

## 2008 Nissan Maxima

by Gary Dickinson

### INTRODUCTION

**O**n the design front, the 2008 model includes the complete 2007 make-over, including a redesigned exterior, a greatly refined interior, the addition of new available technology features and the adoption of a smooth Continuously Variable Transmission as standard equipment.

The heart of the Maxima is its powerful 3.5-liter DOHC 24-valve V6 engine. A ferocious power plant, rated at 255 horsepower and 252 lb-ft of torque. The engine features a modular design with micro-finished crank journals and cam lobes, molybdenum coated lightweight pistons, a resin intake collector, digital knock control, six individual coils (one per spark plug) and a cross-flow coolant pattern.

On the safety front, the 2008 Maxima comes equipped with standard Advanced Air Bag System (AABS) with dual-stage front supplemental air bags, front seat side-impact supplemental air bags for chest protection and roof-mounted curtain side-impact air bags for front and rear outboard occupant head protection.

### OVERVIEW

Nissan continues to do a great job especially in styling and engine performance with plenty of quick but smooth acceleration. Passing performance and 0-60 acceleration are exceptional.

During the test drive, the Maxima performed admirably in all areas except steering. Pluses are the roomy interior along with the quick and refined power train. The 255-hp, 3.5-liter V6 engine continues to be the smoothest running engine I have ever tested. The engine's idle was so smooth and quiet that several times at idle I thought it had stalled and I almost restarted a running engine.



### TESTED VEHICLE

**Vehicle:** 2008 Nissan Maxima.

**Class:** 4 door sedan.

**Engine:** The 3.5 liter six cylinder DOHC engine yields 255 HP at 6,000 RPM and 252 lbs-ft torque at 4,400 RPM.

**Transmission:** Continuously Variable Transmission (CVT) with manual shift mode.

**Suspension:** Front—independent strut with coil springs. Rear—multi-link independent.

**Brakes:** 4-wheel ABS with electronic brake distribution.

**Base MSRP:** \$28,130.

**Tested Vehicle MSRP with options:** \$34,080 (which includes a destination charge of \$625).

### TEST DRIVE

☺ **Acceleration:** Zero-60 MPH tested at 7.0 seconds, 55-65 MPH passing performance tested at 2.3 seconds.

☹ **Steering:** Well weighted but some torque steer upon rapid acceleration.

☺ **Handling:** Well controlled even on high speed maneuvers.

☺ **Ride:** Very comfortable ride.

☺ **Braking:** Sure and responsive.

☺ **Transmission:** Extremely smooth CVT operation with well performing manual shift mode.

☺ **Interior Noise:** Wind and engine noise are well muffled.

☺ **Test drive mileage:** 28.5 MPG (highway driving); EPA estimates 25H/19C.

### EXTERIOR

☺ **Engine Service Points:** All fluid service points are located for easy access.

☺ **Body:** No exterior fit or finish problems found.

### INTERIOR

☺ **Room:** Roomy cabin with plenty of shoulder room, leg room and head-room.

☺ **1<sup>st</sup> Row Seats:** Supple leather seats provides comfortable back and thigh support.

☺ **2<sup>nd</sup> Row Seats:** Comfortable with acceptable leg and shoulder room for three passengers.

☺ **Ventilation:** Dual zone climate control operated seamlessly with well designed and easily accessible controls.

☺ **Storage:** Ample interior and trunk storage space.

☺ **Fit and Finish:** No interior fit or finish problem found.



### VEHICLE CAPACITIES

**Seating:** 5

**Trunk Volume:** 15.5 cu. ft.

**Base Curb Weight:** 3,591 lbs.

**Towing Capacity:** 1,000 lbs.

**Fuel Tank:** 20.0 gallons.

*Test Drive is conducted and written by the Motor Watch staff, who contribute their own unbiased and unfettered comments in order to meet our mission: "To help save consumers time and money, and to help save motorists lives."*