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# Look of Genesis

Light, low and luxe Essentia concept showcases the future of Genesis design

**PHILIPS**

Automotive Lighting



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**Editorial**  
 GoAuto Newsroom  
 PO Box 18  
 Sandringham  
 VIC 3191  
 (03) 9598 6477  
[goautomag@goautomedia.net](mailto:goautomag@goautomedia.net)

**Publisher**  
 John Mellor

**Production**  
 William Vicente

**Contributors**  
 Tim Nicholson  
 Ron Hammerton  
 Terry Martin  
 Tung Nguyen  
 Robbie Wallis  
 Justin Hilliard  
 Byron Mathioudakis

**Advertising enquiries**  
 Sally Mellor  
 (03) 9598 6477  
 0425 700 904  
[sally@goautomedia.net](mailto:sally@goautomedia.net)



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# Essentia viewing

All-electric Genesis Essentia breaks cover at New York motor show



By RON HAMMERTON

**G**ENESIS has used the New York motor show to give the world an insight into a potential all-electric grand tourer sports coupe bearing a new design language and unique construction technology from Hyundai's luxury brand.

Called Essentia, the low, wide 2+2 two-door

concept car with its bubble top and Lightning McQueen face is a long way from production ready, but appears to be the shape of things to come from the South Korean company as it sets out to take sales from luxury car-makers from Germany, the United Kingdom, the United States and Japan.

If it comes to fruition, the vehicle would not

only be Genesis's first grand tourer, but also its first all-electric vehicle.

Such a coupe could be one of six Genesis models set to be rolled out by about 2021, joining the current three sedans, the G70, G80 and G90, and – most likely – an X5-sized SUV based on the plug-in GV80 concept shown 12 months ago at New York.

In Australia, the Genesis roll-out was to have started about now with the launch of the all-new Mercedes-Benz C-Class-sized G70 sedan followed by the debut of the revamped G80 large sedan that until now has been badged Hyundai Genesis in Australia.

However, Hyundai headquarters in Seoul has ordered that the Genesis product roll-out



in Australia be delayed until the third quarter of this year so it can be co-ordinated with a national sales and marketing push for the overall Genesis brand and its new dealer network.

The Essentia's design is said to re-imagine Genesis's Athletic Elegance design language for all future Genesis models.

Unveiling the car in New York, Hyundai's Genesis brand global head Manfred Fitzgerald said: "We understand our obligation as a luxury car manufacturer to create objects of desire, sparking passion and inspiration by emphasising a culture while exceeding expectations in terms of technology and connectivity, bringing our outside world seamlessly to the inside of the vehicle.

"This is what the Genesis Essentia concept is all about, and we are thrilled to introduce our interpretation of an all-electric, two-door gran turismo here in New York."

Although information released by Genesis on the Essentia is short on detail, it is said to be powered by an all-electric multi-motor powertrain in a carbon-fibre monocoque body.

The latter has been left exposed on the car's interior, revealing a lattice-like honeycomb construction technique.

The design potentially provides a stiff but light body while at the same time providing all-round crash protection.

No power or performance figures were announced, but the media release described the Essentia as "high performance", meaning it would target numerous all-electric sports machines now under development, perhaps including Porsche's Mission E.

High-lifting scissor doors are unlikely to make it into production, as they are a real-world pain in the average garage or parking lot.

The same goes for the monster windscreen that extends almost to the nose of the car, lifting up to expose what appears to be luggage space

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between the front wheels.

Inside, the Essentia retains a steering wheel and two pedals, indicating that human input will at least be optional alongside autonomous technology in the Genesis future.

A flat-screen instrument binnacle mounted on the steering column sits in front of a panoramic infotainment screen that stretches the full width of the dash, spreading functions such as sat-nav, audio and climate controls across the car.

Buttons and knobs are largely eliminated, replaced by a console-mounted circular touch-screen.

The passenger-side seat has a fold out leg rest, like a lounge recliner.

The seats are especially thin, freeing up knee room for two rear-seat passengers.

Massive bronze-finished alloy wheels are shod with low-profile Pirelli tyres.

That bronze finish is carried through to other exterior trim items, including the grille surround and belt line that runs from the nose to the back of the glasshouse.

At the back of the car, an ovoid-shaped rear fascia bears LED tail-lights in thin strips, along with a Genesis badge that is illuminated through the plastic panel.

A duck-tail spoiler reminiscent of those on an old Chevrolet Camaro sits above a race-style diffuser that, like the rest of the body, is fashioned from carbon-fibre.

That Lightning McQueen mouth at the front provides a similar aerodynamic downforce function, channelling air through the front and up over the bonnet and roof.

Side vents at the front appear to guide cooling air to the brakes before exiting behind the front wheels. **MM**

# Ferocious feline

SVO adds V8 power to \$140,020 BOCs  
Jaguar F-Pace SVR flagship



By JUSTIN HILLIARD

**J**AGUAR has set its sights on the latest crop of performance mid-size SUVs, unleashing the hard-charging F-Pace SVR at this month's New York motor show ahead of and Australian launch before year's end.

Like all other SVR models, the most potent F-Pace employs a 5.0-litre supercharged

V8 petrol engine, which produces 404kW of power and 680Nm of torque in its latest application.

As a result, the F-Pace SVR sprints from standstill to 100km/h in 4.3 seconds while on the way to its top speed of 283km/h.

Comparatively, the incoming 375kW/700Nm Mercedes-AMG GLC63 S 4Matic+ completes

the triple-digit dash in just 3.8s, while the yet-to-be-revealed BMW X3 M also looms large as a direct rival.

While its new engine will grab all the headlines, the F-Pace SVR has also been subject to exhaust, suspension, braking, drivetrain, steering and transmission upgrades as well as styling tweaks.

Aerodynamically honed changes include larger front air intakes, bonnet vents, side fender vents, wheelarch extensions, lower-body mouldings, a rear spoiler and a redesigned rear bumper with integrated quad tailpipes.

The latter serves as the exit point for the SVR's active exhaust system that allows increased gas flow and a booming soundtrack



while being 6.6 kilograms lighter than that of the regular F-Pace.

Lightweight 21-inch alloy wheels complete the exterior makeover, while even lighter 22-inch rims are optional. Both are wrapped in a mixed set of tyres, with the rear hoops measuring 25mm wider than the front.

Suspension-wise, the progressive front and rear springs are 30 and 10 per cent stiffer respectively and envelop an upgraded anti-roll bar that reduces body roll by five per cent.

The SVR also has a rear electronic active differential – an F-Pace first – that is complemented by recalibrated all-wheel-drive, electronic power-assisted steering and driving mode systems.

Meanwhile, braking is handled by beefed-up 395mm front and 396mm rear brake discs that are clamped by four- and single-piston callipers respectively.

Additionally, the rotors feature an advanced two-piece construction that helps to further reduce weight and improve handling.

Inside, front sports seats with quilting and embossed SVR logos, a unique gear selector for the eight-speed automatic transmission and an SVR-branded steering wheel with aluminium paddle shifters feature.

As per the regular F-Pace variants, the SVR also bundles in a 10.0-inch Touch Pro touchscreen infotainment system, a 12.3-inch digital instrument cluster and 4G Wi-Fi

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Four interior colour themes are on offer, including Red with Jet, Light Oyster with Jet, Siena Tan with Jet and Jet with Light Oyster stitching.

According to JLR chief engineer of vehicle integrity Mike Cross, the latest F-Pace is a true SVR model, packing the level of performance expected from JLR's Special Vehicle Operations (SVO) division.

"The F-Pace SVR delivers the handling and agility to match its performance," he said.

"Everything from the steering to the bespoke suspension set-up has been tuned specifically

for our performance SUV, and the result is a vehicle that lives up to the promise of both the F-Pace and SVR names."

Sales of the F-Pace surged in 2017 – its first full year on sale – with 1275 examples sold to the end of December, representing a 53.8 per cent increase over the 829 deliveries made in the six months it was available in 2016.

This effort placed the Jaguar 10th in the over-\$60,000 mid-size-SUV segment last year, trailing the Land Rover Discovery Sport (4547), Mercedes-Benz GLC (4109), BMW X3 (3671), Audi Q5 (3364) and Range Rover Evoque (2909), among others. **MM**



# Up the ante

Maserati hunts Porsche Cayenne Turbo with 440kW Levante Trofeo



By RON HAMMERTON

**T**HE most powerful Maserati production engine ever produced will head to Australia in the Levante large SUV if the Italian brand's Australian importer has its way.

Pushing out a hefty 440kW of power and 730Nm of torque from just 3.8 litres, the

hottest version yet of the Maserati-engineered, Ferrari-built twin-turbo engine made its debut in the first V8-powered Levante, dubbed Trofeo (Italian for trophy), at the New York motor show this month.

The engine can punch the large SUV from zero to 100km/h in just 3.9 seconds and on to a top speed of 300km/h, making the

Levante Trofeo not only the fastest vehicle in the Levante range but across the whole Maserati line-up.

For now, the Levante Trofeo is aimed at overseas markets, starting with North America, but Maserati Australia chief operating officer Glen Sealey told GoAuto that his company had its sights on the new variant.

“It’s something that we think would work in Australia and is right for the brand,” he said. “That said, I have no firm launch date secured.”

Until now, Maserati has offered only V6-powered Levantes, in twin-turbo petrol and turbo diesel formats.

The most powerful of these is the Levante S that serves up 316kW of power and 580Nm



of torque from its 3.0-litre engine that is also built by Ferrari.

Speculation has been rife that Levante would get a version of the 3.8-litre V8 that is already offered in the Quattroporte GTS in 390kW/650Nm tune.

That might still happen – Maserati is not saying – but few expected the Italian company to pull out all stops and serve up a 440kW bruiser that can top rivals such as Porsche's 410kW 4.0-litre Cayenne Turbo and Range Rover's 405kW 5.0-litre SV Autobiography.

Porsche can be expected to hit back with a Turbo S version of its Cayenne which is on the launch pad for Australia for this year, but that is yet to be confirmed.

The Maserati engine develops a race-like 116kW per litre, with peak power at 6250rpm and peak torque between 2250 and 5000rpm.

To achieve this performance, the Levante Trofeo's powerful V8 gets bigger turbos and reworked internals, including redesigned cylinder heads with specific camshafts and valves, different pistons and conrods, a new crank assembly, and redesigned crankcase.

Auxiliaries such as the oil pump, serpentine belt and wiring have also been changed.

Power is fed to all four wheels by an eight-speed ZF automatic transmission and an intelligent all-wheel-drive system. The drivetrain includes a badass Corsa (race) drive mode that opens exhaust valves under acceleration while providing faster gear changes, lowering the suspension and beefing up dampers via Maserati's Skyhook adaptive suspension.

Whopping 22-inch forged alloy wheels help to keep the beast on the tarmac.

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Apart from these wheels, the Trofeo can be distinguished by re-styled, more aggressive front and rear fascias. At the front, a carbon-fibre splitter and bigger side air intakes are two of the defining features.

The carbon-fibre theme is carried over to the back where the quad exhaust pipes poke through a composite lower bumper, separated by a body-coloured diffuser.

Headlights have been upgraded to full-matrix LED units that automatically block glare for in-coming drivers.

The seats are cloaked with premium soft leather available in black, red or tan, with contrasting stitching and the Trofeo logo embroidered in the headrests.

Matte carbon-fibre is used for trim and paddle shifters.

Standard equipment includes a 1280-watt, 17-speaker Bowers & Wilkins sound system.

Unveiling the Trofeo in New York, Maserati CEO Tim Kuniskis said: "It's proof that when you play with the elements you end up in a storm."

"In the case of Trofeo, the engineers and designers in Modena knew that the driveline parameters were more than able to cope with additional power and they also knew that Maserati had access to the finest engines on earth.

"So, they were up to the challenge of making the finest luxury SUV also one of the fastest." **MM**

# Cinco quattro

Audi expands RS5 range with sexy five-door Sportback



By JUSTIN HILLIARD

**A**UDI has doubled its second-generation RS5 sportscar range with the addition of the Sportback body style for the first time, which is expected to join its Coupe sibling in Australia by the end of this year.

Revealed at the New York motor show this month, the RS5 Sportback crucially fills a hole in Audi's RS model line-up, offering sedan practicality – albeit in five-door liftback form – in the absence of an RS4 Sedan.

While its most direct rivals are traditional

four-door sedans, the RS5 Sportback also gives the German marque an offering that can go toe to toe with the venerable BMW M3 Competition and Mercedes-AMG C63 S.

Just like the RS5 Coupe and RS4 Avant before it, the RS5 Sportback employs a

2.9-litre twin-turbocharged V6 petrol engine that pumps out 331kW of power from 5700 to 6700rpm and 600Nm of torque from 1900 to 5000rpm.

These outputs are sent to the ground via an eight-speed torque converter automatic



transmission and Audi's rear-biased quattro all-wheel-drive system.

As such, the RS5 Sportback can sprint from standstill to 100km/h in 3.9 seconds while on the way to its top speed of 280km/h, despite the 110kg weight penalty over its two-door counterpart.

Comparatively, the 331kW/550Nm M3 Competition achieves marks of 4.0s and 250km/h, while the 375kW/700Nm C63 S registers 4.0s and 290km/h.

Those familiar with the RS5 Coupe will instantly recognise the RS5 Sportback from its A-pillars forward, with both models sharing their overall exterior designs – save for the obvious panel changes to suit the different body styles.

Inside is a similar story, with the RS5 Sportback lifting its cockpit set-up from the RS5 Coupe, but rear passengers are treated to three seats and two doors. Additionally, 480 litres of cargo capacity lurks behind.

Given the S5 Sportback and S5 Coupe are identically priced from \$105,511 before on-road costs, it is expected that the RS5 Sportback will share its list price

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with the \$156,600 RS5 Coupe, but this will be confirmed closer to its launch.

According to Audi Sport GmbH managing director Michael-Julius Renz, the car-maker has high expectations for its latest RS model, which he said will arrive without peer.

“The new Audi RS5 Sportback is a true international car – we expect it to conquer all markets”, he said.

“The Audi RS5 Sportback is more than just an international trade fair novelty – it offers something new to our customers.

“Our innovative interpretation of a five-door high-performance coupe has neither

predecessor models, nor a direct competitor.

“The new Audi RS5 Sportback will carry the RS genes out onto the road.”

Following the launch of the all-new A5 Sportback in May last year, sales of the model surged in 2017, with 660 examples sold to the end of December, representing a 28.4 per cent increase over the 514 deliveries made in 2016.

This effort placed the A5 Sportback eighth in the \$60,000-plus mid-size-car segment last year, trailing the Mercedes-Benz C-Class (8549 units) and CLA (3445), BMW 3 Series (2584), Audi A4 (2177) and Lexus IS (1524), among others. **MM**