Car Buyers Choose Best Road Trip Vehicles

Editors of Kelley Blue Book's kbb.com Choose 10 Great New Road Trip Cars, Buyers Rank Top Choices

Despite the fact that a gallon of gas is still 25 cents more than it was a year ago, 30 million people or 84 percent of Memorial Day weekend travelers expect to drive, according to AAA. That being said, the road test editors of Kelley Blue Book's kbb.com chose 10 current vehicles they thought would be most suited to road trips and then asked car buyers which of these vehicles they would most like to take on the road this summer. The results have been tallied and the chart below displays consumers' rankings:

Rank	Choice	Percentage
1	2005 Chevrolet Corvette Convertible	19%
2	2005 Chevrolet Suburban	17%
3	2006 Chrysler 300 SRT8	15%
4	2005 Honda Odyssey	10%
5	2006 Lexus RX 400h	9%
6	2005 Land Rover LR3	8%
7	2006 BMW 530XIT	7%
8	2005 Mazda RX-8	6%
9	2005 Volkswagen Phaeton	5%
10	2005 MINI Cooper Convertible	4%

This year domestic manufacturers dominate the top spots with three very different models -- Chevrolet's classic sporty Corvette Convertible ranking first, family-hauling and towing favorite Chevrolet Suburban placing second, and Chrysler's 300 SRT8 performance sedan coming in third. With hefty prices still evident at the gas pump, Lexus' all-new luxury hybrid RX 400h SUV ranked in the middle of the pack among consumers' choices for a road trip this summer.

Kbb.com Editors' Comments on Each Vehicle:

2005 Chevrolet Corvette Convertible -- This isn't just a bow to the Martin Milner/George Maharis TV series; the current Corvette can shorten distances in ways few can match and is likely the greatest performance-car value on the market.

2005 Chevrolet Suburban -- There's a reason customers buy one Suburban after another -- for those with large families and those who tow boats or trailers, this is the vehicle of choice. With capacity for up to nine passengers and plenty of gear, the Suburban is a very comfortable long-range hauler.

2006 Chrysler 300 SRT8 -- The big American car lives! In the 300, Chrysler has captured the presence of a big American sedan and bestowed it with not only bold styling but the performance to make a statement.

2005 Honda Odyssey -- If your road trip qualifies as a group activity, setting sail in the new, even roomier Odyssey will help deter any fights for the front seat. And because it sometimes runs on just three of its six cylinders, it delivers a segment-leading 28 miles per gallon on the highway.

2006 Lexus RX 400h -- Smooth road manners, lots of passing power and high gas mileage make this car-like, roomy SUV a travel-worthy vessel for today's upscale, socially conscious driver. Though it won't scale steep, boulder-strewn mountain trails, it will carry you comfortably over the harsh realities of paved highways.

2005 Land Rover LR3 -- Though road trips can sometimes land you in rather rustic places, you still might want to travel in style while having the muscle to make it up the mountain. If so, the LR3 will get you and your clan to the top.

2006 BMW 530XIT -- Fewer things are more satisfying than outrunning and out-handling others while at the wheel of a station wagon. With its

super-smooth 215-horsepower in-line six-cylinder engine and sweet as Splenda® handling, the BMW 530XIT is great car for hauling you, friends and stuff.

2005 Mazda RX-8 -- With the unique hum of the rotary engine, 50:50 even weight distribution and adequate seating for four adults, Mazda's RX-8 combines the fun of driving a true sports car and the practicality needed to travel with more than one passenger.

2005 Volkswagen Phaeton -- Twelve cylinders, 420 horsepower and an upscale cabin that reminds you of the late, lamented Concorde supersonic jet, the Phaeton makes you feel like you're part of a very exclusive club.

2005 MINI Cooper Convertible -- If you want to blast through Europe with the wind rushing through your hair, or just pretend you're blasting through Europe top-down amid the grain fields of Nebraska, you couldn't ask for a more willing or fun-to-drive partner. And the gas money won't break you either.

Kelley Blue Book's "Best Road Trip Vehicle" survey was administered via the Internet on kbb.com to more than 400 participants on May 11-19, 2005.

About Kelley Blue Book (kbb.com)

Kelley Blue Book's kbb.com is America's most used and trusted vehicle pricing, values and information resource. The top-rated Web site provides the most up-to-date pricing and values for thousands of new and used vehicles, including the Blue Book® New Car Value, which reveals what people actually are paying for new cars. Since 1926, car buyers and sellers have relied upon Kelley Blue Book for authoritative and unbiased information to make well-informed automotive decisions. The company also reports vehicle prices and values via products and services, including the famous Blue Book® Official Guide and software products. Car buyers have rated kbb.com No. 1 in overall customer satisfaction and experience, according to a survey by Keynote Systems. Kbb.com also has been named the No. 1 automotive information site by Nielsen//NetRatings and J.D. Power and Associates seven years in a row. No other medium reaches more in-market vehicle shoppers than kbb.com; one in every four American car buyers complete their research on kbb.com.

SOURCE: Kelley Blue Book

CONTACT: Robyn Eckard, +1-949-268-3049, reckard@kbb.com, or Joanna McNally, +1-949-268-3079, jmcnally@kbb.com, both of Kelley Blue Book

Web site: http://www.kbb.com/

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