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**2014 BMW 2 Series Coupe**

*BMW's entry-level coupe enters adolescence*

by Gary Witzenburg

 If the recently birthed 1 Series Coupe was a baby Bimmer, the 2014 BMW 2 Series Coupe is a much-matured version entering adolescence. Just as the '14 4 Series coupe and convertible is a new model line derived from the somewhat smaller 3 Series, this new 2 coupe is a slightly larger, more grown-up take on the 1 Series luxury sport subcompact theme.

As we've related, BMW sedans have long been 3 Series (compact), 5 Series (mid-size) and 7 Series (large), and its large luxury coupes and convertibles have been 6s and 8s. So it makes good sense to separate out these new subcompact and compact two-door coupes and assign them the previously-unused 2 and 4 Series designations.

 The new 2 Series Coupe is 2.8 inches longer and 1.3 inches wider that the 1 Series it replaces on a 1.3-inch longer wheelbase. Its tracks are 1.6 and 1.7 inches wider front and rear, which improves both handling and interior room. Front headroom is up by 0.7 inches and rear legroom by 0.8 inches, while the trunk grows 0.7 cu. ft. to 13.8 cu. ft.

**Models and Lines**

 It comes in two flavors for 2014: a 228i ($33K) powered by a 240-hp 2.0L "twin-power" (twin-scroll) turbocharged four-cylinder, and a quicker, sportier M235i ($44K) motivated by BMW's award-winning 320-hp 3.0L twin-power turbocharged inline six. A BMW Sport Line for the 228i adds 18-inch wheels, ambient lighting, special upholstery, a choice of wood or brushed-aluminum interior trim and gloss-black exterior accents, while an M Sport option offers a lower, tighter suspension, 18-inch M wheels, a specific grille and exterior aero elements (large front air intakes, side skirts, a rear apron diffuser), sport front seats, ambient lighting, special instrument dials, M logo aluminum door sill strips and an M driver’s footrest.

 Stepping up to the M235i -- BMW's first U.S.-market "M Performance" car -- gets you the turbo-six engine and an array of performance-enhancing and sport-appearance features including M Adaptive suspension, M Sport Braking, variable sport steering, Michelin Pilot Super Sports tires and a sport exhaust system, while a BMW M Performance limited-slip differential is optional. But despite all these "M" performance goodies, this is still not a higher-performance BMW "M" model (M3, M5, M6, etc.).
 Efficiency is enhanced through "EfficientDynamics" technologies, including drag-reducing Air Curtains, Brake Energy Regeneration, Electric Power Steering, on-demand pumps and Auto Start/Stop, which kills the engine at rest to save fuel, then restarts it (with a shudder) when your foot comes off the brake. A standard Driving Experience Control adjusts the accelerator mapping, steering and – depending on specification – automatic transmission and shock response to your preferences and driving conditions. Its modes are COMFORT, SPORT, SPORT+ and ECO PRO, the latter with a fuel-saving coast function with the eight-speed automatic.

**Interior and features**

 The new cockpit boasts premium materials and driver-focused ergonomics. BMW's iDrive multi-function control with 6.5-inch display and dual-zone automatic climate control are standard, but Navigation with an 8.8-inch screen and a Touch Controller (a touch-sensitive surface for inputing characters) is optional. A front-seat Easy Entry function facilitates access to the two rear seats, and leather is available, as are brushed aluminum or wood trim, Harman Kardon premium audio and Bluetooth audio streaming.

 Available BMW ConnectedDrive mobility services and driver assistance systems include a rear-view camera, cruise control with braking, Advanced Real Time Traffic Information (ARTTI), extended smartphone and music player integration, a rain sensor with automatic headlight activation, Adaptive Xenon headlights with cornering lights and more assistants than a corporate CEO. These include High Beam Assistant, Parking Assistant (identifies suitable spaces and can steer into them) and Driving Assistant, which combines camera-based Lane Departure Warning and Collision Warning. Extended functionality for internet services such as Facebook and Twitter are available through BMW Apps.

 Standard safety equipment includes front, side and head airbags, plus driver and front passenger knee bags. The standard DSC (Dynamic Stability Control) system incorporates Anti-lock Braking (ABS), Dynamic Traction Control (DTC), Cornering Brake Control (CBC) and Dynamic Brake Control (DBC). To this comprehensive set of shunt-avoidance tools is added a Start-Off Assistant, Brake Assist, Brake Drying and Brake Fade Compensation and 10 years of BMW Teleservice and Assist eCall with enhanced automatic collision notification.

**Performance and efficiency**
 The 228i's 240-hp 2.0L four, with its twin-scroll turbocharger, direct fuel injection, BMW Valvetronic variable intake valve control and Double-VANOS variable camshaft control, gives 5.4-second 0-60 performance (using Launch Control) with frugal 23 mpg city, 35 highway and 27 combined EPA economy with the 8-speed automatic (22/34/26 with the six-speed manual). The M235i's 3.0L direct-injected TwinPower turbocharged inline six, also with Valvetronic and Double-VANOS, generates 320 hp and 4.8-second 0-60 launch capability. Its EPA ratings are 22 mpg city, 32 highway and 25 combined with the automatic, 19/28/22 with the manual.

 The combination of the new 2 Series' double-joint spring strut front and five-link rear suspension, its low center of gravity, 50:50 weight distribution and wider tracks gives a grin-inducing balance of agility and ride. And the DTC mode boosts the stability system thresholds to allow controlled drive-wheelspin for launching on snow or loose surfaces, or (as BMW puts it) "when taking a particularly dynamic approach to cornering."

 Performance of the 228i's turbo four is good, and the M235i's delicious turbo six makes it feel jet propelled. The suspension is BMW athletic but not coal-cart stiff, the brakes are powerful and predictable, and the electric power steering -- while not as laser precise as past pure mechanical BMW systems -- is about as good as electric gets.

 We have our usual BMW quibbles: the quirky automatic shifter (push a button on the side to pull it back for forward or forward for Reverse, another on top for Park) and the iDrive controller, which -- though improved over earlier versions -- still requires multiple steps to do some things a touch screen does in a single touch. We miss both the look and functionality of fog lamps that are missing on the M235i in favor those big lower front air intakes.

**Checkered flag**

 The new 2014 2 Series is a hoot to drive and sexy to look at. BMWs are expensive, and this small coupe is no exception, but their brand image enables higher stickers than most (non-*teutonic*) competitors. A good test drive will help you judge its value per dollar.

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