

# CARGAZING

## Super Duty Adds Luxury

### Ford's Hard-Working Pickup Continues to Move Upmarket

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Ford's Super Duty pickup is designed from the ground up to do hard work, but it's a far cry from a stripped-down work truck.

While you can order a basic Super Duty starting at \$33,150 — an impressive price considering what this truck is engineered to do, with a maximum conventional tow rating of 21,000 pounds — the biggest surprise is just how comfortably it can do the job.

Heavy-duty pickups, and Ford's Super Duty range of F-250, F-350 and F-450 trucks in particular, have been in a race to add more technology, refinement and luxury at every price point in recent years.

Consider this: for 2019, the Super Duty is offering a 10-speaker, 1,000-watt B&O PLAY sound system. With the Bang & Olufsen brand behind it, it's the kind of high-end audiophile system you might expect to find in a European luxury-car showroom,



The Super Duty is designed around towing and hauling, including having cameras and sensors optimized for use with a trailer. Its cabin can be outfitted with leather, wood and the latest technologies like any luxury sedan.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF FORD SUPER DUTY

Whether driving the luxurious Limited, shown here, or the more work-oriented XL or XLT trims, the Ford Super Duty lineup impresses with performance and comfort.

not necessarily in a truck that can pull a 35,000-pound gooseneck trailer behind it.

Other changes for 2019 include a new appearance package on the Lariat Sport with painted 20-inch wheels and the optional FordPass Connect system with a 4G cellular modem for staying connected on the go.

I could see FordPass Connect being especially useful for people who use their truck as a mobile office. Connecting multiple laptops to its WiFi hot spot is a breeze, with fast 4G speeds sharable with up to 10 devices. What is a simple entertainment feature on ordinary Fords can become a powerful tool for productivity on a built-for-work pickup like this.

Its strong backbone remains unchanged. It's still built on a stout frame made from extremely strong steel, and it retains what Ford calls a "high-strength, military-grade, aluminum-alloy body."

Ford's attention to detail in this truck make it drive like a dream. It has a comfortable, smooth ride — even smoother when laden

with cargo or pulling a load — and is shockingly quiet at highway speeds. Despite being built for commercial-grade capability, it's impressively civilized over the road.

Power comes from a choice of two highly capable engines: a 6.2-liter gasoline V8, or a 6.7-liter Power Stroke diesel. After driving both, I prefer the diesel for its monumental, instant burst of torque that's perfect for towing heavy loads. It's pricey at \$9,120 as an upgrade, but it's worth every penny for people who need the numbers it generates for the task at hand. That price is made more palatable, too, by its reputation for durability and high values on the resale market.

When you add content and luxury features, it's not uncommon to see the price of a fully outfitted Super Duty rise over \$60,000 or even more. This truck famously topped out with a sticker price over \$100,000 last year with all

the options added to its ultra-high-end Limited trim level.

Granted, very few people will be buying \$100,000 pickups. But the fact that you can build it up to such a high level, with the capability, technology and quality materials to justify that price, says a lot about the potential that lies under every Super Duty's skin.

#### What was tested?

**Model:** 2019 Ford F-250

Super Duty

**Base price:** \$33,150

**Wheelbase:** 141.6 in.

**Length:** 231.8 in.

**Width:** 105.9 in.

**Height:** 77.9 in.

**Engine:** 6.2-liter V8 (385 hp, 430 ft. lbs.)

**Transmission:** Six-speed automatic

**Fuel economy:** Not rated

#### RATINGS

Style: 7

Performance: 10

Price: 8

Handling: 6

Ride: 7

Comfort: 7

Quality: 8

Overall: 8

#### Why buy it?

Its payload and trailer tow ratings make it an incredibly capable performer. Even more impressive is how comfortable this hard-working truck is to drive on the highway, with a smooth, quiet, composed ride and lots of infotainment goodies.