

2009 Acura TSX

By TITUS HSU
Epoch Times Staff

The TSX is Acura's ammunition in attacking the \$30,000-\$40,000 entry-level luxury market segment. First introduced for the 2004 model year, the 2009 model is the first major redesign. The new exterior loses some of the original simplicity and gains some bulk, and the new chrome plate grill and headlights clearly distinguishes the new look from the previous. The tail lamps also received a similar redesign to match the shape of headlights.

The TSX is available in three trim levels - TSX, TSX Premium, and TSX Technology. The base model is listed for \$29,000, while the Premium package adds \$3,300 to the sticker price. The Premium package comprises premium audio system with XM satellite radio, perforated leather interior, HID lights, fog lights, automatic lights, 2-position driver's seat memory, and USB connectivity. The test vehicle is equipped with the \$6,000 Technology package with no extra fee for 5-speed SportShift automatic transmission. The Technology package adds voice-activated navigation system, reverse camera, and 6-disc, 10-speaker audio system on top of the Premium package.

For the 2009 model with automatic transmission, gone is the Tiptronic-style shifter with a jagged gate and a discrete manual gate. The new shifter is a straight-gate design with F-1 style paddle shifters mounted on the steering wheel. To change gear positions, you press a trigger upward on the shifter knob to unlock the selector stick. Instead of moving the lever to engage the manual mode, you can change gears with the paddle shifters at anytime in D (Drive) and S (Sequential) mode. Normally, once the computer decides the car has resumed the "normal" driving condition, it will take control again.

While manual control is in effect, a small single-digit display on the instrument panel shows the current gear. At first you may be concerned with the shifting logic interfering with your driving, but it shouldn't take long to get used to when the car resumes shifting control. According to the manual, the logic decides the vehicle is in the normal driving mode when it senses a consistent throttle and the speed remains fairly constant. My own driving experience concurred with this. I have let the car roll down a steep hill after manually selecting the second gear and taking my foot completely off the gas pedal. With the throttle completely off, the car correctly determined I wanted engine braking, and it remained in the second gear all the way down the hill. Coming down a



2009 Acura TSX. TITUS HSU/THE EPOCH TIMES

highway off-ramp, I downshifted to the second gear to make a left turn. Accelerating out of the turn, the car left the gear selection in manual mode during the acceleration. You can override this behavior by selecting the S mode and pressing the paddle shifter while the car is stopped. This engages the first gear in a fully manual mode, and you have full control of the gear selection.

The 2.4-litre inline-4 engine provides a satisfying amount of ease and power when accelerating from a full stop. The engine responds quickly to even light gas pedal presses, and the feedback from the torque converter feels fairly solid even in the low rpm range. Equally light, yet linear and well connected, is the steering. The drive is easy and goes a long way to reducing stress in bad traffic conditions. When coming out of a traffic jam, put your foot down on the gas pedal and the engine really comes to life. The roar asserts power without feeling strained, and washes the lingering stress away as the car quickly leaves the traffic jam far behind. The engine is gas-efficient, rated officially at 20 mpg of premium gas for city driving. As with all cars, however, this number goes out of the window if you plant your foot down on the gas pedal. In return, you get the rush of speed as the engine happily sings.

Driving at fast speeds requires the ability to stop fast and turn well. The car's 3,483 lb. curb weight is not a bad trade-off between traction and inertia, and the TSX is known for its athletic qualities, although I would prefer to see the weight around low 3,000s or high 2,900s for a sedan of this size. The weight presses down on the taut suspension and the 17-inch stock tires around corners, giving the driver a good sense of control and confidence. The stock all-season tires on the 2009 model have adequate

performance. The car brakes fairly well. The disc brakes gracefully bring the car to a stop in a linear and controlled fashion. Braking is where I made much use of the paddle shifters. I let the electronic logic handle upshifts most of the time, but out of habit, I aggressively used the paddle shifters to down shift for engine braking. That is one advantage over the previous design - you can change gears at any time without having to engage the manual mode first.

The interior is stylish and spacious, with plenty of space for the driver and three passengers. The 8-way power-adjusted driver's seat is firm and supportive. The base model is equipped with premium cloth seats, while the Premium and Technology models are equipped with leather seats. The power moon-roof is a standard feature. For non-convertible cars, once you are used to having an open moon-roof on a fine day, it's difficult to live without one.

Other remarkable standard features include speed-sensing windshield wipers, automatic day/night rear view mirror, compass, dual-zone climate control, Homelink remote control (i.e. built-in garage door remote), Bluetooth hands-free mobile phone connection, and Bluetooth audio interface. Starting at \$29,909,000, the TSX is loaded with many convenient features. I am surprised that leather upholstery is no longer included in the base model though.

For the 2009 model year, the TSX received a new exterior design and added some bulk and weight, but it is still a sporty sedan. At the same time, it is a very practical family vehicle with its generous interior space, cargo capacity, and conservative fuel consumption. The performance, luxury, and practicality will please everyone in a family shopping for a car in the under \$30,000 range.

2009 Mercedes ML 320 Blue TEC

By DURHL CAUSSEY

The ML 320 has a 3.0-liter turbocharged V-6 diesel that includes 210 horsepower with 3,800 rpm and torque at 398 lb-ft and 1,600 to 2,400 rpm. It comes in a standard 4-wheel drive and has a towing capacity of 7,200 lbs. It seats five adults comfortably, and has 72.4 cu ft. of cargo space with second row folded flat.

The 2009 Mercedes ML 320 Blue TEC will take you over 600 miles on one tank of gas. That's like driving from Los Angeles to Salt Lake City with diesel left over. This Mercedes has the cleanest diesel engine in the world as well as the quietest. The Mercedes engineers have reinvented the diesel engine of old without the noise, odor, and emissions. By injecting a solution known as AdBlue into the exhaust, Blue TEC can reduce smog-causing NOx to its harmless nitrogen and water components.

Just because the ML 320 is easy on the environment doesn't mean that performance suffers. It accelerates from 0-60 in 8 seconds and still averages 18-24 mpg.

The ML 320 looks elegant on the outside, but wait till you see the interior. Front headroom is 39.9 inches and front legroom a comfortable 42.2 inches, with rear head and leg room only about two inches less.

Rack-and-pinion steering with constant power assists and a turning circle: 37.9 feet curb-to-curb makes the Mercedes easy to handle, and smooth to drive, all with the feel of beauty to the eye and elegance to the touch. The Mercedes ML 320 starts at around \$47,000.

Also inside is a new COMAND system that comes equipped with a high-resolution color -LCD screen, a

6-disc CD/DVD changer and Bluetooth* capacity for hands-free calling. Upgrade to options that let you control iPods and other portable music devices, enhanced voice recognition software and navigation.

Many engineering experts say Mercedes makes and designs the best cars in the world. To become a believer of this philosophy, all one has to do is drive a Mercedes.

Durhl Caussey writes a car column read around the world. He may be reached at this paper or dcaussey@sbcglobal.net.



Under the hood of the ML 320 Blue. COURTESY OF MERCEDES BENZ



2009 Mercedes ML 320 Blue. COURTESY OF MERCEDES BENZ

About The Epoch Times

WHO WE ARE

The Epoch Times is an independent and privately held news media company based in New York. Our growing network of local reporters in the United States and throughout the world uncovers local and international stories that are unavailable elsewhere. We strive to make a positive impact on people's lives by reporting news in a responsible and truthful way and by upholding universal human values, rights, and freedoms. We are a business that puts our readers' interests first in all that we do.

A special strength of The Epoch Times is our coverage of China. Today, the world is increasingly looking to China, as this troubled giant goes through tremendous changes. Business and political leaders, and also world citizens, want to understand better what is happening there. We are able to provide well-sourced stories that no one else has through the original reporting done by the Chinese-language edition of The Epoch Times.

We take the long view of humanity's history and future. Free of corporate and political constraints that limit the coverage of worldwide events in other media, The Epoch Times freely reports stories and presents a diversity of opinions that make it a truly informative news source. We provide our readers 'A Fresh Look at Our Changing World.'

OUR HISTORY

The Epoch Times began as a weekly Chinese newspaper, Da Ji Yuan, for Chinese people living outside of China. The Chinese language edition of The Epoch Times has become the most widely distributed Chinese newspaper outside of Taiwan and China, and is published in several cities in the United States, Canada, and in many other countries worldwide, such as Australia, the U.K., Taiwan and Hong Kong.

The English edition of The Epoch Times launched in September 2003 on the web, and in August 2004 as a newspaper in New York. It is currently published in New York, Washington D.C., Boston, Dallas, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Toronto and Vancouver, and the Southeast U.S. The Epoch Times is also published internationally in 10 languages in 30 countries, including Germany, Switzerland, France, Belgium, Australia, Korea, Japan and Argentina.

The Epoch Times

Classifieds

5 Lines 4 weeks \$50
Call our Los Angeles or San Diego office now!

Postage/Shipping Put your PICTURE on REAL U.S. POSTAGE STAMPS that you Design with Your Favorite Photos, Cool Images, Special Messages. VIPPostagePlus.com (800) 964-8306 (562) 376-0953	Jazz Drum Class Want to be a drummer? Can teach at your home. Contact 917-650-6068, 626-786-1072 Free Falun Gong Workshop Three free workshops in Pasadena, introducing what Falun Gong is and teaching of exercises. Date and times: 4/11 1pm-3pm, 5/9 1pm-3pm, 6/13 1pm-3pm and 7/18 1pm-3pm. Location: La Pintoresca Library, 1355 North Raymond Avenue, Pasadena, CA 91103. Contact: Daniel, 626-389-7521, qwang@caltech.edu Free Meditation in San Diego Falun Dafa, a powerful practice to improve mind and body. Pls look for free practice site in your neighborhood. More info pls visit www.FalunDafa.org or call 1-888-98D-FLDF (1-888-973-3533). No Classrooms Convert your Experience into a College Degree 909-706-9244 Travel Cheap Air-tickets & Tours Cheap round trip air tickets for US-China/Taiwan/Hong Kong. Cheap tours to China/Taiwan. East Coast Tours: Buy 2 get 1 FREE! (Limited time and people). 1-888-965-7888. www.keeptavel.com Radio/Television Sound of Hope International Radio Station for Chinese people all over the world. www.soundofhope.net. SOH Radio "Breaking News" web site http://sohnews.com/category/breaking-news/ New Tang Dynasty Television Free Chinese TV programs for overseas Chinese. 24 hour satellite broadcast. News, Economic Review, Theater, Sports, Culture, Art. NTDTV Contact: 323-981-9435. Satellite Installation contact: 626-758-8798	Job Opportunities CRIMINAL ATTORNEY GETS RESULTS All Federal & State Criminal Charges Also Clear Old Criminal Convictions. Affordable & Flexible Flat Rates 24/7. Jerome Bradford (213) 622-3114 PROJECT DESIGNER Pan Construction, Inc. Seeks Project Designer to develop and review design drawings for commercial & residential construction projects. Obtain permits and visit construction sites. BS or BA required. Mail resume to: HR, 404 S. San Gabriel Blvd., San Gabriel, CA 91776.	Hiring 1. Electronic Engineer 2. Sales Staff 3. Secretary Working Place: Torrance, CA. Pls contact keli.wang@umeintl.com Dental Assistant Wanted No experience necessary. Great dental office, contact: drshih@sbcglobal.net Just Cause Productions, Inc. seeks Line Producer (video games). Duties include manage motion capture projects for video game development, production budget control. B.A. degree required. Work location: Marina Del Rey, CA. Mail resume to: HR, 4096 Glencoe Ave., Marina Del Rey CA 90292.	Real Estate DOWNSIZING? 3,000 Square foot full floor office suite. Move-in condition. Excellent Westside location. Close to Century City and Culver City. KEVIN 310-943-8537 Wanted/Donations PC's Wanted Local minority 501c non-profit seeks PC donations for community training and youth programs. 310.749.3016
Health/Medicine VRXsupplement.com Men, Increase pleasure and enhance virility naturally w/o harmful side effects. 1-800-320-6595. Sponsored by: uSaveOnMedical.com Traditional Chinese Medicine Three generations of Chinese medical practices. Secret recipes treating sterility, diabetes, high blood pressure, depression, insomnia and asthma, etc. Accept health insurance. Please call 626-462-9388. Address: 630 W. Duarte Rd., #201, Arcadia, CA 91007 Chiropractic Relieves tensions in shoulder, back and neck. Special treatment of chiropractic. 909-618-7257. www.merrysun.com Best Propolis Alcohol-Free Brazilian Bee Propolis Extract, Nature's Immune-Booster, No Artificial Color or Flavoring. Propolis is a substance extracted and metabolized by bees from secretion of tree trunks, branches and flower petals. Special discount: \$23/bottle, \$19/bottle with purchase over 6 bottles. Buy 24 bottles, get 1 free. 10007 Belhaven Rd, Bethesda, MD 20817. Tel: 301-571-1988 / 301-437-8289 Teaching Chinese lessons Beginner's, Intermediate or Advanced level Chinese class; Adult or Kids, Mandarin or Cantonese. Not a simple Chinese language school, but a Cultural school. Call 858-565-8008. www.chineseschoolsd.com	YOUR CLASSIFIED AD HERE Graphic Designer YCI, Inc. Precision machine tools company seeks Graphic Designer. Use computer tools to design print ads, promotional flyers, websites and banners. B.A. in related field is required. Work location in Santa Fe Springs, CA. Please send resume to HR at 10629 Forest Street, Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670 ROCKWELL LENDING Banks Say No We Say Yes Good or Bad Credit Welcome Stop all Collectors' Calls! Get Cash Now Call 1-866-534-4674 Starting At 5 thousand & UP!	YOUR CLASSIFIED AD HERE YOUR CLASSIFIED AD HERE		

Subscribe to The Epoch Times

Guaranteed delivery* to your home or office!

2009 Subscription Rates

Three months: \$20
Six months: \$40
One year: \$80

Please remit form and check, or call your local office for credit card payment.

Name: _____

Mailing address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Please Circle One:

Three months (\$20) Six months (\$40) One year (\$80)
(*First class postage.)

Mail form and check payable to: The Epoch Times

Los Angeles office: 9550 Flair Dr., #503, El Monte, CA 91731-2924, (888) 853-4774

San Diego office: 10755 Scripps Poway Pkwy. #528, San Diego, CA 92131-3924, (619) 578-8497

The Epoch Times
A FRESH LOOK AT OUR CHANGING WORLD
To place your classified:
LOS ANGELES
Call: 1-888-853-4774
scal@epochtimes.com
Fax: 1-626-401-1221 or
Mail to: The Epoch Times
9550 Flair Dr.,
Suite 503
El Monte, CA 91731-2924
SAN DIEGO
Call: 1-619-578-8498
sandiego@epochtimes.com
Fax: 1-866-733-0390 or
Mail to: The Epoch Times
10755 Scripps Poway Pkwy.,
Suite 528
San Diego, CA 92131-3924