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# German 8

BMW plants seeds of production flagship with Concept 8 Series

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# Spoiler warning

Subaru tunes BRZ tS with STI aero kit and dynamic dampers



By JUSTIN HILLIARD

**S**UBARU has whipped the covers off a pair of performance-focused specials, with the BRZ tS and WRX STI Type RA limited to 500 units each when they go on sale exclusively in the United States early next year.

Engineered by the STI team, the BRZ tS is the latest track-ready version of the Japanese car-maker's two-door coupe, but once again

there have been no changes to engine outputs or mechanics.

Thus, the 152kW/212Nm 2.0-litre boxer four-cylinder petrol engine carries over paired with a six-speed manual gearbox, with the sportscar instead gaining a raft of aerodynamic, handling and chassis improvements.

The rear-wheel-drive tS is equipped with flexible V-braces in the engine bay and draw

stiffeners for the subframe that help to increase responsiveness while offering superior chassis performance.

All of these parts – including Sachs dampers and coil springs – compliment the BRZ's existing low centre of gravity.

The tS rolls on black-coloured lightweight 18-inch alloy wheels wrapped in 215/40 Michelin Pilot Sport 4 tyres.

Behind the rims are Brembo brakes with four-piston callipers up the front and two-pot stoppers at the rear, all of which are painted red.

Exterior changes include a red-accented front bumper with mesh inserts, side skirts and a rear bumper with red highlights. The foglights have been removed and are replaced with STI covers.

Inside, changes include front seats upholstered in leather and Alcantara, red

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seatbelts and door grips, STI-branded speedometer and a red-stitched steering wheel.

Meanwhile, the WRX STI Type RA offers a revised engine control unit (ECU) tune, reinforced pistons, cold air intake, air cleaner and a high-flow exhaust with rear tailpipes.

These changes to the 2.5-litre turbocharged flat four result in a 10kW boost in power to 231kW, while the standard US-spec vehicle's 393Nm torque figure is not affected. A six-speed manual with a revised third ratio puts power down via an all-wheel-drive system.

Bilstein dampers and coil springs have also been added, as well as gold-coloured lightweight 19-inch BBS wheels shod in 245/35 Yokohama Advan Sports rubber.

Cross-drilled Brembo brakes feature at all four corners, with silver-painted six-pot stoppers up the front and two-piston callipers at the rear. The stability control system has also been returned.

Outside, visual differences for the Type RA extend to a front grille with red highlights and carbon-fibre roof panel, as well as a red-accented rear bumper and air outlet grille.

Interior upgrades include a suede-trimmed steering wheel, short-throw gear stick, STI-branded Recaro front bucket seats and an individual build-number plate on the centre console.

Both models share design flourishes, such as a front lip spoiler, black side mirrors, carbon-fibre bootlid wing spoiler, black shark-fin roof antenna and a red push-to-start engine button.

Subaru says the RA stands for 'record attempt', an homage to the manufacturer as it prepares to set a new Nurburgring circuit speed record.

A special race model – dubbed WRX STI Type RA NBR Special – will go toe-to-toe with the infamous Green Hell during the current German summer. **MM**

# XL Polo

New-generation Volkswagen Polo sizes up light-car competition



By TUNG NGUYEN

**V**OLKSWAGEN Group Australia (VGA) is targeting a March on-sale date for its all-new Polo light car, which was revealed in larger, more practical and feature-rich sixth-generation guise this month at an event in Berlin.

Speaking with GoAuto, VGA corporate

communications general manager Paul Pottinger confirmed the new front-drive Polo's launch window and gave an indication of which engines would be available in the mix, as well as when to expect the high-performing GTI variant in local showrooms.

"We're aiming for March, end of Q1," he said. "You can expect a couple of petrol

models, you can expect a Beats edition with a sound system by Dr Dre... and of course a GTI which will be here in quarter three, 2018 with a 2.0-litre engine."

Although not a radical departure in appearance from its outgoing form, the new Polo wears a new front grille, bumper and Golf-like headlights for an updated look, as well as a more pronounced

shoulder crease and tweaked rear end.

Built on Volkswagen Group's ubiquitous MQB platform, the new Polo grows in size to measure 4053mm long, 1751mm wide, 1446mm high with a 2564mm wheelbase, up from the fifth-gen's of 3972mm long, 1682mm wide, 1453mm high and 2470mm wheelbase dimensions.

With the increase in physical size, the sixth-



gen Polo will accommodate 351 litres of storage in the boot with the rear seats in place, up from the 280L in the previous generation for an increase of around 25 per cent.

By comparison, the new Polo easily outclasses segment rivals the Mazda2 (250L), Toyota Yaris (286L) and Ford Fiesta (281L) in boot space, as well as the hatchbacks in a segment above

including the Ford Focus (316L), Mazda3 (308L) and Toyota Corolla (280L).

Overseas Polos will be available with diesel and natural gas engine options but, as previously stated, the Australian-spec light car line-up is likely to be underpinned exclusively with petrol powerplants.

“We’re introducing a new diesel to the Golf

line-up and there’s quite a few diesel choices there, but in the class down from that (light car) it’s not something which people seem particularly interested in,” Mr Pottinger said.

Of the petrol engines on offer internationally, the most likely candidates for an Australian market debut will be the 1.0-litre turbocharged three-pot in either 70kW or 85kW tune, as

well as an 110kW 1.5-litre four cylinder.

The current standard Polo line-up is available in two trim levels powered by a 1.2-litre turbo four producing 66kW/160Nm in the Trendline and 81kW/175Nm in the Comfortline.

Volkswagen has also upped the ante on its Polo GTI by shoehorning a 2.0-litre turbocharged TSI under the bonnet for 147kW of power, up

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**Polo:** Volkswagen Polo R



from the previous 141kW of the 1.8-litre engine.

Internationally, the aforementioned petrol engines are available with either a five- or six-speed manual gearbox or seven-speed dual-clutch automatic transmission, but Mr Pottinger could not confirm if both configurations would be made available locally.

“Difficult to know at this stage, it’s still such a long way out,” he said. “Even in that class of car, pick-up of manual is declining year-on-year.”

Overseas Polos will be available in Trendline, Comfortline and Highline as well as Beats and GTI flavours, while Australian-spec hatchbacks are expected to retain the same Trendline, Comfortline and GTI levels with the Beats edition available in limited quantities as before.

Inside, the sixth-gen Polo will wear Volkswagen’s new Active Info Display all-

digital instrumentation, as well as featuring LED daytime running lights, 6.5-inch central entertainment and information touchscreen, speed limiter, 14-inch wheels, and autonomous emergency braking as standard.

Higher-spec cars gain access to a driver alert system, centre armrest, park distance control, larger wheels, 8.0-inch central display, and, in the case of the Beats edition, an up-rated 300-watt sound system.

Options in overseas Polos include LED headlights and tail-lights, wireless smartphone charging, panoramic sunroof, active dampers, adaptive cruise control, blind-spot detection with rear cross-traffic alert and a semi-autonomous park assist function.

Australian pricing and exact specification is expected to be released closer to launch. **MM**

# Gold standard

Porsche 911 Turbo S powers up for limited-run Exclusive Edition model



By RON HAMMERTON

**I**F YOU want the most powerful, fastest and most expensive Porsche 911 production coupe built yet, you had better get in fast.

Just 500 of the limited-edition 446kW 911 Turbo S Exclusive Series coupes will be hand-built in Germany for global consumption, with “extremely limited” numbers available for

Australian buyers at an eye-watering \$590,700 plus on-road costs.

The price – \$128,800 more than the “standard” \$461,900 911 Turbo S coupe – is no barrier to certain Australian buyers who have already placed orders sight unseen for the new variant that is shown in the publicity photographs in a metallic gold finish but can

be had in different colours.

According to Porsche Cars Australia communications director Paul Ellis, two orders had been placed by Australian customers before the car was officially announced today, and others could be expected now that the vehicle has gone public.

“Customers for this car are known for

wanting the best of the best,” he said.

Mr Ellis said he did not know how many of the cars would be allocated to Australian buyers, but the company would simply take the orders, place them with the factory and see how many it can fulfil.

Based on past experience, Australia’s allocation will probably end up in single figures.





Made by Porsche's newly renamed Exclusive Manufaktur bespoke manufacturing operation in Zuffenhausen, the new variant gains the most powerful road-going version of the 911's 3.8-litre bi-turbo flat six, producing a supercar-like 446kW of power – 19kW more than the flagship 911 Turbo S engine's 427kW – thanks to what Porsche describes as an “exclusive power kit”.

Peak torque of 750Nm – the same as the Turbo S – is achieved between 2250rpm and 4000rpm.

Like the Turbo S, the Exclusive Series matches the engine with Porsche's acclaimed seven-speed PDK dual-clutch transmission.

Sadly, the latest variant is no faster to 100km/h than the Turbo S, perhaps because of tyre grip limitations. Mind you, that sprint time is 2.9 seconds. 200km/h comes up in 9.6 seconds, and it tops out at 330km/h, which most buyers should find sufficient.

Fortunately, stopping power is provided by ceramic brake discs gripped by callipers uniquely (in the Porsche world) painted black and emblazoned with the Porsche name in gold behind black-painted 20-inch alloy

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wheels with race-style central locking nuts.

Those wheels, incidentally, have gold-painted highlights applied with the help of a laser.

Porsche throws in its active suspension system and Sport Chrono package as standard equipment, along with rear-axle steering and dynamic chassis control.

No matter the body colour, each Exclusive Series 911 is adorned in carbon-weave finishes, including dual stripes over the bonnet and roof, exterior mirrors, rear spoiler and front splitter, among other things.

The rear engine air scoop - again in a carbon finish - is new, as is the rear apron with twin exhaust pipe tips in a black-finished stainless steel.

Inside, 18-way adjustable sports seats are cloaked in not one but two layers of perforated leather. The idea is that the inside layer's two gold stripes are revealed through the out layer via the perforations.

Seat stitching is in the same gold, as is the Turbo S lettering stitched on the headrests.

For a little extra bling, a fine copper thread is integrated into the carbon interior trim. While the Alcantara roof lining gets gold pinstripes.

Each car gets Exclusive Series badging and the obligatory limited edition number on a plate.

If that is not enough, buyers can order up the matching Exclusive Series watch and luggage set. **MM**

# Series revival

BMW resurrects 8 Series coupe with striking new concept



By ROBBIE WALLIS

**B**MW has used the Concorso d'Eleganza Villa d'Este in Italy to reveal its Concept 8 Series, which will give fans an idea of what the production version of the flagship coupe will look like when it arrives in 2018.

Rumours of a revived 8 Series, which

was sold by BMW throughout the 1990s, began when it was reported that the German manufacturer had quietly ceased production in North America of the 6 Series coupe.

The Concept 8 Series shows an aggressively-styled two-door large coupe, that BMW says blends the traditional design cues of a BMW,

including the kidney grille and hexagonal headlights, with futuristic design ideas.

At the front end the oversized kidney grille dominates the front fascia, flanked by narrow headlights which could possibly be a nod to the original 8 Series. The hexagonal headlight cluster design currently being rolled out across

BMW's range also features.

The Concept 8 Series, shown in a Barcelona Grey Liquid colour, has an imposing look with a long, swooping bonnet flowing into the kidney grille, while beefy lower air intakes and a subtle carbon-fibre splitter finish off the front end's styling.



In profile, the Concept 8 Series has an elongated, low shape complemented by 21-inch multi-spoke light-alloy rims, large single gills behind the front wheels, and BMW's signature Hofmeister kink on the C-pillar.

At the rear, styling is characterised by a large, slanted window that transitions into

a boot with an upturned lip, while wide, L-shaped blade tail-lights emphasise the car's low-to-the-ground stance.

Rear air vents shape the 8 Series' bumper and the look is capped off by trapezoidal exhaust pipes and a carbon-fibre rear diffuser.

Inside, the Concept 8 Series takes on a much

more symmetrical layout than its production stablemates, starting with a simplified centre console with embedded touchscreen display, minimalist climate control layout with haptic buttons, carbon-fibre trim and a clean gear selector with iDrive navigation, engine start key and drive mode select.

It uses an Alcantara-wrapped steering wheel with paddle shifters and touch buttons, while a virtual instrument display shows the speedometer that extends to 260km/h and a tachometer that redlines at 7000rpm.

Slender, carbon-fibre seats wrapped in Fjord White merino leather hug occupants, while

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white and dark brown leather with contrast red stitching features throughout the cabin. Audio comes courtesy of a Bowers & Wilkins sound system.

BMW Group design senior vice president Adrian van Hooydonk said the Concept 8 Series blended BMW styling with futuristic design ideas.

“The design of the BMW Concept 8 Series provides a fresh interpretation of iconic BMW styling cues,” he said. “And it also showcases a new approach to the use of forms which is reflected particularly prominently in the car’s surfacing.

“A handful of crisp lines mark out clear surfaces, and the car’s volumes are powerfully sculpted.

“Together, these elements make a forceful statement and create a model brimming with

character. In short, this is a driver’s car.”

While no details have emerged on what powertrains may underpin the production 8 Series, BMW Australia has filed trademarks for the 830, 835, 840, 845, 850, M850, 860 and M8 nameplates, suggesting a mix of six, eight and possibly even 12-cylinder engines are on the cards.

Potential powertrain options could include a 3.0-litre inline six-cylinder engines in petrol and diesel guise, a 4.4-litre twin-turbo V8 and possibly even the 6.6-litre twin-turbo V12 from the incoming M760Li xDrive.

It is possible that a production version of the 8 Series will be revealed at the Frankfurt motor show in BMW’s native Germany in September.

After an international arrival in 2018, the 8 Series is likely to land in Australian showrooms in 2019. **MM**