

2017 NYIAS - Toyota FT-4X Concept Global Reveal

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Toyota FT-4X Concept Global Reveal
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Kevin Hunter, Caltly Design Research president and Ian Cartabiano, studio chief designer

(Kevin Hunter)

Thank you everyone. Thanks for joining us today. I'm Kevin Hunter from CALTY Design Research.

As designers, we're much better at drawing pictures than writing speeches, so if it were up to me I'd rather be standing here doing exactly that.

But as designers, we're also the most excited to share the FT-4X with you because it really is a concept that has come from our love and passion for cars.

Now, Toyota has long been known for its nearly 60-year heritage of bulletproof off-road vehicles, including the:

- 4Runner,
- Landcruiser,
- Tacoma,
- And the Caltly-designed FJ Cruiser.

These trucks are truly amazing at what they can do and where they can go.

They are what we consider to be hardcore.

But as customers' preferences continue to shift towards smaller and more fuel-efficient SUVs, we began a deep study on what the next generation of adventurers really wanted in a vehicle.

As designers, we're no longer focusing on just style and function. We're diving deeper into the emotional connection with our cars.

The user's experience. Every aspect of how people interact with their cars and how they love to use their car, and what makes their car an engaging experience.

So together with Caltly's Toyota Innovation Hub in San Francisco, the design team met with outdoorsy millennials in the Bay Area to find out what they were doing to escape the city and what their true, core values were.

As it turns out, they share the same desire to get away and explore.

But their needs and appetites are less *hardcore*, and more of what we like to call, *casualcore*.

In generations past, basecamp symbolized the beginning of a journey.

But today, for many millennials, basecamp has **become the destination**.

They are also spontaneous and prefer to venture out at a moment's notice.

So we designed FT-4X to be Always Ready, and incorporated some useful features that enable just that.

The FT-4X, which stands for Future Toyota Four-Wheel Drive, symbolizes a new type of adventure vehicle for young urbanites. One that is compact enough to navigate around the city, but capable of escaping into the wild at a moment's notice. Anytime. Anywhere.

Always Ready

We envision the FT-4X to be equipped with a fuel-efficient yet powerful 4-cylinder engine, paired to a true mechanical four-wheel drive system.

Underneath, we imagine a comfortable yet capable MacPherson strut front, double-wishbone rear suspension, tackling rocks and potholes.

It charms its tech-savvy, screen-clicking users with a distinct, tactile charisma sensed at every button push, handle twist and dirt road trekked.

And it does it all while proudly wearing Toyota's rich heritage of capable trucks.

Never has the divide between desktop and trailhead been as miniscule as now.

As you can see, the FT-4X concept fully embodies "Rugged Waku Doki" – a heart-pounding sense of excitement – through its numerous clever design ingredients.

But we designers call it, Rugged Charm.

What does a Rugged Charm vehicle consist of?

Four things:

- Simplicity
- Capability
- Mechanical Satisfaction
- And of course, Toyota's rugged DNA

Speaking of Rugged Charm, I'd like to invite CALTY's Studio Chief Designer Ian Cartabiano to take you through some of the cool features of the FT-4X.

»(*Ian Cartabiano*)

Thank you, Boss.

When it came time to pen the FT-4X, we discovered that the rear is the new front. It's where you **store your gear**, and where you **drink your** hot cocoa.

With this in mind, we incorporated one of my favorite features: The versatile Multi-Hatch rear door.

Sarah here is going to show us how this works.

It opens two ways, horizontally in Urban Mode for easier curbside gear loading when clearance is limited, and vertically in Outdoor Mode, creating an impromptu shelter from the elements — perfect for any tailgate party.

On the inside of the Multi-Hatch are twin boxes: One warm, the other cold, perfect for stowing snacks or warming gloves.

The Rear Cargo Zone's floor hides a deep weatherproof storage compartment underneath, and can be accessed both by lifting the floor up or by sliding it out, transforming the floor into a tray or seating area.

While enjoying the view from the inside, you can remove the side vertical picture window to not only enhance your scenic view, but to bring the outside elements in.

These panels can be removed or interchanged to personalize the FT-4X with multiple opaque color or tinted glass options.

We wanted to make sure that at every angle this car looks rugged, solid and capable, so the FT-4X has a consistent X-Theme in the body of the design.

This X-theme starts at the doors, creating a natural protective zone around the cabin while pushing the wheels out at each corner for a rugged stance.

Sculpted rocker panels, at the lower portion of the doors, enhance underbody protection and durability when venturing off the beaten path.

And whenever the FT-4X encounters some heroic scenery, a GoPro camera built into the driver's side rearview mirror captures it all.

Up top, a reinforced flat roof makes hauling outdoor gear or mounting a roof-top tent a breeze.

Convenient tie-down hooks are placed at each of the roof's corners, as well as integrated power outlets, perfect for camp-side lighting or roof rack accessories.

Going from work to play, indoors to outdoors — without any prep — can be a recipe for forgetting some essential gear.

No worries, the FT-4X is a rolling gear box.

Not only is the interior's concept that of a large open space with plenty of accessible storage for basic equipment, but it is basic equipment itself.

Passengers can easily identify the space's purpose based on coloring, as blue equals closed storage, while orange equals open storage.

Folding the second-row bench seat extends the floor's capacity. Red tie hooks line the sides of the rear's cargo hold, too, for added load securing.

We ventured away from a traditional fixed navigation screen, and instead gave the driver the option to dock their

mobile phone right above the driver's digital instrument pod. The idea being that a downloadable navigation application, as well as one showing digitized off-road gauges, can be made available for drivers' use.

Now continuing with the FT-4X theme of "Always Ready," there are dual-usage items everywhere in this car.

My personal favorite is the North Face armrest that can be pulled out to be used as a sleeping bag or maybe it's the dome lights that can be popped out to be used as flashlights.

There are just too many to decide on a favorite.

Personally, I really love the design concept of "Mechanical Satisfaction" in the FT-4X.

In today's "swipe left," "swipe right" world, the FT-4X is equipped with physically rotatable knobs and handles at every touch point.

So our question to you is, How would you love to use this car?

Our hope is that you would envision yourself on your next spontaneous adventure, maybe at Joshua Tree or Montauk.

But almost as important as the adventure itself is the ability to share a journey.

Be the first to tell others your thoughts on the FT-4X, and we'll give you a custom Toyota FT-4X s'mores kit — a must for any casualcore outing.

Before we invite you all up to the stage, I'd like to introduce the FT-4X design team that helped bring it to life:

- Ben Chang,
- Andrew MacLachlan,
- Daichi Kimura,
- Mona Beattie,
- Tim Farnam,
- And Darrin Hataway.

Kevin and I, along with the rest of the team, will be up here on stage to answer any questions that you may have.

Thank you all very much for your time today.

I'd now like to invite photographers up here first to get some pictures of the FT-4X.