

Highlights from the 2011 NY International Auto Show

April 29th, 2011 by Bob Long - Editor in Chief / Host

There are four major venues in the America that the car companies use to introduce new production or concept vehicles to the press in grand style. The hot spots are Los Angeles in November or early December, Detroit also known as The North American Auto Show in January, Chicago in February and wrapping up with New York in March or April of every year. In addition to the American shows, there are four international shows every year which are also very important to the automotive media.

The press days for the New York International Auto Show are history for 2011. This year was interesting mix of a little bit of everything from electric to high performance muscle machines. NY is the oldest auto show in the country and for more than 100 years has showcased North America or World debuts including the North American debut Of Jaguar's icon E Type which was shown exactly 50 years ago this year.

If you went back 100 years to an early 20th century NY Auto Show you would a similar theme to the 2011 show. In 1911 the NY show had electric vehicles, steam powered vehicles, hybrid-type vehicles, diesel powered machines and gasoline powered internal combustion vehicles. In 2011, the same mixes of vehicles were on the show floor. Many would not expect New York City the home of more taxi cabs than anywhere I know, to be important to the automakers. However this in one of highly attended shows during the public days and for some automakers the #1 market for their product including Jeep.

Important stars of the show this year included the North America debut of the 2013 Chevy Malibu which will be offered with a four cylinder power only. The Malibu will be sold worldwide, hence the recent world debut at the Shanghai Auto Show. Ford took the wraps of a world debut the 2013 Ford Taurus and Taurus SHO. The Taurus will be offered with an eco boost four cylinder power plant and SHO variant finally gets a meaner sportier look.

Speaking of mean machines Chrysler took the wraps of the 2012 300 SRT 8 packing a 6.4 Hemi V8 with 465 ponies however with cylinder deactivation it will yield 25 MPG highway.

My favorite Jeep also made it world debut in NYC the Jeep Grand Cherokee SR8 with same 6.4 Hemi V8 and great aggressive styling.



Fiat made a World debut with its 500C Convertible, returning to the US for the summer months expect a starting price of about 20K

Other important debuts included the BMW 650i Coupe, The 550 HP Porsche Panamera Turbo S, and the 2012 Subaru Impreza with a 35 MPG AWD highway rating and some impressive styling.

Mazda showed off a revised Mazda 3 for 2012 and new Skyactiv Fuel Saving Technologies.

Jaguar enjoyed a world debut of its complete model range for 2012 with beautiful styling upgrades to the XF/XFR and drop dead gorgeous XK and XKR. It was the North America Debut of The ultimate XK the XKR-S. This for me was one of the highlights of the show.



Other personal highlights included the second incarnation of the New Beetle is here packing a impressive new interior, three engine choices base 4 cylinder with 175Hp, Turbo with 200HP and Diesel power plant as well. The styling changes give it a fresh new look without losing the charm of the original.



Two concept cars really struck me. First the joint sports car collaboration between Toyota and Subaru has produced a drop dead beautiful vehicle from of all makers Scion (up until now makers of some of the most design challenged vehicles of all time). Let's hope that some of styling of this concept makes into production.



The other striking concept, a tiny A class vehicle from Mercedes that shows the world small cars can be elegant and sporting.



And finally for me on my lottery list besides the Jaguar XKR-S is the C63AMG from Mercedes. If the exhaust note from the C63AMG Coupe is anything like the C63AMG sedan I drove for a week a few years back. It sounded like a World War II German Howitzer cannon and brings a smile to face even today years later. I sure hope I get to drive this one.



The public show days of the NY International run through May 1 check it out if you are anywhere in the tri state area. Listen to AutoWorld on Sunday or Motor News Weekly on Saturday or Sunday for more complete show coverage