

2013 MAZDA CX-9

The largest vehicle in the lineup, the [2013 CX-9](#) is a mid-size SUV that seemingly towers over its Mazda brethren in size and maturity, yet behind the wheel feels just as sprightly and acts just as juvenile as the rest of the Zoom-Zoom lot. This is *not* a bad thing. Refreshed for the 2013 model year, the three-row, seven-passenger CX-9 receives KODO “Soul of Motion” design enhancements, the new familial look that began with the [SHINARI Concept](#), as well as added technology features from the inside out.

“Since its launch in 2007, CX-9 is without a doubt Mazda’s flagship SUV,” said Jim O’Sullivan, president and CEO, Mazda North American Operations (MNAO). “Always a strong segment competitor, this refreshed mid-size SUV will continue to impress consumers looking for versatility and finesse with its athletic styling, unrivaled dynamics and dependable safety.”

Unmistakably Mazda, the 2013 CX-9 has evolved into a dramatic yet refined design, like the grown-up in an expensive suit but sans expensive tie. Available in three trim levels – Sport, Touring and Grand Touring – the CX-9 is not one to discriminate and offers all consumers a mid-size SUV that delivers on dynamics and content as well as provides all occupants a front-row seat to sophistication and comfort.

Emotion-Evoking Exterior

The KODO design language exudes aggression and grace, energy and poise, strength and elegance. Mazda’s most expressive design theme yet, KODO captures the fluidity of movement – while standing still. The unfiltered refinement of the 2013 CX-9 further vocalizes this with the precisely etched features in its new front-end and rear-facing appeal. From the slight snarl of the five-point front grille and its chrome outline that points deftly and defined into eagle-eyed headlamps to the commanding calm of the rear taillights overseeing a masculine landscape that develops into the redesigned robust plateau of the rear bumper, no one said utilitarian had to be ugly.

The fog lights also have been redesigned to sync with the KODO-esque attributes of the front fascia as have the dual rear exhaust pipes, changing from a lean trapezoid to a fog light-matching round shape. The overall stature of the CX-9 continues to be one of prominence and luxury with strong 18-inch aluminum alloy wheels wrapped in P245/60R18 all-season tires fitting perfectly under brawny fender arches. Optional 20-inch aluminum alloy wheels dusted in a satin chrome finish are paired with Bridgestone Dueler H/L 400 P245/50R20 all-season rubbers.

The steeply raked windshield further accentuates the vehicle’s agile ability and continues the course into an expansive roofline that ostensibly dares you to load it with any amount of rooftop cargo. Any number of optional roof rack systems can be had courtesy of the standard roof rails. The body colored rear spoiler? That’s standard, too. The large-view side and rear windows form an open and modern greenhouse as well as provide outward visibility from all seating positions.

The 2013 CX-9 is available in six glosses including Crystal White Pearl, Liquid Silver, Brilliant Black, Dolphin Gray and two new shades in Zeal Red and Meteor Gray.

Highly Versatile, Well Crafted Interior

Under the CX-9’s sleek exterior is an interior with the mettle to impress consumers who expect nothing less than spaciousness, functionality and premium content from every SUV on their shopping lists. Sitting on a 113.2-inch wheelbase, the CX-9 has a lot of length for design minds to play with and with an overall width of 76.2 inches a roomy interior for seven adults to reap the rewards. Its organized and efficient interior layout also is replete with rich touch points.

Without a moonroof, passenger volume is a generous 139.4 cubic feet. Headroom is top hat worthy at 39.6 inches in the front row with 39.0 and 35.4 inches available in the second and third rows, respectively. When moonroof-equipped, the skylight reduces the space by 1.7 cubic feet to a still comfortable 137.7 cubic feet. The front row features a headache-free 38.4 inches of headroom. The second- and third-row dimensions remain

unchanged. Legroom is measured at a stretchable 40.9 inches in the front row, 39.8 inches in the second and 32.4 inches in the third.

For versatility points, the 60/40-split second row easily accommodates three passengers and offers approximately five inches of fore-and-aft travel in addition to a reclining backrest. In the 50/50-split third row, seating position and legroom are among the leaders in the mid-size SUV segment, both in numbers and real-world comfort. Access into the third row also is effortless with nearly 26 inches of ingress space between a folded second-row seat and the C-pillar.

Extra thought was invested in all the finer functionality details, such as how the seat releases are configured. For example, releasing the second row seat in order to enter the third row requires only one simple hand motion to unlatch the seat and move it forward. Likewise, a clever strap attached behind the third row seat's backrest serves as both a release for folding the seat down and as a means to pulling it back up.

With all seats occupied, the CX-9 provides 17.2 cubic feet of cargo space, which eclipses many large sedans. Both second and third row seats fold flat to provide up to 100.7 cubic feet of storage space from the rear hatch and up towards the seat backs of the front row.

Sport and Touring models exhibit piano black trim accents while Grand Touring models feature a high-quality Bordeaux throughout the vehicle. Fitted along the door panels and hugging alongside an updated center console, this detail is not overly brash but elegantly subtle. A redesigned leather-wrapped shift knob is standard and provides the palm-perfect fit from park to drive and all the gears in between.

Visibility is important in all lighting situations because the less focused your eyes are on the flash of the dash the more focused you are on the road. Changing from red-on-black to white-on-dark, the panel details are equally readable in the bright of day and without a harsh appearance in the dark of night. In addition, intuitive operational switches and knobs abound. Some controls are repetitive, such as radio and phone operations, so as to offer consumers more choices in adjusting vehicle settings to their preference rather than they change their natural habits to adapt to the vehicle.

A leather-wrapped steering wheel, which offers tilt and telescopic functions as well as audio and cruise controls, is standard. Also standard are anti-pinch power windows with a one-touch automatic up/down feature for front row windows.

With the "hard" surfaces of the CX-9's interior leaning toward easy-to-use functionality, the "soft" areas lean toward spoiled comfort. Standard on Sport models is a sporting black cloth interior while moving up the line to a Touring or Grand Touring invites leather-trimmed upholstery in either black or sand hues, the latter being new for 2013. The black leather trim is highlighted with black suede inserts and features red contrast stitching. All leather seats offer two heat settings. Plush and welcoming in any seat, the front row offers added seat bolstering.

Make Connections

A 5.8-inch multi-information display (MID) screen is new for 2013 and standard on all trim levels. All-new infotainment features include HD Radio™ Technology and Pandora®. HD Radio is a subscription-free digital AM and FM broadcast radio service which provides crystal-clear sound, on-screen information and additional programming choices via HD2 and HD3 channels. Pandora offers personalized stations based on the input of a single "seed" (i.e. favorite band, song or genre) and continually customizes its playlist using musicological "DNA" and listener feedback. When music from a personal device is preferred, MP3 players and smartphones can be connected via the Bluetooth® hands-free phone and audio system. This allows all information and folders to display and be controlled via the MID. A USB connection port offers an alternative for users, such as infrequent passengers, who do not want to connect their devices via Bluetooth. All the aforementioned systems, including an auxiliary jack, are standard.

The Bluetooth system itself has been updated from the previous CX-9 model year. Version 1.4 of the Audio/Video Remote Control Profile (AVRCP) now allows users to repeat tracks, shuffle tracks and select folders. The speech recognition functionality also has been significantly improved and features a new microphone with enhanced noise-control processing and high-performance wind-noise suppression processing. Initiating phone calls using voice recognition is simplified and contacts can be saved into the directory with a single operation.

The directory can now hold up to 1,000 contacts, a figure up significantly from the previous version's maximum allotment of 32.

A new standard feature for 2013 is audio message receipt and delivery. When a smartphone is connected, Short Message Service (SMS) messages can be received and shown on the MID. The system can then articulate the messages as well as allow users to send replies using fixed phrases.

Available is a TomTom technology-based in-dash navigation system featuring premium North American maps, advanced lane guidance, intuitive voice recognition and real-time traffic. The navigation module communicates with the Sanyo display head unit in the CX-9 via a USB interface and utilizes an SD card for storing map data. The SD card feature allows consumers to input customized maps as well as regularly update TomTom mapping content and software via their home computer.

All of these auditory features pump their sound waves through a standard high-quality six-speaker sound system matched with an AM/FM/CD head unit. A premium 10-speaker Bose® Centerpoint® Surround Sound System with AudioPilot® is available on Touring and Grand Touring models with a higher-end 11-speaker Bose sound system available on Grand Touring models only. Sirius Satellite Radio with a complimentary four-month subscription is an option for all trim levels.

These ease-of-operation updates for telephone, navigation and music systems provide even greater convenience for users and means that less time is focused elsewhere than the road ahead.

The Power of Engineering

A more than potent MZR 3.7-liter V-6 engine powers the 2013 CX-9, making even the most harried drives seem like a stroll along the beach. Its peak power of 273 horsepower at 6,250 rpm offers explosive acceleration and passing performance. The torque curve keeps 250 lb-ft at 3,000 to 6,000 rpm and peaks at 270 lb-ft at 4,250 rpm.

The 60-degree short-stroke V-6 is state-of-the art throughout. Advanced features include a die-cast aluminum block with cast-in iron cylinder liners and aluminum cylinder heads for minimizing vehicle weight. The valve train includes chain-drive dual overhead camshafts for minimal maintenance, four valves-per-cylinder with direct acting bucket-type actuators and variable intake valve timing. The throttle is electronically controlled for on-the-spot responsiveness.

Two close-coupled catalytic converters clean the exhaust without hindering power. Computer-aided engineering analysis was used extensively to configure the cylinder block casting, to shape intake and exhaust ports and to design the high-volume exhaust system fitted with three large mufflers. Very low back pressure is one of the reasons why the power curve is still ascending at the 6,500-rpm redline. In addition, the forged-steel crankshaft is fitted with induction-hardened journals and a full complement of counterweights. Engineering details also extend to a roller-chain cam-drive sprocket lined with rubber for added noise reduction.

The 2013 CX-9 utilizes an Aisin-supplied six-speed Sport AT automatic transmission with a manual mode as standard equipment. Broad ratios maximize flexibility by providing enthusiastic launching with quiet cruising speeds. The top two gears are both overdrive ratios. This is how the vehicle is able to offer both excellent acceleration and fuel economy. A manual transmission is not available on CX-9.

Front-wheel drive (FWD) is standard on all trim levels with Mazda's Active Torque All-Wheel-Drive (AWD) available as an option. This AWD system rapidly adjusts to changing traction needs by monitoring wheel slippage, steering angle, yaw rate, lateral acceleration and available driveline torque. In normal driving situations, 100 percent of the driving torque is delivered to the front wheels. During aggressive acceleration, or when one front wheel is on the verge of slipping, a controlled percentage of the available torque is directed to the rear axle.

A power take-off device integrated with the vehicle's transaxle spins a drive shaft attached to an active coupling built into the rear differential. Commanded by a control module, the servo-controlled multi-plate coupling can route from zero and up to 50 percent of the available torque to the rear wheels.

Fuel economy for FWD models is EPA-estimated at 17 city/24 highway miles per gallon (MPG). Models optioned with the AWD system are expected to achieve 16 city/22 highway MPG, per the EPA.

Flexible Packaging

The 2013 CX-9 is offered in Sport, Touring and Grand Touring trims, and all models offer three-zone automatic climate control air conditioning, cruise control, anti-pinch power windows with one-touch up/down operation for front windows, power door locks, remote keyless entry with a retractable key, a trip computer, a tilt-and-telescopic steering wheel, steering wheel-mounted audio and cruise controls, a leather-wrapped steering wheel and shift knob, a Bluetooth hands-free audio and phone system, a 5.8-inch multi-information display (MID) in-dash screen and enhanced audio features with HD Radio Technology, Pandora and audio receipt and reply of smartphone messages. USB and auxiliary jack connection ports also are standard.

The Sport model stoically sits upon 18-inch aluminum alloy wheels wrapped in P245/60R18 all-season tires. An eight-way power-adjustable driver seat with manual lumbar support, heated front cloth seats and heated outside mirrors are available as an optional package.

Stepping up to the Touring model adds leather seat trim, an eight-way power-adjustable driver seat with power lumbar support, a four-way power-adjustable front passenger seat, auto on/off headlights, a Blind Spot Monitoring (BSM) system, rear backup sensors and a rearview camera. The Touring Technology Package is available and offers a premium Bose 10-speaker surround sound system, a TomTom-based in-dash navigation system with real-time traffic, a power lift gate, the Mazda Advanced Keyless Entry and Start System, a four-month complimentary subscription to Sirius Satellite Radio, a moonroof and fog lights.

Rolling up on 20-inch satin chrome alloy wheels is the Grand Touring model. Tires are Bridgestone Dueler H/L 400 low-profile all-season radials. This top-of-the-line trim adds standard amenities such as chrome exterior door handles, rain-sensing windshield wipers, an anti-theft alarm, exterior mirrors with turn indicators, power outside mirrors with memory and an automatic tilt-in-reverse feature, fog lights, a power lift gate, auto on/off bi-xenon high-intensity discharge (HID) headlights with manual leveling, LED daytime running lights, a three-position memory driver's seat, a HomeLink® auto-dimming rearview mirror and premium Bordeaux interior accents.

Grand Touring models are available with three package options. The Grand Touring Technology Package upgrades include a Bose 10-speaker surround sound system, a TomTom-based in-dash navigation system, a moonroof and four months of complimentary Sirius Satellite Radio service. A Rear Seat Entertainment System Package offers a nine-inch-screen DVD player, an 11-speaker Bose® Centerpoint® Surround Sound System with AudioPilot®, a TomTom-based in-dash navigation system with real-time traffic, a 115-volt outlet and Sirius Satellite Radio with a four-month complimentary subscription. This package cannot be combined with the Grand Touring Technology Package.

A Towing Prep Package is available only with Grand Touring models. While all CX-9 FWD vehicles are equipped with 2,000 lbs. of towing capacity, the Towing Prep Package bumps that pull strength to 3,500 lbs. Included are a heavy-duty transmission cooler and radiator fan as well as a revised engine control module. To complete the towing package, a towing receiver hitch accessory must be purchased separately. AWD models receive the Towing Prep Package as standard equipment.

Standard Safety

All models of the 2013 CX-9 include among the best in advanced vehicle safety features to include six airbags (advanced dual front, front-seat mounted and full-length side curtain), an Anti-lock Brake System (ABS), Electronic Brakeforce Distribution (EBD) with Brake Assist, Dynamic Stability Control (DSC) with a Traction Control System (TCS), a tire pressure monitoring system (TPMS), Roll Stability Control (RSC), "Triple H" body construction, front and rear side crumple zones, three-point safety belts for all seating positions, front seatbelt pretensioners with force limiters as well as Lower Anchors and Tethers for Children (LATCH).

New for 2013 is availability of the Blind Spot Monitoring (BSM) system and rearview camera being extended to Touring models in addition to Grand Touring models as standard equipment. Rear backup sensors are new for this model year and also are standard for both trim levels.

Also, all Mazda vehicles come with the Mazda Certified Roadside Assistance Program. Using either the toll-free number or free Mazda Assist app for iOS- and Android-operated mobile devices, vehicle owners and their family members can contact roadside assistance 24 hours a day, 365 days a year throughout the United States and Canada. In addition, the New Vehicle Limited Warranty includes a comprehensive three-year/36,000-mile warranty, which covers every part of the vehicle except those subject to normal wear, a five-year/60,000-mile powertrain warranty and a five-year/unlimited-mileage corrosion warranty.

Mazda North American Operations is headquartered in Irvine, Calif., and oversees the sales, marketing, parts and customer service support of [Mazda vehicles](#) in the United States and Mexico through nearly 700 dealers. Operations in Mexico are managed by Mazda Motor de Mexico in Mexico City. For more information on Mazda vehicles, including photography and b-roll, please visit the online Mazda media center at www.mazdausamedia.com.

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