

The new 2018 Infiniti QX80 is not quite as new as it looks

Intel suggests that Infiniti's answer to the Mercedes-Benz GLS, Cadillac Escalade and Lexus LX will continue to run with the same 400-horsepower V-8 used by the current **Infiniti QX80**. That means the eight-passenger wagon, which will be based on the QX80 Monograph concept, is not quite as new as it looks.



QX80 Monograph concept

Rumors persist, however, that the Nissan Armada-based big rig will eventually get the twin-turbocharged 3.0-liter V-6 that's found in other Infiniti models. It's also rated at 400 horsepower, but makes more torque than the non-turbo V-8. Another possibility is a hybrid powertrain using the V-6 that will crank out an estimated 500 horsepower.

This **Volvo V60 Polestar** is Volvo's performance line, but as an all-electric will probably get a sexier look to compete with Tesla.



Volvo goes electric

Look out, Tesla: **Volvo** is hot on your battery-laden tail. This week, the Swedish maker announced that, by 2019, all its cars will be partially or fully battery-powered. Said CEO Håkan Samuelsson: "This announcement marks the end of the solely combustion engine-powered car." To that end, Volvo is attempting to turn its **Polestar** performance line into a new brand of upscale all-electric vehicles, a market now staked out by American Tesla and German BMW's i brand. Spun off its racing team, Volvo (which is owned by China-based Geely) had originally intended Polestar to be a stand-alone brand. It already produces a **V60 Polestar** performance wagon and sedan packing a gas-powered turbo 3.0L that delivers 345 power to all four wheels... but only makes 750 of them each year. Look for that number to explode exponentially. In addition to gaining a battery, the electric Polestar brand will reportedly lose the Volvo name, aiming to emphasize performance over the Swedish brand's reputation for safety and practicality.



The discontinued **Kia Forte Koup** is a victim of its own lack of design flair...

Retirement announcements

Our sources have been providing information on what new vehicles are heading our way for 2018, but there's also plenty of news as to what models will disappear once the 2017 model year is a wrap.

Among the known casualties is the quirky and slow-selling **Nissan Juke**, which is fun to drive but is getting long in the tooth. Then there's the **Kia Forte Koup**, done in by a lack of design pizzazz.

In the likely-to-leave group are the **Acura ILX**, which is built on the previous-generation Honda Civic platform, the **Fiat 500L** and **Ford C-Max** hybrid (to be replaced by something much better). Although not officially announced, the **Dodge Grand Caravan** isn't expected to be around for 2018, phased out in favor of Chrysler's new Pacifica minivan.

They'll join previously announced retirees the **Jeep Patriot**, **Buick Verano**, **Dodge Dart** and **Chrysler 200**. All but the Patriot are four-door sedans.



But the fun **Nissan Juke** is also going bye-bye.



The 2018 Chevy Corvette ZR1's engine will have dual overhead cams and 700+ horses.

More grunt for the Corvette

The Corvette's current cam-in-block engine has all the performance anyone could want, but the plan is to build higher-output, double-overhead camshaft version. We're hearing that the **Chevrolet Corvette ZR1** that's expected for the 2018 model year will get a completely new V-8 engine called the LT-5. The 6.2-liter mill — the same displacement as the current V-8 — will be fitted with dual overhead cams instead of the current cam-in-block arrangement and will be hooked up to a supercharger. Output will most certainly exceed the 650 horses produced by the current Z06 Corvette. Our best guess is somewhere in the 700-750-horsepower zone.

TEST DRIVE

2017 Chrysler 300S

Continued from page 1

AWD Sport models like my tester is biased towards ride quality and agreeably so.

Interior news centers on Chrysler's Uconnect system. The standard, 8.4-inch touchscreen is the interface for many onboard functions, and has pinch/swipe/tap capability. Uconnect is compatible with Android Auto and Apple CarPlay, so smartphone users of the respective systems can access maps, messages and music with their favorite apps. The screen itself is large and legible, and the controls are better than average for user friendliness.

There are a number of sound system options; the 552 watt, 10-speaker Beats audio setup in my test car sounded good even when what was playing on it sounded bad. Comfort, convenience and safety technology options are added progressively in trim levels and also available individually.

Three Hundred seats adults comfortably in both rows. Those in back have

separate HVAC vents and USB ports at their disposal. Part of the job description for full-size sedans is having a trip-worthy trunk. The 300's is usably large at 16.3 cubic feet, and rear seatbacks fold mostly flat forward when needed, to accommodate long items. Ambient, blue lighting borders the new instrument panel, with a configurable 7-inch driver information display in the center. The rotary shift knob — first seen on RAM trucks — is progressively making its way into other members of the company's lineup. The knurled knob has a positive feel clicking from gear to gear, and you don't have to be looking at it to feel the changes.

One of the things that's helped these 10th generation (post 2005) 300's survive and thrive in the marketplace has been their design. The cars have classic, square-shouldered styling that's aged gracefully and is also easily (and endlessly) customizable. Getting a fresh, new look is as simple as changing the



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE MANUFACTURER

TEST DRIVE
this vehicle at these preferred dealerships:

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

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



rims and grille and tweaking the trim. The aftermarket has capitalized on this over the years — as has Chrysler. The company has added to the factory fashion variations for 2017 with some new hues and styling cues.

Sport models can get a fresh take with the Sport Appearance Package (\$1,295 on V-6, standard on V-8). It adds a more aggressive front fascia (with LED fog lamps and larger air intakes), and a rear, body-colored spoiler.

A complementary package for the interior is also offered, highlighted by heated, ventilated, perforated leather

performance seats with suede bolsters. Ceramic Gray is added to the 300's color palette this year, as is another cosmetic bundle for 300S models.

The Alloy Edition Package (\$495) features Dark Bronze grille, surround, badging and aluminum wheels (19-inch on AWD), Titanium finish wing badge and exhaust tips and model-specific floor mats.

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.