

Versa Inflates Feature List

New Style, More Content on Nissan's Compact Car for 2023

By Derek Price

CARGAZING.COM

As inflation makes everything from apples to Ziploc bags get more expensive, it's tough to find new cars for sale under \$20,000.

Thanks a lot, Jerome Powell.

It's harder still to find brand-new cars priced under \$16,000 ever since the Federal Reserve started blasting America with a cash bazooka in the spring of 2020, but that's exactly what Nissan is offering in its latest Versa.

For just \$15,730, or roughly the cost of an average Costco shopping trip in today's world, you can buy a 2023 Versa S with a manual transmission.

Most people will opt for the version with a continuously variable transmission for \$17,400, but I don't recommend it. Small cars are more fun with manuals, plus Nissan's CVTs don't have a great reputation for long-term durability.

I've known too many Nissan owners who curse those transmissions, so I say it's better to spend that \$1,670 on a little butter and tortillas instead.

For the money, the Versa is actually a pretty spectacular car and an even better value after adding extra features to every grade.

Some people might assume driving a sub-\$16,000



A starting price under \$16,000 and highway fuel-economy rating of 40 mpg make the Nissan Versa a great vehicle for 2023's economy.

new car would be a great way to punish Mr. Powell for screwing up the world's greatest economy, but it's far too comfy and quiet for that job. The Mitsubishi Mirage would make a better form of torture.

The Versa's suspension is soft and compliant on highway drives, plus tight enough

to have some fun in corners.

Its 1.6-liter engine pulls nicely from stop signs and merging onto highways when you floor it, even if it sounds slightly distraught in the process, as if it just saw the latest prices on restaurant menus.

If Mr. Powell drove this refreshed Versa, a long list

of Nissan Safety Shield 360 features would help him arrive safely at the dollar-bill printing press where he yells, "Faster! Faster!" And automatic emergency braking is standard equipment, which is, coincidentally, the exact same feature he's using on our overheated economy right now.

Refreshed styling on the 2023 Versa will help you look your best if, say, you're headed to a meeting that will make the nation's entire mortgage market go into a nosedive. You may have detractors, but at least you'll have the satisfaction of looking smart with the latest version of Nissan's distinctive

WHAT WAS TESTED?

2023 Nissan Versa SR (\$19,720)

Wheelbase: 103.1 in.

Length: 177 in.

Width: 68.5 in.

Height: 57.7 in.

Engine: 1.6-liter four cylinder (122 hp, 114 lbs. ft.)

Transmission:

Continuously variable

Fuel economy: 32 city, 40 highway

Why buy it?

It's one of the few vehicles priced under \$16,000 in today's inflation-riddled world, but it drives with the quiet sophistication of a pricier car.

V-motion grille.

My tester, a refreshed SR grade Versa, looks sporty with black side mirrors and red accents in the cabin. Dollar for dollar, it's one of the most impressive cars I've driven this year, and its 40-mpg gas mileage helped me afford to eat this week.

Overall, I like the changes Nissan made to the Versa for 2023. It's aggressive, like the recent interest-rate hikes, and also comfortable, like someone who can't be removed from their four-year term of office, even by the president.

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For the money, the Versa is actually a pretty spectacular car



An 8-inch color touchscreen is standard in the SR grade of the latest Versa. Other versions have a 7-inch screen.

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A CLOSER LOOK



AT A GLANCE

FACTS, FIGURES AND RATINGS

What was tested? 2023 Nissan Versa SR (\$19,720).

Options: None. Price as tested (including \$1,095 destination charge): \$20,815.

Wheelbase: 103.1 in.

Length: 177 in.

Width: 68.5 in.

Height: 57.7 in.

Engine: 1.6-liter four cylinder (122 hp, 114 lbs. ft.)

Transmission: Continuously variable

Fuel economy: 32 city, 40 highway

RATINGS

Style: 7

Performance: 5

Price: 10

Handling: 7

Ride: 7

Comfort: 7

Quality: 7

Overall: 8

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