

# MOTORING *friends*

## Lincoln's Navigator rugged and refined DRIVING

by HEATHER TRAUB

When I first laid eyes on Lincoln's first foray into the sport utility field, I was stunned by its elegant immensity.

Wow. This beast is a beauty. Dan Walls of Fred Walls and Son on Highway 16 West told me to be gentle, as this particular beauty was already spoken for. You mean I have to keep my money in the bank? Here I was all ready to plunk down my house (or what I own of it) and empty all my pockets.

Four-wheeling has never been so refined. You could go anywhere, from the Baja to the ballet, and never feel underdressed or underpowered.

My tester was a Deep Navy Blue Clearcoat Metallic 4X4 with a Medium Prairie Tan leather interior. Illuminated running boards provide a gentleman's helping hand in. Entry for passengers is facilitated with good-sized handles. Drivers use the burl walnut inlaid, leather-wrapped steering wheel to vault into a six-way power driver's seat. Nav's front passenger also enjoys a six-way seat with lumbar adjustment.

Navigator's 4X4 air-suspension system sports front air shocks and rear air springs that actually lower the vehicle for easier entry and egress when the ignition key is removed.

With Control Trac 4-wheel drive, the Navigator offers four different operating options, depending on driving conditions. Two wheel drive, for your basic toot to the grocery store. Unless it's winter in Prince George, which means you will smile ever so slightly as the Navigator selects automatic 4WD capability for light snow conditions—truly defining "set and forget" functionality.

When it is really, really winter in Prince George and prior to snagging a Navigator you routinely got stuck in your cul-de-sac, you smile broadly as you select four-wheel drive "high" and blaze a trail that everyone else will want to follow to get bread and milk.

Lincoln's Navigator has abundant power to haul, thanks to more than 230 horses under the hood. A 5.4 litre Triton V8 powerplant with Fail-Safe Cooling on a 4X2 Navigator allows you to tow up to 8,000 pounds when teamed with an optional 3.73 limited slip rear axle. A Class III hitch and a wiring harness tucked into the rear fascia are part of the standard Trailer Towing Package.

Capability is Navigator's middle name, but this is a premium Lincoln, after all. Set your cabin temperature, and the electronic temperature control takes care of the ambient air. Audio and climate controls are duplicated on that "Memories of Jaguar" steering wheel. An electrochromic rearview mirror dims glare automatically. A six-disc CD changer in the central console and a premium AM/FM stereo with cassette serves up crisp, clean sound.

Overhead, a console houses map lights, storage for a garage door opener and sunglasses, rear quarter window switches, and an electronic trip information display. A memory system allows up to three drivers to program their favorite driver's seat and side mirror positions.

Second row seats access separate audio and flow-through climate settings, and power windows and locks are not only standard fare, they are thoughtfully illuminated. My tester had a 60/40 split bench. Second row seats tip forward to allow access to the back benches. Eight passengers could comfortably ride in this model.

This is not your run-of-the-mill sport-ute. A sophisticated ride planes the bumps, high road or no road thanks to automatic load-levelling suspension system, shock absorbers and distinctive tires. Luxury sound insulation erases road noise; you could actually carry on conversation at highway speeds. No yelling required. Dan Walls tells me that Lincoln took the insulation level of the Expedition and added 300 pounds worth to the Navigator. Let me tell

you, it is quiet.

Parallel parking or backing up that trailer is made easier with speed-sensitive variable-assist power steering.

Access to cargo is a snap with a lift-gate that opens up as usual, or you can open the rear window separately.

Safety features are premium. Aside from its size, which in itself feels secure, a long list of equipment adds to Navigator's security. Antilock braking and dual air bags are standard. Ask Dan about the Second Generation air bags. Remote keyless entry with a panic button, side-impact door beams, vertically-adjustable 3-point safety belts for outboard seats add to

the list. Dual fold-away heated power memory outside mirrors are de rigueur.

I could go on. And on. But you really should see a Navigator for yourself.

### SPEC SHEET

**1998 Lincoln Navigator**

**Vehicle type:** 8-passenger 4WD luxury sport utility vehicle

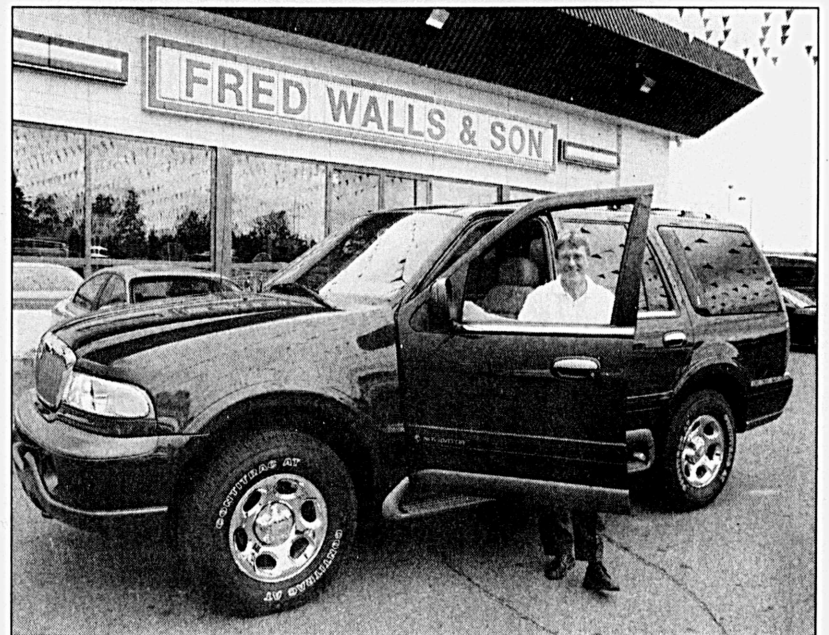
**Price as tested (MSRP):** \$63,689

**Engine:** 5.4 litre SOHC V8

**Horsepower:** 230 hp @ 4250 rpm

**Torque:** 325 lb.-ft. @ 3000 rpm

**Transmission:** Control-Trac 4WD



Dennis Chapman at Fred Walls and Son would be happy to show you around the luxurious, rugged 1998 Lincoln Navigator. This little beauty should provide everything you need to seriously enjoy four-wheeling.

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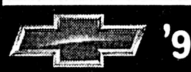
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