

Title:

2007 Nissan Versa: Gen "Y", Take Notice

Word Count:

533

Summary:

Nissan is poised to release a Scion fighter all of its own. The Versa is aimed squarely at young buyers and certainly worth the consideration of those looking for value and style in their new car.

Keywords:

Nissan Versa, Scion, Honda Fit, Toyota Yaris, Dodge Hornet, Ford Bronco, Geely, Chery, Chinese cars

Article Body:

Automakers are clamoring to build and market cars to the Generation "Y" crowd which, loosely defined, and encompasses new drivers and mostly everyone who is under 30. Toyota threw the gauntlet down in 2003 when they introduced a line of cars under the Scion brand. Now, Nissan is responding and the Versa - to be released during the summer of 2006 - is their answer. Will the Versa compete successfully or be lost in a sea of Gen "Y" vehicles soon to flood the market? All of that is too early to determine, so let's take a look at the Versa and what the car has to offer to motorists.

A visit to Nissan's website reveals much about the Versa. Unlike a certain Scion vehicle that takes its styling cues from a toaster, the Versa is aerodynamic and reminds me of the Toyota Matrix. Available as a four door sedan or five door hatchback, the Versa is expected to retail for around \$12,000, the same price range as Scion vehicles. Like Scion, the Versa will be fairly well equipped to give motorists a value packed experience without having to add on several thousands more to the base sticker price in order to achieve a satisfactory and comfortable driving experience.

Along with a 1.8L I4 engine, here is what you can expect to be included with base models:

AM/FM/CD audio system

Air Conditioning

Power side mirrors and automatic trunk release

6 speed manual transmission [4 speed automatic is optional]

Split folding 60/40 seat with the hatchback

Not a bad standard equipment list for the price. For \$2,000 more, SL versions will come with aluminum alloy wheels, cruise control, power windows/doors/locks, remote keyless entry, a souped up sound system, and more.

The car will have a 102 inch wheel base which is long for a vehicle of its type. The result is more interior room, with four adults having ample knee and leg room to weather long trips.

Pictures of the interior reveal a car that is well thought out and not cheap looking. I especially like the dashboard with its overlapping circular instrument panel and easy to reach audio and air conditioning controls. A generation ago, entry level cars would have looked and felt cheap. Today's drivers expect more and the Versa delivers in the form of a decent level of standard equipment and attention to style.

The Versa replaces the Sentra as the entry level Nissan. Nissan has restyled the Sentra and "promoted" it up a notch much like Honda has done with the Civic and Toyota with the Corolla.

Although more expensive than Chevy's Aveo and Kia's Rio, the car has more flair and style than either one. Still, one has to wonder how the Versa will compete against Toyota's soon to be released Yaris and the all new Honda Fit. Throw in new models expected from Dodge and Ford and add Chinese cars to the mix and the whole entry level market becomes saturated.

Ultimately, the Versa is a step in the right direction and a nice alternative to some of its boxy competitors. Gen "Y" drivers have another choice in the Versa and an alternative to Scion, Toyota's youth-oriented brand.