

Suburban Observer & Eccentric Automotive Showcase

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CAR Report



Tahoe makes the grade

By Anne Fracassa
Avanti NewsFeatures

My neighbor Joe just couldn't wait to get behind the wheel of the 1996 Chevrolet Tahoe I'd just brought home. Poor guy wants one so badly he can taste it.

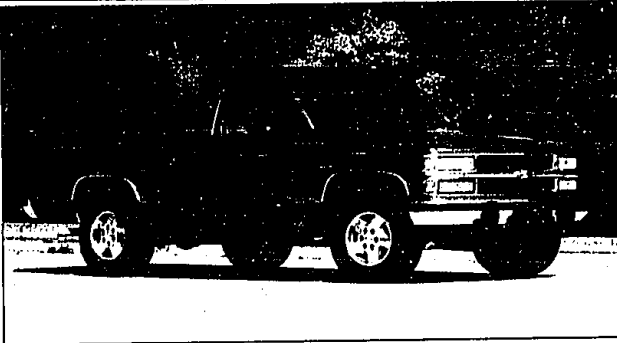
I threw him the keys and he took it for a spin around the block.

"This is sooooo nice," he cooed. "Perfect, just perfect."

Joe was right. It's perfect for a guy like him: He has teen-age girls, likes to travel, likes to have a strong truck and loves comfortable luxury vehicles.

The Tahoe is Chevrolet's newest sport utility offering — larger than the Blazer, but smaller than the Suburban. It's a perfect mesh of the two, actually. The most surprising thing about the Tahoe is that although it looks like a mammoth vehicle, it really isn't. You need the running boards on the Suburban, you don't need it with the Tahoe, although it is a dealer-installed option.

This SUV is much like stepping into a luxury car. The bench seats are really comfy. Up front, there's a center armrest storage compartment complete with a coin holder, a convenient writing surface and a lid-mounted map net. The passenger compartment has rear-seat heat ducts, which provides added comfort when it's cold or hot.



ROAD TEST
By
Anne Fracassa

Formerly called the K-Blazer, the Tahoe is available in two- and four-wheel-drive and 2- and 4-door models.

Standard engine on the Tahoe is a brand new Vortec 6700 V8 with sequential fuel injection that produces 255 horsepower and 3300 foot pounds of torque. The new engine produces 55 more horsepower than last year's 6.7-liter V-8 — a welcome addition for anyone planning to tow a boat, snowmobile or trailer. Optional engines include a 6.5-liter turbo-

diesel V-8 that produces 180 horsepower and is mated to a heavy-duty 4-speed automatic transmission.

Both engines have 100,000-mile (or five years' worth of) engine coolant, platinum-tipped spark plugs (that allow no tune-ups until 100,000 miles) and transmission fluid that never needs replacement under normal use.

Buyers have a choice of panel rear doors or combination lift-glass tailgate. There are advantages to both, depending on your life style. The panel rear doors create a strange "seam" in your rear-view mirror, but that also means you can load cargo quite easily. With the lift-glass tailgate, you eliminate the seam and you can load cargo as you would in a pick-up truck.

Some amenities you'll find in Tahoe that set it apart from other SUVs on the market include an illuminated entry feature that

keeps the interior light on for a few seconds after the last door is shut and two auxiliary 12-volt outlets for the car phone or any other electronic accessory.

The Tahoe has a base price of just over \$30,000 and comes equipped quite well. Standard features include overhead console, auxiliary transmission cooling system, 4-speed automatic transmission, air conditioning, dual electric mirrors, aluminum wheels, electronic AM/FM stereo radio with seek-scan, stereo cassette and digital clock, power windows, electrochromatic rear view mirror with 8-point compass, leather wrapped steering wheel and color keyed floor mats.

The Tahoe tested had a six-way power seat, remote keyless entry, high back reclining bucket seats, side running board steps, rear axle locking differential, electronic shift transfer case (for shift-on-the-fly capabilities), 16-inch all terrain tires, CD player, two-tone

paint and heavy duty trailering equipment.

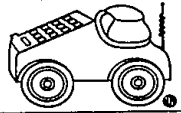
Safety hasn't been forgotten here, either. Daytime running lights, standard 4-wheel anti-lock brakes, brake/transmission interlock, driver's air bag, reinforced safety cage, front and rear crush zones, laminated windshield glass, energy-absorbing steering column, outboard passenger head restraints, and child security rear door locks are all standard equipment.

The Tahoe offers seating for five or six passengers. Five is comfortable.

Instrumentation is easy to read and easy to operate. All switches are backlit, which makes it oh, so easy to find in a dark garage. The instrument cluster includes plenty of gauges like coolant temperature, oil pressure, voltmeter, tachometer, trip odometer and telltale lights.

Another nice feature is a single two-sided key that operates both the ignition and the doors.

Consider the Tahoe a good choice for anyone who loves to travel in comfort for a weekend get-away or just for tooling around town — it's solid transportation in a classy package.



If you'd like to see a particular model tested or if you have a car question, send Anne Fracassa a message at AVANTI1054, Avanti's America Online mailbox...

Or comment through the Internet at AVANTI1054@aol.com

Anne Fracassa is senior editor of Avanti News Features.

1996 Chevrolet Tahoe
Vehicle class: Full-size sport utility vehicle.
Engine: Vortec 6700 V-8 SFI.
Where built: Janesville, Wis. (4 door), and Silao, Mexico (2 door).
Base price: \$30,464
As tested: \$52,935

Driver Errors That Cause Most Accidents

The National Safety Council says two-thirds of highway accidents are caused at least in part by driver error. Those errors include:

- Following too closely
- Overdependence on our brakes
- Driver inattention
- Driving too fast for conditions
- Inability to control skids
- Failure to use mirrors, signal for a turn, or yield
- Failure to turn on headlights at dusk
- Failure to maintain brakes, lights and windshield wipers
- Neglect of tires and ride control systems that affect the vehicle's stability and roadability

Car Care Council

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1996 GRAND PRIX SE SEDAN Dual air bags, 3.1 V6, power windows, power door locks, pass key theft deterrent, cruise, rear defogger, AM/FM cassette, aluminum wheels, remote trunk release & more. Stock #960040 SALE PRICE \$15,995* GM OPT II Deduct \$61.55	1996 GRAND AM GT COUPE Automatic transmission, 3100 V6, dual airbags, anti-lock brakes, cruise control, rear defogger, AM/FM stereo cassette, power door locks. Stock #960265. 36 MONTH SMART LEASE \$223.99** per mo. 1996 SUNFIRE SE 2 DOOR COUPE Air conditioning, tilt, AM/FM cassette, defogger, ABS brakes, dual air bags. Stock #960183. MSRP \$11,995* GM OPT II Deduct \$640.45	1996 JIMMY 4X4 4 DOOR 4.3 V6 engine, air conditioning, automatic transmission, ABS brakes, air bag, power windows/locks/mirrors, tilt, cruise, AM/FM cassette stereo, and much more! Stock # 960270. SALE PRICE \$23,995* 30 month Smart Lease \$299** per mo. GM OPT II Deduct \$1306.20 1996 BONNEVILLE SE 3600 V6, automatic transmission, air conditioning, AM/FM stereo, rear defogger, power windows, power locks, ABS brakes, dual air bags. Stock #960114. SALE PRICE \$19,695* 36 month Smart Lease \$299** per mo. GM OPT II Deduct \$1079.45	1996 SONOMA EXT. CAB 2.2 liter, four cylinder engine, four speed automatic transmission, air bag, ABS brakes, air conditioning, tilt, cruise, aluminum wheels, AM/FM stereo cassette, tachometer and much more! Stock #960078. SALE PRICE \$14,495* GM OPT II Deduct \$406.55 1996 SIERRA PICK-UP Vortec 4300 V8 engine, auto transmission, air conditioning, air bag, ABS brakes, painted rear step bumper, AM/FM stereo and much more! Stock #960283. SALE PRICE \$15,995* GM OPT II Deduct \$819.55 36 month Smart Lease \$299** per mo. 1996 SAFARI VAN Vortec 4300 V6 engine, auto trans, w/overdrive, dual air bags, ABS brakes, air conditioning, dual doors, 8 passenger seating, power windows, locks and mirrors, tilt & cruise, luggage carrier, rear defogger, AM/FM cassette stereo and much more! Stock #960154. SALE PRICE \$19,945* 36 month Smart Lease \$319** per mo. GM OPT II Deduct \$1070.50
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1996 GRAND PRIX SE	1996 GRAND AM GT	1996 JIMMY 4X4	1996 SONOMA EXT. CAB	1996 SIERRA PICK-UP	1996 BONNEVILLE SE	1996 SAFARI VAN
24,995	14,495	SAVE LOTS	7995	11,995	13,995	14,475
						7995
						16,495

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