

Hyundai's all-new Santa Fe: Improved design, performance and innovation

 By [Naresh Maharaj](#)

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Hyundai Motor Company recently launched its new Santa Fe with a re-imagined model that offers great all-around enhancements. Whilst there are so many new features, the one that stood out for me was how light the SUV was when it came to fuel consumption. The fuel dial seemed stuck at 'F' position, despite having travelled many kilometres. Established as one of Hyundai's iconic brands, the latest Santa Fe is the fourth generation of this large sports utility vehicle and the flagship in Hyundai's range in South Africa.



Image credit: Naresh Maharaj

Totally transformed, the new Santa Fe is much more than a mere facelift. With the interior upgrades, it creates an aura of luxury and prestige, and the updating and fine-tuning of its 2.2l turbodiesel engine, in combination with a smooth eight-speed dual-clutch transmission (DCT), offers a dynamic driving performance.

It takes two

The new Santa Fe is available in two derivatives in South Africa – the R2.2 Executive with an upgraded turbodiesel engine and new eight-speed DCT; and the R2.2 Elite, also with the 2.2l turbodiesel and eight-speed DCT, but with All-Wheel Drive and several more luxury features. Both derivatives are 7-seaters, with the two seats in the third row that fold away in the floor of the large cargo compartment. Plenty of load space.

Redesigned exterior

The Santa Fe has been redesigned to convey a look of strength, magnificence and highly redefined luxury. It stands out thanks to its bold exterior and the front section with its striking new grille, brings out a fresh and more modern look. The

eye-catching cascading grille has been improved, with its signature geometric patterned inlay integrated with the headlights.



Image credit: Naresh Maharaj



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At the back, the rear bumper displays a low and wide look that conveys stability. Its bold stance is reflected by the sweeping horizontal line, connecting the combination lights and tailgate garnish. The wrap-around combination lamps enhance the look even further.

Interior: luxurious and innovative

A spacious interior with full leather seats and a new floating centre console which is equipped with shift-by-wire transmission buttons provides an ambience of luxury and operational convenience.

The centre console also contains the buttons for the automatic climate control and selector knob for the drive modes and, in the Elite derivative, terrain modes for the all-wheel-drive system. To help create fun and remarkable journeys, the Santa Fe comes installed with a wide array of technology features. Rear window curtains and heating and ventilation for the front seats are also on the list of convenience features, as well as Remote Start, which allows you to start the vehicle remotely with the smart key, automatically switching on the air conditioner and setting the temperature at 22°C.

Upgraded turbodiesel engine, new 8-speed DCT transmission

The new Santa Fe is the first Hyundai model to be fitted with the next-generation powertrain Smartstream R2.2 turbodiesel engine which has a maximum output of 148kW. Compared to the previous engine generation, the new engine block consists of aluminium instead of iron, ensuring a weight reduction of 19,5kg. It is also the first Hyundai SUV to be equipped with the newly developed Smartstream Wet 8DCT, a dual-clutch transmission delivering quick eight-speed shifting and acceleration performance

All-wheel drive and terrain modes

In the Elite derivative, the new Santa Fe features Hyundai's signature HTRAC four-wheel drive technology. HTRAC is a combination of the words "Hyundai" and "traction," and the technology is intended to enable agile handling and better torque application depending on wheel grip and vehicle speed.

For the first time, the Santa Fe Elite derivative comes with a Terrain Mode selector: a control knob located in the centre console to conveniently switch between different drive modes. The different drive modes optimise driving performance and HTRAC settings for a variety of situations. This feature includes unique driving modes for sand, snow and mud, as well as the driving modes Comfort, Sport and Eco.

Safety features aplenty

One of the active safety features in the new Santa Fe is the Reverse Parking Collision-Avoidance Assist (PCA), which uses a rear-view camera and rear ultrasonic sensors to detect obstacles when reversing, providing a warning and applying the brakes, if necessary, to avoid a collision. There is a slew of additional safety enhancements that is sure to make the drive in the all-new Santa Fe a more than a pleasant journey.

Pricing (at launch)

- Santa Fe R2.2 Executive 8sp DCT – R769,500
- Santa Fe R2.2 Elite 8sp DCT AWD – R869,500

The prices include a seven-year /200,000km manufacturer's warranty; a six-year /90,000km service plan; and roadside assistance over a period of seven years or a distance of 150,000km.

ABOUT NARESH MAHARAJ

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