Ford gambles that consumers have tired of minivans and are ready for an extra dose of style, power and high-tech comfort.

The MyFord Touch system is now standard on all but base Flex SE models. MICHAEL BETTENCOURT FOR THE GLOBE AND MAIL

RATINGS

LOOKS

8.0

Against fairly generic rivals, the Flex still stands out.

INTERIOR

8.0

Not as spacious as a minivan, but the MyFord Touch's touch screen is visually impressive, and ergonomically improved.

RIDE

8.5

Comfortable ride and among the best handlers in its class.

SAFETY

8.0

Offers top-rated crash protection, inflatable rear seat belts and other safety features, though many are optional.

GREEN

6.0

No hybrid or plug-in option, base engine about same as thirsty rivals, up-level EcoBoost turbo engine heavy on the Boost, worse on the Eco.

THE VERDICT

8.0

Among the most sophisticated mainstream family haulers in top trim levels, with fun toys and available AWD, but pricier and less practical than minivans.

You'll like this vehicle if: you're tired of your minivan, and looking for something more interesting.