-link, stblzr bar
STEERING	elec pwr asst rack-and-pinion
BRAKES	F: 12.9-in vented; R: 12.5-in vented
WHEELS	(XSE) 20-in machine-finish gun metal multi-spoke alloys
TIRES	235/50R20 100V; ours: Yokohama Geolandar X-CV
GROUND CLEARANCE	8.0 in
TURNING CIRCLE	36.0 ft
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	177.9 / 108.3 in
HEADROOM (F/R)	(sunrfl) 38.62 / 36.38 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	42.12 / 32.19 in
CARGO CAPACITY	25.3 / 59.5 cu.ft
WEIGHT	(XSE) 4366 lb
CHARGING	NACS compatible; AC Level 1 120V, AC Level 2 240V 11kW; DC Fast Charge compat 150 kW in approx 30 min (10-80% in ideal conditions)
RANGE	(XSE) est 273 miles
MPGe	est 112 (city/hwy/comb)
BASE PRICE	\$39,000
PAINT: Tandoori w Midnight Black	
metallic roof	500
PANORAMIC ROOF	1000
DESTINATION CHARGE	1595

TOTAL.....\$42,095*

* Our sample had no Monroney sticker. Obvious options (paint, sunroof), as well as destination charge, priced from consumer website. • Notable options not on ours include JBL audio (\$600), Cold Weather Pkg (headlight cleaners, heated rear seats \$450), an Activity Mount (100 lb capacity for "hitch-mounted accessories," \$600), and several others.

2026 TOYOTA C-HR LINEUP.....AWD

SE.....338 hp, 287 mi range	\$37,000
XSE.....338 hp, 273 mi range	▼ 39,000

2026 TOYOTA bZ LINEUP

C-HR has much in common with the Toyota bZ lineup, more complex with multiple powertrains and two body and mission styles (bZ and bZ Woodland) a bit different from each other and a bit different from C-HR.

bZ.....FWD.....AWD

XLE FWD	
168 hp, 235 mi range	\$34,900
XLE FWD Plus	
221 hp, 314 mi range	37,900
XLE AWD	
338 hp, 288 mi range	39,900
XLE Limited FWD / AWD	
221 hp, 299 mi range	43,300
338 hp, 278 mi range	45,300

bZ WOODLAND.....AWD

375 hp, 281 mi range (or 260 w A/T tires)	
Woodland	45,300
Woodland Premium	47,400