



## Camry comes alive!

### Toyota unveils the all-new 2006 Camry at the Detroit auto show

By NEIL McDONALD

TOYOTA hopes to bury, once and for all, the bland cardigan image of its Camry when the seventh-generation model arrives here in August following its world premiere at the North American International Auto Show in Detroit this week.

Gone are the staid "whitegoods on wheels" looks and in its place is a thoroughly modern-looking sedan that is roomier, safer and stronger than the existing car and has a high-class, Lexus-inspired interior.

The new Camry has a longer wheelbase, wider track, stiffer body and, according to Toyota, Formula 1-inspired aerodynamic improvements to aid stability.

The designers have pushed the wheels outwards for a better on-road stance while the front and rear windcreens are deeply set to give the sedan an almost coupe-like profile.

Toyota claims better crash safety, including up to seven airbags (including a driver's knee bag) and a pedestrian-friendly bonnet.

In the United States it will be offered with an improved version of the existing 2.4-litre VVT-i four-cylinder and a new 3.5-litre V6. However, Australian Camrys will be four-cylinder only in an effort by Toyota to distance it from the next-generation V6-only Avalon replacement.

To be paired with either a five-speed manual or

five-speed automatic (with pseudo-manual mode) transmission, the revised 2.4-litre engine produces 118kW at 6000rpm – up 6kW and delivered 400rpm higher over the current version – and 220Nm at 4000rpm, a modest increase of 2Nm (delivered at the same rpm). Refinement and fuel economy are also claimed to have improved.



Both the Camry and Avalon replacement will be built at Toyota's Altona plant in Victoria and the Camry will continue to be exported to more than 25 countries.

Although a hybrid Camry will be offered in the US, there are no short-term plans to bring it here, according to Toyota Australia's executive director of sales and marketing, David Buttner.

"We would like to embrace local manufacturing of a hybrid Camry," he said, adding that there was no definitive plan within the current model line-up horizon, "which is out to 2008".

Mr Buttner said the new car represented a big design departure from the current car.

"No one has ever complained about its value for money, quality or fuel economy, but there has always been some underlying comment about its style," he said. "But I'd like to think now we have style with substance.

"It will put us on the consideration list for people who would have never thought of a Camry before," he said.

Although specifications are still being finalised, Mr Buttner confirmed the Sportivo model would continue. GoAuto understands some models will be dropped or renamed.

As usual, Australian Camrys will also get unique suspension and steering calibrations.

Although unable to confirm the total local investment in the Camry/Avalon, Mr Buttner said it was "significant". "Because we're taking manufacturing from 110,000 (units p.a.) up to 140,000, we've made a lot of enhancements to the engine plant and improved the body shop," he said.

Both the Camry and Avalon replacement will be made on one production line and there will be some commonality of parts between them.

However, Mr Buttner said there would be strong visual differentiation between both cars and that the Avalon replacement was a significantly bigger car. It is expected to get an Australian-developed version of the same 24-valve DOHC V6 dual variable valve timing V6 offered in the US Camry. In that car it develops 200kW at 6200rpm and 336Nm at 4700rpm and is mated to an all-new six-speed automatic transmission.

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**Camry was the main attraction for Australia at Detroit, but there was much, much more to get tongues wagging – and fists waving – at what is arguably the world's most important motor show. The GoAuto team reports...**



### FORD REFLEX

**THAT** Ford has dubbed its compact Reflex coupe concept as one of the stars of this year's Detroit motor show is a reflection of the tediously slow but inevitable shift towards small cars in the US.

Packed with enviro-friendly tech like self-powered solar fans that cool the car when parked and an interior made from synthetic and regenerated materials, Reflex is powered by a diesel-electric hybrid engine that delivers fuel economy of up to 3.6L/100km.

Also featuring "reverse butterfly" doors and inflatable rear seatbelts, Reflex is a one-off show special built by Ford's North America Design studio, led by ex-Volvo design chief Peter Horbury. Polished alloy 20-inch wheels carry unique low roll resistance tyres from Michelin, while inside there's 2+1 seating, a touch-screen that displays streaming video of rear-seat occupants, shift paddles for the six-speed semi-auto transmission, "organic blue" LED instruments, low-voltage circuitry and solar-powered exterior lights.

### FORD EDGE

**THIS** is what we were waiting for: an in-the-metal look of Ford's forthcoming small 4WD, dubbed the Edge. In addition to a new 3.5-litre V6 petrol engine paired with a six-speed automatic gearbox, the small 4WD features an intelligent computer-controlled four-wheel drive system similar to the Mazda CX-7. It is mated to Ford's AdvanceTrac traction control system and rollover protection control.

The five-seater Edge's modern exterior flows into the interior with a bold dashboard with distinctive centre console treatment. The 60/40-split rear seats fold flat for extra luggage room and the front passenger seat also fold flat for extended loads. The Edge goes on sale in the US later this year.



### CHEVROLET CAMARO

**GENERAL MOTORS** took many by surprise by revealing a strikingly retro-styled, V8-powered coupe concept dubbed the Chevrolet Camaro at Detroit.

Similar in size and concept to the Chev SS concept first shown in 2003 and, curiously, at the San Diego show in late December, the two-door Camaro



show car pays homage to its archetypal American musclecar namesake, the original 1966 Camaro.

While the rear-drive Camaro concept's Corvette/HSV-like 298kW 6.0-litre LS2 V8, T56 six-speed manual transmission and staggered-diameter wheels (21-inch fronts, 22-inch rears) made for an unbeatable wow factor alongside Dodge's equally striking Challenger coupe, the Camaro may not be just for show.

GM vice-president and product king Bob Lutz is its biggest fan and said at Detroit "all I have to do is persuade this man to pay for it," referring to GM CEO Rick Wagoner. It's believed that, if produced, the four-seater Camaro would employ the same chassis architecture as Holden's new-for-2006 VE Commodore, known as Zeta Lite.

Which raises an intriguing prospect: as Holden's Monaro reaches the end of its Australian life and a VE-based replacement for the Holden-built Pontiac GTO remains uncertain, could the Camaro concept morph into Holden's next-generation Monaro?

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## DODGE CHALLENGER

**IT WOULD** be easy to describe the Dodge Challenger concept as a *Dukes of Hazard*-style two-door version of the same DaimlerChrysler brand's Charger sedan – but the Detroit show car is more than that.

Underpinned by the 300C and Charger sedans' rear-drive LX platform, Challenger is a precursor to the next generation of Dodge/Chrysler models expected to appear from late next year in the US, based on a new LY-codenamed platform.

Likely to eventually be available in the US alongside Chrysler's Imperial sedan flagship and an all-new Chrysler 300C, plus a next-generation Dodge Charger, the Challenger coupe is Dodge's answer to Ford's Mustang and the Chevrolet Corvette from GM, which may also produce a born-again Camaro coupe.



Styled by Chrysler Group's West Coast Pacifica Studio, Challenger features five-spoke chrome wheels – 20-inch items up front and 21-inch rears. Wheel tracks (1625mm front; 1650mm rear) are wider than both 300C and Chrysler's original 1970 Challenger. If approved for production, Dodge's new sports coupe could go on sale in the US as early as mid-2007, powered by a 6.1-litre V8 as the 2008 Challenger SRT-8, before becoming available with 5.7-litre HEMI V8 power.



## JEEP WRANGLER

**ELECTRIC** windows? Has Jeep gone soft with the all-new Wrangler? Not so, according to the American 4WD brand. It claims the Wrangler still adheres to the tried-and-true simple design philosophy of the rugged off-roader but is longer, wider and roomier than the current car.

Due here later this year, the 2007 model shares its new 3.7-litre V6 with the Cherokee and replaces the current 4.0-litre in-line six. In the Wrangler the V6 develops 153kW/325Nm and is mated to a six-speed manual (or optional four-speed auto) with what Jeep calls "Off-Road Rock-Trac" high- and low-range four-wheel drive. A diesel version will also be sold in Australia.

Apart from electric windows, ChryslerJeep says the off-roader will also be available with a rollover stability system, stability control and brake assist. An innovative three-piece modular hardtop is also available. Although launched as a two-door, a four-door variant is believed to be in the pipeline, as well as a 5.7-litre Hemi V8 version.

## JEEP COMPASS

**DIEHARDS** will wince but Jeep has definitely moved away from its flannelette-shirt, rugged off-road image with its new Compass wagon, which is due Down Under within 18 months.

The Compass will also be the first Jeep available in front-wheel drive guise as well as all-wheel drive. The newcomer seats five, has the customary Jeep grille and chunky looks. It rests on a 2626mm wheelbase, which is slightly longer than a Subaru Forester, and will be powered by a 128kW 2.4-litre four-cylinder engine.

Jeep claims the vehicle "combines the packaging and functionality of an SUV with the performance, handling, fuel economy and price of a compact car or small pick-up".

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## CHRYSLER IMPERIAL

**NOT** content with wowing crowds with its Challenger coupe from sister brand Dodge, Chrysler used Detroit to reveal a brand-new flagship sedan bearing the Imperial name that was once sold as a stand-alone marque.

Based on a stretched version of the LY-codenamed platform that will underpin the next-generation 300C sedan from 2008 (the current 300C and Charger sedan are based on existing LX architecture), the Imperial will be Chrysler's new luxury flagship to rival premium Cadillacs in the US. Like 300C and the LY-based Challenger coupe concept, the rear-drive Imperial is likely to be HEMI V8-powered. Riding on a 3125mm wheelbase, the Imperial is about 430mm longer than the 300C and 150mm higher.



## AUDI S6

**FRESH** from confirming its R8 Le Mans racer for production and revealing the V10-powered S8 at the Tokyo show in October, Audi has used the 2006 Detroit show to unveil its all-new S6 sedan and Avant. Due on sale here some time after this year's 313kW RS4 (April) and 335kW S8 (October), the redesigned S6 is powered by a version of the S8's Lamborghini-sourced 220kg 5.2-litre V10 – which may be slightly less powerful than the S8 at 309kW but offers the same beefy 540Nm of torque from just 3000rpm.

**FULL STORY: [CLICK HERE](#)**

## AUDI ROADJET

**IS THIS** Audi's next-generation A3 or simply a platform upon which the German giant has previewed a range of new technology at this year's Detroit show? Described as a B-segment (small car) four-door fastback saloon, Audi says its Roadjet concept combines "the latest evolutionary stage of Audi's formal idiom with an entirely new space concept".

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## FERRARI 599 GTB



**FERRARI** has used the Detroit show to announce the creation of a new model from Maranello – the 599 GTB, which it claims is the most powerful V12-engined production car of all time. To be officially unveiled on February 28 at the Geneva motor show, the mid-front-engined two-seater coupe uses an Enzo-derived 5999cc V12 which produces a stunning 620hp (462kW) at 7600rpm. It is built using the latest evolution of Ferrari's all-aluminium body and chassis, which sets up a weight/power ratio of just 2.6kg per horsepower.



## LAMBORGHINI MIURA

**LAMBORGHINI** is attempting to stir car-lovers' souls with its Miura Concept, which it describes as a "modern interpretation" of the 1966 original. This latest Miura – a name that refers to a particularly fierce breed of Spanish bull – is the work of Audi's head of design, Walter de' Silva, who insisted the car retained "the extraordinary purity of line characteristic of the original". He also said he has refined the contours and eliminated "any superfluous detail in order to enhance the clean, simple lines and perfectly-balanced proportions of the original."

The company claims there is no firm date for production launch. However, if the Miura does get the green light, expect it to appear sometime in 2007/2008, brandishing all-wheel drive and built on the recently announced Audi R8 platform – a development of the Lamborghini Gallardo.

**MORE DETAILS: [CLICK HERE](#)**



## ASTON MARTIN RAPIDE

**ASTON MARTIN** sprung a four-door limousine surprise at Detroit this week. Based on the VH (Vertical/Horizontal) platform that underpins the Vanquish and DB9, the Rapide will rival Porsche's Panamera four-door sedan scheduled for release by 2009, as well as the Bentley Continental Flying Spur, Maserati Quattroporte and Audi S8.

A long-wheelbase, four-seater, high-performance coupe (of sorts), the Rapide is said to represent the pinnacle of the Ford-owned company's design ethos – "a formal language developed through the carefully balanced combination of elegance and aggression". At 5m long, the vehicle is 30cm longer than a DB9 and a 140kg heavier. Power comes from the V12 engine used in the DB9, uprated to 480bhp (358kW) and mated to a ZF "Touchtronic" gearbox. The large boot (complete with a fridge) is accessed via a hatchback, while each rear seat folds down individually.



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## INFINITI COUPE

AS NISSAN Australia continues to contemplate introducing the Infiniti luxury brand Down Under, the Japanese manufacturer has unveiled a striking coupe concept vehicle at Detroit.

A forerunner to the next-generation G35 and its Nissan sibling, the 350Z, both of which have reached middle age in their current life cycles, the coupe concept indicates that perhaps more than anything else, the Japanese manufacturer is not intending to tamper too much with the fundamental design it already has in place.

Notable aspects on the concept include a full-length glass panel roof, modulated front fenders and bonnet, a deep front spoiler and large projector headlights, polished bare metal-look paint, obscured doorhandles and 20-inch aluminium-alloy wheels. Inside, there is a "double wave" instrument panel design. Specially textured aluminium accents project the image of traditional Japanese "Washi" paper, providing "an added sense of warmth and crispness" according to Nissan.



## NISSAN URGE

THE Urge is a motorcycle-inspired compact coupe using a "quick, high-revving, small-displacement engine" to direct power to its rear wheels via a six-speed manual transmission. Hailed as "pure, powerful sports car", Urge features brushed aluminium wheels, colour-infused aluminium body panels and a "driver-oriented" cockpit with integrated Xbox 360 gaming system.

Given Nissan showed a possible 2005X Silvia coupe replacement in its Foria concept at the Tokyo motor show in October, exactly where Urge fits into Nissan's future models plans is unclear. But, if nothing else, the rejuvenated Japanese company's focus on compact sports coupe concepts bodes well for the future.

## ACURA RDX

HONDA'S Acura luxury brand, under which the MDX 4WD is sold in the United States, has been used to present the all-new RDX four-wheel drive wagon. A smaller sibling to the American-built MDX sold in Australia, the five-seat RDX could replace the CR-V in Australia or sit above that vehicle as a prestige contender rivalling the likes of the BMW X3.

Built on Honda's new global light truck platform, this near-production "prototype" was shown in Detroit with a 179kW/352Nm 2.3-litre four-cylinder turbocharged engine that drives all four wheels via a five-speed automatic transmission (with a pseudo-manual mode) and Honda's so-called Super Handling All-Wheel Drive system. It also has rollover sensors, side and curtain airbags, HID headlights and some innovative cabin storage areas. The RDX goes on sale in the US later this year.



## MITSUBISHI CONCEPT-CT

MITSUBISHI has revealed two new world-first vehicles at the Detroit auto show in January – the 2007 Eclipse Spyder 2+2 cabriolet and the Concept-CT. The latter is an ultra-compact four-door hatchback which showcases the Japanese manufacturer's latest design work in this market segment and also includes a hybrid powertrain combining a 50kW 1.0-litre three-cylinder petrol engine with the company's in-wheel motor (20kW x 4) electronic vehicle technology first shown at the Tokyo motor show last October.

Other interesting features on the CT include "suicide" rear doors, a horizontally split tailgate (with upper glass hatch and lower tailgate) and a rear-midship layout which places the engine behind the rear passengers but ahead of the rear axle line. Mitsubishi claims this allows for optimum weight distribution, a lower centre of gravity and a small yaw-inertia moment (quick steering response), as well as large frontal crush zone for reduced engine intrusion into the cabin in the event of a collision.

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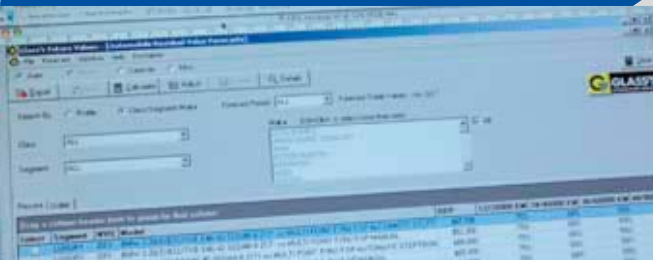
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## LEXUS LS460

**LEXUS** surprised few by revealing an all-new version of its top-shelf LS sedan at the 2006 North American International Auto Show in Detroit yesterday. Though the Toyota luxury brand's fourth-generation flagship is virtually identical to the LF-Sh hybrid concept shown at Tokyo in October, it is the LS460's preliminary specs that are the real news.

Revealed 17 years after the original LS was launched at Detroit, the all-new 2007 LS460 is powered by a 4.6-litre V8 that drives the new sedan's rear wheels through the world's first eight-speed automatic transmission and offers an "estimated" 285kW. **FULL STORY: [CLICK HERE](#)**

## MERCEDES-BENZ S65 AMG

**MERCEDES** calls it the world's most powerful series-production car, and we're not about to dispute it because the new S65 AMG delivers 450kW and has a peak torque figure of 1000Nm – more than any other vehicle in its segment. The ultra-powerful AMG 6.0-litre V12 bi-turbo engine accelerates from 0-100km/h in a claimed 4.4 seconds and 0-200km/h in just 13.3 seconds. It has a peak power figure of 450kW from 4750rpm to 5100rpm, while the maximum torque of 1000Nm can be called on from 2000rpm to 4000rpm.

**FULL STORY: [CLICK HERE](#)**



## MINI CONCEPT DETROIT

**MINI** has unveiled a near-production version of its new Cooper and confirmed that the brand will grow to three models in Australia within three years. The Mini Concept Detroit is likely to be called the Traveller or Countryman when it goes on sale. It has barn-door-style rear doors and a bigger, more practical interior.

The car is bigger in every dimension than the current car. The concept's distinctive front-end styling is also tipped to go into production.

The new Mini is expected to debut at the Paris motor show in September and go on sale here next year. It will use a range of Peugeot-derived engines, with the Cooper S tipped to get a 126kW 1.6-litre turbocharged four-cylinder engine.

## VOLVO C30 DESIGN CONCEPT

**NEW** details and images of Volvo's forthcoming C30 hatchback were leaked on to a Spanish Volvo website on Boxing Day ahead of the C30 Design Concept shown at Detroit this week. It bears a strong resemblance to the actual production car, which will be unveiled at September's Paris motor show and go on sale in Europe and North America in 2007. Production is due to start at the end of 2006 at Volvo's Ghent factory in Belgium.

The C30 will be based on the S40/V50 platform but is about 10cm shorter than the S40. It will use the same architecture of the Ford Focus and Mazda3, and is clearly influenced by the Safety Concept Car and 3CC concept. Inside, the cabin adopts the dashboard and seats from the S40, including the floating centre console and brushed aluminium highlights.

**MORE DETAILS: [CLICK HERE](#)**



## SAAB 9-5 AERO BIOPOWER

**AFTER** a successful launch of the Saab 9-5 2.0t BioPower flex fuel car in Sweden, Saab has unveiled a concept version of the 9-5 Aero BioPower at the Detroit show. The Aero BioPower concept is capable of 232kW and 440Nm torque from its E85 bioethanol 2.3-litre high-output turbo engine. This is almost 20 per cent more power and 25 per cent more torque than the conventionally turbocharged 2.3-litre engine.

On the road, this power increase is expected to translate to a 0-100km/h sprint in under 6.0 seconds, compared to 6.9 seconds for the standard petrol 9-5 Aero. This is all achieved alongside a dramatic improvement in environmental performance, through significantly-reduced greenhouse gas emissions. **MORE DETAILS: [CLICK HERE](#)**





## HYUNDAI HCD9 TALUS

**NOT** quite the rear-wheel drive, Tiburon replacement GoAuto uncovered last April, the HCD9 Talus coupe-crossover concept nonetheless points to what that car may look like when it reaches production in 2007/8.

Befitting Detroit, the Californian-created, high-riding, four-seater, five-door hatchback is powered by a 4.6-litre 32-valve V8 that is estimated to produce 254kW of power and is mated to a five-speed automatic gearbox. Drive is delivered to the rear wheels unless extra traction is needed. Suspension is fully independent.

Fantasy details include 22-inch chromed alloy wheels, a powered clamshell hatch, Mazda RX-8-style rear doors with hidden handles, and a dash console designed to resemble a jewelled necklace.

Electronic stability control, night vision and shift-by-wire transmission technologies, wireless internet connectivity, rear-seat DVD monitors, LED pipe cabin lighting and adaptive cruise control point to the HCD9's luxury-segment aspirations, as does the full leather upholstery, metallic trim accents and chestnut wood inserts.



## KIA SOUL

**THE** Soul concept is a crossover wagon with a sporty, bold look that builds on design cues from Kia's Mesa concept vehicle introduced at last year's Detroit show. Though small on the outside, Kia says the interior is large and practical with a versatile cargo area. The Soul is a five-door wagon but the rear "suicide" doors create a larger and easier entrance into the cabin. Although the car-maker is remaining mum on the Soul making it into production, it has hinted that the concept is a clear indication of what is in store for its future designs.

**MORE DETAILS: [CLICK HERE](#)**



## TOYOTA F3R

**TOYOTA** says it commissioned its California design studio, Calt Design Research Inc, and its California-based Advanced Strategy Group, to produce the F3R concept in response to a rapidly shrinking people-mover market in the US, where "minivan" sales have plummeted from about 900,000 vehicles in 1994 to 500,000 last year. While it may not be a precursor to Toyota's next-generation Tarago, the result is seating for eight and maximum space efficiency within a wedge-shaped, boxy exterior.

Along with ubiquitously large 22-inch alloy wheels, a remote-controlled audio, video and lighting system and a heavily tinted, super-narrow daylight opening, the F3R show car attempts to be "a sophisticated extension of the home" for America's youth by offering three modern, individually styled rows of seats.

## MAZDA KABURA

**THE** CX-7 was the production car for Australians to take most interest in at the Mazda stand, while the Kabura was the concept car to marvel at. A compact rear-drive coupe, the Californian-designed Kabura gets its name from the Japanese term "Kabura-ya" – translated as the "first arrow into battle". Interestingly, the Kabura has a 3+1 (rather than 2+2) seating configuration.

It has a standard driver's door but the right-hand side of the car features two seats in tandem and a smaller extra door for the rear passenger. At the touch of a button this slides into the car's body cavity to allow access to the rear seat. In size it fits between the MX-5 and RX-8 with a wheelbase of 2550mm, length of 4050mm, 1280mm height and width of 1780mm. Power is provided via a 2.0-litre four-cylinder engine driving the rear wheels.

Could the Kabura form the basis for a new RX-7? Watch this space.



## MAZDA CX-7

**DUE** Down Under early in 2007, Mazda's production CX-7 five-seat prestige 4WD wagon was shown at the Greater Los Angeles Auto Show a few days ago, ahead of the Detroit show this week. Powering either the front or all four wheels is a variation of the recently released Mazda6 MPS's 2.3-litre turbo-charged four-cylinder engine that is tied to a six-speed automatic gearbox. In US make-up it produces 182kW of power at 5000rpm and 350Nm of torque from 2500rpm, with "at least" (according to Mazda) 99 per cent of the latter occurring between 2000rpm and 5000rpm.

**MORE DETAILS: [CLICK HERE](#)**

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# Small conquers all



## Toyota leads another record year as industry falls short of 1m sales

By BYRON MATHIOUDAKIS

**988,269. NOT** a million for sure, but as far as new-vehicle sales in Australia are concerned, 2005 was still a record year and continued a four-year growth streak, with Toyota again the leading brand in the land.

According to VFACTS figures released last week, the 2005 total represented a 3.5 per cent rise from 2004's 955,259-unit record.

Of the 988,269 total, 608,804 were passenger vehicles, representing a 3.2 per cent rise over the year before.

December 2005 was also a record month, eclipsing the previous best December (2004) by 297 vehicles to achieve 79,277 sales.

But it was down on November 2005's 83,538 total by 4261 units, continuing a last-quarter sales trend that the Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries (FCAI) argues robbed the industry of the one-million sales result for the year.

In 2005, the Holden Commodore led all others for the 10th year in a row with 66,794 units (down from 79,170 in 2004), followed by the Ford Falcon (53,080 versus 65,384).

As the graph indicated for most of the year, large cars fell – by 15.7 per cent to 153,244 units for the full year. The previous year's result was 181,678.

Other 'Big Six' casualties included the Camry V6 (down 2024 units to 12,046) and the ailing Toyota Avalon (2949 versus 5584 sales in 2004).

Mitsubishi's family-car situation remained disheartening despite a numerical improvement. Just 16,017 Magna, Verada and all-new 380 models were sold last year, representing a mere



Corolla

49 more cars over what the former two achieved in 2004.

Mitsubishi sold 947 380s last month, well below the 2500 a month average it needs to survive as a manufacturer in Australia.

In contrast – and not coincidentally – the big winner was the small-car segment, which jumped 18.6 per cent year-on-year to 215,324 sales, breaching the 200,000 mark for the first time. In 2004 the total was 181,160.

The Toyota Corolla, which was Australia's best-selling car overall in September, led the small-car class with 46,415 sales, up from 39,053. This is an 18.9 per cent rise, and an all-time best for the 38-year-old nameplate.

The premium-priced Mazda3 continued its startling run with 32,570 cars sold, compared to 2004's 22,046, but it was piped to second place by Holden's wider range of Astras (33,070 versus 24,699 in 2004).

With an 1837-unit drop in Focus sales in 2005 (10,728 versus 12,565), Ford must be wondering what it has to do to find more buyers for its European small car. Securing 9311 sales (a 57.3 per cent leap over 2004), even the far-costlier VW Golf is closing in on the Focus.

On a brighter side for Ford, Sport Utility Vehicle (SUV) sales lifted 4.2 per cent to 180,292, an achievement due in no small part to its Territory (23,454 sales) that, according to FCAI chief executive Peter Sturrock was "one of the highlights of the 2005 model year".

In that SUV Medium sector the revamped Hyundai Terracan, Holden Adventra V6, Jeep Wrangler, Kia Sorento, Nissan Pathfinder and Land Rover Discovery also lifted their sales.

Honda's hard-charging Accord/Accord Euro duo (17,579 versus 12,564) not only blitzed the second-placed Maxima (2808 sales – 47.3 per cent down on 2004's 5329 result) in its prestige segment

## 2005 TOP 10 BRANDS

	Brand	2005 % Share	2004 % Share
1	Toyota	20.5	21.1
2	Holden	17.7	18.6
3	Ford	13.1	14.2
4	Mazda	6.7	5.8
5	Mitsubishi	6.3	6.0
6	Nissan	5.7	6.7
7	Hyundai	4.9	4.5
8	Honda	4.8	3.8
9	Subaru	3.6	3.5
10	Kia	2.6	2.6

Source: VFACTS, January 2006

but also outsold the Mazda6 (14,783) in the cheaper medium segment. Only the Toyota Camry 2.4 (24,446 sales) stood in its way.

The 3543 Odyssey people-movers Honda shifted in 2005 (against 2129 the year before, and only 891 units shy of the segment-leading stalwart, the Kia Carnival), as well as increased Jazz sales (7914 compared to 7360) were also impressive.

Speaking of light cars, Toyota is leading the category thanks to a seamless transition from the big-selling Echo to its Yaris replacement.

Together they found 18,832 buyers compared to 17,879 in 2004, despite Hyundai's growing Getz threat (16,455) as well as the record 9675 Barina sales Holden achieved. Significantly, Suzuki's Swift sold almost 31 times better last year than its Ignis predecessor did in 2004.

The light commercial vehicle tally was also up, by 2.6 per cent to 167,878, with strong showings from the Holden Rodeo, Mitsubishi Triton, Ford's ageing Courier and Toyota's revitalised HiLux pick-up and HiAce van.

Overall in 2005, Toyota led the pack again – the 10th non-consecutive year to do so – with 202,817 sales, just 1080 units more than 2004's record-busting 201,737 sales.

But Holden (at 174,464) and Ford (at 129,140) faltered against the previous year's respective 178,027 and 135,172 totals. Along with Toyota and Nissan, they also lost market share in 2005.

## 2005 CATEGORY WINNERS

Category	Gold	Silver	Bronze
Light	Toyota Echo/Yaris	Hyundai Getz	Holden Barina
Small	Toyota Corolla	Holden Astra	Mazda3
Medium	Toyota Camry	Mazda6	Subaru Liberty
Large	Holden Commodore	Ford Falcon	Mitsubishi Magna/380
People-mover	Kia Carnival	Honda Odyssey	Toyota Tarago
Sports	Holden Monaro	Holden Astra Convertible	Honda Integra
Prestige	Honda Accord / Accord Euro	Holden Statesman	Nissan Maxima
Luxury	BMW 3 Series	Mercedes-Benz C-class	Audi A4
SUV Compact	Subaru Forester	Nissan X-Trail	Toyota RAV4
SUV Medium	Ford Territory	Toyota Prado	Toyota Kluger
SUV Large	Toyota LandCruiser	Nissan Patrol	Ford Explorer
SUV Luxury	BMW X5	Lexus RX330	Volvo XC90

Source: VFACTS, January 2006

Continued next page



# Small cars conquer

Continued from previous page

A surging Mazda filled out the fourth place with 66,250 sales (all its passenger cars bar the RX-8 and geriatric MPV grew in sales), followed by Mitsubishi's 61,907 sales – up from a disastrous 56,967 previously), and then Nissan at 56,032 against 63,654 in 2004 when it sat at number four.

The Tiida, Nissan's imminent Pulsar replacement, cannot come soon enough, as the X-Trail – second with 12,072 sales in the light SUV segment behind Subaru's facelifted Forester (12,320) – will face a fierce foe in Toyota's all-new RAV4 (which finished third with 11,881 sales) in 2006.

Improvers rounded out the top 10, with Hyundai registering 48,010 vehicles against 42,510 and Honda hitting 47,001 versus 36,474. Subaru also set a personal best of 36,044 (up from 33,619) while Kia shifted 25,293 vehicles against the previous year's 24,454.

Suzuki virtually doubled its sales from 7206 to 13,794, while Volkswagen, too, shot up to 15,782 units from 10,754, representing a 46.7 per cent difference.

Other ascendants included Smart (60.1 per cent), Proton (57 per cent), Mini (39.9 per cent), Audi (29.9 per cent), Citroen (25.2 per cent), Lexus (19.9 per cent) and Jeep (12.8 per cent), while BMW, Chrysler, Volvo and Mercedes-Benz also recorded rises. SsangYong's 2645 result was ahead



Territory

of 2004's non-VFACTS tallied 1106 vehicles.

Distributors that saw sales slow significantly are the departing Daihatsu (5010 versus 3007 in 2004), Saab (1510 versus 1848) and Alfa Romeo (1572 versus 1800), while Jaguar and Renault also slid back.

For 2006, the FCAI is predicting 980,000 units for the second year in a row.

"While general economic conditions will soften in 2006, the motor vehicle market will stabilise at its current level of strength," said Mr Sturrock.

He also envisaged a large-car segment recovery, courtesy of significantly new or revised players.

Market leader Toyota's executive director of sales and marketing, David Buttner, concurred with both the FCAI's market forecasts and the large car's new product-led resurgence.

However, he said it would be a slow recovery, as both the upcoming Holden VE Commodore and Toyota Avalon replacement would not be released

until well into the second half of 2006.

"They're coming too late in the year (the large segment) to fully recover the 16 per cent fall it experienced in 2005," he told GoAuto, predicting that their full impact would not be felt until 2007, which is also when Ford's BF Falcon replacement is due.

"In Australia there will always be demand for large cars... (especially) if you are offering the right 'large six' with the right space, the right fuel economy and at the right price – but it also has to have the right looks too."

Mr Buttner also thinks that the mid-sized passenger car and medium SUV segments will probably return some of the market share they stole from the large-car segment.

"It will not be easy in 2006," he said. "With the same levels of sales expected as last year, and with Toyota seeking growth, we need to achieve more conquest sales as well as to hold on to the loyal customers. This is the challenge."



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# Adventra V8 axed



By NEIL McDONALD

**HOLDEN** has discontinued V8 model variants of its Adventra four-wheel drive wagon and will concentrate solely on V6s.

The decision was made partly because the V8 model has been a slow seller in the competitive sports utility vehicle segment and also because of the need, according to Holden, to reduce manufacturing complexity at its Elizabeth (South Australia) operations.

The company has also discontinued Holden One Tonner variants in preparation for the all-new VE Commodore in the second half of 2006.

Compared to Ford, which sold more than 23,000 Territory 4WDs in 2005, Holden recorded 3153 Adventra sales in 2005. The vehicle continued to struggle despite the addition of a V6 last February.

Holden launched the Adventra as a V8-only model in 2003, however it sold below expectations because of its high \$50,000-plus pricetag. The company was eventually forced to slice \$4000 off its retail price.

In 2004 just 2500 Adventras were sold, well short of Holden's 4800 target.

Another issue overshadowing the Adventra's future is the arrival later this year of a GM

Daewoo-sourced 4WD wagon, based on the S3X concept car and known as Captiva in overseas markets.

Holden is yet to release full details on the vehicle but it is likely to be available in five- or seven-seat configurations as well as with front- or all-wheel drive.

There are also several powertrain options available to Holden – a 2.4-litre four-cylinder, a Holden-built 3.2-litre Alloytec V6, as well as two Korean-built 2.0-litre turbo-diesel engines.

The state-of-the-art Euro4-compliant common-rail diesels will be available in fixed geometry turbo (FGT) form, which develops 88kW at 4000 rpm and 280Nm at 2000rpm, as well as a higher performing variable geometry turbo (VGT), which develops 110kW at 4000rpm and 310Nm at 2000rpm.

Holden has also announced changes to its model year 2006 line-up of Australian-produced vehicles in preparation for the all-new VE Commodore in the second half of the year.

The high-tech 3.6-litre Alloytec engine introduced in the VZ Commodore series in 2004 required minor changes to the engine, exhaust system and calibration to meet Euro3 requirements. These changes included new fuel injectors and a new exhaust catalyst.

As reported by GoAuto in November, the new 6.0-litre L76 alloy engine, a member of GM's fourth-generation small-block V8 family, joins the line-up for 2006. The engine develops 260kW at 5600rpm and 510Nm at 4400rpm when tested with 98 RON premium unleaded petrol.



One tonner

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**HOLDEN**



## Kia adopts a dual people-mover strategy with old and new Carnival models

By NEIL McDONALD

**KIA** Automotive Australia will hold on to the value-for-money Carnival people-mover despite the arrival of the newer, more powerful and more expensive Grand Carnival V6 model.

The now-outdated Carnival 2.5-litre V6 will continue to be part of the Kia line-up beyond March 1, when Ateco Automotive hands over Australian distribution for Kia vehicles to a factory-backed operation.

The Carnival has been a huge success for Ateco, snaring a 28 per cent share of the people-mover market last year, based on its competitive \$29,990 price point, relatively high equipment level and seven-seat capacity.

An Ateco spokesman said there was still room – figuratively speaking – for the Carnival alongside the new-generation Grand Carnival because each were distinct vehicles, one being a bigger eight-seater and the other a seven-seater, as well as having two distinct engine/transmission combinations.

“In every dimension it really sits in a class above the Carnival,” he said.

As well as the extra seat and interior room, the Grand Carnival ups the stakes by offering a more powerful 184kW/343Nm 3.8-litre V6 engine paired with a new five-speed automatic gearbox with pseudo-manual mode. It also offers improved equipment levels and, Kia claims, better quality – all with a starting price of \$36,990.

Visually, there is no mistaking that the Grand Carnival is a people-mover but the overall styling is crisp and harmonious with a sharply sloping bonnet, large glass area and roomy cabin.

At 5130mm long, the Grand Carnival is 205mm longer than the Carnival and 85mm wider. It has a 3020mm wheelbase and is 1815mm high including roof rails.

The bigger V6 delivers a 0-100km/h sprint of 10.5 seconds, with Ateco claiming the Grand Carnival is more than a match for some of the upper-market people-mover rivals such as the Chrysler Grand Voyager, Volkswagen Multivan and Mercedes-Benz Viano.

Despite being bigger in every respect than the Carnival, the Grand Carnival's turning circle is

smaller – 12.1m versus 13.0m – as a result of a new speed-sensitive steering system and steering rack.

Standard features include a flat-folding third row, cruise control, ABS brakes, tri-zone air-conditioning, central locking, electric (and heated) exterior mirrors, a six-speaker CD stereo, folding tables in the seatbacks, an 80-litre fuel tank and dual front airbags.

Side and curtain airbags are optional at \$1500 in a pack that also includes rain-sensing windscreen wipers, fake wood trim and a leather-clad steering wheel. Metallic and mica paint is a further \$250.

The air-conditioning system allows front seat and rear seat occupants to independently set temperatures and fan speeds.

The spare tyre is a centrally mounted space-saver spare, allowing for a deep boot area with all eight seats in place.

Dynamically, the Grand Carnival gets a MacPherson strut front suspension with rear multi-link system that is claimed to offer more passenger comfort, better on-road response and enhanced safety.

The front suspension features a hydro-formed subframe designed to better isolate noise and vibration as well as offer better crash absorption characteristics.

Last year the market-leading Carnival was Kia's third-best-selling vehicle in its line-up behind the Rio and Cerato. The Korean manufacturer sold 4434 Carnivals in 2005.

Kia is the fourth brand Ateco has handed to factory-backed operations, following Volkswagen, Audi and Suzuki. It has been distributing Kia vehicles here since 2000.

With Kia gone, Ateco still imports Alfa Romeo, Citroen and Fiat vehicles, and has recently become responsible for Ferrari and Maserati. In recent months, the company has been actively seeking to fill the gap left by Kia by looking to import Chinese-built commercial and low-cost passenger cars.



**Automotive trading in the hot Aussie summer is usually centred around big deals on old stock. But a large number of new model variants have also come our way this season. Here is a sample...**

### **SUBI STRIKES NEW LIBERTY BALANCE**

AFTER bolstering its top-end Liberty range last year with extra turbocharged and six-cylinder models, Subaru has turned to the bottom end – a naturally aspirated 2.0-litre four-cylinder model returns in the form of the base-model 2.0R.

Priced from \$31,990, the 2.0R sports a revised version of the previous 2.0i's 1994cc 'boxer' engine, featuring a DOHC (instead of single-cam) configuration. As a result, the power output is 121kW at a lofty 6800rpm, compared to 101kW at 5600rpm for the 2.0i, which was discontinued last August. Torque output remains the same at 187Nm, but tops out at a more accessible 3200rpm (down from 4400rpm).

Gearbox choices continue to be a four-speed automatic or five-speed manual, married to Subaru's constant all-wheel drive system.

Other changes to the range include the deletion of the entry-level 2.5i model, leaving the 2.5i Safety as the cheapest 2.5-litre Liberty you can buy. To compensate, Subaru has reduced each 2.5i variant by \$1500, beginning at \$35,990 for the manual sedan.

Subaru has also implemented the five-star ANCAP-achieving dual front, side and curtain airbag armada in all models.



### **5 SERIES V8 MUSCLE**

BMW has refreshed its 5 Series line-up with the arrival of two new V8-engined models – the 540i and 550i – which slot in between the six-cylinder 5 Series models and the range-topping 373kW V10-engined M5.

Priced from \$135,500, the 540i uses a 4.0-litre V8 that develops 225kW and 390Nm. In turn, the \$162,400 550i uses a 4.8-litre V8, which produces 270kW and 490Nm and replaces the previous 4.4-litre engine found in the 545i. Both are mated to a six-speed Steptronic automatic transmission.

Compared with the six-cylinder 530i, the 540i gains the following: chrome exhaust extensions, alarm, lumbar support, headlight washer system, adaptive HID headlights, 18-inch Star-spoke light alloys, navigation system, TV, voice recognition and high-beam assist.

The 550i adds a heads-up display to this extensive list.



307 CC

### **NEW LOOK FOR 307 CC**

PEUGEOT'S facelifted 307 CC has arrived Down Under, brandishing a new look, new features and a \$2000 lower pricetag.

Priced from \$47,990 for the 307 CC Dynamic (with the Sport variant now costing \$54,990), the revised 307 coupe-convertible range offers the same folding metal hard-top that opens or closes in 25 seconds – but comes with a number of new additions.

Besides a gaping new front bumper design borrowed from its larger and controversial 407 sibling, new styling features for 307 CC include larger elliptical headlights with 20 per cent greater luminosity, an aluminium bonnet and integrated driving lights.

**MORE DETAILS: [CLICK HERE](#)**

### **1.4 FIVE-DOOR FOR GETZ**

HYUNDAI has added a smaller 1.4-litre four-cylinder engine to its Getz five-door line-up, lowering the entry price for a five-door Getz by \$1000.

The Getz 1.4 five-door manual is priced from \$14,490 (with a four-speed automatic \$16,380), identical pricing to the three-door Getz 1.6, which recently reclaimed the NRMA/RACV Australia's Best Small Car crown in 2005.

The Getz range now spans from \$13,490 for the 1.4 three-door manual to \$17,380 for the automatic 1.6 five-door. The 1.4 produces 70kW at 6000rpm and 126Nm at 3200rpm.

**MORE DETAILS: [CLICK HERE](#)**

### **RX-8 REVELATION**

MAZDA Australia has announced the addition of a limited-edition variant to the revised RX-8 sports car range that goes on sale here later this month. Called RX-8 Revelation, the unique Mazda will join an updated RX-8 range that features three new colours (Phantom Blue, Galaxy Grey and Snowflake White Pearl), plus a number of interior upgrades.

Just 100 examples of the six-speed manual-only RX-8 Revelation will be made available – in either Copper Red or Brilliant Black paint colours – priced from \$64,570.

The luxury-oriented RX-8 Revelation also features sand-coloured Alcantara seat trim with contrasting stitching and dark silver alloys, along with unique foam-filled cross-members for improved ride and handling, a power sliding glass sunroof and, in a first for Mazda Australia, a "smart" keyless entry and engine start system.

**MORE DETAILS: [CLICK HERE](#)**



RX-8 Revelation

### **SAAB SLASHES PRICES**

SAAB has taken the scalpel to pricing of its under-performing 9-3 range, wiping up to \$8000 off the price of its entry 9-3 Linear Sport.

In cutting the price, Saab has also re-specified the car with leatherette/woven textile seats and steel wheels as standard. It is now priced from \$39,990, down from \$47,900.

A Linear Lux model with leather seats and alloy wheels is available from \$42,900.

The Vector has also been given a \$4000 price cut, from \$57,900 to \$53,900, and also gains the high-output 2.0-litre turbo engine from the 2005 9-3 Aero. The Vector 2.0-litre now delivers 154kW, up from 129kW, and torque has increased from 265Nm to 300Nm.

Prices of the 9-3 Linear and Vector convertible variants have also been cut by \$2000. They now start at \$64,900 for the Linear and \$71,900 for the Vector. The Vector convertible also gains the 154kW high-output turbo.

The addition of the 184kW 2.8-litre V6 turbocharged engine in the 9-3 Aero models sees the Aero Sport Sedan increase from \$67,900 to \$69,900.

### **OUTLANDER GETS ACTIV**

MITSUBISHI has launched a limited-edition version of its Outlander compact 4WD with a claimed \$2000 of extra value at no additional cost.

Based on the LS variant, the Outlander Activ features sports roof rack crossbars, a six-CD in-dash stacker, an alloy nudge bar and "Activ" decals, and comes with a \$500 fuel voucher.

Mitsubishi claims the extras, aimed at summer touring, represent \$2000 of additional value over the Outlander Activ's \$32,490 pricetag.

Like the Outlander LS upon which it is based, the Activ features a 120kW/220Nm 2.4-litre SOHC four-cylinder with MIVEC variable valve timing, coupled to a four-speed automatic with manual-shift mode and full-time AWD.

Outlander LS and Activ also feature twin front airbags, power steering, power windows/mirrors, cruise control, air-conditioning and a four-speaker audio system.

Side airbags remain optional at \$500.

# Special sauce

By MARTON PETTENDY

**IT IS** time to get on friendly terms with your bank manager: DaimlerChrysler has confirmed the most potent Maybach yet, the new 57 Special, will be made available in Australia from mid-2006.

The 57 Special will join Maybach's exclusive line-up as the sports flagship of the range, powered by an AMG-tweaked version of the 6.0-litre twin-turbo V12 that produces 450kW and an electronically-limited 1000Nm of torque between 2000rpm and 4000rpm.

The result is 0-100km/h acceleration in a supercar-matching five seconds.

Since DC's super-luxury brand made its first Australian appearance in 2003, the marque has attracted eight buyers for either the Maybach 57 or long-wheelbase Maybach 62.



The Engine is hand-assembled in the Mercedes-AMG engine workshops, or 'Manufaktur', under the "one man, one engine" philosophy, in which the signature of the technician responsible appears on the model plate.

The 57 S also features a firmer suspension set-up that is claimed to retain the top-shelf

DaimlerChrysler model's ride comfort, which the company says will attract "enthusiastic owner-drivers seeking the very latest high-performance technology". Expect a price premium over the million-dollar Maybach 57 on which it is based.

**FULL STORY: [CLICK HERE](#)**

## UP CLOSE on PERSONNEL

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### YEO TAKES HYUNDAI HELM

HYUNDAI Motor Co Australia has a new chief executive officer, Sudong "Steve" Yeo, after B G Lee was named the executive vice-president of Hyundai Motor Company's export support group (international division) in South Korea late last month.



**Steve Yeo**

Mr Yeo, 46, has had a range of management postings in passenger car export sales with Hyundai and affiliate companies in Korea and countries across Europe, southern Asia and North America.

Hyundai claims his appointment reflects the company's long-term plan for the Australian business to mirror other major offshore subsidiary successes in the US, China, India and Europe and to position Hyundai as the top-selling pure import automotive brand here by 2010.

B G Lee oversaw the move to a factory-run operation in 2003 as well as a strong increase in sales for the South Korean brand in Australia. He will also be remembered as the man who enticed a number of journalists to purchase a Sonata for a heavily reduced price at the vehicle's Australian press launch last year.

### GAUCI COLOURS FLY HIGH

GM HOLDEN has started filling positions in its expanding design centre, with Holden's colour and trim chief designer Sharon Gauci promoted to the new position of chief designer – colour and trim for GM Asia Pacific.



**Sharon Gauci**

Ms Gauci will continue to report to GM Holden design director, Tony Stolfo, and will work with colour and trim design managers in other Asia Pacific studios based in South Korea and China.

Her appointment is one of six made in Asia Pacific Design, with the objective of further strengthening the GM Global Design team.

### NEW HORWATH DIRECTOR



**Henry Veronese**

HORWATH Motor Industry Services, a specialist accounting and financial services provider to dealers, distributors and manufacturers, has appointed Henry Veronese as director in the SA/NT region.

He brings to the position 19 years of accounting and

business advisory experience to entrepreneurial business operators.

Horwath Motor Industry Services comprises nine directors, five associate directors and 85 staff across Australia and New Zealand. It provides services to more than 1000 motor dealers, distributors and manufacturers in Australia, New Zealand, China, Macau, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Korea and Taiwan.

### BARLOWORLD CEO NAMED

BARLOWORLD Motor Australia has named Allan Carter as its incoming chief executive officer following the retirement last month of Andrew Weight.

The current Barloworld Motor director responsible for Australia, Subaru and Coachworks, Mr Carter will take up the position next month.

Mr Weight was a former finance director and company secretary of Lanes Limited, which Barloworld – a South African-based "international industrial brand management company" – purchased in 1997.

**If you have any car industry personnel announcements, please email them to Terry Martin at [tmartin@mellor.net](mailto:tmartin@mellor.net).**

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## GoAuto latest road test

### Kia Rio five-door hatch



THE difference between cheapness and value is well illustrated by the old Kia Rio. On paper it always looked better than it actually was. In all departments bar affordability most rival light cars have had it beaten. So consequently what you saved new, you lost at resale time. And that's not taking into account the substandard levels of dynamics, quality and comfort you've had to put up with in the meantime. But now Kia has issued a new-generation Rio that shows progress in every department. It's even cheaper than ever, but does it actually represent better value?

**ROAD TEST: [CLICK HERE](#)**

### CAYENNE POWER PLAY

PORSCHE has wound up the wick of the Cayenne Turbo S four-wheel drive wagon, which from its release mid-year will produce 383kW at 5500rpm (up 52kW) and 720Nm from 2750-3750rpm, an increase of 100Nm over the current model.

The enhanced 4.5-litre bi-turbo V8 engine is now second only to the Carrera GT as the most powerful production model Porsche has ever built. The more muscular engine delivers a 0-100km/h sprint time of just 5.2 seconds and a top speed of 270km/h, all from a vehicle tipping the scales at more than 2.3 tonnes.

The performance improvements have been gained through upgraded and more efficient intercoolers, increasing turbo boost pressure by 0.2 bar (to a maximum of 1.9 bar) and a modified engine management system.

The S also gets bigger brakes, 380mm up front (up 30mm over the Turbo) and 358mm at the rear (up 28mm). Exterior styling cues remain largely unchanged with 20-inch SportTechno wheels, quad exhausts, Turbo S badging inside and out, and a new navy blue metallic exterior colour. The special 275/40 tyres on the Cayenne Turbo S are rated for speeds up to 300km/h.



Cayenne Turbo S

### DIESEL LE MANS RACER

JUST weeks after Audi confirmed its 2003 Le Mans quattro concept for production – to be known as the R8 supercar – the German auto powerhouse has revealed an all-new diesel-powered Le Mans 24-hour challenger.

Unveiled in Paris late last month, the V12 TDI-engined racer will go by the name R10 and replaces Audi's super-successful R8 Le Mans prototype, which notched up 61 wins – including the 24-Hours Le Mans five times and the American Le Mans Series (ALMS) six times in succession.

The R10's 5.5-litre 485kW twin-turbo diesel, which produces a bullocking 1100Nm of torque, makes Audi the world's first car-maker to hunt for Le Mans victory with a diesel-powered racecar.

**MORE DETAILS: [CLICK HERE](#)**

### LAUNCH PAD

#### JANUARY:

Honda Civic sedan redesign  
Holden Gen IV V8 upgrade  
Hyundai Grandeur sedan redesign  
Saab 9-3 SportCombi wagon  
Nissan Tiida sedan/hatch  
Porsche Cayman S coupe

**New model diary: [CLICK HERE](#)**

### S-TYPE OIL-BURNER

JAGUAR will offer a diesel-powered version of its S-Type luxury sedan model from April, joining the Audi A6 3.0 TDI, BMW 530d and Mercedes-Benz E280 CDI in the elite economy express class.

To be priced from \$101,490, the S-Type Diesel will use a hi-tech 2.7-litre twin-turbo-charged engine producing 153kW of power at 4000rpm and 435Nm of torque at 1900rpm – 80 per cent of which kicks in from 1500-4000rpm. Paired to a six-speed automatic gearbox, the S-Type Diesel does the 0-100km/h sprint in 8.6 seconds on the way to a 227km/h top speed.

Returning an average of 7.8 litres per 100km, as well as 6.1 and 7.8L/100km in the highway and city cycles respectively, the Diesel V6 is 47 per cent more economical than its 4.2-litre V8 petrol sibling.



S-Type Diesel

### MORE DIESEL: C4 HYBRID

CITROEN intends to unveil a diesel-electric hybrid C4 concept later this month and plans to have a production hybrid on sale by 2010.

Citroen claims a diesel-electric hybrid is more effective at reducing fuel consumption and emissions than petrol-electric hybrids. It also says diesel hybrids offer better fuel consumption and lower emissions without performance penalties.

Citroen has been a long-time proponent of diesel engines, having pioneered launches of common-rail direct-injection diesels. It was one of the first car-makers to offer a diesel engine with a particulate filter.

Citroen will also launch its C4 HDi turbo-diesel in Australia next month.



### 130i IN SHORT SUPPLY

BMW Australia has launched its 130i Sport hot hatchback model, priced from \$62,000 and restricted to a mere 120 units for 2006.

It features a lightweight 3.0-litre six-cylinder engine producing 195kW at 6600rpm and 315Nm from 2500-4000rpm.

The 130i Sport is further aided by M Sport suspension, which has firmer damper and spring rates, and double-spoke 17-inch M alloy wheels.

The standard M Sport package also includes dual exhausts with chrome-plated ends, titanium-coloured headlight trim strips, foglights, satin chrome finishes and an aerodynamic bodykit.

### CAMRY EXPORT RECORD

TOYOTA has set an export record for its Camry, shipping 69,000 Altona-built vehicles worth more than \$1.3 billion last year.

The company eclipsed its previous record of 66,247 vehicles set in 2003.

Toyota Australia's divisional manager (export) Scott Grant said last year's exports were up 5.5 per cent over 2004, and 4.2 per cent up on the 2003 record. He said there would be no slowdown of exports this year and he was confident of setting another record.

More than 90 per cent of Australian Camry exports are left-hand drive vehicles to the Middle East, where it is the top-selling passenger vehicle in Saudi Arabia. Toyota exports Camry to more than 20 countries, including South Africa, New Zealand, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Oman, Qatar, Bahrain and Kuwait.

### HYUNDAI WARRANTY DEAL

HYUNDAI Motor Co Australia has extended the allowable distance driven under its new car warranty from 130,000km to unlimited kilometres.

The offer applies to all Hyundai models and is only available for January and February as a special "thank you" deal for customers and to help celebrate the Korean car-maker's 20th anniversary in Australia. It is also transferable to subsequent owners.