

Background: Why This Car?

2005 Toyota Prius, B package

Purchased new in July, 2007.

August, 2007, Owners comment:

My wife and I had been thinking about a hybrid car for sometime, but didn't make the move until this past summer, when all the factors seemed to come together to make it a good move for our family. One child was about to enter middle school in Penticton, which despite school buses and carpooling still meant more trips to Penticton for our family. We had been driving a 2005 Honda CRV, which we leased as a company car for supply shopping trips when we owned Village Grounds Coffeehouse. The CRV is a great little car: solid, roomy, economical compared with larger SUVs, and great in the winter on Naramata's hills. However, for us, there were several advantages to looking at a Prius.

Winter: was the Prius up to task of getting around in the winter? It would not have the four wheel abilities of the CRV, yet research on the internet revealed that with good winter tires the Prius is capable, except in really deep snow (due to its low ground clearance).

Fuel Economy: The CRV's four cylinder fuel performance is rated at 8.4 Litres/100km-highway / 10 Litres/100km-city. Therefore, the Prius is rated to use half the fuel of the CRV. The test analysis will determine that!

Other Vehicles: Why didn't we consider something like a Volkswagen Jetta TDI station wagon with a very fuel efficient diesel engine? Many of them successfully burn biodiesel. This question came down to personal choice. Yes, the TDIs are very fuel efficient, but they still have a lot higher carbon emission output than the Prius.

(One website showed that the Prius would drastically cut the CO2 emissions compared to the Honda CRV. <http://www.terrapass.com/road/carboncalc.php> showed that if a Prius is driven 12,000 miles at its estimated 60 U.S. mpg city/51 highway, it will use 216 gallons of gasoline and emit 4226 lbs. of CO2. The CRV over the same distance with a fuel economy of 22 city/27 highway would burn 490 gallons and emit 9586 lbs.)

I also am interested in the future capabilities of the Prius hybrid technology, such as adding an additional battery to make it a plug-in car whereby it could conceivably get over 100 miles to the gallon by operating further on electrical power.

Upfront costs of the Prius: A new 2007 Prius (B package) would be about \$34,000. (November 2007 note: prices on the 2008s models have decreased due to the rise of the dollar) In July, there was only one such car at a BC Toyota dealer as my e-mail survey of most of the dealers revealed. Therefore, I was thinking we'd have to buy a used one and in order for the math to work it would have to cost about \$25,000 before taxes. Fortunately, through my research, I found a 2005 Prius, still brand new at the Toyota dealer in Pitt Meadows, outside Vancouver...a rare find indeed. While new

