

2010 Lexus RX450h

Your first thought was most likely like mine, why would anyone build a hybrid SUV? Well there are folks out there that have kids that play sports or a very large instrument and all that gear needs to be moved from place to place. Plus the driving public is trying to be environmentally concerned about our surroundings. Well it sounds good anyway!

The 2010 Lexus RX 450h is a great vehicle to have such a sophisticated system aboard, you don't even know you're in a hybrid except for when you start the Lexus and there is no sound coming from under the hood, then after a few seconds it roars to life. The Lexus is as comfortable as the gas burner RX. The RX is very comfortable to drive with all the amenities, heated and air conditioned seats with lumbar of course. Leather is soft and supportive and a lot of seat adjustments and one feature found in the 250h I drove a few weeks ago and this RX is heads up display. At one time this feature was only found in the Corvette but now you can have it in your Lexus RX. One thing I liked was you could put your navigation on the windshield along with radio volume and your speed. On the 250h the HUD controls were well positioned on the RX there were in a more obscure position which made it difficult to operate at speed.

The 450h comes with a 3.5-liter Atkinson-cycle V6 for grunt power and a generator and two electric motors for electric power for short trips only or a combination of electric and gas propulsion will get you to your destination. The transmission is an Electronically Controlled Continuously Variable Transmission kind of like driving a golf cart with a ton of sophistication. You can get your RX in two-wheel or all wheel drive depending on your needs. If for some reason you would want to tow with a hybrid it must be the All Wheel Drive version. You get electric power steering, (This is a gas saver) four wheel disc brakes, standard 18-inch alloy wheels, my tester came with 19-inch alloy wheels with low resistant tires for added fuel mileage.

Inside is all comfort as I mentioned before the sound system was top notch with satellite radio, MP3 and of course am/fm/cd sound system with nine well placed speakers. You get Blue Tooth for hands free talking. You also get key fob entry that is pretty cool, just have the smart key fob on your person and you can open the doors just by grabbing the door handle. I have gotten real use to this feature and I hope it ends up on all vehicles in the future.

You also get a center controller that has a mouse-like control on top that allows you to search the entertainment system, climate control, navigation system all with the twist of your right hand. In the same area you have a sliding center console cover that allows the driver to have a comfortable arm rest while driving. I had a time looking for a 12-volt outlet but after a few minutes of digging I found it at the bottom of the center console, out of the way and pretty convenient once it was found.

The power rear hatch was a nice touch and there is plenty of room for adult and kids stuff in the rear, how did I like it on the open road? It was great, hauled a bunch of folks and made a few runs to the big box store for supplies for the up

coming winter and found the fuel mileage acceptable, 30 in the city and 28 on the open road.

My tester based out at \$43,250 plus tax and license but as it was shipped to me with a ton of fun stuff it hit the cash register at \$59,815 plus tax and license, seem a little pricey but it is a Lexus. My suggestion is take one out for a spin and see if it doesn't put a smile on your face!