

Powerful But Polarizing

Hybrid Powerhouse Delivers Impressive Capability, Durability Questions

By Derek Price

CARGAZING.COM

The 2024 Toyota Sequoia Capstone represents the pinnacle of Toyota's full-size SUV offerings, blending luxury appointments with truck-based capability.

After a week behind the wheel of this behemoth, it's clear that while the Sequoia excels in many areas, it also comes with some notable compromises.

At the heart of the Sequoia is its impressive i-FORCE MAX hybrid powertrain. The twin-turbocharged 3.5-liter V6, combined with an electric motor, produces a robust 437 horsepower and a staggering 583 pound-feet of torque.

This powertrain delivers smooth, effortless acceleration that belies the Sequoia's considerable size. Fuel economy, rated at 19 mpg in the city and 22 on the highway, is competitive for the class, especially considering its power output.

Towing capability is a strong suit, with the Sequoia able to haul up to 9,520 pounds when properly equipped. This places it near the top of its class.

The available Tow Tech Package, which includes features like Trailer Backup Guide and Straight Path Assist, helps take some of the stress out of maneuvering with a trailer.

On the road, the Sequoia's truck-based roots are evi-



The Sequoia's bold, imposing presence is accentuated by the Capstone trim's chrome accents and massive 22-inch

dent. While the ride is generally comfortable, especially with the optional air suspension, it lacks the refined, car-like feel of some unibody competitors.

Handling is predictable but ponderous, reminding you of the vehicle's substantial mass in corners. Wind noise at highway speeds is more pronounced than expected in a vehicle of this caliber.

Inside, the Capstone trim showcases Toyota's premium aspirations. High-quality materials abound, including semi-aniline leather seats and genuine American walnut wood trim.

The 14-inch touchscreen

infotainment system is responsive and feature-rich.

Passenger space is generous in the first and second rows, but the third row suffers from an awkward, knees-up seating position that's unsuitable for adults on longer trips. Cargo space with all seats in use is limited, though the innovative sliding third row and adjustable cargo shelf system add some versatility.

Safety features are comprehensive, with Toyota's Safety Sense 2.5 suite of driver aids coming standard. This includes adaptive cruise control, lane keeping assist and automatic emergency braking, among other features.

However, the elephant in the room is the question of long-term reliability.

The Sequoia has long been renowned for its durability, largely thanks to its tried-and-true V8 engine. The switch to a twin-turbocharged V6 hybrid system raises concerns about longevity, as turbocharged engines typically don't have the same expected lifespan as naturally aspirated ones.

While Toyota reps have assured me that the new powertrain has been thoroughly tested, only time will tell if it can match the legendary reliability of its predecessor.

At \$84,575 as tested, the

Sequoia Capstone commands a premium price. While it offers impressive capability and a luxurious interior, the steep cost may give some buyers pause, especially when considering equally capable and more refined unibody competitors.

Ultimately, the 2024 Toyota Sequoia is a vehicle of contrasts. It offers immense power, towing capability and a luxurious interior, but its truck-based platform results in compromises in ride quality and handling.

For buyers who prioritize towing capacity and off-road ability in a luxurious package, the Sequoia makes a compelling case.

AT A GLANCE

WHAT WAS TESTED?

2024 Toyota Sequoia 4WD Capstone (\$80,865). Options: 50-state emissions (\$290), air suspension (\$1,045), all-weather floor liners (\$358), wheel locks (\$80), ball mount (\$87). Price as tested (including \$1,850 destination charge): \$84,575

BY THE NUMBERS

Wheelbase: 122 in.
Length: 208.1 in.
Width: 79.6 in.
Height: 74.2 in.
Engine: Twin-turbo 3.5-liter V6 hybrid (437 hp, 583 ft. lbs.)
Transmission: 10-speed automatic
MPG: 19 city, 22 highway

RATINGS

Style: 8
Performance: 8
Price: 7
Handling: 3
Ride: 8
Comfort: 8
Quality: 9
Overall: 8

WHY BUY IT?

The latest Sequoia offers impressive power, towing capability and luxury features in a rugged, truck-based package, making it ideal for buyers who need serious capability without sacrificing comfort.

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Premium materials and advanced technology define the Sequoia Capstone's cabin, though the awkward third-row seating position limits its practicality.

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A CLOSER LOOK



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FACTS, FIGURES AND RATINGS

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