



Chrysler 300 Limited

Photos by Michael Cooney

Pushed hard on deserted winding roads, the tires squealed for mercy but the 200 remained solid, planted, and never missed a beat. Its limits were high for a front wheel drive car with such ride comfort. And like the 300, this 200 was quiet on freeways, smooth, and comfortable.

The 200's exterior shows a bit of sportiness—it's not elegant like the 300. And again, you get a lot for the money. Mine had that new V6, rated at 283 hp with a 6-speed auto. You can also get a 2.4L 4-cylinder engine with 173 hp. Taking off from stop lights, the V6 easily chirps the front tires.

Interior styling is functional and well thought out. Just not elegant like the 300's interior. The turn signal stalk was oddly stiff and coarse in its movement; other than that, all felt just fine.

This 300 was EPA-rated at 18-city, 27-highway mpg. I averaged 23.8. Expect

## 2011 Chrysler 300 Limited and 200 Limited Strong Value Wrapped in Smooth Riding Packages

The Chrysler 300 was introduced in 1955 and carried a Hemi-V8. Sprint forward 50 years to find an all-new 2005 Chrysler 300 rear wheel drive sedan with a Hemi-V8 (and V6 too). The switch from the 2004 and prior FWD 6-cylinder sedans to the brawny V8 housed in bold new styling for 2005 signaled a big hit for Chrysler. I reviewed the 300 Touring with V6 that year, and came away impressed.

Redesigned for 2011, the new Chrysler 300 takes all the good from the '05-'10 model and makes it even sweeter. Spending a week in this 300 with its all-new V6 engine showed a dramatic improvement over an already great package. The new 3.6L six brings 292 hp on board—an increase of 42. It had a 5-speed auto, and the big news for 2012 is a new 8-speed automatic with significant fuel economy gains.

This particular 300 was equipped with practically every imaginable luxury amenity. Power tilt/tele wood and leather wheel (heated), power adjustable foot pedals, power mirrors—all tied together in the driver memory function. Rear curtain, rear seat heaters, forced air heated and cooled perforated leather front seats... plus way more than I can list here. Get the picture?

Exterior styling is still dramatic and bold, and yet more elegant than before. Especially in this 300's metallic "Blackberry Pearl" paint with beige interior. Classy. Inside you'll find everything within sight thoughtfully designed with styling that is understated and upscale looking—easily the equal of most cars twice its price.

On the road, the 300 is a comfy cruiser—quiet, smooth, with all-day seats, a sun visor which slides and extends to give shade where you need it... seems they thought of everything.


Acceleration and handling should please most. For a larger luxurious car, its cornering ability is up to the task of hustling through the canyons at a good clip, if you don't mind some tire squeal. The new V6 has enough power to allow safe passing on two-lane roads, and a 363 hp Hemi V8 is available if you want more.

For 2011, the Chrysler Sebring more or less became the Chrysler 200. I say "more or less" because although it looks much the same, it is greatly improved under the skin and worth another look.

The Sebring chassis was not known for its solid feel—it flexed a bit. The new 200 chassis is stiff and feels completely solid. This shows itself in sharper handling and cornering prowess and a more secure feel.



over 30 EPA-highway mpg for the 2012 model. 300s begin at \$27,110 and this nicely loaded one came to \$40,775 with destination fees. The 200 with V6 is EPA-rated 19-city, 29-highway mpg and I got 23.4 with more city miles than in the 300. 200s begin at \$19,245 and this V6-equipped one totaled \$27,160.

In redesigning the 300, Chrysler took a good car and made it great. It's highly competitive in price and you get tons of content for your \$40k. The 200 is a good value too and you get a solid, nice driving car for way under \$30k. Find out more at Chrysler.com. 

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Chrysler 200 Limited