



2002 AUTO REVISTA

## **Cadillac Deville Maintains Its Stellar Reputation**

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For more than 50 years, Cadillac DeVille has been synonymous with innovation, quality, luxury and performance. The 2003 model lives up to its reputation in all those categories.

The innovations include such things as Night Vision, StabiliTrak and rear parking assist. Although these features are not included in the \$48,055 base price, they are available for the person who wants to have top-of-the-line quality and performance. The options bring the total package to \$56,745.



DeVille's overall appearance underwent a major change for the 2000-year model, but there are new improvements on the current model. They include Michelin -- rather than Goodyear -- tires, the addition of a couple of new colors, and enhanced sideview mirrors that feature a brightly lit arrow that blinks when the turn signals are on. Cadillac added another thoughtful feature: A tire pressure monitor that can be read on the dash panel while driving.

The option that I enjoyed most was XM Satellite Radio. I tuned into one of the 71 channels that featured recordings that I haven't heard in years, broadcast in compact disc quality. Best of all -- no commercials.

Night Vision unobtrusively displays an image in front of the driver's vision and "sees" further down the road than the headlamps shine. Using thermal imaging, the system creates the outline of a warm body, in the roadway long before the headlamps illuminate the person or animal.

Cadillac was a pioneer in yaw control and has not only offered StabiliTrak for years but has continuously improved upon it. To avoid an accident, StabiliTrak automatically regains control of a car that is just about to spin out of control due to a sudden swerve. In addition to this feature, my DTS model was equipped with CVRSS: Continuously Variable Road-Sensing Suspension. Those two features alone gave me the feeling of security in a sedan loaded with safety precautions.

Even though my tester didn't include a navigational system, I had OnStar that I used for numerous purposes, including directions. And it was comforting to know that should I be involved in an accident, road-side assistance or an ambulance is quickly available.

Safety and convenience aside, what made my tester an enjoyable vehicle was the quality of the comfortable ride. This full-size solid black sedan standing on highly polished 17-inch wheels gave the DeVille a

stately appearance. That impression was reinforced when I opened the door and sat in Eagle Ottawa leather seats that is said to be the finest leather available.

Even the roomy rear seat offered the feel of quality. In addition to a separate heating control for warm air, the seats could be electrically heated in their entirety or backrest only.

The trunk is enormous with a very wide opening. It will hold loads of luggage, plus it has a net for keeping small packages in place.

The driver's seat has two memory seat positions, plus an exit position. Each time I entered, the seat was low and easy to get into. With the shoulder belts attached to the seat, there was no need to hunt around to buckle up. The adjustable headrests are high enough to do their job properly.

The instrument panel is clear and understandable, and messages concerning performance or maintenance are easy to read. What's most interesting about the DeVille, however, isn't seen, but can be felt simply by depressing the accelerator pedal.

Another area of quality and performance is the Northstar engine. The performance produced by this 4.6-liter V8 engine is a perfect complement to the name DeVille.