

## STI crowns Impreza range

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Subaru's third generation Impreza WRX STI is the ultimate hot hatch.

Any suggestions the flagship model of the Impreza range might be compromised towards the small car main stream are quickly dispelled when you get behind the wheel, select Sport Sharp on the SI drive console and let out the clutch.

With 15 more kW than the old model – now 221 kW and a boost in torque from 392 Nm to 407 Nm, the STI soon lets its intentions be known, given half a chance.

And it goes around corners too with its symmetrical All Wheel Drive transmission connected to the four cylinder 2.5-litre turbocharged “Boxer” engine through a six-speed close ratio manual gearbox.

And the Impreza WRX STI looks hot just standing still, with its flared wheel arches, deep front air dam, significant roof mounted spoiler and no less than four exhaust tail pipes.

It sits on 18-inch alloy wheels with 245/40R18 tyres – plenty of meat to put the power on the road and grip tenaciously through the bends. BBS wheels are optional on the Spec.R model.

This is the car that will challenge for the Production World Rally Championship in 2008.

The introduction of the new WRX STI has completed the full line-up of the Impreza models in New Zealand that starts with the Impreza 2.0R at \$26,990 and includes the \$32,990 Impreza 2.0R Sport and the \$42,990 Impreza WRX with a 169 kW version of the turbocharged engine used in the STI.

Only the bonnet, roof, hatch opening and front door panels are the same as those of the other models in the Impreza range. The Impreza WRX STI really does look different and stands apart from the other Impreza models.

The large rear spoiler optimizes the balance between the front and the rear and an aerodynamically curved front air dam helps minimize lift forces and contributes to maintaining vehicle stability at high speeds.

Seven exterior colours are available: Obsidian black pearl; pure white; spark silver metallic; dark gray metallic; lightning red; midnight blue pearl (only for the WRX STI); WR blue mica.

The vehicle information display constantly shows outside temperature, average fuel consumption and time. And the audio display is placed nearer the top of the dashboard for improved visibility and functionality.

The front bucket seats use a combination of Alcantara fabric and leather with RECARO, custom sports seats available on the Spec. R model.

Power tilt and telescopic steering comes with a three-spoke genuine leather wheel. Electro-luminescent instrumentation is used.

An extended wheelbase and widened track compared to the previous STI provide optimal dimensions for the new model to ensure its outstanding handling and road holding. (The wheelbase is longer by 85 mm to 2625 mm, the front track is 40 mm wider at 1530 mm, and the rear track at 1540 mm is 45 mm wider, than the previous model.) The 5-door body style excels in balancing lift forces in the front and desirable downward forces in the rear, achieving optimal aerodynamic characteristics.

Shortening of the front and rear overhangs has reduced yaw moments of inertia, and enabled highly stable handling, while interior roominess has been improved. However, the gross weight has remained nearly the same as in the previous model through streamlined body construction.

Dual Active Valve Control on both the intake and exhaust valves helps improve low-end torque while providing a strong power boost at high revs. It also increases combustion efficiency, thereby reducing exhaust emissions and improving fuel economy.

A 6-speed manual transmission, Subaru's own development, has been further perfected for faster, more accurate and responsive shifts.

The front differential adopts a torque-sensitive LSD (limited slip differential) that excels in response to input torque; the rear differential employs a Torsen LSD that supports distribution of torque.

Subaru Intelligent Drive (SI-DRIVE) regulates the Engine Control Unit (ECU) and the electronic throttle control, allowing the driver to select three different modes of driving: Intelligent; Sport; and Sport Sharp.

Intelligent mode offers economy-oriented performance with smooth throttle control that is ideal for general commuting, highway cruising and heavy traffic. Sports mode is ideal for all-round sporty driving under a wide range of road conditions. Sport Sharp mode offers maximum power and torque at low throttle levels for high-performance driving.

The multi-mode Driver's Control Centre Differential (DCCD) enables the driver to choose from different modes of control for the centre differential. This feature allows the driver to enjoy handling and manoeuvring as he desires, and it provides high levels of vehicle straight-line stability unique to the AWD configuration.

The multi-mode Vehicle Dynamics Control (VDC) also provides three different modes that the driver can choose from to experience a wider range of driving enjoyment, while always maintaining the safety features of VDC.

The combination of SI-DRIVE, Multi-mode DCCD and Multi-mode VDC means that the new WRX STI can be configured, at the touch of a button, to create a bespoke driving experience to suit the conditions, skill and driving style of the STI driver.

The WRX STI boasts a state-of-the-art chassis with an inverted MacPherson strut front suspension and the newly designed double-wishbone rear suspension, and combined with its widened track, this model achieves outstanding handling and road holding.

Aluminium cast lower arms and a stabilizer bar in the front suspension help raise torsional and rolling rigidity, providing accurate response in steering. Rear suspension links are attached to the body through the sub-frame, which enhances riding comfort and further lowers noise levels.

The Boxer engine is mounted lower in the chassis, further advancing vehicle stability already ensured by its low centre of gravity: 22 mm lower at the front end of the engine, compared to the previous model.

The brake system, coupled with the SuperSports ABS (antilock brake system) with EBD (electronic brake distribution), processes information fed from the G sensor, steering angle sensor, yaw rate sensor, and pressure sensor to deliver steady braking and control. It also works with the DCCD to ensure accurate braking on all four wheels independently, while minimizing deviations from the driver's intended path.

The hill-start assist function maintains the braking function one second after the brake pedal is released in case of starting a car on a hilly road.

As with all new Subaru, the Impreza WRX STI is 5-star ANCAP safety rated – the highest possible rating. It also has 4-star ANCAP pedestrian safety rating – also the highest achievable rating.

All models are equipped with dual SRS airbags, dual side SRS airbags and dual curtain airbags, as well as 3-point seat belts in the rear seats. A collapsible brake pedal is standard to reduce the risk of foot injuries in accidents.

The WRX STI uses an advanced form of Subaru's legendary and proprietary Ring-Shaped Reinforcement Frame Body Structure, reinforcing each pillar with frames that circle around the body in a ring shape. Reinforcements are now provided to connect firmly between the lower part of the front pillar and upper frames, increasing the strength of the strut attachment onto the body frame. Reinforcements are also added to the upper part of the opening of the rear hatch.

The new model achieves a combined ADR fuel consumption of 10.3 litres per 100 km. CO2 emissions are 243 gm/km. The new Impreza is also more than 95% recyclable.

The all-new double-wishbone rear suspension makes room for a wider and deeper luggage compartment.

Standard features on the WRX STI include pop-up headlight washers; an anti-theft alarm system and immobilizer; DataDot security, and a 3 year unlimited km warranty.

The Impreza WRX STI is available in two models. – The Impreza WRX STI at \$59,990 RRP excluding on-road costs and accessories, Includes 18-inch aluminium alloy cast 5-spoke wheels and sports type Alcantara/leather front seats with STI embroidered logo

Impreza WRX STI spec.R at \$64,990 RRP excluding on-road costs and accessories includes BBS 18-inch aluminium alloy forged 18-spoke wheels and RECARO Alcantara/leather sports front seats.

ENDS