



Subaru takes the Crosstrek to the next level

We're pretty certain that a revamped Impreza-based tall-roader will look like the XV concept model premiered at the 2016 Geneva Auto Show in Switzerland. That means buyers will get a much more rugged-looking vehicle than before, including a bit more ground clearance plus extra protective side cladding around the fender opening and rocker panels. A unique grille and headlights will further separate the Crosstrek from its Impreza roots, but both will share the same 152-horsepower four-cylinder engine and all-wheel-drive system.



Subaru XV concept at Geneva

A new Continental on the way

No, you poor schlubs, we aren't referring to the 2017 Lincoln Continental, but the \$200,000-plus **Bentley Continental GT** coupe and convertible. Other than more horsepower for the 6.0-liter 12-cylinder engine and the addition a turbocharged 4.0-liter V-8 option for the 2011 model year, the Continental has remained static since its 2003 introduction. From what sources are saying, the next-gen all-wheel-drive Continental GT will have a considerably sleeker body with more pronounced fenders and a smaller grille. However the car's signature oval-shaped headlights will remain virtually unchanged. Although the current powertrains remain pretty much the same, a plug-in-hybrid option is expected following the new Conti's early 2018 arrival.



Lotus released it a special edition of its recently introduced **Evora 400** to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the company's Hethel, England, assembly plant. Sadly, because of emissions standards, the U.S. is not a market for the Evora.

Geely to buy Lotus?

British sports car maker **Lotus** has made some great performance vehicles, and some tumultuous financial times. Since placing the Esprit as the submarine Bond car in "The Spy Who Loved Me," Lotus has struggled to reclaim the spotlight in recent years.

In 2012, it was acquired by Malaysia-based DRB-Hicom, which has improved quality and product planning, but now rumors are that China-based **Geely** is looking to acquire Lotus Cars. The alleged deal would allow Geely to nab luxury Lotus, while other possible interested bidder Groupe PSA of France (which owns Peugeot and Citroën) would acquire DRB-Hicom's Proton brand of mass-market vehicles.

Geely's ownership of Volvo has been largely hands-off, so this might be an opportunity for Lotus to get some much-needed R&D funding from a larger parent company.



The new Chevy Camaro ZL1 has been clocked higher than the Corvette Z06.

Faster than a 'Vette?

Not only is the new **2017 Chevrolet Camaro ZL1** the fastest Camaro ever, its top speed of 198 mph allows it to outpace the current Chevy Corvette Z06.

Think that's fake news? That number comes from a recent test where the 650-hp supercharged Camaro ZL1 hit that magic number at the 7.6-mile high-speed oval at Germany's Automotive Testing Papenburg GmbH. Though it's a whisker shy of an even 200, the new Camaro actually hit 202.3 mph in one direction; however the top speed figure averages runs in both directions. Still, that gives it a 3.5-second 0 to 60, with 1.02g of lateral grip.

And Chevrolet claims the steep banking allowed the test drivers to push it flat out for the entire run. It also states that the test vehicle had no modifications besides safety and data-measuring equipment, and sported Goodyear Eagle F1 Supercar 3 tires inflated to 44 psi, the recommendation for high-speed driving.

Now some comparisons. The current Corvette Z06 tops out at 198 mph, while the 2009-13 'Vette ZR1 maxed out at 205 mph. The new 707-hp Dodge Charger Hellcat claims a top speed of 204 mph. Just 30 years ago, the Ferrari F40 was considered the fastest production car in the world at 199 mph.

But you can pick up a Camaro ZL1 for just \$63,435.

TEST DRIVE

2017 Dodge Durango

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available cargo capacity ranges from 17-84 cubic feet. Ride height is such that there's a moderate lift over required to access the load deck. Buyers can consider the optional running boards to ease entry/exit if need be. An under floor bin provides hidden storage space in the cargo bay.

Given their girth, large SUVs don't typically spend much time in heavy trail bashing. However, light off-roading is sometimes part of their job description, and more frequently, dealing with winter weather conditions. Both are well within Durango's comfort zone. Each engine has its own, fulltime AWD system. The V-6 system has a 50/50 front/rear torque split, while the Hemi has a two-speed transfer case with a low range, and a variable torque split.

All models except the R/T get a 3.6-liter V-6, rated at 290 h.p. (295 on Citadel and

models with the Blacktop package) and 260 lb.-ft. of torque. Standard on R/T and optional elsewhere is the 5.7-liter Hemi V-8, which generates 360 h.p. and 390 lb. ft. of torque. Both motors are linked to an eight-speed automatic transmission. Maximum towing capacity for six cylinder Durango's is 6,200 lb., while eight-cylinder models can be equipped to tow up to 7,200 lb. (AWD) and 7,400 lb. (RWD). The EPA estimates fuel economy for V-6 models are 19/26/21 (RWD); 18/25/21 (AWD). Hemi-powered Durangos are predicted to return 14/22/17 (RWD & AWD). While the mileage numbers aren't stellar, they're in line with the competition (Honda Pilot (V-6, AWD) 18/26; Mazda CX-9 (turbo 4, AWD) 20/26, Toyota Highlander (V-6, AWD) 20/27). And the gas tank's large capacity (24.6 gallons) minimizes pit stops. I averaged 21 mpg's on a recent long trip. At that rate, you could go over 500 miles before refueling.



TEST DRIVE this vehicle at these preferred dealerships:

ARMORY CHRYSLER DODGE JEEP RAM SRT FIAT
926 Central Ave., Albany, NY 12206
518-641-7777 www.armoryauto.com

GOLDSTEIN CHRYSLER JEEP DODGE RAM
613 Loudon Rd., Latham, NY 12110
518-785-4156 www.goldsteinchryslerjeep.net

LIA CHRYSLER JEEP DODGE RAM
2116 Central Ave., Schenectady, NY 12304
518-579-3300 www.liachryslerdodgejeep.com

I've driven Durangos with both engines on both coasts in a wide range of conditions. That includes city traffic, freeway flying, canyon curves and towing trailers. Like any vehicle in this segment, Durango's size and heft preclude any truly sporty handling, however, it takes corners confidently and feels stable in all conditions — including towing. My feeling is that the six is enough engine to

satisfy the vast majority of Durango buyers. However, those that need the added towing capacity (or just like having lots of horses on tap) will want to test drive the Hemi.

A regular contributor to the Times Union for more than 25 years, Dan Lyons is the award-winning author of six books, and photographer of 180 calendars.