



**HYUNDAI SANTA FE HIGHLANDER
WINNER OF THE OZROAMER
2013 7 SEAT AWD SUV UNDER \$60,000 AWARD**



by Rob Fraser



The Hyundai Santa Fe has always been a sales success and the all new in 2012 model with updates continues to be at the forefront of the medium AWD SUV category. The Hyundai Santa Fe Highlander 2.2R Diesel 6 Speed auto is a seven seat economical AWD SUV with a heap of features all packaged in a really good-looking vehicle that is relatively competent off road.

Externally the Highlander is defined by 19 inch Alloy wheels, Panoramic sun roof, XID headlights and daytime driving lights. Overall it remains one of the better looking vehicles in it's class.

Internally the Santa Fe is fantastic. While not opulent in the way of a European SUV it is quality throughout. The interior is well thought out, comfortable and practical. There are carbon graphite style accents and aluminium effect finishes throughout the cabin plus a new 'supervision' instrument cluster. Black leather trim is standard on the Highlander model.



The electrically adjustable driver's seat is comfortable with lumbar support and squab adjustment, has a memory function but could do with more travel for taller drivers. The passenger seat is also electrically adjustable and both are 3 stage heated for colder months. The dash is clean and simple to read with two large dials and dials within. In the centre of these is a useful MFD.

The leather steering wheel is both reach and height adjustable, has the usual controls attached and provides excellent feedback. The new Santa Fe also has the 3 mode Flex Steer which allows driver input between normal comfort and sport settings. It works well enough to be noticeable and I prefer to leave it on sport setting for more responsive steering.

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There is an abundance of storage areas with handy door sills, centre cup holders, two areas in front of the transmission lever for phones etc, chilled glove box and centre storage bin. Other Santa Fe Highlander features include 7" touch screen satellite navigation with SUNA live traffic and 3 year MapCare plan, USB audio input with iPod® compatibility, Premium audio system, cruise control, heated outside mirrors that dip in reverse, push button start and proximity key, Solar control glass with rear privacy tint, Automatic climate control air conditioning, electro-chromatic rear view mirror, reversing camera display as well as auto dusk sensing headlights, rain sensing wipers and dual zone climate control air conditioning. Third row passengers get their own air conditioning vents and fan speed control.

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Seating flexibility is a key feature with seven seats fitted. The second row of seats has a 60/40-split fold function and the third row a 50/50 split fold. The second row 'kerbside' seat can also tumble forward to allow easier access to the third row. The middle row of seats are comfortable for three teenagers etc, but are a little hard over long distances. The third row are better than most similar style seats and very comfortable for younger children.

A great feature for the family road trip is the air-conditioned cool box and there is also a convenient storage recess in the rear cargo area. With all seven seats in use though there is limited luggage space. When not in use the third row seats fold flat into the floor area.

The new Santa Fe Highlander has been designed to deliver maximum crash safety protection with seven airbags as standard. Driver and front passenger airbags, dual side front (thorax) airbags and front and rear passenger side curtain airbags (which extend to the third row).



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Model	Santa Fe Highlander
Model Price	\$56,271 RDAP
Engine	2.2L 'R' 4 Cyl
Drivetrain	AWD 6 speed Auto
Power	145 Kw @ 3,800 rpm
Torque	436 Nm @ 1,800 rpm
Safety	5 Star ANCAP
CO2 Emissions	192 g/km
GVR	3 Star
Economy	7.3L/100km (ADR comb)
Tow Capacity	Max 2000 kg
Tow Ball Rating	150 kg
Servicing	3 Years Capped
Warranty	5yr/ Unlimited km with full roadside assist



There is also a comprehensive suite of active safety technologies including Vehicle Stability Management (VSM), Electronic Stability Control (ESC), Traction Control System (TCS), Anti-skid Braking System (ABS) with Electronic Brakeforce Distribution (EBD) and Brake Assist System (BAS), Hill-start Assist Control (HAC), and Downhill Brake Control (DBC).

The new Santa Fe benefits from Motor Driven Power Steering (MDPS) with 3-mode Flex Steer and introduces Hyundai's Advanced Traction Cornering Control (ATCC) system. Rollover sensors are a new feature on all models. Should the vehicle be at risk of overturning the side and curtain airbags and seatbelt pretensioners are triggered.

Other standard safety features include Rear Park Assist, front active headrests and 3-point retractable seat belts for all occupants, including the third row. The Santa Fe driver's side safety window retracts if an obstacle is detected.

The Santa Fe Highlander comes with the 2.2L 'R' diesel motor mated to the 6 speed automatic transmission with sport Tiptronic. Like the Sorento it's nothing short of great. It produces 145kW of peak power and maximum torque of 436Nm from just 1,800 rpm for the automatic version. It provides more than enough 'grunt' to tackle what is asked of it.

We have previously towed horse floats, car trailers, camper trailers, ditch diggers, quad bikes and seadoos with the Highlander and never once did it grumble. Its off road ability is surprising if you take account of its overhangs and acknowledge its limitations it will provide heaps of off road fun for the family.

The design is reasonably stylish, comfortable, with seats seven, full of features, fantastic value and comes with Hyundai's 5-year warranty. Combine that with the awesome motor transmission combination it should be at the top of buyer's lists for an honest and practical family AWD SUV. The Highlander is the winner of the 2013 OzRoamer 7 Seat AWD SUV under \$60,000.



What's Good:

- Engine Transmission combination
- Seven seat practicality
- Value for money

What's Not:

- AWD not 4WD
- Tall drivers restricted
- Thick 'C' pillar

Overall OzRoamer Rating: 90/100

Behind the Wheel	9	Practicality	10
Comfort	9	Fit for Purpose	10
Equipment	9	Towing Ability	7
Performance	10	Off Road Ability	7
Ride & Handling	9	Value for Money	10