

Rolling With the Road Runners

By Roger Witherspoon

The young pair waiting for the light to change outside the corner Starbucks made an attractive sight. The seven-year-old black kid, whose cap matched the color and rakish angle of his young father's, held tightly to his Dad's hand as he stared intently at the car pulling up to the curb.

"What kind of car is that, Dad?" he asked.

"Let's find out," the young man replied.

Together, they walked slowly around the car – twice – the youngster commenting on the crayon red color with the orange undertones, the sunroof, the curved lines and the 19-inch wheels which, next to his thin frame, looked huge.

"That is one tricked out ride," commented the father. "I'd never have thought it was a Hyundai."



Actually, it was the Hyundai Genesis Coupe, the two door sports car that the Koreans bill as the "evil twin" to their more traditional Genesis sedan. It is a revved up sports car aimed in theory at a fast moving market carved out by the Infiniti G-37, the Mustang GT and the BMW M3, with a few design cues reminiscent of the Mazda RX-8. But, the Korean design team clearly intends the Genesis to run ahead of the pack rather than with it.

That was also the impression of the NJ State Trooper, who paused as he came out of Starbucks and asked first to look under the hood, noting the 3.8-liter V-6 engine capable of cranking out 306 horsepower and taking off from 0 – 60 miles per hour in just 5.7 seconds. That puts the Genesis about a half second and \$6,000 less than Infiniti's G-Thang.

The officer walked around the car, noted its trim lines and flared humps over the racing tires, and asked how fast it could go. When informed that the Genesis tops out at a bit over 150 miles per hour he looked surprised, and then said, simply, "I'll have to look out for these."

He won't have trouble spotting a Genesis. They are sleek, low, with a slim, short grill flanked by sharply slanted high density lights, an elevated rear and a wide stance. It is a rear wheel drive sport coupe which takes off without a trace of a shimmy. The rocker panels are low and wide, as if designed to stabilize the car while in flight – though the stability is taken care of by the Genesis' traction and roll controls. Its low grill, which curves up and around the fog lights, gives the impression of a kid with a permanent smirk – particularly as it is racing towards you.

The Genesis' six speed transmission comes in two flavors: traditional manual with aluminum paddles, or automatic with an electronic manual shift mode that is equally smooth and responsive.

If the exterior of the Genesis is designed to grab the youthful and the speed addicted, the interior is intended to appeal to a much broader spectrum. This was not a car designed in Asia. The Genesis' outer look came from the crayons of Eric Stoddard, a white, California surfer dude, and the Black and Hispanic men on his team. The interior came from the defter palates of the women in Hyundai's western design studio.



She was a retired librarian whose automotive tastes ran to Honda Civics and who seldom drove more than five miles an hour past the posted speed limit. But she found the lines of the Genesis, with its soft curves, intriguing. Inside, she frequently found her hands almost caressing the double stitched leather that was

soft and supple like formal leather gloves. The gears shifted seamlessly, without the thought and conscious effort she was used to, and the 6.5-inch navigation touch screen was easy to use. As she shifted into fifth gear and realized the speedometer was pushing 90 miles per hour she said, simply, "I can get used to this."

The Genesis comes with a load of upscale electronics. For safety, there are heated side mirrors with turn signal indicators, as well as high intensity headlights and fog lamps. For entertainment, there is XM satellite radio, which is integrated with the navigation system for real time traffic updates. It has easily connected Bluetooth, and for additional entertainment, contains a CD player as well as iPod and USB ports mated to an 8-GB hard drive and a 10-speaker, 360-watt sound system.

All of which makes the Genesis a head-turning sports car that one is reluctant to get out of.



2010 Hyundai Genesis GT

MSRP: **\$29,750**
EPA Mileage: **17 MPG City** **26 MPG Highway**

Performance / Safety:
0 – 60 MPH **5.7 Seconds**
Top Speed: **150 MPH**

3.8-Liter aluminum DOHC V-6 engine producing 306 horsepower and 266 pound-feet of torque; sport tuned MacPherson strut dual link front suspension; sport tuned 5-link rear suspension; 6-speed manual transmission; Brembo disc brakes with ABS; 19-inch alloy wheels; electronic stability and traction controls; fog lights and Xenon high intensity headlights; leather wrapped, tilt steering wheel with fingertip audio controls; backup warning system; front airbags, front seat-mounted side airbags, and front side curtain airbags.

Interior / Comfort:

AM/FM/XM satellite radio; navigation system with 6.5-inch touch screen; 10-speaker, 360-watt sound system; CD player; iPod and USB ports; 8-GB juke box hard drive; power sun roof; heated front seats; leather wrapped, tilt steering wheel with fingertip audio controls; Bluetooth connection; heated side mirrors.