

Efficient Family Hauler

Telluride Hybrid Keeps Comfort, Adds Real Fuel Economy

By Derek Price

CARGAZING.COM

The fuel gauge was the biggest surprise of my week behind the wheel of the new Kia Telluride.

I expected to like the redesigned Telluride, which is available now as a 2027 model. The last-generation version, along with its Hyundai Palisade cousin, already sat near the top of my personal list for mainstream three-row SUVs. It was smooth, quiet and convincingly upscale without requiring luxury-SUV money.

What I did not expect was to drive the new hybrid version for a full week and use only about half a tank of gas.

That is the payoff in the 2027 Telluride Hybrid. It keeps the qualities that made the original so compelling, then adds the one thing a large family SUV always needs more of: efficiency.

My test vehicle was the HEV X-Line SX-Prestige AWD, a loaded version priced at \$61,180 with destination and options. Under the hood is a 2.5-liter turbocharged hybrid four-cylinder rated at 329 horsepower and 339 pound-feet of torque.

Those numbers are not just for bragging. They make the Telluride feel confident when merging onto fast freeways, passing



The 2027 Kia Telluride has upright proportions, crisp lighting and flush exterior details that give Kia's three-row SUV a cleaner, more refined look.

slower traffic or pulling away from a stop with passengers aboard. For a vehicle that stretches nearly 200 inches long and seats seven, it never feels underpowered.

It also avoids one common hybrid annoyance. Kia pairs the engine with a six-speed automatic transmission, not a continuously variable setup that holds the engine at odd, droning speeds. The result feels natural from the driver's seat, with smooth power delivery and enough punch when you ask for it.

The EPA rates this all-

wheel-drive version at 30 mpg in the city and 32 on the highway. That's impressive for a roomy, quiet three-row SUV, and my week behind the wheel backed up the numbers.

Ride quality remains one of the Telluride's strongest traits.

Kia did not try to make this feel like a sporty SUV, which is the right decision. The suspension is tuned for comfort. The cabin stays hushed and the whole vehicle has a relaxed highway personality.

The cabin helps, too. Kia seems to be

borrowing lessons from Honda on interior storage, which is exactly the right place to study. There are smart cubbies and usable spaces throughout the cabin, small details that become more important the longer you live with a vehicle.

The digital pieces worked well for me, too. Wireless Apple CarPlay and wireless phone charging both functioned flawlessly all week. New-generation vehicles can stumble out of the gate with software glitches, but this Telluride felt polished and ready.

Some of the new controls are more debatable.

The separate climate-control panel makes sense because it keeps basic HVAC adjustments easy to reach. Other changes feel more experimental. The gear selector has an engine-start button built into it. The interior door handles are unusual. The exterior door handles recess flush into the sheet metal.

My dad would call those "one more thing to break."

I understand the concern. None of those details bothered me much in daily use, but they do show how much Kia is willing to rethink things most automakers treat as settled. Even the steering wheel has a flattened D shape, more like an electric vehicle than a traditional family SUV.

Still, the Telluride's strengths are hard to ignore.

It is spacious, quiet, comfortable and now genuinely efficient. It has enough power to feel relaxed in traffic, enough technology to feel current and enough cabin polish to make the price seem justified.

The redesigned Telluride succeeds because it does not abandon what worked. It simply makes the old formula easier to live with, especially if you don't like stopping for gas.

AT A GLANCE

WHAT WAS TESTED?

2027 Kia Telluride HEV X-Line SX-Prestige AWD (\$57,590). Options: Premium paint (\$495), towing package (\$625), all-season floor liners (\$255), carpeted floor mats (\$250), cargo net (\$65), cargo cover (\$200), carpet cargo mat (\$155). Price as tested (including \$1,545 destination charge): \$61,180

BY THE NUMBERS

Wheelbase: 116.9 in.
Length: 199.2 in.
Width: 78.3 in.
Height: 70.5 in.
Engine: 2.5-liter turbocharged hybrid four-cylinder (329 hp, 339 lb.-ft.)
Transmission: Six-speed automatic
MPG: 30 city, 32 highway

RATINGS

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

WHY BUY IT?

The all-new Telluride Hybrid is built for families who want generous space, quiet comfort, strong acceleration and meaningful fuel savings in a mainstream three-row SUV.

CARGAZING



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Inside, the Telluride uses broad digital displays, thoughtful storage spaces and three usable rows to make family travel feel calmer and more organized.

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A CLOSER LOOK



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FACTS, FIGURES AND RATINGS

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