



DE SOTOS overall design is focused on power, performance and responsiveness in a smartly styled automobile which maintains a high level of comfort and convenience. The Adventurer, with the optional ram-induction V-8 powerplant, is a notable example of how well this has been accomplished.

Handling is one of the Adventurer's major attractions and most drivers will like, even prefer, its responsiveness. Sensitive steering is a contributing factor. The car's turning circle is good for its wheelbase and the steering, $3\frac{1}{2}$ turns lock-to-lock, is quick and accurate.

The car is precise in parking and belittles the fact of its bigger size. At any speed correcting for uneven road conditions requires substantially no effort and it is simple to keep the car moving in

DE SOTO

a straight line. In city driving the Adventurer will whip in and out of traffic lanes with cat-like agility.

The De Soto executes corners vigorously and its suspension and chassis seemed to be tuned for sharper turning than most drivers will ordinarily encounter. This engineering is probably necessary since the car's quick steering and powerful acceleration will encourage faster cornering. On even the sharpest corners the Adventurer tracks true with no tendency for either end to break away from the circle. Body lean is negligible and there is very little tendency to pitch the passenger or driver to one side although this is due in part to the contour of the seats.

The Adventurer has impressive acceleration and must be classed among the hotter 1960 cars. Throttle response is almost instantaneous and even though the transmission is automatic, torque is relayed to the rear wheels nearly as efficiently as a stick shift. This eager acceleration owes much to the optional 3.31 axle ratio which compensates for the Adventurer's extra weight. Standard is a 2.93 axle which would reduce acceleration and increase the mpg figure somewhat.

This ultra-responsiveness is not lost at traffic speeds and in the low rpm range is actually multiplied. Opening the throttle at any speed hurtles the car forward even quicker than using a passing gear would. At higher speeds the effect is still there although subdued to a degree.

With a powerplant this size there are bound to be some disadvantages. One is economy and the ram induction engine has an acquired craving for fuel. The engine compartment is crowded and several vital components are conspicuously inaccessible. Many service and minor repair jobs will be difficult and time consuming procedures, increasing the labor expense.

These are only minor considerations to some people, however,

FLASHY INTERIOR gives the DeSoto a sporty character quite unlike any other medium-priced car. It's a busy area of loud trims, arm rests and record players that seem to go with a fast car.

and will be discounted against the De Soto's performance record. One thing no true power enthusiast will overlook though is the engine's vocal reaction to power. When the throttle is opened the ram manifold produces a vibrating sound similar to those made by dual exhausts. This resonance is not harsh and grating. Instead, it is a low, throaty rumbling indicative of power.

Roadability in the Adventurer is good both at slower city speeds and faster open highway rates. In the country the De Soto will maintain high speeds without inducing fatigue. The springing seems to be a good compromise which is not too soft to cause objectionable swaying on the open road nor too harsh for comfort in town. On uneven roads practically the only vibration transmitted to passengers is the audible slap of the tires against the pavement.

Entry and exit from the passenger compartment cannot be called good. The Adventurer was equipped with automatic swivel seats and they are a decided advantage when the door can be fully opened. But more often than not, especially when parked near another car, they cannot be used at all.

Inside, the front seat is adequate for only two persons. A third passenger would definitely be cramped and nearly impossible to seat if the car has the optional record player. The Adventurer has a swing down arm rest in the center of the front seat. This device gives the driver good support on long trips. In fact, the front seat is, for all practical purposes, two individual seats with an upholstered arm rest between.

Entry and comfort in the back seat are limited and passengers would find that long trips would be fatiguing. The rear window is large and has unobstructed visibility. To prevent back seat passengers from becoming sunburned this window has an iron oxide coating.

The instrument cluster is a well arranged layout and has good contrast between indicator and dial face permitting easy reading. The speedometer is a sweep hand needle and gives the driver an instant indication of his speed. The whole instrument cluster must be viewed through the steering wheel, however, and this can be disadvantageous varying with individual drivers. Depending upon their height some drivers can not see all the gauges without head movement. The steering wheel rim interferes with the speedometer for some, while others cannot see the gas gauge on the left. A small point, but irritating when driving, since both these gauges are important and must be frequently referred to.

Automatic transmission controls are pushbuttons placed in a straight row to the left of the driver. Their action is simple and positive, practically eliminating any chance for error in shifting. Visually balancing these buttons is another row placed on the right side controlling the heater and fresh air. Push-pull controls are in a horizontal row below these pushbuttons and are handy for the driver.

One accessory, the record player, can be enjoyed by nearly anyone but honestly appreciated by only those who realize the difficulties that had to be overcome before it could become a workable and practical option. Despite vibration, noise and outside interference, the record player works well and plays two hours of standard 45 rpm records with excellent sound reproduction.

De Soto's Adventurer is a remarkable automobile in many ways. It is sporty, yet has tasteful restraint that keeps it from being ostentatious. The Adventurer's engineers have made a wise selection of components and combined them into an automobile which actually gives more than it promises. It handles well enough to be driven by a woman, yet the controls are not mushy and will appeal to men who prefer accurate, positive handling. •



1960 DE SOTO

TEST CAR: De Soto Adventurer
BODY TYPE: Two-door hardtop
BASE PRICE: \$3663

OVERALL LENGTH: 217 inches
OVERALL WIDTH: 79.4 inches
OVERALL HEIGHT: 54.8 inches
WHEELBASE: 122 inches
TREAD, FRONT/REAR: 61 and 59.7 inches
TEST WEIGHT: 4355 lbs.
STEERING: 3.5 turn lock-to-lock
TURNING CIRCLE: 43.7 feet curb-to-curb
GROUND CLEARANCE: 5.2 inches

MOTOR LIFE TEST DATA

SEATING CAPACITY: six
FRONT SEAT—
HEADROOM: 34.4 inches
WIDTH: 63 inches
LEGROOM: 46.2 inches
TRUNK CAPACITY: 29.7 cubic feet

TYPE: ohv V-8
DISPLACEMENT: 383 cubic inches
BORE & STROKE: 4.25 x 3.38
COMPRESSION RATIO: 10-to-1
CARBURETION: Dual four-barrel with ram manifold
HORSEPOWER: 330@4800 rpm
TORQUE: 460@2800 rpm
TRANSMISSION: three-speed automatic
REAR AXLE RATIO: 3.31

GAS MILEAGE: 10 to 15 mpg
ACCELERATION: 0-30 mph in 3.9 seconds,
0-45 mph in 5.7 seconds and
0-60 mph in 8.8 seconds
SPEEDOMETER ERROR: indicated 30, 45 and 60 are
actual 32, 47 and 61 mph respectively
POWER-WEIGHT RATIO: 13.2 lbs. per horsepower
HORSEPOWER PER CUBIC INCH: .86



ONE OF THE HOTTER CARS of 1960, the ram-induced DeSoto V-8 is extremely responsive in the low and middle rpm ranges. The throaty rumble of the ram tubes is the most exciting sound Detroit

has yet uttered. But this power gimmick has definite drawbacks, primarily in the fields of economy and engine servicing. Other points are covered fully in this test report of the Adventurer.