

Speed Without the Rumble

Faster Version of Electric EV6 Can Accelerate Like Lamborghini, Ferrari

By Derek Price
CARGAZING.COM

Step inside, turn the key, and feel the engine rumble to life with the force of a thousand Greek gods.

While that's the stereotypical way to start a review of a high-performance car, it won't work for this one, the Kia EV6 GT.

This is one of the quickest cars I've ever had the privilege of driving, yet it lacks something many people still associate with fast, powerful cars: an internal combustion engine.

Like most electric cars, the ordinary EV6 is built for endurance and efficiency, with an EPA-rated range up to 310 miles. It's not slow, either, with a whopping 320 horsepower in the version I tested last year.

In contrast, this new-for-2023 GT version is engineered more for speed than range. It uses two electric motors to send power to all four wheels, generating 576 horsepower from a lithium ion battery that can discharge 441 kW, 90 percent more power than the standard EV6.

The downside is that it has dramatically less range, just 206 miles.

The upside is, well, everything else about it.

With torrents of power that can be unleashed in an instant — unlike gasoline



New for 2023, the Kia EV6 GT electric car makes 576 horsepower, enough to accelerate from 0-60 mph in a lightning-quick 3.4 seconds.

cars, where there's a delay while you wait for the engine to rev up to reach full power — the speed of the EV6 GT is mind-bending.

It accelerates from zero to 60 mph in 3.4 seconds, roughly the same as a Lamborghini Murcielago or Ferrari California.

Granted, those weren't the very fastest exotic supercars even when they were new. But it's also telling that an electric Kia can hit the same kinds of numbers people spent Ferrari and Lamborghini money for just a few years ago.

To drive home the point, Kia recently set up a 0-60 drag race with a Ferrari Roma and Lamborghini Huracan Evo. The EV6 GT out-accelerated both of

them, according to independent testers at AMCI.

It also has a brilliantly tuned suspension, the best I've ever experienced in an electric car. The EV6 GT stays relatively flat and very predictable in tight turns, no doubt helped by its four-wheel traction.

In addition to Eco, Normal and Sport modes that are available in the ordinary EV6, the GT also includes a Drift mode and GT Drive mode, both of which dial back the traction control to let you slide the car around and have fun at the limits of tire adhesion. Because I drove my tester entirely on public roads, not at the track, I didn't spend much time playing with them.

Bigger disc brakes — 15

inches in front and 14.2 inches in back — help you keep the monstrous power in check. It comes standard with 21-inch wheels dressed in Z-rated Goodyear Eagle F1 tires.

Aside from its completely bonkers performance, the GT version of this car has all the upsides of the normal EV6. It does a good job blocking road and wind noise from entering the cabin. It also has an SUV-like, family friendly four-door layout with back seats that can fold flat for hauling cargo.

It's also exploring somewhat new territory from a design standpoint. How do you make a high-performance electric car look right?

For the most part, Kia's designers went with a conventional layout. The EV6 has a hood, even though it technically doesn't need one because it has no engine to house. The GT version shows off its go-fast credentials by sprinkling bits of bright colors around, inside and out. The neon green accents are so bright they look like they could glow in the dark.

And that rumbling sound that we stereotypically associate with fast cars? Kia even tries to set the mood for that, too, with what it calls Active Sound Design. It lets the driver choose what kinds of artificial sounds are created, letting you pick an auditory universe from mild to spicy.

As an old-fashioned car guy, I was reluctant to jump on the EV bandwagon. The first electric vehicles I drove years ago were slow, noisy and not very useful with their limited range.

Cars like this, though, are proving that EVs have the potential to be just as thrilling as their gas-powered descendants, if not more so.

Until someone figures out how to put a manual transmission and clutch pedal in an electric car, though, I'll still smile bigger in my old Miata than I will in even the fastest new EVs.

Pricing starts at \$48,700 for the EV6 Wind. The mind-bending GT version tops the lineup with a price

WHAT WAS TESTED?

What was tested? 2023 Kia EV6 GT AWD (\$61,400). **Options:** Carpeted floor mats (\$170). Price as tested (including \$1,295 destination charge): \$62,865

Wheelbase: 114.2 in.

Length: 184.8 in.

Width: 74.4 in.

Height: 60.8 in.

Powertrain: 77.4 kWh lithium ion battery and dual electric motors (combined 576 hp)

Fuel economy: 79 MPG equivalent

RATINGS

Style: 9

Performance: 10

Price: 7

Handling: 8

Ride: 7

Comfort: 7

Quality: 8

Overall: 9

Why buy it?

It's a high-performance car that doesn't burn a hint of gasoline. It's proof that if the future of America involves electric cars, it doesn't have to be boring.

about \$13,000 more, at \$61,600, which is still a lot less than a used supercar that accelerates in the same way.

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Neon green accents, including piping on the sporty bucket seats, set the ultra-fast GT model apart from other EV6s.

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A CLOSER LOOK



AT A GLANCE

FACTS, FIGURES AND RATINGS

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