

The Last Muscle SUV Standing

With HEMI V8 and Bold Attitude, Durango Keeps the Muscle Car Spirit Alive

By **Derek Price**

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As Dodge retires its iconic Charger and Challenger muscle cars, the 2025 Durango R/T 20th Anniversary Edition proves there's still room for old-school American muscle in today's SUV-dominated market.

After a week behind the wheel of this HEMI-powered family hauler, it's clear that while this generation Durango may be showing its age, it still offers a unique blend of practicality and performance that's increasingly rare.

The heart of this special edition Durango is its 5.7-liter HEMI V8, producing 360 horsepower and 390 pound-feet of torque.

This engine, paired with a smooth-shifting eight-speed automatic transmission, delivers the kind of muscular acceleration and satisfying exhaust note that Dodge enthusiasts expect. More impressively, it can tow up to 8,700 pounds when properly equipped — a figure that puts many pickup trucks to shame.

However, this powerful V8 comes with a significant thirst for fuel. EPA ratings of 14 mpg in the city and 22 on the highway reflect the compromises required for this level of performance and capability. In an era of increasing fuel costs and environmental awareness,



The 20th Anniversary Edition Durango R/T's muscular styling and performance-inspired touches create an imposing presence that sets it apart from typical three-row SUVs.

these numbers might give some buyers pause.

The R/T 20th Anniversary Edition adds distinctive touches that set it apart from standard Durangos. The black HEMI hood graphic, "345" fender badges and 20-inch forged wheels create a purposeful appearance.

Inside, SRT seats with Tupelo bronze stitching and "345" embroidery remind occupants this isn't your typical family SUV.

The Durango's age shows in its technology and safety features. While the Uconnect infotainment system remains one of the most user-friendly in the business, many advanced driver assistance

features that come standard on newer competitors are optional here. Our Premium trim tester included these features, but they require stepping up to higher trim levels.

On the road, the Durango feels exactly as you'd expect a muscle car-inspired SUV to feel. The steering is precise, if not particularly communicative, and the performance-tuned suspension in the R/T strikes a reasonable balance between handling and comfort.

However, its size and weight are always apparent, especially in tight urban environments.

Inside, the three-row cabin offers good space and func-

tionality. The second-row captain's chairs in our tester provided comfortable accommodations, though the third row is best suited for occasional use.

Material quality is generally good, with premium touches like the forged carbon-fiber accents adding visual interest.

At \$72,065 as tested, the Durango R/T 20th Anniversary Edition Premium represents a significant investment. But for buyers seeking a practical family vehicle that hasn't completely abandoned performance credentials, it offers a compelling package that's increasingly hard to find.

The 2025 Dodge Durango R/T is something of a throwback — a V8-powered, rear-wheel-drive-based SUV in a world increasingly dominated by turbocharged four-cylinders and front-wheel-drive crossovers.

As one of the last V8-powered mainstream SUVs available, the Durango R/T carries the torch for enthusiasts who need family transportation but aren't ready to give up on performance.

It's not the most practical or efficient choice, but for those who appreciate its muscular character, those compromises may be worth making.

AT A GLANCE

WHAT WAS TESTED?

2025 Dodge Durango R/T 20th Anniversary Edition (\$70,470). Options: None. Price as tested (including \$1,595 destination charge): \$72,065

BY THE NUMBERS

Wheelbase: 119.8 in.
Length: 200.8 in.
Width: 85.5 in.
Height: 72.1 in.
Engine: 5.7-liter HEMI V8 (360 hp, 390 ft. lbs.)
Transmission: Eight-speed automatic
MPG: 14 city, 22 highway

RATINGS

Style: 8
Performance: 10
Price: 6
Handling: 5
Ride: 7
Comfort: 8
Quality: 7
Overall: 7

WHY BUY IT?

The 20th Anniversary Edition offers genuine performance credentials and impressive towing capability in a practical three-row package, making it an appealing choice for enthusiasts who need family transportation.

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While the Uconnect infotainment system remains one of the most user-friendly in the business, many advanced driver assistance features that come standard on newer competitors are optional here. Our



Special edition touches and performance seats give the Durango's functional interior a sporty character, though some materials and features show the platform's age.

Premium trim tester included these features, but they require stepping up to higher trim levels.

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A CLOSER LOOK



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FACTS, FIGURES AND RATINGS

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