

Review - Toyota Landcruiser GX

Written by Dave Conole
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In Australia, Toyota is seen as a “cardigan car” brand, with capable if unexciting vehicles such as the Aurion and Camry. The Corolla is consistently a high seller but, behind the scenes, is Toyota’s legendary Landcruiser.

First released to an unsuspecting world in 1951, it’s grown and evolved and diverged into different models. I’ve got my hands on the 200 series GX and I’n going to take a look at where this classic nameplate is today.

It’s a four model range: GX, GXL, VX and Sahara. The GX as tested comes with a planet rotation stopping twin turbo, 650Nm diesel V8, at 4.5L capacity. That torque is available at just 1600 revs with peak power a reasonable 190kW at 3400rpm. The iron block, alloy head engine sips just over 10L per 100 kilometres, incredible given the ‘Cruiser’s kerb weight of a lick over two and a half tonnes.



The main tank is 93 litres in capacity with the auxiliary at 45L, providing a potential range of well over 1000 kms. There’s the characteristic diesel chatter under way, with the six speed auto

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calibrated to turn the engine over at 1600/1700 rpm for freeway velocity whilst the exhaust emits a muted V8 burble.

On the road the Landcruiser is relaxed, unstressed, that massive amount of torque easily motivating the mass along; sink the right foot and the transmission quietly drops two spots, the engine takes a deep breath and sends the speedo spinning. There's a palpable shove in the back and the horizon appears to increase in size rapidly. Given the drag co-efficient of the Landcruiser is akin to a kite in a stiff breeze, it's a truly remarkable sensation to experience.

Ride quality is niggly jiggly; the high profile dual purpose spec tyres (285/65s on 17 inch rims) do an admirable job of soaking up most bumps however the suspension (double wishbone front and live rear combination) is a bit touchy, with smaller and repetitive bumps being transmitted. Although there's a squeal from the tyres coming into some bends, there's never a true feeling of losing contact. The vehicle supplied was tested during some of Sydney's wettest summer days and it was more of the pucker factor than anything when it came to handling. Under brakes, a well modulated pedal, with consistent travel, hauls the 'Cruiser up with nary a blink. The near fourteen inch wide discs throwing out the anchors equally and without fuss each time.



As one would expect off road, it's a sure footed machine, with plenty of torque to power through foot deep puddles in a clay basin; in fact, the wading depth is set at a maximum of 700 millimetres. On a tech level, there's a centre diff lock, a transfer case for low range crawling and a dial for hill descent speed. With the front wheels being pushed more to the front bumper, approach angle is rated at a high thirty degrees with departure a tad less, at twenty. With an overall length of near as dammit five metres and a wheelbase of 2.85 metres, with a track of close to 1.8 metres, it presents a formidable footprint.
