



What's coming up in new vehicles for 2003

BY ANN JOB
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After years of emphasizing sport utility vehicle introductions, automakers now are filling the showrooms with new cars. Cars account for 50 of the approximately 70 new vehicles that are arriving in showrooms through September. (SUVs are technically classified as light trucks, not as cars.)

More than a third of the newest autos are from luxury brands or are priced in the luxury range of more than \$30,000.

This includes the posh Maybach sedans and Rolls-Royce Phantom, whose starting prices are around \$300,000.

At the lower price range, Saturn brings out the coupe version of its Ion small car, while Dodge's turbocharged SRT-4 arrives amid claims it's

upgraded Bose sound system and driver power lumbar support.

In April, Acura adds a smaller sedan to its lineup. The 2004 TSX has BMW-like styling at the rear, sporty suspension, a 200-horsepower, 2.4-liter four-cylinder engine with a choice of six-speed manual transmission or five-speed automatic.

Audi

Audi's flagship A8L 4.2 quattro has been redesigned and will come to the United States as a 2004 model by mid-summer.

This large sedan is even larger in its new incarnation. Wheelbase has grown 5 inches and total length is 17 feet.

The current 4.2-liter V-8 has 20 more horsepower — for a total of 330 — and 15 more foot-pounds of torque — to 317 at 3,500 rpm.

Come July, Audi's sporty RS



AP Photo/BMW

The Alpina Roadster from BMW offers a 5-speed automatic transmission along with its V-8 engine and rocket styling.

with a six-cylinder engine. The new V-8 model has 300 horsepower and 280 foot-pounds of torque between 2,700 and 4,600 rpm.

BMW

is updated subtly, with new headlights and adaptive, rear light-emitting diode tail-lamps.

The 330Ci coupe and convertible now have a standard six-speed manual transmission, and a six-speed sequential mechanical gearbox (SMG) is an option on the 330Ci coupe and convertible as well as the 325Ci coupe.

The SMG also becomes an option on the BMW Z4 this year.

On the 3-Series sedan side, BMW adds a Performance Package 330i sedan. It includes six-speed manual, higher horsepower and torque — 235 horsepower and 222 foot-pounds of torque at 3,500 rpm — as well as new M suspension. A sport package is added to the 745i and 745Li, too. In January, BMW began delivering its top 7-Series — the 760i and 760Li with 435-horsepower, 6-liter V-12.

Buick

Buick continues with its lineup of Century, LeSabre, Regal and Park Avenue cars and the Rendezvous SUV.

Buick's next SUV, the mid-size Rainier, is due in the fall.

Cadillac

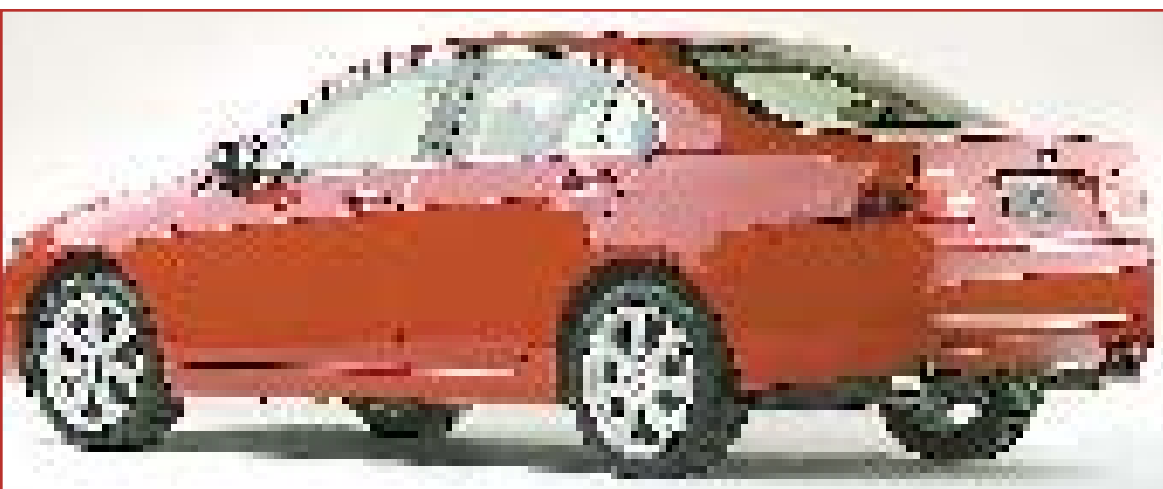
Luxury brand Cadillac can't seem to get enough of SUVs. It's adding the 2004 SRX by summer. The look of the SRX resembles the CTS sedan and the SRX's five doors give access to a maximum of seven

seats and nearly 70 cubic feet of cargo room.

Both rear-wheel-drive and all-wheel-drive models will be offered. There are two engines; a 3.6-liter V-6 generates some 260 horsepower, while the uplevel 4.6-liter Northstar V-8 makes 315 horses and 310 foot-pounds of torque at 4,400 rpm.

The long-awaited Cadillac roadster, the XLR, also comes to showrooms this summer.

Powered by the same Northstar V-8 displacing 4.6 liters and generating 315 horsepower that's in the SRX, it's a looker, both with its retractable hardtop up or down. Gauges inside were designed with help from Italian luxury brand Bulgari.



AP Photo/Acura

Acura's TSX is a sporty, smaller version of its flagship sedan.

the fastest production car priced under \$20,000.

Acura

The 2004 3.5 RL is Acura's newest model, and company officials boast that it's also the first luxury sedan that comes with both XM satellite radio and navigation system standard.

More than 100 coast-to-coast satellite stations are available with XM radio, and for the first three months after purchase of the RL, the XM radio subscription is free.

Other updates to the flagship Acura sedan include

6 zips into showrooms. And zip is the word, as this mid-size sedan is fitted with a LeMans racing-inspired engine capable of powering the car from 0 to 60 mph in 4.6 seconds.

The 450-horsepower, 4.2-liter, biturbo V-8 in the RS 6 comes modified by Audi's quattro GmbH, the high-performance arm of Audi in Germany.

By the end of August, the 2004 all-road quattro V-8 arrives.

Introduced in 2000, the all-road has been offered only

BMW showrooms are busy.

The Alpina Roadster Z8 is a new edition of Z8 and made by Alpina, the maker of performance BMWs for the connoisseur. Only 450 Alpina Z8s will be sent to the U.S. These don't have a BMW M engine, as other Z8s have had. Instead, the powerplant is a 375-horsepower, 4.8-liter Alpina V-8, and it's mated to a five-speed automatic transmission.

At the lower end of the BMW range, the 2004 3-Series coupes and convertibles arrive in spring. Their styling



AP Photo/Cadillac/GM

Cadillac's XLR Roadster hits the highway with its luxury features, such as its eucalyptus wood accents.