

INTRODUCTION

The intention in creating the Acura NSX was to produce a hand-built, exotic, mid-engine sports car that would establish entirely new levels of prestige, performance, refinement, driveability and reliability. The NSX is designed to represent an entirely new definition of the exotic sports car.

In the 1995 model year, Acura introduced the NSX-T. This model features a removable roof panel to provide the unique thrill of open-top motoring. The goal was to create a different level of excitement and broaden the appeal of the NSX, while maintaining the extremely high levels of performance and sophistication established by the NSX coupe.

As might be expected, creating the NSX-T involved far more than removing the fixed roof and engineering a new removable panel. Engineers extensively reinforced critical areas in the body to ensure that the handling precision and rigidity standards of the coupe were retained as much as possible. Special reinforcements were made in the rocker panels, front and rear bulkheads, floorpan and other vital areas.

All 1996 NSX models also boast a number of other sophisticated features. Key among these is the optional Formula One-inspired SportShift automatic transmission with a unique column-mounted electronic shifter. Unlike other systems, this unit allows the driver to manually select a gear without the driver's hands leaving the steering wheel. This not only adds to the enjoyment of performance driving by allowing the driver to more quickly select a gear, it also enhances safety by allowing the driver to maintain his full attention to the road ahead.

Other innovations include a drive-by-wire throttle system, an exhaust and muffler configuration designed for high efficiency and low emissions, an OBD-II onboard diagnostic system and an advanced Traction Control System (TCS). The drive-by-wire system also allows the engineers to lower the threshold at which the Traction Control System will operate, an enhancement to stability and driver control. All NSX models also feature a standard variable electric power-assisted steering system, a compact and efficient system pioneered in the first-year NSX equipped with the automatic transmission.

All 1996 NSX models meet 1997 federally mandated side impact safety standards.

CONCEPTS AND GOALS

In designing the original NSX, the engineers formulated a list of attributes the automobile was to possess:

- Top-rank performance equal to or greater than existing exotics.
- Excellent liveability. The NSX had to be as easy to live with as any other Acura.
- Outstanding handling.
- A high level of comfort and ergonomic design, and low ambient noise level.
- Reliability and durability equal to mass-produced automobiles.
- Lightweight construction throughout.
- Extremely high level of fit, finish and materials.
- Limited production.
- Excellent climate control system that could keep the occupants comfortable under any weather condition.

The NSX achieved all these goals and established itself on a level equal to or greater than existing exotic sports cars. Goals for the NSX-T included all the original attributes of the NSX, plus the intangible excitement of open-air motoring. Priorities included:

- Maintaining body rigidity for excellent handling and precision.
- Maintaining original levels of noise insulation.
- Providing a convenient storage compartment for the roof panel.
- Minimizing wind buffeting at speed.
- Providing a security system that functions with the top removed.

OVERVIEW

The mid-engine, 2-seater NSX is powered by an all-aluminum, 3.0-liter V-6, which produces 270 hp and 210 lbs-ft of torque. This normally aspirated engine is equipped with dual overhead cams, four valves per cylinder, a Variable Valve Timing and Lift Electronic Control (VTEC) system, and a Variable Volume Induction System intake configuration. The engine also offers Programmed Fuel Injection (PGM-FI) and a direct ignition system that uses an individual coil mounted atop each spark plug instead of a single coil for the entire system. A 5-speed manual transaxle is standard, with an electronically controlled 4-speed automatic with Formula One-inspired SportShift mode available as optional equipment.

The chassis features all-aluminum construction for light weight. The 4-wheel independent double-wishbone suspension also features aluminum-alloy control arms and hub carriers front and rear, and aluminum subframes for the front and rear suspension. The braking system features ventilated 4-wheel discs front and rear, and an advanced 4-channel Anti-Lock Braking System (ABS). The sophisticated Traction Control System (TCS) has been designed to help limit wheelspin and enhance control on slippery surfaces.