

2012 NY Auto Show - 2013 Toyota Avalon Reveal

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2012 New York International Auto Show
2013 Toyota Avalon Reveal
Javits Convention Center Galleria

Thursday, April 5, 2012

Bob Carter, Group Vice President and General Manager, Toyota Division, Toyota Motor Sales

Good morning everyone and thanks for spending part of your day with us.

I'm happy to be in New York because it's home to one of the world's greatest auto shows...and also one of the oldest.

Since 1900, it has chronicled the nation's automotive industry.

And in a city with 12 thousand taxis and 800 miles of subway track, it pays tribute to the ingenuity and freedom that personal transportation provides.

Through good and bad times, it has always been a place where the auto industry can flex its muscles, and this year is no exception.

After several tough years, the industry is roaring back and that's good news for everyone because it is the largest manufacturing sector in the nation.

As sales continue to improve, the industry will help stimulate the economy and Toyota will be a leader...because we are bringing new products to market faster than ever before.

For example...the new Camry continues as the number-one-selling car in America with better quality and driving dynamics than the model it replaces. With sales of more than 42,000 last month, Camry had its best March ever.

Another example is the Prius Family of hybrid vehicles, offering the 50 mpg liftback, fast-charging Plug-in, versatile *v*, and the recently introduced *c*.

With consumers facing record-high gas prices, Prius couldn't have started a family at a better time. Last month, family members accounted for best-ever sales of nearly 29,000, making Prius one of the industry's top nameplates.

Next month, we'll introduce our first affordable sports car in a long time...the Scion FR-S with a great balance of performance and handling at a price under \$25,000.

And the re-styled 2013 Venza crossover, which combines a sleek design with SUV flexibility, is making its global debut here at the auto show.

Designed for active boomers, the Venza's new features include redesigned front grille, restyled 19-inch wheels, and Entune connectivity.

As a matter of fact, we'll be introducing a total of 19 new or updated products this year under the Toyota, Scion and Lexus brands...and the car I'm about to show you is one of them.

It's a car that captures Toyota President Akio Toyoda's vision for more exciting vehicles.

It's designed, engineered, manufactured, sold and serviced in America.

It's an all-new premium midsize sedan sedan that will attract a wide range of buyers.

I'm excited about this car and the people who created it. Everyone knows about our sales and manufacturing presence in the U.S. But may not be as familiar with our design and engineering capabilities.

Let me show what I mean....

[Design video]

It's now my pleasure to introduce this fantastic new vehicle, a car that will lead an exciting new era of design and driving excitement for Toyota.

That's a gorgeous car...

This is, without a doubt, the most beautiful car I've ever seen in the 20 years I've been with Toyota.

I get goose bumps every time I look at it, and I think Akio does too. The first time we showed it to him he said, "Cool!" "Don't change a thing."

That kind of reaction from the boss gives us incentive to develop more models here for the American market.

We've been heading in that direction for a while now. Toyota currently employs 20,000 people in the U.S. working on design, engineering and manufacturing.

To increase our North American capabilities, we're announcing today that we will add 250 engineering positions over the next five years in order to localize engine and transmission development.

And to further our commitment to vehicle multi-media technology, we're opening a dedicated office in California's Silicon Valley.

As gorgeous as this car is, I can assure you it's only the beginning of terrific things to come.

Styled by Calt Design in California and Michigan, it's modern, athletic and elegant...

It has a unique slim upper grille and a large exotic lower grille...with advanced dual square projector lamps.

From the side, it projects a long cabin with a swept-back rear pillar.

The sleek silhouette gives way to a spacious and well-appointed cabin.

At the rear, the dramatic LED tail lamps convey a wide and aggressive look.

And the integrated rear deck spoiler and dual exhaust advance the luxurious, athletic theme.

It features a well-designed interior, which provides more passenger space than the BMW 5 Series.

The cabin provides ample rear seat room and front passenger head clearance.

There's also an abundance of technology, like capacitive touch controls for climate settings and audio, full-color displays... and a charging area for hand-held devices.

The layered door-trim design accommodates a full-width instrument panel, making the interior look even roomier.

Supple leather seating and unique stitch pattern provide a high-grade appearance and enhanced comfort.

Special lighting, including ambient night illumination, reinforces the elegant interior environment...

Paddle shifters are mounted on the stitched leather-wrapped steering wheel.

There's also an unmatched list of technology-driven safety features, including a best-in-class 10 airbags, blind spot monitor with cross-traffic detection and pre-collision system.

The car rides on 111-inch wheelbase with V6 power and excellent mileage. We will tell you more about powertrain advancements later this spring.

Thanks to the engineering team at TTC Ann Arbor, the car's ride and handling match its athletic appearance.

The chassis, steering and unibody are designed to offer agile handling and responsive steering.

The unibody has a high level of braces and welds to improve body rigidity and handling characteristics...

Overall... it strikes an ideal balance between engaging performance and comfortable on-road refinement.

In addition to Normal and ECO modes, this new model will also have a Sport Mode for a more aggressive quick throttle response and more dynamic steering...

And the electronic power steering is tuned for a firmer on-center feel and reassuring off-center feedback.

It will be built with more than 90 percent North American content at Toyota Motor Manufacturing Kentucky. Team members will rely on the same quality-driven processes as Camry, but will add a few new steps.

For example, the instrument panel will be handcrafted on sewing machines to create tailor-made stitching for an upscale look and feel.

Since stamping dies are extremely expensive, a prototype zinc-alloy die was developed to confirm body panels could be stamped successfully to meet Toyota's high standards and maintain Calt's beautiful design.

By now, I hope you realize this car embodies the commitment of American teamwork and cooperation between design, engineering and manufacturing.

Now I'd like to introduce the "Team".....

- Calt's was the first automotive design studio established in Southern California when it opened in 1973. It has created worldwide buzz with a number of concept vehicles... including the hit of this year's Detroit Auto Show... the Lexus LF-LC... please welcome the President of Calt's, Kevin Hunter.
- Toyota Motor Manufacturing Kentucky has produced nearly 9 million vehicles. Today, it's the largest auto plant in America and the second largest in the world. Overseeing production is TMMK President Wil James.
- For more than 35 years, Toyota Technical center in Michigan has been a driving force behind Toyota's North American engineering and research and development activities. More than 150 of its engineers worked on this new car, under the direction of the chief engineer, Randy Stephens.

Ladies and gentlemen, these three guys are responsible for bringing us this wonderful new car... I consider them Toyota's rock stars.

This is a significant car in many ways...

It's the first vehicle in Toyota's U.S. line to have Akio Toyoda's thumb print for a new direction in exciting products...

It's the beginning of a new era for vehicle development in the U.S. for the American market...

And it's the new flagship of the Toyota brand, which will go on sale later this year.

I've talked a lot about this car today... but there's one thing I haven't told you... its name.

Ladies and gentlemen...this is the all-new Avalon.

The four of us are here to answer your questions...and the new Avalon will be here until one o'clock.

I'd like to invite the photographers to come up first to get a few shots.

Thank you for coming.