Six appeal

Stylish new Mazda6 revealed
All-new Medium
Bigger Mazda6 to join mid-size battle from 2013

Que Sera, Cerato
Vital new Kia small car surfaces in Seoul

Mac attack
McLaren builds outlandish X-1 for mystery billionaire

Dawn of the Z
Zagato and BMW rush out Z4-based Roadster
Mazda's bigger, bolder and more efficient Mazda6 was unveiled in late August at the Moscow motor show in Russia - Mazda's biggest market in Europe - delivering a ground-up makeover for the Japanese company's popular mid-sized sedan.

The third-generation Mazda6 is expected to launch in Australia in the first quarter of 2013. As a full global car that will replace both the wide-bodied North American Mazda6 and the smaller version sold in Australia, Japan and Europe, the Mazda6 grows considerably.

A hefty 130mm longer and 45mm wider than the current generation, the slippery all-new 'Six' is now only 38mm shorter and 59mm narrower than a Holden Commodore. A Iso due to the global nature of the program - and Mazda's stretched engineering budget - the hatchback variant that is popular in Australia and Europe is expected to be dropped, leaving only sedan and wagon body styles.

The new Mazda6 features pronounced front wheelarches flowing back from slim headlights with BMW-style LED 'halo' daytime-running lights.
A slim chrome strip defines the lower edge of the modern Mazda-style ‘smiling’ grille – a distinctive element of the company’s new Kodo design language that debuted on the CX-5 – and this chrome strip extends into the headlights.

Bristling with Mazda’s latest SkyActiv engine and chassis technology – and boasting a wind-cheating 0.26Cd aerodynamic rating on its most efficient variants – its fuel consumption has been slashed by a huge 27 per cent according to the figures released in Moscow.

This brings consumption down from the 8.8 litres per 100km for the current model with the old 2.5-litre four-cylinder petrol engine to just 6.4L/100km for the new-generation engine of the same size, easily beating the mass-selling Toyota Camry’s 7.8L/100km.

The most economical model globally – and almost certain to come to Australia – will be powered by Mazda’s 2.2-litre low-compression turbo-diesel engine, linked with the six-speed auto to deliver fuel consumption of 4.2 litres per 100 kilometres – a whole litre less than the Australian-built, petrol-electric Camry Hybrid.

In a world first, the Mazda6 uses a capacitor instead of a heavier battery to store regenerated electricity from braking, reusing it to run electrical components around the car.

The most likely petrol engine for Australia is the 2.5-litre SkyActiv-G, which produces
SUBARU has unveiled a high-performance turbocharged ‘ST’ edition of its Forester compact SUV at the Moscow motor show, drawing from the unique Australian S-Edition but placing an unashamedly strong emphasis on its STI credentials.

MITSUBISHI has slashed the Australian pricing of its hot-shoe Lancer Evolution by up to $8900, undercutting the rival Subaru WRX STI. The price cuts accompany a minor facelift for the broader Lancer range to reverse a sales slip and give it new legs until the all-new model arrives in 2014.

PORSCHE has revealed the all-wheel-drive Carrera 4 versions of its all-new 911 – in both coupe and convertible forms – a month ahead of their first public appearance at the Paris motor show.

141kW of power at 5700rpm – 16kW more than the similarly sized current engine (125kW) – and 256Nm of torque at 3250rpm (up 30Nm).

A smaller 2.0-litre engine shown in Moscow produces 110kW at 6000rpm and 210Nm at a high 4000rpm, but both engines run on premium unleaded petrol.

The Mazda6 retains MacPherson strut front suspension and multi-link rear suspension, but the Hiroshima-based company is claiming class-leading handling.

Electric-assisted rack-and-pinion steering is employed, with the electric motor mounted on the steering column for what Mazda claims is precise control “without forcing changes in the positions of the hands on the wheel”.

Mazda also says it targeted class-leading NVH (noise, vibration and harshness) performance by blocking noise paths from the engine and road to the cabin.

The company’s engineers say forward visibility has been enhanced by moving the A-pillar forward 100mm and mounting the exterior mirrors on the door rather than the base of the pillar.

Among technologies new to Mazda are automatic high-beam headlight control, directional headlights that move with the steering, and autonomous braking that uses a “near-infrared beam sensor” to detect an imminent collision and automatically brake the car in an emergency to avoid or mitigate an impact.

A rear-vehicle monitoring system warns the driver of fast-approaching vehicles from behind, while the Mazda6 also gains lane-departure warning.
BMW and Zagato premiered a Z4-based Roadster concept at the recent Pebble Beach Concours d’Elegance in California as a follow-up to the BMW Zagato Coupe unveiled at the Italian Villa d’Este event in May. The one-off coach-built sportscar was quickly prepared following a positive reception to the road-legal Coupe in Italy and took just six weeks from initial design sketches to finished product.

Sources close to BMW at the event in northern Italy were reported as saying the sleek hand-beaten aluminium Zagato bodywork might point towards the next-generation Z4 that will supersede the E89 series that has been around since 2008.

Apart from a switch from deep metallic red on the Coupe to a silver-grey finish on the Roadster, described as resembling liquid metal, the front-end’s styling remains unchanged, retaining the re-profiled headlights, low-set grille and large, deep-set bonnet and side vents.

Closer inspection of the familiar-looking BMW kidney grille reveals a mesh that consists of hundreds of small Zagato ‘z’ letters, and the long bonnet sports a pair of air intakes for the engine (details of which are still to be revealed).

Around the back, Zagato has applied its signature double-bubble roof shape to the open car’s rear deck, with bulges stemming from behind the leather-trimmed roll-over hoops to the beginning of its integrated rear spoiler.
Echoing the Coupe’s dark glass tailgate extension between smoked tail-lights, the Roadster features a slim glossy strip that more elegantly covers the rear fascia, seamlessly linking the rear clusters.

The flattened rear deck arising from the lack of a fixed roof also accentuates the muscular haunches that are shared with the coupe and help build the impression of a squat, purposeful stance.

Matte-finish bright silver five-spoke alloy wheels complement the colour of the bodywork and are said to hint at aircraft propellers, pointing to the shared aeronautical origins of both BMW and Zagato.

Instead of the coupe’s moody interior colour scheme of dark grey with red piping, the Roadster gets black seats, lower dash and door trims with large swathes of tan leather on the dash-top, centre console and seat sides, plus generous amounts of tan piping and stitching – including the trademark Zagato ‘Z’ embroidered on the head restraints.

The tan colour flows across the interior’s upper surfaces like a ‘rail’ that creates “a visual connection between the inside of the car and its exterior … embracing the driver and passenger like a large protective arm”.

Preaching to the convertible: Zagato adapted its stylish coupe to create a stunning new roadster design.
Mazda3 has always delivered driving enjoyment with great economy. And now Mazda3 SP20 SKYACTIV lets you smile even more. Its innovative SKYACTIV Technology boosts power and torque, but significantly cuts fuel use and emissions at the same time. It’s just another way Mazda3 helps you have fun, making motion the best destination of all. To find out more or to book a test drive, see your dealer or mazda3.com.au

NEW MAZDA3 LOVES DRIVERS

Senior vice-president of BMW Group Design Adrian van Hooydonk credited the expertise of and “outstanding teamwork” between BMW and Zagato with producing the show car within such a tight schedule.

Andrea Zagato, CEO of the famed Milanese design house and coachbuilder, said the project “shows what is possible when two successful companies pool their resources”.

The Coupe was BMW’s first collaboration with an Italian design house since the Giugiaro-designed M1 coupe of 1978 and this second vehicle points to an ongoing relationship.

Bringing together the 93-year-old Milan-based design house with BMW was an easy decision for Mr van Hooydonk, who is an old friend and admirer of Zagato chief designer Norihiko Harada.

BMW said the Zagato collaboration “heralds a new chapter in the tradition of cooperation between BMW and Italian designers”.

Although both Coupe and Roadster are one-off concepts, Zagato insiders have reportedly not ruled out strictly limited production – if the price is right.

Rumours abound that elements of the Zagato Coupe and Roadster point to the next-generation Z4 that will supersede the current E89 folding-hardtop sportscar that was launched in 2008.

The presence of separate Coupe and Roadster concepts suggest the next-gen Z4 could return to the two-model line-up of the original Z4.

Through these projects, BMW re-established a connection with the Italian Rivolta family – from whom the Bavarian car-maker bought the production rights to the famous Isetta “bubble car” in 1954 – as Marella Rivolta is the wife of Andrea Zagato and was responsible for overseeing the interior trim and colours.

"Double bubble:" With no roof, Zagato applied its “double bubble” signature on the panel behind the seats.
Designed as a tribute to Peter Brock’s original VK Commodore HDT SS Group A homologation car from 1985, the new-generation ‘Blue Meanie’ comes complete with a number of signature styling highlights taken from the original car. 

Click image to play
Que Sera, Cerato
Vital new Kia small car surfaces in Seoul

KIA has unveiled its vital new Cerato small sedan, which is not due to hit local showrooms until at least the second quarter next year, as a replacement for the current Cerato – the company’s top-selling model in Australia this year.

Set to be launched in South Korea around September as the K3 – and dubbed Forte in other markets – the third-generation Cerato was presented in sleek four-door sedan guise, the only Y D-series body style to have been revealed. Exposing a thorough departure from the look of the current TD sedan range released in early 2009, the new model shares similar visual themes with Kia’s well-received Optima mid-sizer and Rio light car.

A hatchback version will follow about six months after the sedan, after a possible introduction at the next Detroit motor show in January, replacing the existing five-door model released just two years ago.

A replacement for the striking Koup has also been confirmed for this series. Expect to see that revealed at the New York show in April next year, four years after the current model’s debut.
Kia to success: Stylish new Cerato is said to sport a variation of the European C’eed’s interior (pictured).

Kia will roll out the three Cerato model bodystyles considerably faster than the 18-month timeframe of the current generation.

It says the newcomer is larger and wider than today’s version, with a longer wheelbase.

“There is nothing technically being revealed to us at this stage about the Cerato,” said Kia Motors Australia PR manager Kevin Hepworth.

Mr Hepworth said the new Cerato will undergo similar suspension and steering ‘localisation’ testing as the existing Rio and Optima to create more favourable ride and handling characteristics for the Australian market.

Kia’s latest iteration of its global bestseller has been predominantly developed in Germany alongside the second-generation Hyundai i30 launched here in June and the more sophisticated but Europe-only Ceed hatch.

This means it shares most of the Hyundai’s all-new architecture, including a MacPherson strut front suspension and torsion beam rear setup, electric power steering, and NU-series direct-injection four-cylinder petrol engines.

However, the advanced 110kW/178Nm 1.8-litre engine found in the latest i30 will probably be overlooked in favour of the 2.0-litre Theta II unit found in some Optima models overseas, producing around 120kW and 200Nm, driving the front wheels via six-speed manual and automatic transmissions.
With its unique 1+2 door design the Veloster offers the style of a coupe, with the practicality of a hatch. Discover more at veloster.com.au

Turbocharged and naturally aspirated versions of the 1.6-litre powerplant from the related Hyundai Veloster coupe may also make their way to Australia later, but diesel engines are apparently off the agenda.

Despite the European connection, Kia will build the Australian-market Cerato in South Korea to keep costs down.

When it does arrive, the next Cerato will complete Kia’s design-led reinvention for its passenger vehicles. It is the company’s first C-segment small car with styling completely overseen by former Audi designer Peter Schreyer. Design work was reportedly carried out in Frankfurt and Kia’s Namyang Design Centre in South Korea.

The next Cerato has more aggressive proportions than the current model, with a sharply raked windscreen, high waistline and pronounced scalloping on the doors, along with Kia’s signature ‘pinched’ grille and angular headlights and tail-lights (which appear to have taken inspiration from the Optima sedan).

Its sporting intent in the design is further emphasised by bonnet bulges above both front wheels, a low coupe-like roofline and macho flared arches covering large alloy wheels.

Based on the same architecture as the recently released second-generation Hyundai i30, the new Cerato body is said to house a more tactile and spacious cabin.

Mr Schreyer told us in March that the new cabin had “improved even more than the exterior”, and would offer reduced levels of noise, vibration and harshness.

Expect the interior design to mirror that of the Europe-only Cee’d hatch and wagon premiered at the Geneva motor show in March this year, with a more driver-oriented instrument fascia and heavier use of soft-touch plastics than the current model.

Kia Australia COO Tony Barlow said the company was eagerly awaiting the new-generation model, saying it “clearly continues Kia’s dramatic styling progression”.
McLAREN Automotive – the road car offshoot of the famed Formula One team – has unveiled an outlandish one-off version of its 12C supercar. Called X-1 but bearing no resemblance to a BMW compact SUV, the road-legal and fully developed machine was commissioned by a mystery McLaren enthusiast and showcases the level of customisation available from the company, which did not reveal the car’s final cost.

The client, who has also owned a McLaren F1, Mercedes-Benz SLR McLaren and 12C, wanted designers from inside and outside McLaren – including some from outside the automotive industry – to submit competing ideas.

Inspiration for the design – made up of carbon-fibre panels and solid aluminium brightwork – was taken from cars, architecture, fashion, movies and even food.

The client finally settled on the flowing retro-futuristic, art-deco lines seen here, penned by McLaren’s Hong Yeo, a Korean-born graduate of the Royal College of Art in London.

Among the vehicles submitted by the client as inspiration were the 1961 Facel Vega, 1953...
Chrysler D’Elegance Ghia, 1959
Buick Electra, 1939
Mercedes-Benz 540K and 1971 Citroen SM.

From the world of architecture were the Guggenheim museums in New York and Bilbao, Spain, while further inspiration came from a Jaeger-LeCoultre art deco clock, an Airstream caravan, a Thomas Mann Montblanc pen and a photo of Audrey Hepburn.

The food connection came in the shape of an eggplant, which was joined by a grand piano as examples of shiny finishes favoured by the client, according to McLaren design director Frank Stephenson.

McLaren Special Operations program director Paul Mackenzie said the client approached the company’s executive director Ron Dennis almost three years ago, while the 12C was still in development.

“The client wanted a machine that had all the capability of the 12C but wrapped in a unique body that reflected his needs and personality,” said Mr Mackenzie, who described the brief as creating a car with “timeless and classical elegance”.

One of the challenges facing Mr Yeo was that the cars from which the client drew inspiration were of a traditional front-engine, rear-drive layout whereas the 12-C has its twin-turbo V8 located behind the cockpit.

McLaren says finding the right visual balance required “months of sketching and modelling”, with the final design taking 18 months to sign off and the client demanding to see 30 per cent scale and full-size foam models instead of the digital representations originally planned.

Despite the X-1’s styling being far removed from usual McLaren fare, with only the glasshouse carried over from the 12C donor car, Mr Yeo said it “embodies the McLaren value that every part has to have a purpose”.

“No details are simply visual cues; every one has a purpose … although
I like to think the wide body combined with pontoon-style rear fenders will ensure the car glides when it’s moving just like a superhero’s cape.”

Mr Yeo was pointing to the enclosed rear wheels, which are accessed by raising carbon-fibre panels supported by what Mr Stephenson described as “some of the most gorgeous hinges you’ve ever seen”, with the open panels adding an almost Batmobile-esque presence.

As a result of the exterior modifications, the X-1 is 109mm longer and 188mm wider than the 12C, but the extensive use of carbon-fibre panels keeps weight down to about the same 1400kg.

The panels are painted in piano black with no metallic or colour tints, which Mr Stephenson said made it “one of the most challenging colours to paint”.

Because the X-1 was to be a road-legal vehicle with a brief to be just as capable as the 12C on which it is based, McLaren gave the car its own development program.

This included an aerodynamics program to ensure high-speed stability and more than 1000 kilometres of testing, including two stints at the Spanish Idiada circuit with McLaren test driver Chris Goodwin at the wheel.

Given the amount of work done on the car’s exterior styling, the interior is surprisingly standard, adding bespoke ‘Harissa Red’ Nappa leather upholstery, upgraded carpets, machined nickel-coated switchgear and titanium weave for the carbon trim panels to provide a 3D effect.

Mr Stephenson described the X-1 project as “a truly rewarding and unforgettable experience”.

“I think that we as a team have created a completely unforgettable car that is true to one man’s vision.”