

NEWSLETTER

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QUOTABLE QUOTE

"Pride would be a lot easier to swallow if it didn't taste so bad."

- Brad Moore

A HOST OF NEW VOLKSWAGENS

Vw will be flooding the market with a whole host of new products during the next year. Alongside is **Jetta 6**, in U.S. spec, and due here by 2011. It has a longer wheelbase than Golf 6



and is very roomy inside with more than 60mm extra rear legroom. Overall length has grown to 4.64m, almost as long as the previous generation Passat. Below is the next **Polo Classic**, with its rather bland



tail. Specification and engines are expected to mirror the hatchback models with ESP standard on Highline versions, but no GTI version. Below are grainy spy pictures nabbed from a leaked brochure that shows what the **facelifted Tiguan** will look like. It adopts the horizontal



frontal styling of other VWs and Touareg-like rear lights. LED daytime running lights will be fitted and new alloy wheels will be offered. The facelifted Tiguan is expected to be launched at the Paris Motor Show in September 2010. At the bottom is the latest **CrossPolo**, which has already been launched in

South Africa in two 77kW 1.6 derivatives; one a petrol with 155N.m (price: R198,500) and the other a turbodiesel with 250N.m (price: R224,500). Suspension is raised by 15mm and there is a full-size spare at last.



Our opinion: Jetta 6 a solid buy, but it's outgrown its class. Polo Classic does the job but styling depressingly dreary. Excellent Tiguan's looks much improved. CrossPolo's low profiles still useless on a dirt road—it's just a styling exercise, but a very successful one. •

EXCITING NEW SUZUKIS



By the second quarter of 2011, there will be a new Honda Accord rival in the shape of the **Suzuki Kizashi**. It will have a 2.4ℓ engine (131kW/230N.m) and a choice of either a 6-speed manual or CVT.

In July this year, we will also get the hot new **Swift Sport**, a 3-door



Swift powered by a 92kW/148N.m 1.6-litre engine, getting it to 100km/h in 9 seconds and on to 200km/h. The price will be R199,900,

undercutting rivals such as the Mini Cooper (R220,500), Toyota Yaris 1.8TS (R228,200) and matching the Renault Twingo RS. ESP and 17-inch alloys are standard, as are a trip computer, auto aircon and a 4-year/60,000km service plan.



On the heels of the Sport is the news of a **brand-new Swift** (bottom). It follows the current model's styling cues

but is notable bigger. It goes on sale in Europe in September.

Our opinion: Strikingly styled Kizashi should cause the competition in the medium class a few sleepless nights. Swift Sport a comparative bargain, but a new and better Swift is only a year away. •



MERC CLS, CL SPIED

AutoExpress and SecretNewCars.com website have snapped the next Mercedes CLS totally undisguised. It shows a very attractive new



model awash with LED lights and boasting a single-bar radiator grille. The new CLS is expected to be launched at the Paris Motor Show.

Mercedes-Benz of the Netherlands has accidentally posted photos of the facelifted CL on their website and it also shows the new LED lights in the front light clusters and on the strips covering the lower ventilation slots.

Our opinion: New CLS looks stunning but will face stiff competition from the Audi A7. •



BETTER MITSUBISHI PAJERO



Mitsubishi has substantially upgraded the Pajero SUV. A locally developed infotainment and navigation system is now offered

with GARMAP navigation and digital integration encompassing iPod connectivity, Bluetooth and (optional) reversing camera.

Under the bonnet, the trusty 3.2-litre turbodiesel engine has been upgraded and now offers 141kW and 441N.m, yet it is still fully compatible with the (dirtier) 500ppm diesel fuel still widely offered locally. The Pajero is still relatively unsophisticated and does not offer all the electronic aides of the likes of the Discovery 4.

Our opinion: Tough, practical Pajero now more powerful with welcome satnav & infotainment. •



KIA OPTIMA HERE END 2010



Kia has renamed the Magentis of unblest memory the Optima; it represents yet another instalment in the impressive rise to fame of this Korean marque, not least thanks to Kias' spectacular new styling by Peter Schreyer. The Optima will be here before the end of the year. Technical details are scarce, but it boasts a fully independent multi-link rear suspension and both petrol and diesel models may be offered.



Our opinion: Yet another stunning Kia. Will have it tough with competition like the Honda Accord, Mazda6 and new Suzuki Kizashi. •

MITO RANGE EXPANDED



The 114kW Alfa Romeo MiTo Distinctive has been joined by a lower-ranking 100kW Progression and a new top model, the 125kW Quadrofoglio Verde (QV). All three engines are versions of the same 1.4-litre turbocharged engine. The QV's MultiAir engine offers 250N.m, a 6-speed gearbox and titanium-finished 17-inch alloy wheels, along with a start-stop system. Prices: R227,900, R245,200 and R264,000.



Our opinion: Competition tough (Citroën DS3 and Mini) but turbo power compensates, especially at Reef. •

NEW CITROËN C4 SHOWN

The new Citroën C4 has been revealed and it is a fine looking thing, even if we are a little under-



whelmed. Only a 5-door option will be offered and it has lost some of that lovely Citroën quirkiness. Sadly, it does not even boast the company's fixed-hub steering wheel. Both petrols and diesels will be offered and a blind spot monitoring system will be available. The official launch will be at the Paris Motor Show.

Our opinion: First signs promising, but a few more distinctly Citroën touches would not go amiss. •



CHEV SPARK GOES LITE



In preparation for the brand-new Chev Spark that will arrive later this year, GMSA has realigned the current Spark range and renamed it Spark Lite. Two models remain, the L with 796cc 3-cylinder engine (38kW) and an LS with a 995cc 4-cylinder engine (49kW). Both models feature power steering and fog lights, while the LS adds to that an airbag and nicer trim. The Spark Lite is covered by a 5-year/120,000 warranty with roadside assistance for the full period. The L costs R82,300 and the LS, R98,700.

Our opinion: Tiny, honest, cheap. Go for sprightly LS. •



COMMENT: FRENCH FORTUNES

Everybody has an endearing story about a French car. Who could forget the awe-inspiring Citroën DS, forty years before its time, its high-tech suspension system served by the same hydraulic system as its feather-light steering and brakes. The DS was a technological Tour de Force, much as the Citroën Traction Avant before it.

The Citroën 2CV was France's Beetle and again, the incredible suspension system was the main feature. The ride height could be adjusted and the design brief decreed the car should be capable of being driven across a ploughed field at speed. Small wonder French cars—especially Citroëns—were impervious to European cobblestone streets.

I remember crossing the Egyptian desert ferried in a Peugeot 504 station wagon. Typically French, it soaked up all the bumps as if they didn't exist. What is more, they are indestructible and popular in Africa to this day. But perhaps the 404 is the definitive Peugeot: comfortable, stylish and extremely tough, over 4 million were built.

Renault has its own storied history, from the inimitable Renault 4 of 1961. It was front-wheel drive, extremely spacious and kicked off a new hatchback era in Europe. It was incredibly enduring too, being produced until 1994. Of course, the Renault 5 was a huge success and

this small, super-economical, soft-riding French car had real charisma; it also came at the right time (1972) to face the impending energy crisis and eventually, over 5 million of them were built.

But what has happened to the love affair we used to have with French cars? The reintroduction of Renault in South Africa was met with a local Car of the Year title for the Clio in 2001, followed by strong sales. Peugeot joined in the fray and their 206 was similarly popular. And then... Then, poor service, indifferent dealers, expensive parts and unreliability staged a collective coup on the French alliance and South Africans simply fell out of love with them.

But there is hope. Peugeot has been aggressively relaunched with superior products and the promise of exciting cars like the RCZ. Citroën is back with a unique style (Picassos and DS3) and high-tech (hydraulically suspended C5) and Renault offers not only French flair (Clio, Mégane, Laguna) but they still uphold their family values (Scénic), while bolstering their range with reliable and high-value (if boring) offerings like the Sandero and Logan.

I really need a reason to believe in French cars again, because I love them. Let's hope this is it. - Cobus Potgieter •

NEWS SNIPPETS * NEWS SNIPPETS * NEWS SNIPPETS

- VWAG has opened a new, R230 million distribution hub in Centurion.
- VW's super-economical BlueMotion cars will start to reach the local market by October.
- The current VW Jetta 5 has benefited from new Golf 6 powertrains, notably the 1.4TSI engine and the new 1.6TDI.
- A new 4.4-litre TDV8 engine is replacing the Range Rover's current 3.6 and is coupled to an

- 8-speed automatic gearbox. The new engine offers 230kW and 700N.m and lower emissions.
- Mazda is considering making the next (2012) MX-5 a rotary hybrid and lower weight to 1 ton.
- GM's Vice President of Global Engineering has acknowledged Audi as the market leader when he stated that GM aims to reach Audi quality with their vehicles' interior designs.
- Audi has confirmed an eventual S1 with

- around 147kW. The A2 is coming too and will be a MPV-ish EV with high-tech construction. The next TT arrives 2014 and an R4 is rumoured to fill the space below the new TT.
- Audi SA has launched the Audi A4 2.0TDI Efficiency, the first car in its class exempt from the new emissions tax. It costs R350,000.
- The new BMW X3 will be launched at the Paris Motor Show and will be larger. •

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ONE-77, C60



Only three or four 7.3-litre V12 Aston Martin One-77s (above) will be available locally at around R20 million each. A leaked image from a Swedish dealer presentation shows a convertible Volvo S60 (below) which may replace the current C70 model in 2012, using a similar hard foldable roof. •

