



Road Running

In a Revamped *G-Thang*

By Roger Witherspoon

Seattle – It had been raining hard for the past two days and while the road was currently dry, the low, roiling clouds made it clear that the sky would soon reopen and the water would flow. As a result, I had a strong desire to zip along the single lane highway lazily meandering through the pine forests lining Puget Sound before the rains returned.

The rambling, rural road was a perfect place to road race Infiniti's new G-37, the revamped version of the G-35 sport coupe whose street cred earned it the sobriquet of *G-Thang* – particularly in urban drag races against BMW Zs and 3-series coupes. But BMW, which takes a lot of pride in its ride, had improved its wheels and the 2007 BMW 335 was giving the G-Thang a hard time and, on occasion, a dusty windshield. Hence the overhaul and the sleek, new G-37, whose 10-spoke, 19-inch wheels were just begging to beat Beamers to the lights.

But, on this afternoon, I first had to deal with the plodding tractor trailer and, on a winding one-lane road flanked by very big trees, there was little space to accelerate and pass before you are hard into a curve. But then, what's the point of having a sports car with a 6-speed manual transmission, magnesium paddle shifts and four-wheel active steering if you can't tackle a truck on a country road.

The gray waters of Puget Sound were visible in the distance through a break in the trees as we rounded a leftward curve and faced a brief straightaway before a sharp curve to the right. I tapped the paddle behind the steering wheel, dropping to third gear and hitting the accelerator. The twin exhausts rumbled as the 3.7-liter, 330-horsepower, and aluminum engine revved into higher speed and the G-37 jumped forward. With a touch of the paddles, the transmission moved smoothly through to sixth gear and the

speedometer hit 105 before I had passed the truck's front bumper. But I was running out of roadway and hit the curve in triple digits, tapping the paddle to shift down to fifth gear as the all wheel drive shifted torque between axels and wheels to hug the road as tightly as a newly drafted NBA player holds onto his bonus check.

I exited the curve somewhere around 90, left the trucker behind and went off to enjoy the long country drive. With the new coupe, a *G-Thang* on steroids, Infiniti has taken what had been a well crafted sports coupe and built a coupe that is more comfortable, faster, road worthy and technologically proficient than the original and is less likely to be embarrassed by a competing Beamer.

Externally, the G-37 has a low silhouette flowing from a front grill curved into a slim, aggressive grimace – which befits a sports car aimed primarily at middle aged, male drivers. More muscle was added under the hood, and while the top speed is still limited to 150 miles per hour, *Car and Driver* magazine clocked its takeoff from 0 to 60 miles per hour in just 5.3 seconds.

Internally, Infiniti gave a lot of thought to comfort and appearance, starting with the double-curved dash giving warm, separate spaces to the driver and front passenger, and a center console comprised of rich African rosewood and topped with a round analog clock. One slot in the rosewood is the entrance to a six-disc CD changer and a smaller one below it is a flash drive slot for a 9.3-gigabyte Music Box hard drive. For additional entertainment, there is an AM/FM and XM satellite radio with the latter providing XM traffic watch for the satellite driven navigation system. There is also a connection for an iPod in case you want to bring another 1,500 or so friends along for the road trip. These sounds all emanate from an 11-speaker Bose “studio on wheels” which includes three-way door speaker arrays and 10-inch woofers. The entertainment can be run from controls on the dash or fingertip controls built into the leather, adjustable steering wheel. And if you prefer talk to music, there is a Bluetooth connection which easily pairs to any cell phone.

This is a mid-sized, two door car, but there is plenty of room in the rear for a pair of average sized adults, even if there are a pair of NFL-sized occupants in the front. The G-37 comes in three flavors: the basic Coupe Journey, which lacks the navigation system and paddle shifts; the Journey with a sport package, which includes the paddle shifts and navigation system; and the top of the line G-37 Coupe Sport 6MT with a sport suspension and aluminum pedals and 19-inch wheels.

The basic is fine for a long drive if you want to look good in a sporty coup. Adding the sport package and navigation system will make a road trip a bit more enjoyable. But if you want to nod, smile, and hit the accelerator next time you see a Beamer, get the Sport Coupe, get on the road, and go.



08 Infiniti G-37 Coupe

MSRP:		\$37,565
EPA Mileage:	20 MPG City	27 MPG Highway

Performance / Safety:		
0 – 60 MPH		5.3 Seconds
Top Speed		150 MPH

3.7-Liter DOHC aluminum V-6 engine producing 330 horsepower and 270 pound-feet of torque; 6-speed manual transmission with stick shift and paddle shifters; double wishbone front suspension; independent rear suspension; four-wheel active steer; power assisted vented disc brakes; 10-spoke, 19-inch aluminum alloy wheels; high intensity, projector-beam, bi-xenon headlights; dual-stage front airbags; roof-mounted, curtain side impact airbags; dynamic stability and traction control.

Interior / Comfort:

AM/FM/ XM satellite radio; 6-disc, in-dash CD and 9.3 Gigabyte hard drive and compact flash slot and iPod integration; Bose 11-speaker audio with 3-way door speaker arrays and 10-inch woofers; Navigation system with XM NavTraffic and 7-inch color monitor; Bluetooth cell phone connection; power sunroof; leather-wrapped, tilt and telescope steering wheel with fingertip audio and cruise controls; adaptive cruise control.