



London Motorshow

London calling

Carshow | Finally! From July 24 to August 3 the "British International Motor Show" opens its doors to the public. In London the Opel Insignia, Nissan Qashqai+2 and Lotus Evora make their global debuts. Many rarely seen, exclusive sports cars are on display as well.

There's no doubt about it: the most significant reveal of the London Motorshow is the Vauxhall Insignia. This long awaited successor of the Vectra is expected to be a fleet favourite. And the car has everything it takes to be a success. The Insignia features good looks (see panoramic photo) and innovative technology. Also the Insignia is shown in a four and five door version.



Lotus has the premiere of the Evora, a brand new 2+2 coupe, which will be positioned above the Elise. The car is powered by a 280 hp 3.5 litre six cylinder engine. The Evora isn't meant as a hard core sports car but more as a fast luxury car for daily use.



More affordable passion can be found at Alfa Romeo, where the MiTo is first shown to the public.



The other premieres are mostly new versions of existing cars. For example, Nissan showcases the Qashqai+2. This seven seat Qashqai is 21 cm longer than the current model. This extra space is used to fit a second bench. A first road test of the Qashqai+2 is planned for August by Autozine.



Ford unveils an eco-version of the new Fiesta. The powerful and very sporty Focus ST can also be seen here first.



It was already known that Chevrolet is to introduce the Camaro on the European market. However in London the Camaro convertible is first shown. Chevrolet also shows the prototype of the Beat, a compact car which will be introduced mid 2009.



The concept car "Hybrid-I" shows what the Toyota Prius of the future could look like.



Honda features a concept of an environmentally friendly, high performance roadster: the OSM (for "Open Study Model").

One man bands

Great Britain has a lot of small, one man car manufacturers which build exclusive sports cars out of the back of old garages. Those small businesses are all present in London, exhibiting everything from adorable little electric vehicles to monstrously fast sports cars.



Even the Mexican "Mastretta" sees a place on the UK market and introduces the bright orange MTX in London. This rear wheel drive, two person coupe weighs less than 900 kg but is powered by a 240 hp turbo engine. Price tag: about 35,000 pounds.

In the "electric village" one of the favourites of the Autozine editor can be admired: the Tesla Roadster. This two seater coupe performs just as well as the other sports cars, but is powered by an electric engine and is therefore emission free.



Family fun

Still, the organisation of the "British International Motorshow" knows this isn't the biggest or the most important car show in the world. It is mainly the name that is "International", the show itself is national with just a hand full of world premieres and lots of national news.

This is why the Motorshow is also a day of family fun. Around the ExCel complex is a true car fun fare with an off-road track, a kart circuit, a drifting area, a super car paddock, a traffic school for children and a Disney pavilion.



Conclusion

The "British International Motorshow" doesn't

feature the biggest or the most important car news. That is still left to Geneva in the beginning of the year and Paris at the end of the year. Many German and Italian brands didn't even bother to show up in London!

But this doesn't mean a visit to the London Motorshow isn't worth while. The Vauxhall Insignia will play an important role on the market and that car can be seen here first. Also the many small sports car brands build exhilarating vehicles which can only be seen here. Around the building many activities make a visit to London also a day of family fun. ■

