

Crafting a Vision: Caltex Design Research and the Colorful Legacy of the TRD Pro Series

June 16, 2023

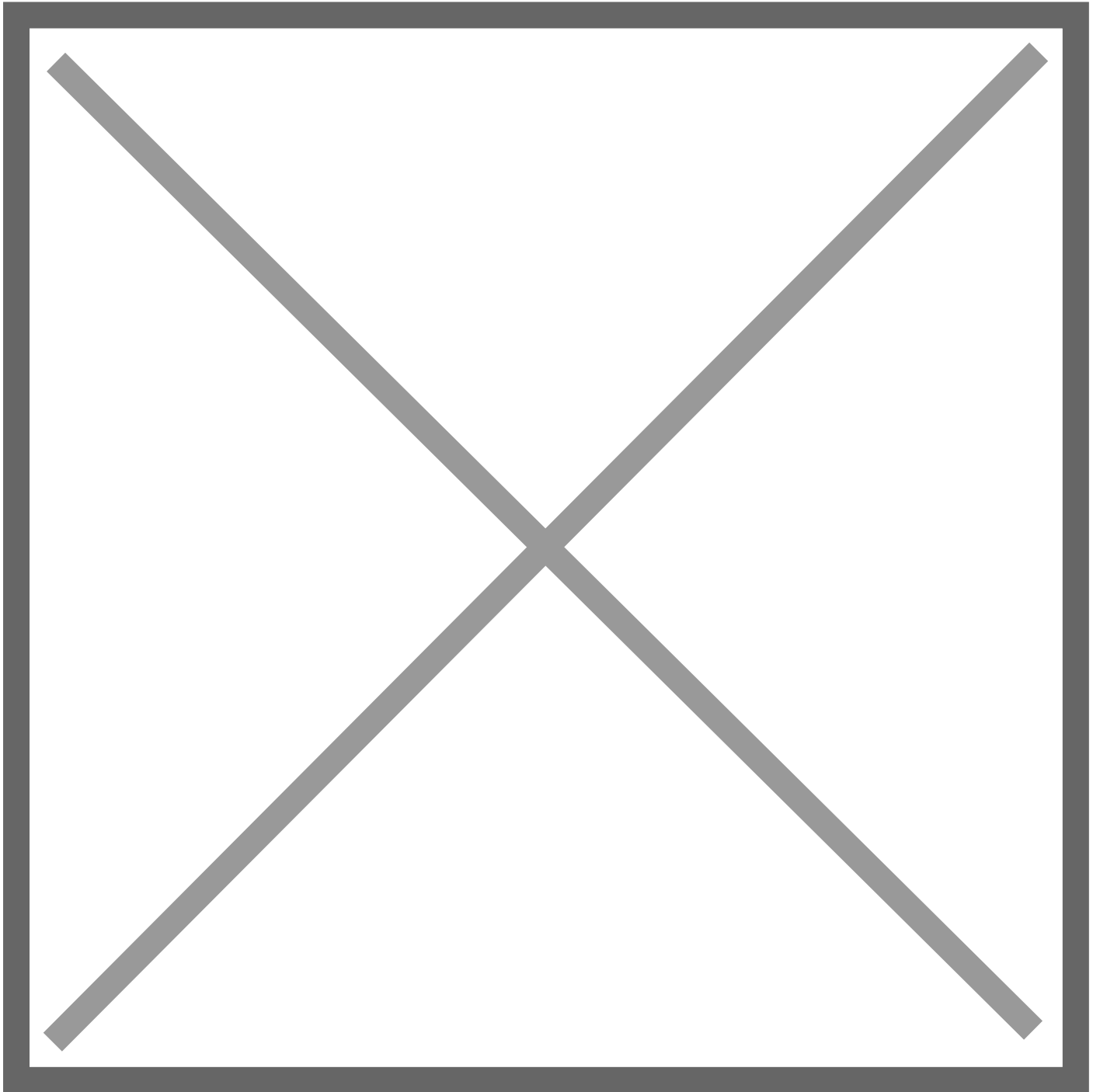
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Color speaks to us. It evokes emotions, stimulates senses and paints our world with shades of meaning.

In the realm of automotive design, color is a language that whispers tales of adventure. A crucial thread in the fabric of vehicle identity, color visually weaves together design, performance and customer appeal.

And for Toyota's Caltly Design Research team, the TRD Pro signature color developed for each model year tells a unique story of artistic vision and the relentless pursuit of innovation. Here's a peek behind the scenes of the vibrant story behind the TRD Pro color of the 2024 model year – Terra.



The Genesis of Caltly Design Research

In 1973, Shoichiro Toyoda, who served as chairman of Toyota Motor Corporation from 1992 to 1999, established the first major automotive design studio by a Japanese automaker in North America: Caltly Design Research. This initiative reflected Toyota's profound understanding of the importance of design in shaping not just vehicles, but the future of mobility itself.

Caltly, with locations in [Newport Beach, California](#), and [Ann Arbor, Michigan](#), has since been at the forefront of Toyota's design revolution. From the iconic 1978 Celica to the rugged all-new [2024 Toyota Tacoma](#), Caltly's imprint is evident across hundreds of models that have rolled off Toyota's production lines.

There's more to a vehicle's design than its shape, as the annual TRD Pro color selection process illustrates.

“When we decide on a color, there is a whole team involved. We work with the planning group, marketing, engineers, manufacturing...it really takes a whole team.” says Sellene Lee, CMF senior lead designer at Caltly's Newport Beach location. “It's a fun challenge to find that sweet spot where everyone's vision lines up.”

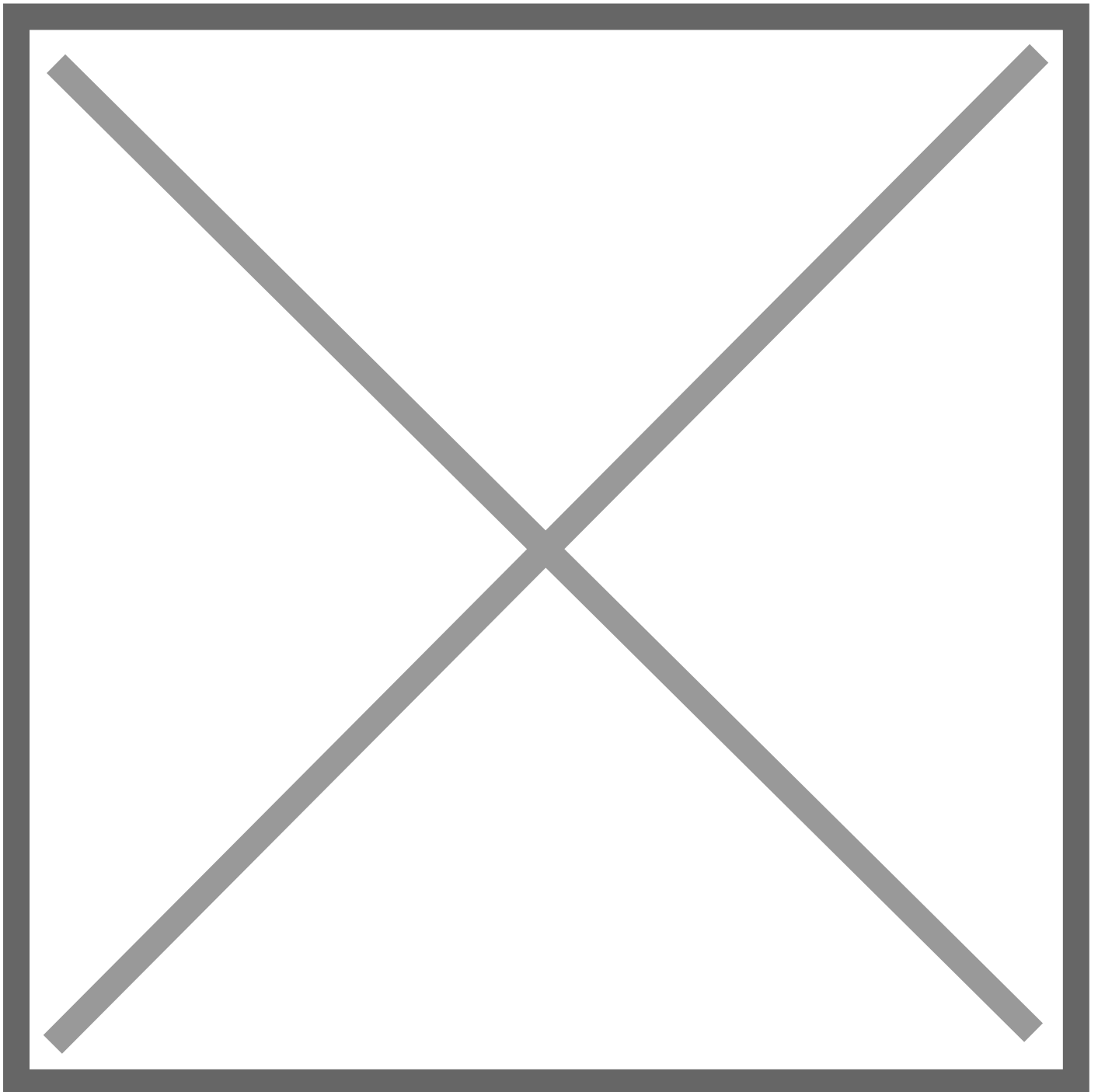


The Art of Selecting the Annual TRD Pro Color

Each year, Caltý's team faces the exciting challenge of developing the new TRD Pro color. Available only on select [TRD Pro series](#) vehicles each model year, the exclusive color is a testament to the uniqueness of the TRD Pro series. These vehicles are crafted with a perfect blend of power, toughness and style — their character enhanced by the option to experience them in a distinctive exterior hue.

“There are four different silhouettes ([Tundra](#), [Sequoia](#), [4Runner](#), [Tacoma](#)), and they all share the same color,” says Benjamin Jimenez, general manager of Caltex in Ann Arbor, “so we need to ensure that it will look good on each vehicle.”

The process itself is a complex blend of analyzing market trends, understanding consumer insights and, most importantly, letting creative juices flow. They’re creating an identity that embodies the TRD Pro drivers’ spirit of adventure and love of the outdoors. These pioneering vehicles have sported their unique coat since 2015, with past colors including 2016’s Quicksand, 2019’s Voodoo Blue and 2022’s Lime Rush.



Once the color is chosen, the real challenge begins: — perfecting the science behind the paint.

“Paint formulas are individual to the color and the plant,” shares Jimenez. “Factors like temperature, humidity and equipment can affect the color outcome.”

“It’s our job to make sure that the color outcome matches our initial intention,” says Lee. “Sometimes we have to go back three to four times to fine-tune the color.”

The color developed for the most recent 2023 TRD Pro series is Solar Octane, a vibrant, fiery orange inspired by a bright sunbeam. True to its name, Solar Octane utilizes a dash of pearl in its color mix to pop in the sunlight. The result is a color that not only captures the imagination but also lives up to the high standards of Toyota’s design ethos.

Per Jimenez, “Anyone who picks this color is not looking to blend in.”



The TRD Pro Color Odyssey Continues

Defined by an intricate dance of mining consumer insights and igniting creative inspiration, the future of the TRD Pro color palette is as exciting as its past.

“The simplest way to put it is that we’re always listening,” explains Jimenez, sharing a sentiment that encapsulates the consumer-centric vision of Caltly and Toyota’s ongoing commitment to bringing appealing products to their customers.

As drivers look forward to the colors of the future, one thing is clear: The Caltex team's dedication to design innovation and customer satisfaction ensures that vibrant hues will continue to shape its influence on the automotive industry.

The TRD Pro series colors serve as a badge of honor, symbolizing the vehicle's exceptional off-road capabilities, commitment to durability and spirit of adventure. Each model year, the colors tell a new story while continuing Caltex's colorful legacy of exceptional design.

"Don't expect to see anything you've seen before," Jimenez teases. "Expect the unexpected."