

Dos Volvos, número uno...
C70: any weather, top up or top down

Volvo's "buy one get one free" C70

By Barbara and Bill Schaffer • photos by Arizona Driver Magazine

Unless you are one of those diehard "I'm going with the top down, no matter what" kind of drivers, a convertible is a wonderful solution for those months when the conditions are just perfect. Not too hot, not too cold and of course not wet.

You may prefer to drive in climate-controlled comfort with no wind in your hair or outside noise to interfere with your singing. But maybe not always. Just as new crossovers are appealing to double uses, the new Volvo C70 is like having a racy-looking coupe and a sexy convertible both—but needing just one parking spot in the garage.

In the same time it takes to hawk new cell service in a 30-second television spot, the Volvo C70 can do a complete makeover from sweptback coupe to beautiful open-top convertible. It's just like getting a makeover on the Oprah program, but it only requires pushing one button. The process is like watching one of the Rube Goldberg machines where a simple action leads to another action and another and another. In an oversimplification, the C70 trunk opens from



the front, the top lifts up and folds into three pieces and tucks neatly into the trunk and the tonneau cover drops into place over it.

Volvo and the Italian Pininfarina design studio collaborated during the design process, starting with a strong coupe design. Once that was established, they translated that design into a convertible. The resulting shapes are classic new-generation Volvo, with a wide profile, athletic stance and trademark strong shoulders.

Like classic Scandinavian furniture, the interior is clean and innovative. Surfaces are uncluttered and feature natural materials. The center console looks like a single piece of stainless steel, shaped like a ski jump. On the surface are the climate and audio controls topped with a digital display, while at the bottom the steel surrounds the shifter.

The previous generation C70 was indeed two actual cars—one coupe and one convertible. We liked both cars, but the convertible had too much body twist and cowl shake on rough roads. The new two-in-one version has virtually none of that twist and shake.

Combined with this stiff body structure, a fully independent suspension produces a perfect adult-style ride. It's slightly stiff, to give the driver accurate feedback and responsive handling, yet soft enough not to beat up the passengers.

The adult styling continues into the seating. Volvo has some of the best seats in the business, and the C70 is no exception. Even the rear seats are designed for adults, not just small children. Rear seat access is made easier by a standard driver's side fast-acting, electrically-operated seat scooter that quickly pushes the seat forward by pushing a button on the seat backrest. The same system is an option on the passenger side.

Looking at the C70 specs, we thought the T5 (227hp) turbocharged five-cylinder engine might be a little underpowered for a 3,627-pound car, but were pleasantly surprised by the performance. Zero to 60 acceleration is estimated to be 7.0 seconds and the top speed is 149 mph. We recorded a respectable speed of 75 mph in our casual acceleration test, which we run from where we pull onto the highway for about one-eighth mile.

Fuel economy is listed at 18 mpg for city driving and 26 or 27 mpg (automatic/manual) on the highway. We averaged 23.5 mpg.

The easiest way to describe the C70's safety attributes is to say it's a Volvo, but we have to mention some of the revolutionary features. To start with, it has all the traditional airbags, side impact protection, active head restraints, stability control and dozens of other features. Then, in Volvo's typical safety-obsessed way, they created the first door-mounted side curtain airbag system. The Rollover Protection System (ROPS) includes two small roll bars that literally explode into position, whether the top is up



or down, to provide extra protection for the occupants. ROPS also deploys in the event of a rear crash, to help protect occupants from flying debris.

All four seating positions are provided with a small compartment that locks when the doors are locked. It's a great place to store valuables when the car is left in public with the top down. The system allows certain compartments to be locked with the key from the glove compartment when leaving the car with a parking attendant.

The car has a generous 12.8 cubic feet of cargo space with the top up, which is enough for about four medium sizes bags. With the top down, 6.8 cubic feet is taken up by the folded roof. There's a partition identifying where the roof will go when it's down. Loading the trunk with the roof down is made easier by pushing a control button that raises the entire roof mechanism up by nearly 8 inches for easier access.

We are always looking for a bargain, and the Volvo C70 is a great one. How often can you buy two exciting cars for the price of one? The Volvo C70 is classically looking and fun to drive, top up or topless. They have also handled one of our frequent convertible objections: a lack of rear visibility, especially when backing out of a parking space. The top-up "B" pillar is slim and gives the driver a good rear view.

We like how well the car handles and performs. There's no torque steering during hard acceleration, and the handling feels as good as most rear-wheel drive cars. The C70 "is" two big winners in our book. ■



STANDARD EQUIPMENT

Dynamic Stability Traction Control; Rollover Protection; Haverdal Flextech seats with leather insert panels; Electronic climate control; Trip computer; Power windows; Keyless entry; Tilt and telescoping wheel; Dust and pollen filter; AM/FM stereo with 6-disc in-dash CD changer.

Base Price:\$39,240
Options: 18-Inch Mirzam alloy wheels..\$750
Total Options\$750
Freight.....\$745
Price as Tested\$40,735

DIMENSIONS

EPA SizeSub Compact
Weight3,772 lb.
Wheelbase103.9 in.
Length.....180.4 in.
Width.....71.7 in.
Height55.1 in.
Fuel Capacity15.9 gal.
Cargo Capacity12.8 cu. ft.

MECHANICAL

Engine.....2.5L DOHC In-line 5-cyl. turbo
Horsepower218@5000
Torque236@1500
Transmission6-spd. man.
DriveFront wheel
Brakes.....Disc ABS
Tires235/40R18

PERFORMANCE

0 to 60 mph7.6 sec.
Top speed124 mph
Our 1/8 mile speed.....75 mph
EPA rating.....man 18/27 - auto 18/26 mpg
Our actual fuel econ23.5 mpg



OUR DRIVE

We admit we weren't expecting to be overwhelmed by this car, but we were quite pleasantly surprised. We just as readily admit we found this car extremely desirable and would happily keep one in our own personal fleet. The controls are clear and complete. Driver and passenger comfort are excellent, and even the rear seat is reasonable for this layout (though back seats are inherently rough on passengers when a four-seater has the top down). When we learned the Volvo's five-cylinder turbo was putting out 227hp, we realized we had a fairly hot car on our hands—in today's world of cars with over 300, 400, even 500hp, that may not sound like much, but it exactly matches that of the 5-cylinder turbo S-series Audi performance sedans of the 1990s, which were great performers.

The photo below shows the hood release. Reaching under the dash, we found this hard to locate easily—or you could say safely. When we got on our knees to find it, we were surprised to see sharp edges, unfinished surfaces and even an electronics box, all exposed enough to knock out some controls or cut a hand, if clumsy.

We drove our test car the week leading up to our Mercedes/AMG SL test drives, in time to not be jaded by all their power. (And we recognize the SLs cost two, three, even four times as much as this Volvo.) We also were exposed to the Audi A4 cabriolet in that same time period, and whereas it has much going for it, it doesn't have the special magic of a folding hardtop. We'd rather the Volvo had rear-wheel drive (which the SL has) or all-wheel drive (which is available on the Audi cabriolets with quattro all-wheel drive; otherwise they're front-drivers, too). But the Volvo's combination of price, performance, features and its very neat two-cars-in-one coupe/convertible trick is hard to beat. We'd buy one. ■



Dos Volvos, número dos...
XC70: any weather, any road, wet or dry

Volvo kicks the XC70 up a notch

By Barbara and Bill Schaffer • photos by Arizona Driver Magazine

We often play a game, trying to match people with their cars. It's fun when leaving a store behind someone. As they walk down the row of cars, we scan ahead trying to guess which car they are driving. Or if we're driving, before we overtake another car, we imagine who the driver might be: a soccer mom, retired gentleman, young kid with his hat on backward. It's interesting to see how close we come.

Car manufacturers play this game, big time. They talk to individuals, interview families, drive with them and do anything they can to try to find out what kind of car consumers will want. Then they try to design their cars to match people with certain demographics.

The Volvo's target buyer for the 2008 XC70 is age 35-50, 55 percent female, with no children yet or else an empty nester. They estimate a household income of \$100,000 to \$148,000. Now, we'll be watching every XC70 we pass, to see if the driver fits Volvo's target demographics.

We have to admit that during almost 20 years we've writ-



ten about cars, a couple of our most memorable drives have been in the Volvo XC70 Cross Country. It would be hard not to appreciate the XC70 that we drove from Anchorage, Alaska, to Prudhoe Bay in two days in December. With temperatures down to 35 below and ice-packed roads, the XC70 was amazing. On another occasion, we drove an XC70 for 400 miles up the Baja Peninsula, traversing the desert terrain on donkey trails, climbing over rocks and through deep sand. Again, the luxurious XC70 made the drive comfortably and safely.

Redesigned and reengineered for its second generation, the XC70 Cross Country's styling has been tweaked to give it a more sophisticated look, but without changing the unique lines. The inside takes on a clean contemporary Scandinavian look, as the dash sweeps across the front of the cockpit like a piece of art. We especially like Volvo's trademark center console stack that extends away from the dash out onto the console. In addition to looking good, all the controls are intuitive and have a quality feel.

The second generation XC70 shares major components and systems with Volvo's flagship S80 sedan. This new platform allowed engineers to use a more powerful six-cylinder engine to replace the previous five-cylinder, and to refine ride and handling characteristics.

The Volvo wagon is now powered by a 3.2-liter, 235-hp in-line naturally aspirated six-cylinder engine. The engine is equipped with an advanced valve mechanism Volvo calls Cam Profile Switching (CPS) along with the Variable Intake System (VIS). Volvo XC70 project director Thomas Ahlborg says, "The I-6 satisfies both performance-oriented customers, as well as those who prioritize driving comfort and fuel economy."

The six-speed "Geartronic" automatic allows a driver to leave the transmission in drive for normal operations or to shift manually if desired. Standard all-wheel drive with Instant Traction™ moves power to the wheels with the best grip. An added feature of the redesigned XC70 is Hill Descent Control, which uses the vehicle brakes and engine torque to crawl down a steep slope in total control.

The XC70 accelerates from 0 to 60 mph in a respectable 8.1 seconds and has a top track speed limited to 130 mph. EPA fuel economy estimates are 15 mpg for city driving and 22 mpg on the highway. Our average for a week was 19.5 mpg.

Volvo may be marketing the XC70 to people without children, but the fact is, this is one of the best cars to keep children safe. In addition to stability control, whiplash protection, tire pressure monitor and dozens of other safety features, the XC70 has a new optional height-adjustable integrated child



booster seat cushion. This is the world's first application of the system that allows the rear seat cushion to be raised, based on a child's height, to a level where the seatbelts and the side curtain airbags can best protect a child.

Volvo offers a couple of other innovative safety features. The Blind Spot Information System (BLIS) warns the driver when a vehicle moves into that blind spot on either side of the car. Another world's-first feature is the Personal Car Communicator key fob that allows the driver to check from anywhere whether the car was locked, plus it can also warn the driver if someone is hiding in the car as he/she approaches it.

Early in the year, Volvo announced a new Collision Avoidance Package (CAP) for the WX70, V70 and S80 models. The \$1,695 CAP includes adaptive cruise control, collision warning with auto braking, distance alert, driver alert control, lane departure warning. This system is as good as they get for helping drivers avoid a collision due to distractions.

Only one very well equipped trim level is available for the XC70, with price starting at \$37,520. A long list of available options allow shoppers to customize their XC70 with GPS navigation, rear seat entertainment system, the Collision Avoidance Package, premium audio system and several other luxury and convenience features. With all the available options, the price of the XC70 can go as high as \$53,000.

Driving the XC70 on local roads may not be as exciting as driving in the middle of nowhere, but we always enjoy this car. It will do nearly anything an SUV can, but with more comfort, security and ease of access and operation.

Last October, the North West Automotive Press Association members picked the Volvo XC70 as the SUV of the Year from 28 qualifying SUV-style vehicles. ■



River photo courtesy Volvo Cars of North America

STANDARD EQUIPMENT

Dynamic Stability and traction control; electric parking brake; tire pressure monitoring; central locking and keyless entry; Hill Descent Control; heated mirrors; cruise control and driver's seat; power windows; tilt/telescoping wheel.

Base Price: \$36,775

Options: Metallic paint \$475; Dynaudio® package (12 premium speakers, Dolby Logic II Surround Sound, rear seat headphone jacks and controls, Sirius Satellite Radio) \$1,650; premium package (power moonroof, leather seating surfaces, HomeLink, etc.) \$2,995; climate package and child booster seats (heated front seats, headlamp cleaning, heated windshield washer nozzles, Rainsense wipers, integrated two-stage child booster seats with adaptive seatbelt and power child locks) \$875; 17-Inch Sargas alloy wheels \$550.

Total Options \$6,545

Freight \$745

Price as Tested \$44,065

DIMENSIONS

EPA Size SUV
Weight 4,092 lb.
Wheelbase 110.8 in.
Length 190.5 in.
Width 73.3 in.
Height 63.1 in.
Fuel Capacity 18.5 gal.
Cargo Capacity 33.3 to 72.1 cu. ft.

MECHANICAL

Engine 3.2L DOHC In-line 6-Cyl.
Horsepower 235@6200
Torque 236@3200
Transmission 6-speed automatic
Drive AWD
Brakes Disc ABS
Tires 235/55R17

PERFORMANCE

0 to 60 mph 8.1 sec.
Top speed 130 mph
EPA economy rating 15/22 mpg
Our tested fuel economy 19.5 mpg

OUR DRIVE

We took this car out as soon as we received it. Controls were clear and intuitive, though we had to think twice, or thrice, about the shaftless key, which though it provides keyless entry, doesn't provide keyless start, although it has the appearance of such a key, and an engine start/stop button on the dash would seem to indicate that's the setup. Instead, you take the whole plastic chunk and shove it in a hole on the dash, wondering which way is up (doesn't seem to matter). And then you push the button to start (and the same one to shut the engine off, while also pushing the key to force its rebound and freedom. We backed over a very gently graded curb and noted a soft and floaty ride, but we'd just exited a sport coupe with a fairly harsh ride.

The first thing we did was to decide we'd go back for our cameras, then and there, and we're happy to report this car has such a tight turning circle (despite its all-wheel-drive steering geometry), we dismissed our prior mildly negative thoughts.

On a style note, we weren't nuts about the accented orifices on the dash, or their matching trim around lower lights on the front and rear bumpers. And the rear taillights, though not conceptually new, look in this iteration as though they'd been created with red flagging tape as an afterthought. We'd either draw less attention to all of these shapes or work harder on dressing them up.

We had all good weather for our time with the XC70, so we didn't experience all-wheel traction on wet, but on mild dirt/gravel, it makes the transition and holds its path as well as any road-intended all-wheel-driver. In all, with large cargo area, clever additional gear stowage, a comfortable all-conditions ride, great instruments and respectable power, all at a competitive price, we'd find this a keeper. ■



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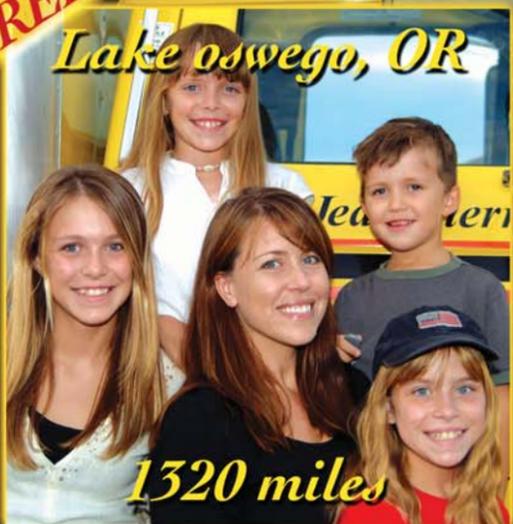
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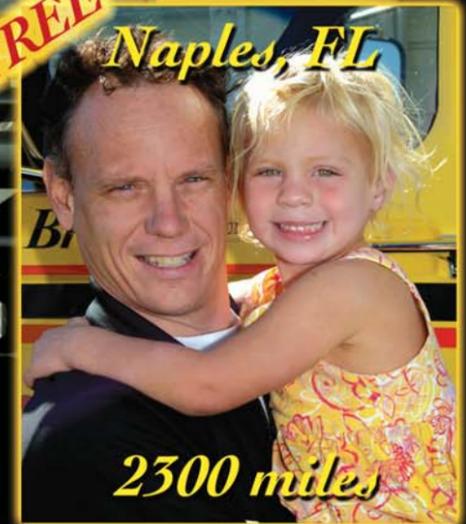
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Let's get wet!

**RINSPEED'S ZERO-EMISSION WORLD DEBUT
AT THE GENEVA MOTOR SHOW—
A GREEN "FISH" WITH Q-FACTOR**

This could be just the ticket for a hot summer day out at Saguaro Lake. Thirty years after the movie thriller "The Spy Who Loved Me" hit the silver screen, sQuba is the first car that can actually "fly" underwater.

If the situation got too hot for 007 he'd go underground—or underwater, as demonstrated by Roger Moore in the 1977 James Bond movie, when he dove below the waves in a sleek vehicle that moments before seemed to be an ordinary car. The only catch: the scene never really took place; it was an animation.

With the sQuba, the world's first real submersible car, the movie trick now becomes reality. Rinspeed boss Frank M. Rinderknecht is known for extraordinary automotive creations. The acknowledged James Bond enthusiast and Swiss automobile visionary kept revisiting this scene in his mind over and over: "For three decades I have tried to imagine how it might be possible to build a car that can fly under water. Now we have made this dream come true."

And it is this submerged stable flight at a depth of 10 meters that sets the sQuba apart from military vehicles. While the latter can go underwater, they are limited to driving slowly over the submerged ground. Rinderknecht: "It is undoubtedly not an easy task to make a car watertight and pressure resistant enough to be

maneuverable under water. The real challenge, however, was to create a submersible car that moves like a fish in water."

It also had to be a sports car. The original was converted by Swiss engineering specialist Esoro. First, the combustion engine was removed and replaced by several electric motors. Three are located in the rear, with one providing propulsion on land, the other two driving the screws for underwater motoring. These are supplemented by two powerful Seabob jet drives in the front, which "breathe" through special rotating louvers. The rotating outlet jets were designed to be extremely light yet twist-resistant, using high-tech carbon nano tubes.

KEEP RIGHT >>

TECHNICAL DATA

MEASUREMENTS

Length	3'785 mm
Width	1'940 mm
Height	1'117 mm
Wheelbase	2'300 mm
Track front	1'470 mm
Track rear	1'520 mm
Ground clearance	130 mm
Empty weight	approx. 920kg

PERFORMANCE

Top speed	> 120 km/h
Acceleration 0-80 km/h	7.1 sec
Water speed	> 6 km/h
Under water speed	> 3 km/h
Dive depth	10 m

ENGINES

Street	Electric
Power output	max. 54 kW
Wat	4'500 /min
Torque	160 NM at 1'500 /min
Water—stern propellers	Electric
Power output	2 x 800 W
Diving—bow jet drives	Electric
Power output	2 x 3.6 kW Rotinor
Batteries	Lithium-Ion
Voltage	6 x 48 Volt

PROPULSION

Power train	Rear wheel drive
Gearbox	R - N - F

SUSPENSION

Chassis	Steel
Body panels	Carbon Nano Tubes
Seating capacity	2
Front suspension	Double wishbone
Rear suspension	Double wishbone
Dampers/springs	KW automotive
Steering	Rack & pinion

TIRES

Front tires	Pirelli P Zero 205/40 R17
Front wheels	AEZ 7.5 x 17"
Rear tires	Pirelli P Zero 225/40 R18
Rear wheels	AEZ 8 x 18"

MISCELLANEOUS

Air supply	1x 15 liter + 1x 18 liter ScubaPro
Laser scanner	lbeo
Lubricants	Motorex
All data without guarantee .	



You drive the sQuba into the water and it floats—that is, until you crack the door to let the water in. Immediately, the car starts on its way to the underwater world. The occupants' breathing air comes from an integrated scuba tank. "For safety reasons we have built the vehicle as an open car so that the occupants can get out quickly in an emergency," says Rinderknecht. "With an enclosed cabin, opening the door might be impossible." But safety wasn't the only reason for choosing an open-top design: with an enclosed volume of just two cubic meters of air the vehicle weight would have to increase by a full two tons to counteract the unwanted buoyancy, giving the sQuba the land mobility of a turtle. Without occupants the sQuba surfaces automatically. It is even capable of autonomous driving on land, thanks to a sophisticated laser sensor system—without any help from the driver or passenger.

The sQuba is a zero-emission car. Power is supplied by rechargeable lithium-ion batteries. The Swiss are world pioneers in hydropower—the sQubas' filling station is the water reservoir. It is no surprise that the vehicle features powerful yet energy-saving LED lighting technology. Even the Motorex lubricants used in the 'sQuba' are biodegradable. For the Rinspeed boss that is a meticulousness stemming from conviction: "The sQuba lets me be one with the elements and lets me immerse myself in a new and fascinating world... It is our duty to protect this world in which we are guests, to the best of our ability," says Rinderknecht.

For shore leave the sQuba relies on a stainless coil-over suspension from KW automotive and large Pirelli tires mounted on custom-made forged light-weight wheels from AEZ with 17- and 18-inch diameters. But the sQuba is really at home in the water. There is an innovative salt-water resistant interior with genuine mother-of-pearl trim and diamond-plated non-slip inlays, normally used in high-tech abrasives. The high-tech VDO instrument cluster and controls create a futuristic ambiance and allow controlling all vehicle functions even while submerged.

For the ninth time in Rinspeed development, Swiss engineering company Esoro was hired to serve as general contractor for the entire project, responsible for project management, implementation of new

technologies, engineering, rendering, design and manufacture of the Rinspeed sQuba. Esoro has been a contract developer of concept vehicles, components and products for 17 years, with a primary focus on lightweight construction and mobility. Esoro develops fiber-reinforced components from initial conception through pre-production samples.

Motorex specialists put together a very special lubricant plan, with all the lubricants and greases in use rapidly biodegradable. A goal from the beginning was to minimize pollution in every aspect, especially in the water.

Seabob makes the world's fastest diving and water scooter, which powers through the water with 10 gears and up to 7 hp. Its maximum speed is up to 22 km/h on the surface and 16 km/h under water. Seabob draws its power from 14 lithium-ion accumulators. Their internationally patented electric jet-stream system makes a water vehicle which is entirely silent and emission-free in its performance, the basis for a 100% environmentally friendly claim. Seabob is manufactured by Cayago AG in Stuttgart, Germany.

The underwater world, with its fascinating light and interplay of colors, was the inspirations for the sQuba's interior design. The color palette takes its cue from the dazzling color of the Yellow Tail Snapper; its iridescent silver and its bright yellow contrast with the deep blue of the sea. Knitted fabric has been designed with a silver/yellow fish scale texture; the padding has been finely quilted and has a distinctive herringbone pattern. A diamond-coated non-slip surface in silver/yellow—with a "sushi roll" on the edges for additional grip—has been used on the pedals, combining safety with a mysterious shimmer.

One of the most attractive, luxurious materials the sea has to offer has been used for the door linings, steering wheel and gear knob: mother-of-pearl. Veneered like a fish scale the elegant organic material on the gear knob corresponds to the pearly fibred yarn, also manufactured using the "tweaving" process, which discreetly shimmers under the textile coverings and on the display. Pure luxury for any vehicle.

It took the highly skilled development team just six months to realize the entire sQuba concept car project. ■



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THE INSIDE TRACK: BRIEFS & RUMORS



Hummer HX concept

■ **Hummer** had the Jeep Wrangler in its sights as they introduced the HX concept in Detroit in January. The open-air two-door off-road vehicle is shorter than the H3 and features doors, fender flares and roof panels that can be quickly removed to convert it from a closed to open vehicle. The four-wheel drive is powered by a 3.6-liter V-6 flex-fuel engine rated at 304-hp with a six-speed automatic transmission. The HX is 81 inches wide and 72-inches high, with 20-inch wheels. Production plans have yet to be announced.

■ **Cadillac** unveiled the CTS Coupe concept in Detroit this winter. The striking two-door has a sharply sloping rear roofline and taller trunk line that the sedan with taillights emulating classic Cadillac tailfins. No production date was announced.



Cadillac CTS Coupe concept

■ **BMW** is openly talking about starting or buying a fourth automotive brand to appeal to shoppers looking for more “green” or ecologically friendly cars than the companies existing BMW performance brand, ultra luxury Rolls-Royce brand or the eccentric MINI.

■ The same turbocharged four-cylinder engine being

used in the RDX crossover is expected to power the upcoming **Acura** TSX sedan when it debuts this year. The following year the TSX is expected to get Honda's first US diesel engine.

■ **Mercedes-Benz** has a large S-Class diesel hybrid in the works for 2010. The S 400 BlueHYBRID will be powered by a Bluetec V-6 diesel with a 20-horsepower electric motor. Together, Mercedes claims it will have “the performance of a V-8 with the fuel economy of a four-cylinder.” The system produces 265-hp and 465 lb.ft. of torque and a 0 to 60 mph time of 7.2 seconds.



Mercedes-Benz S 400 BlueHYBRID

Combined fuel economy for the big sedan is near 40 mpg for highway driving. At rollout, Mercedes says the S 400 diesel-hybrid will be emission compliant in all 50 states.

■ The New York City **Taxi and Limousine** Commission will be shopping for a new generation of taxicabs soon, replacing the entire existing fleet of 13,000 yellow cabs, which are mostly Ford Crown Victoria Sedans. The Fords Crown Vics have been the workhorse of the fleet since the Chevrolet Caprice was discontinued in 1996 and the last Checker Cab was put out of service in 1999.

■ The V-6 engine in the second generation **Honda** Pilot that goes on sale this spring is designed with a new engine management system that operates in six-, four- and three-cylinder modes to save fuel. The current Pilot engine operates in six-cylinder and

three-cylinder modes only. The new Pilot is more powerful, roomier and safer than the current model, according to John Mendel, executive vice president of American Honda.

■ **Audi** is showing the next step for its brilliant R8 sports car with a V-12 diesel engine. The R8 V12 TDI debuted in Detroit in January with a version of the same powerful and quiet engine that won last year's Le Mans 24-hour race. For the R8 installation, AutoWeek magazine is speculating the V-12 to produce about 500 hp and 738-lb.ft. of torque. Initial speculation was the R8 might get the V-10 engine in its cousin the Lamborghini Gallardo. Both Audi and Lamborghini are owned by Volkswagen.

■ With its bold split-waterfall grille design, the MKS will become the new flagship **Lincoln** of Ford's luxury brand. Sharing the same platform as the Ford Taurus/Mercury Sable and Volvo S80, the MKS will be offered in front- and all-wheel drive configurations. The Standard engine is a 270-hp 3.7-liter V-6, with Ford's first application of a turbocharged direct injection version of the same engine arriving about a year later.

■ **Ford** plans to offer a Sport version of the Edge crossover this fall. The 2009 Edge Sport will have standard 20-inch wheels (and optional 22-inchers) with body colored aerodynamic side skirts to improve aerodynamics. The interior will



Ford Edge Sport

have distinctive leather and suede-like upholstery.

■ **Lexus** is rumored to be working on a compact SUV to compete with the BMW X3, Infiniti EX35, Acura RDX and others due out from Mercedes and Audi. In typical fashion, company officials will not confirm the smaller vehicle, which would likely be developed from the Toyota RAV4 platform.



Hyundai Genesis

■ The aggressive looking **Dodge** Demon sports car is likely to be switched from rear- to front-wheel drive. The Demon is going to be switched to a Chery Automobile (a Chinese automaker) platform as part of a “wider cooperation between the companies to create small hatchbacks and sedans for the Chrysler and Dodge brands.” The change will allow them to use a new low emission, direct injection engine currently in development.



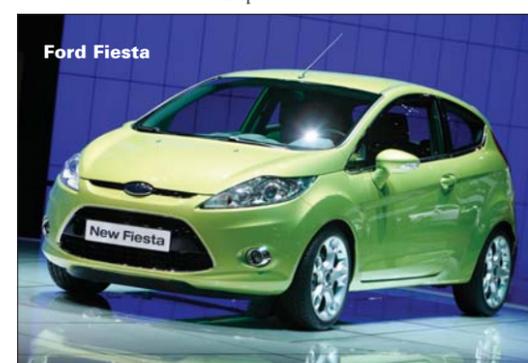
Dodge Demon concept

■ **Subaru** debuted the first four-cylinder horizontally opposed diesel engine at the Geneva motor show. The 2.0-liter turbocharged H4 engine produces 148-hp and 258-lb.ft. of torque and is perfectly balanced to eliminate vibrations. Developed initially for the European market, it could arrive in the

US as early as 2009. When the Subaru diesel arrives in the US, a more powerful version is expected in order to meet US driver performance requirements and the US preference for an automatic transmission.

■ **Hyundai** picked an elegant grill without a logo to front its new rear-wheel drive Genesis sedan. Hyundai

benchmarked the BMW 5 Series, Mercedes-Benz E-Class and Lexus GS when designing the four-door. The top engine is a new 368-hp, 4.6-liter aluminum V-8. Hyundai officials say the first models will not have cylinder deactivation, but say the V-8 was designed to accept the fuel-saving technology as well as a supercharger.



Ford Fiesta

■ Watch for **General Motors** (and other manufacturers) to cut the displacement of some engines and add turbochargers. Starting next year, GM will use a turbocharged 1.4-liter four-cylinder engine, possibly in the Chevy Cobalt and Saturn Astra.

■ **Ford** has introduced the production version of its Fiesta global small car in Geneva. Developed from the Verve concept shown at Frankfurt, Guangzhou and Detroit auto shows, the sleek Fiesta will arrive in European showrooms in the fall of 2008 in both three- and five-door models. Expect the Fiesta to arrive in

North America in 2010 as a sedan, maybe followed by a three-door hatchback.

■ **Nissan** and **Chrysler** are discussing joint research on new technology and vehicles in weak areas, but not equity exchanges. For example, Chrysler needs help with small cars, while Nissan could use help with trucks. ■

Briefs & Rumors is a summary of auto news from industry sources, trade journals and consumer magazines compiled for *Arizona Driver Magazine* by **BILL & BARBARA SCHAFFER** of *Auto Digest*.