



• Kia SPORTSPACE concept



• Aston Martin Vulcan



• Audi R8



• Infiniti QX30 concept



• Lexus LF-SA concept



• McLaren 675LT



• Bentley EXP 10 Speed 6 concept



• Mercedes-AMG GT3 race car



• Porsche 911 GT3 RS



• Range Rover Evoque Convertible



• SEAT 20V20 (Vision 2020) concept



• Volkswagen Sport Coupé Concept GTE

# GENEVA SHOW HIGHLIGHTS

GENEVA INTERNATIONAL MOTOR SHOW | MARCH 2015



Photo: Tom Purves

Every year or two, we take a serious look at attending the Geneva International Motor Show. It falls in the schedule just after the LA, Detroit and Chicago shows, as well as Arizona's collector auctions, about the same time as NASCAR and several other events, and just before the NY International Auto Show. So somehow it has not yet made the cut. But we follow it with interest, as high-end and/or high-volume Europeans and others always save something special for Geneva. Here are a few highlights, alphabetically (with photos mostly alphabetically):

- The new **Aston Martin Vulcan** track-only supercar is powered by their most potent yet naturally-aspirated 7.0L V12—a front-mid-placement 800-plus-hp unit developed with their racing unit. Its power-to-weight ratio beats that of GTE cars in the FIA's World Endurance Championship. The car has a carbon fiber monocoque, integral limited-slip differential, magnesium torque tube with carbon fiber propeller shaft and Brembo carbon ceramic racing disc brakes. All this power feeds through a race-bred rear-mid-mounted Xtrac six-speed sequential shift gearbox.
- The second-generation **Audi R8** supercar has noticeable sharpening of body styling, built over a new multi-material space frame with emphasis on aluminum and carbon fiber-reinforced polymer. A mid-mounted V10, new quattro AWD system and 7-speed S tronic deliver either 540 or 610 hp, the latter quicker to 62 mph than any series production Audi in history (3.2 seconds)—and the first officially capable of exceeding 200 mph.
- The **Bentley EXP 10 Speed 6 concept** (above right) is a visual knockout. The two-seater is intended to express the brand's earliest racing years and its modern international racers. Built with a combination of British handcrafting and modern technologies, the concept incorporates the finest materials and advanced performance technology. Bentley suggests this car may become a reality: "This is not just a new sports car concept, but the potential Bentley of sports cars," declared chairman and CEO Wolfgang Dürheimer. We hope so.
- Another visual knockout is the **Kia SPORTSPACE concept** (above left). Unveiled by Kia Motors Europe, it reflects that continent's love for the shooting brake—a stylish and practical form that's sleeker than a

wagon, longer than a hatchback and lower to the ground than a crossover. Also shown was the new **Kia cee'd GT Line**, with their first 1.0-liter T-GDI engine and new 7-speed dual-clutch transmission. The cee'd is entering European production, and the SPORTSPACE seems likely to do so. We hope for North American versions of both.

- The **Infiniti QX30 concept** communicates "stylish protection," with angular yet aerodynamic lines accented by skid plate fascias, carbon fiber cladding, three-dimensional milled aluminum interlocking 21-inch wheels and sure-footed large profile tires. A nice direction for Infiniti.
- The **Lexus LF-SA concept** is an ultra-compact sub-B-segment urban 2+2. In their own words, "the LF-SA explores unexpected territories for the brand in a bold and emotional execution." Unexpected, yes. Their philosophy is of "a future in which Lexus drivers will still be able to enjoy the real life luxury of driving themselves"—a phrase both encouraging and disturbing. We are of course glad that Lexus still embraces drivers.
- The **McLaren 675LT** revealed at Geneva was said to be a sneak peek of the Sports Series to be shown in New York. Following McLaren Longtail heritage, it focuses on light weight, aerodynamics, power, track-focused dynamics and driver engagement. Two-thirds of the 675LT's parts are shared with the McLaren 650S. With a half-reengineered 3.8L V8, the car hits 62 mph in 2.9 seconds and 124 mph in 7.9 seconds. Top speed is 205 mph.
- The **Mercedes-AMG GT3** was revealed just as the 2015 race season was firing up. An FIA-spec racer, the GT3 is based on the Mercedes-AMG GT, being launched a few days later. The GT3 has an enhanced version of the 6.3-liter V8 in the SLS AMG GT3. Following an intensive test phase, the new AMG GT3 racer will ship to its first customer teams at the end of the year.
- The new **Porsche 911 GT3 RS** is designed to be both a road-going sports cars and a GT3 racer.

Modifications to its drivetrain, aerodynamics and weight surpass the 911 GT3, right to the limits of street-legal. The RS is the fastest current 911 at Nürburgring, beating the prior GT3's lap time by five seconds. The GT3 RS is powered by a 4-liter six with 500 hp and a modified PDK transmission, weighs 22 pounds less than the GT3 and does a track quarter mile in 11.2 seconds. The 911 GT3 RS comes with the widest tires of any 911 model.

- The **Range Rover Evoque Convertible** from Land Rover is confirmed for production, on sale in 2016. Confirmation came at Geneva in the form of a test film made in unusual conditions—tested deep inside Europe's largest construction project, a network of Crossrail tunnels 130 feet below the streets of London. This enabled test engineers to push the vehicle to aerodynamic limits with the top down, yet completely away from any prying eyes.
- The **SEAT 20V20 concept** (or Vision 2020)—from Volkswagen's Spanish brand—reflects elements destined for VW Group siblings, with further evolution of crossover and four-door sport compact coupé synthesis. LED headlights, 20-inch wheels and extensive premium features inside all aim to deliver German "technology, quality and precision at an affordable price." The 20V20 platform, with DSG gearbox and electronically controlled four-wheel drive, is adaptable to high-performance TSI and TDI engines or plug-in hybrids.
- The **Volkswagen Sport Coupé Concept GTE** is a design language study, revealing cues that will be adapted throughout the Volkswagen brand in the immediate future. This Sport Coupé concept blends elements of the B and C segments in the "four-door coupé" styling of the current Volkswagen CC and other German brands. The GTE designation announces a plug-in hybrid drive system good for about 32 miles in all-electric mode and also 374-hp long-distance driving, with a top speed of 155 mph and a European combined fuel economy of 118 MPG. ■