

# Let's talk about a RAVolution!

 By [Naresh Maharaj](#) 16 Jul 2019

No, not the one that disrupts a country. Instead, one that adds credence to a much-loved SUV in South Africa. There is an affinity with South Africans towards the Toyota brand and this is large evident in the sales figures of the Hilux, Fortuner, Quantum, ETIOS and the RAV4. But, before I get ahead of myself, let's talk about Toyota's all-new and enhanced RAV4.

For starters, it's the fifth-generation RAV4 built on Toyota's New Global Architecture (TNGA) which enhances an expressive, angular exterior design together with an improved All-Wheel Drive functionality, new power trains and more safety features.



Image by Naresh Maharaj

With the original RAV4 unveiled in 1994, Toyota singlehandedly created the SUV crossover category; and it's that same pioneering spirit in the all-new fifth-generation RAV4 that sees this iconic SUV enter a new era of striking design, performance, capability and safety.

## A new era of performance and safety

The new RAV4 takes a bold leap forward with a dynamic new design characterised by a front grille with an assertive, angular bumper, and LED headlights, as well as taillights. This results in a vehicle that has a confident, athletic stance on the road.

This strong theme runs throughout the interior too, with an ergonomic, high-quality cabin characterised by soft-touch surfaces and something that appeals to me rather than hard plastic. This soft-touch is also found on the dashboard and door panels.



Image by Naresh Maharaj

Brushed-aluminium trim adds a premium feel and highlights the interior's stylish design, while a low-set instrument panel with horizontal lines that flow into the door panel emphasises the cabin's generous width and give the driver a clearer view of the road ahead. The new RAV4 is equipped with a host of safety features. A full set of airbags – including knee and curtain – are fitted to all models, with electronic driver assistance in the form of ABS, EBD, Brake Assist, Vehicle Stability Control (VSC), Hill Assist Control (HAC) and Trail Sway Control all catered for.

### **Even more comfortable**

The TNGA underpins the new RAV4. It's the first time its been used for an SUV and, in the RAV4, it contributes to an engaging yet supple ride, as well as a spacious interior with class-leading load space, which is a must when you talk SUV.

The dynamic abilities of the SUV come from the double-wishbone rear suspension which absorbs bumps and grinds, while still remaining responsive and athletic to provide the driver with commendable dynamic control.

### **Spacious interior**

A very striking feature that is worthy of a mention is the longer wheelbase (by 30mm). Straight away you know that this adds to more interior space. It's wider too (by 10mm), allowing for a larger, open centre console between the front seats – something more typical of larger SUVs – along with wider seats for rear passengers and increased opening-angle of the rear doors.



Image by Naresh Maharaj

Amazing what 30mm can do to the interior space of an SUV. In addition, the new RAV4 boasts a best-in-class capacity of 580 litres (a 79-litre improvement) that, when the 60:40 split rear seats are folded down, can accommodate a 29-inch mountain bike without any wheels having to be removed. Tried and tested by myself. A bonus is the power-operated tailgate with hands-free function.

### **Tougher than before**

The all-new RAV4 backs up its tough, determined looks with increased ground clearance and shorter front and rear overhangs, allowing it to take on tough terrain with ease. Along with a choice of two “Dynamic Force” naturally aspirated four-cylinder petrol engines – a 127kW 2.0-litre and 152kW 2.5-litre – come improvements in the all-wheel-drive (AWD) technology.

Now, not only do you get more responsive and fuel-efficient engines, but the new RAV4 delivers enhanced performance capabilities and control in all driving conditions.



Toyota's AWD Integrated Management systems – a unique feature in its class – further improves the RAV4's AWD performance by automatically adjusting different the vehicle systems (steering assist, brake and throttle control, shift pattern and drive torque distribution) according to the drive mode selected. "Mud Sand" and "Rock & Dirt" are the modes are available.

## Shifting gears

With regard to transmissions, the RAV4 comes with a choice of three: a 6-speed manual; a Continuously Variable Transmission (CVT); or an 8-speed automatic. The 2.0-litre engine is paired with either the rev-matching 6-speed Intelligent Manual Transmission (iMT) or Shiftmatic CVT option and comes in 2WD or AWD guise.



Image by Naresh Maharaj

The 2.5-litre is exclusively combined with an 8-speed Sport Direct Shift transmission that offers smooth or crisp shifts and lock-up control when in Sport mode. Adaptive Cruise Control and LDA systems essentially end a level of autonomous driving to the VX models.

## Model line-up and pricing

The RAV4 line-up will comprise a three-grade strategy: GX, GX-R and VX.

- RAV4 2.0 GX MT 2WD: R416,400
- RAV4 2.0 GX CVT 2WD: R427,600
- RAV4 2.0 GX-R CVT AWD: R508,100
- RAV4 2.0 VX CVT 2WD: R505,400
- RAV4 2.5 VX 8AT AWD: R577,900

*\*These were prices at launch*

All models carry a 6-services/90,000 km service plan with 12-month/15,000 km intervals. A 3-year/100,000 km warranty is also included.

## ABOUT NARESH MAHARAJ

Naresh Maharaj is a petrol head who loves cars and writing about them. He is also a Member of the SA Guild of Motoring Journalists. Naresh is also an international sports correspondent and an acclaimed corporate MC and voice-over artist. Naresh is a sports/news producer for community radio stations and also an award-winning sports journalist. Contact Naresh on [nmaharaj321@gmail.com](mailto:nmaharaj321@gmail.com).  
View my profile and articles...

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>