

## Mitsubishi's Electric Car To Sell For Under \$30K

Ann M. Job, For The Associated Press

At just under \$30,000 base retail price, the 2012 Mitsubishi i-MiEV is the most affordable all-electric car in the U.S. market.

The little five door with very little hood in the front also has an eye-popping, 126 miles-per-gallon-equivalent rating from the federal government in city driving. That's higher than the 106 mpg-e city rating of the 2012 Nissan Leaf electric car but less than the 132 mpg-e of the upcoming Honda Fit EV.

An added bonus: The rear-wheel drive i-MiEV has a plucky personality and speed-sensitive steering that, while electrically delivered, feels and responds more like a regular car's steering than does that of some gasoline-electric hybrid cars.

The same compliment goes for the iMiEV's electric brakes and their firm, realistic pedal feel.

Still, i-MiEV drivers have to keep a close eye on mileage range, because like all solely electric cars, this little hatchback can't go far on a full charge. Indeed the U.S. government estimates the i-MiEV range at 62 miles on a full charge.

Typical time to fully recharge: Seven to 22 hours, depending on the charger.

Starting manufacturer's suggested retail price, including destination charge, is \$29,975 for an i-MiEV ES model with 66-horsepower electric motor, a 16-kilowatt lithium-ion storage battery and a one-speed, direct drive transmission.

In comparison, the most popular all-electric car in the United States — the front-wheel drive Nissan Leaf — has a starting retail price, including destination charge, of \$36,050 for a base, 2012 SV with 107-horsepower electric motor, 24 kilowatt lithium-ion battery and a single-speed reducer tranny. The federal government estimates a 73-mile range for the Leaf on a full charge.

The front-wheel drive, 2012 Chevrolet Volt, which has a plug-in electric motor plus a gasoline engine on board for short, around-town, all-electric trips plus long-range, gas-engine travel, has a starting retail price of \$39,995. The Volt's electric-only range is just over 30 miles, but the federal government estimates a 397-mile travel range when both electric motor and gasoline engine are used.

All these vehicles are eligible for a one-time federal income tax credit of \$7,500. But buyers must wait for this credit until they file their tax documents for the calendar year in which they made their vehicle purchase. Some states and cities provide incentives, too.

Mitsubishi started offering the i-MiEV on the West Coast late last year and is

## **Mitsubishi's Electric Car To Sell For Under \$30K**

Published on Industrial Maintenance & Plant Operation (<http://www.impomag.com>)

---

beginning to expand sales across the nation this summer.

The test i-MiEV was the upper SE model, which included optional 40-gigabyte hard drive for music storage and navigation system, rearview camera, a battery warming system for use in cold weather and a quick charge port.

Many typical car amenities were in this Mitsubishi, including six air bags, traction and stability control, air conditioner with micron filter, keyless entry and power windows and door locks and a 360-watt audio system. The SE tester also came with a nifty remote control that can remotely check the status of the battery.

This remote worked fine in a home with an attached garage. But at a downtown parking garage, the remote only saved the driver from climbing three stories of steps to get to the car on the third level. The remote wouldn't work until it was physically at the parking garage — not across the street or in a nearby office.

The remote, when in range of the car, also can be used to turn on the air conditioning to cool the interior while the car is plugged in, thus reducing the drain on electric power when the vehicle is started up and no longer plugged in.

More energy savings comes from utilitarian, small-looking, 15-inch, low-rolling-resistance tires. The drawback is these tires are hard and don't have as much grip and grab on pavement as other tires.

The lasting impression of the i-MiEV is how small (about the size of a Mini Cooper) and quirky it is.

Four seats sit well above the pavement, providing rather upright seat positions. They are supportive but not plush.

Rear seats fold down mostly flat for a maximum 50.4 cubic feet of cargo space.

The interior is plain but functional, with nifty cupholders that pull outward from beneath vents at each side of the dashboard. These cupholders are high enough for easy use and are handy spots for coins, tokens and other items. No cubby but the glovebox provides covered storage in this car.

There are only three round, digital gauges, with mostly minimal but necessary information — speed, range, battery condition and gear selection.

The snub of a hood, accentuated by a bright blue color that contrasted with the white car body on the tester, contributed to bad parking jobs that left a gulf of space between the front bumper and the parking curb in parking lots.

Otherwise, driving the i-MiEV was a surprisingly pleasant experience. At 2,550 pounds, the tester didn't feel wimpy like a golf cart.

It handled curves well and there was more stability than expected. Weight felt evenly distributed, thanks to the arrangement of the heavy battery pack under the

## **Mitsubishi's Electric Car To Sell For Under \$30K**

Published on Industrial Maintenance & Plant Operation (<http://www.impomag.com>)

---

car floor.

**Source URL (retrieved on 09/18/2014 - 1:41am):**

<http://www.impomag.com/news/2012/07/mitsubishis-electric-car-sell-under-30k>