Teslas arrive in Qatar with futuristic interiors and autopilot thrills



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The Peninsula
Local focus, Global vision

Wheels

WEDNESDAY 24 JANUARY 2024 SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT

Bugatti, Ferrari are the most expensive classic cars of 2023



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Flexible lease: New way of owning a car

BLOOMBERG

The Polestar 3 is the type of electric vehicle that drivers go mad for these days. It's safe, a little swanky and, critically, a Goldilocks SUV – not too big and not too small. There's just one problem: Polestar won't start delivering it en masse for another couple of months.

That's not stopping the carmaker from getting people in drivers' seats now. In October, Polestar started offering what it calls a "flexible lease." Customers can drive off in the only car the company currently makes – its "2" sedan – and then scrap the lease in as little as five months. If all goes as Polestar has planned, those drivers will hand in the keys to a 2 and go home in a 3.

"Let's put it this way: It's an extended test drive," says Gregor Hembrough, chief executive officer of Polestar USA. "With a lot of customers, their leases are expiring and every one of our rivals have something for them to go into, so we had to step up to the plate.'"

Polestar isn't alone: Subscriptions, short-term leases and other tactics for microdosing the ordeal of getting a new vehicle are having a moment. The transition to electric cars is turbocharging these arrangements, which entice both the EV-curious and those would-be buyers awaiting a specific electric model. Automakers and dealers are also tapping into a swath of customers increasingly comfortable renting everything from clothes to TV shows.

While short-term setups may not be cheaper than car ownership in the long run, they are helping drivers dodge hefty upfront payments while EV prices and interest rates are still relatively high. There are also more EVs to hold out for than ever. Although the US market now boasts 55 distinct electric models, that number is expected to grow another 20% to 30% next year.



Carmakers and dealers, meanwhile, can use microleases to more easily monetize a growing glut of EV inventory. Philipp Sadek, a principal at Boston Consulting Group, predicts subscriptions and short-term leases could soon account for up to 15% of new car transactions around the world, compared with "low single digits" now. "The car buying process today is still very tedious," Sadek says. "With this, one moves from ownership to usership."

In some ways, the short-term car lease is the renaissance of a bad business idea. From 2017 through 2019, many carmakers rolled out subscription products – essentially month-to-month microleases – only to scrap them in short order.

The misstep, according to Sadek, was that automakers built their programmes on a buffet model that let consumers sample a different car every month. Not only did that require a lot of expensive, idle inventory, but most drivers preferred to get comfortable in one ride.

"It's expensive to run and hard to do profitably," says Elaine Buckberg, a Harvard economist. "So if you're a carmaker, you may need to have another objective."

Half a decade after that wave of proto-subscriptions, most auto executives and their dealer networks still prefer to do business the old-fashioned way. But some of them, as well as rental companies and startups like Polestar, are circling back to short-term leases in a bid to lure ever more capricious consumers and bridge the gap until more EV options emerge.

Finn, a Germany-based car-subscription service, has raised roughly $1bn over the past four years and now operates in 11 US states. Its transactions are managed entirely online and Finn will even drop off cars right in subscribers' driveways. Sixt SE, a German car-rental empire, started selling subscriptions in 2020 and today offers them in 10 countries. The company declined to share how many subscribers it has, but says the number doubled this year. "The growth rate confirms that we are hitting the pulse of the times with this offer," a Sixt spokesman said via email.

AutoNation, which runs about 250 dealerships in the US, recently started offering its own "microleases" in six- and 12-month increments. Ivan Mihov, vice president of mobility, says it's the company's response to car subscriptions. "The three-year lease doesn't work for everybody," he says. "With EVs in particular, obviously there are a lot of people on the fence."

Ryan Johnson, a software developer in Boston, has been driving subscription cars since 2020; he's now on his fourth. The arrangement let Johnson go electric years earlier than he had planned.

"I've had 16 cars over 34 years, so this fits the way I like to drive cars," Johnson says. "If I can, I'm never buying another one."

Writ large, today's micro-lease enthusiasts are a mixed bag – from young drivers unsure of what their lives will look like in a few months, to older affluent couples. Florida snowbirds, for example, sign up for a car for the season. Urban millennials are booking convertibles solely for the summer.

"We're separating access from ownership," says Mihov at AutoNation. "And there's a whole spectrum of different use cases."

Since Polestar launched its flexible lease program in October, roughly half of the carmaker's customers have opted for the product instead of a longer-term lease or buying outright. Hembrough at Polestar says EV buyers are "less brand-loyal," which can be both a challenge and a blessing for an upstart carmaker. "For the most part, 100% of my customers are conquest," he says, meaning they have to be lured away from another brand.

Hembrough is also looking forward to taking back an assortment of slightly used Polestar 2 sedans, which can be deployed to court less affluent customers in the market for a cheaper EV.



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BMW Group posts record sales, meets e-mobility growth targets in 2023

The BMW Group delivered a total of 2,555,341 BMW, MINI and Rolls-Royce vehicles to customers last year (+6.5%) - a new all-time sales high for the company. The BMW, Rolls-Royce and BMW Motorrad brands also reported new record highs in 2023. In the fourth quarter, BMW Group sales climbed to 718,778 units, up +10.3% on the previous year.

"Thanks to close co-operation with our retail partners and driven by the strong performance of our associates, the BMW Group was able to achieve a new all-time sales high for 2023. Customers around the world appreciate our strong brands BMW, MINI, Motorrad and Rolls-Royce and in particular the choice of different drive technologies across the entire BMW Group product range", said Jochen Goller, member of the Board of Management of BMW AG, responsible for Customer, Brands, Sales. "With our new, highly attractive and technologically outstanding vehicles, we were able to ramp up electromobility even more dynamically in 2023 and achieve the goal of 15% of total sales from fully-electric vehicles", Goller continued.

Thanks to a strong team effort, the BMW Group once again managed to significantly increase its worldwide deliveries of fully-electric products last year to 376,183 units. This represents a year-on-year sales growth of +74.4% for the company. In the fourth quarter, the BMW Group delivered 129,316 fully-electric vehicles to customers (+47.7%). Its sales of fully-electric vehicles for the year 2023 significantly outperformed the total market for fully-electric vehicles, underlining the company's role as an e-mobility pioneer.

The BMW Group is confident it will be able to maintain its BEV growth trajectory in 2024. With a range of 18 fully-electric models spanning all its brands' main segments, the BMW Group is laying a strong foundation for dynamic BEV growth in the coming years: One in every five of the company's newly delivered vehicles will have a fully-electric drive train this year; by 2025, it will be one in four. "We see continued high demand for our fully-electric products and, based on our strong, cross-brand product portfolio, expect to sell more than half a million fully-electric vehicles in 2024", said Goller.



- BMW Group sales reach new all-time high of 2,555,341 units in 2023 (+6.5%)
- BMW Group BEV sales at 15%, with growth across all sales regions worldwide
- BMW brand once again tops global premium segment in 2023; electric models see significant growth (+92.2%)
- Rolls-Royce and Motorrad brands also report new highs

BMW brand tops global premium segment

With a total of 2,253,835 vehicles delivered to customers worldwide in 2023, the BMW brand posted growth of +7.3% from the previous year, with sales reaching a new all-time high. The BMW brand was once again able to defend its leading position in the global premium segment last year.

The brand's fully-electric vehicles, in particular, were in high demand, with a total of 330,596 units delivered to customers in 2023 (+92.2%). Fourth-quarter deliveries of fully-electric BMW vehicles reached 113,458 units (+55.4%).

Models in the upper price segment, such as the BMW 7 Series and the BMW X7, also benefited from strong demand in 2023. Fully-electric models, including the BMW iX1 and the BMW i4, in particular, were among the main sales drivers. Last year, the BMW X1, BMW 3 Series and the BMW X3 remained especially popular with customers.

With the launch of the fully-electric BMW i5 last year, the BMW Group now has a fully-electric option in each of its main segments. The fully-electric BMW iX2 has also been added to the line-up. Later this year, the first fully-electric touring model will make its debut as part of the BMW 5 model series.

BMW M GmbH sales reach new milestone

With a total of 202,530 performance and high-performance cars sold in 2023, BMW M GmbH posted its best-ever result in the company's more than 50-year history — an increase of +14.3% compared to the previous year. In addition to the successful market launch of the M2, XM and M3 Touring high-performance models, the BMW i4 M50 fully-electric performance model also deserves particular mention. Just like the previous year, the BMW i4 M50 was the best-selling BMW M car and is a prime example of the systematic transformation of the brand towards electromobility. The range of battery-electric vehicles in the executive and luxury car segment was rounded out by the BMW i5 M60* and the BMW i7 M60.

Strong BEV growth for MINI

The MINI brand sold a total of 295,474 vehicles (+0.9%) last year, with sales of fully-electric MINI models up 3.5% to 45,261 units. The fully-electric MINI Cooper SE released in 2020 remains the best-selling MINI model variant. The fully-electric MINI Cooper SE Convertible was introduced onto the market last year. The limited edition of 999 units sold out in most markets within a few weeks of the announcement. Fully-electric vehicles now make up 15.3% of total MINI sales for the full year 2023.

The new MINI family will be released onto the market over the course of 2024. The fully-electric MINI Cooper SE and MINI Cooper E will be joined by two further fully-electric models, the MINI Countryman SE and the MINI Countryman E. Both the MINI Cooper and the MINI Countryman will also be available with an internal combustion engine. The yet-to-be-unveiled new MINI Aceman, a compact five-seater crossover, will be a pure-electric model as well.

Rolls-Royce ends 2023 with all-time sales high

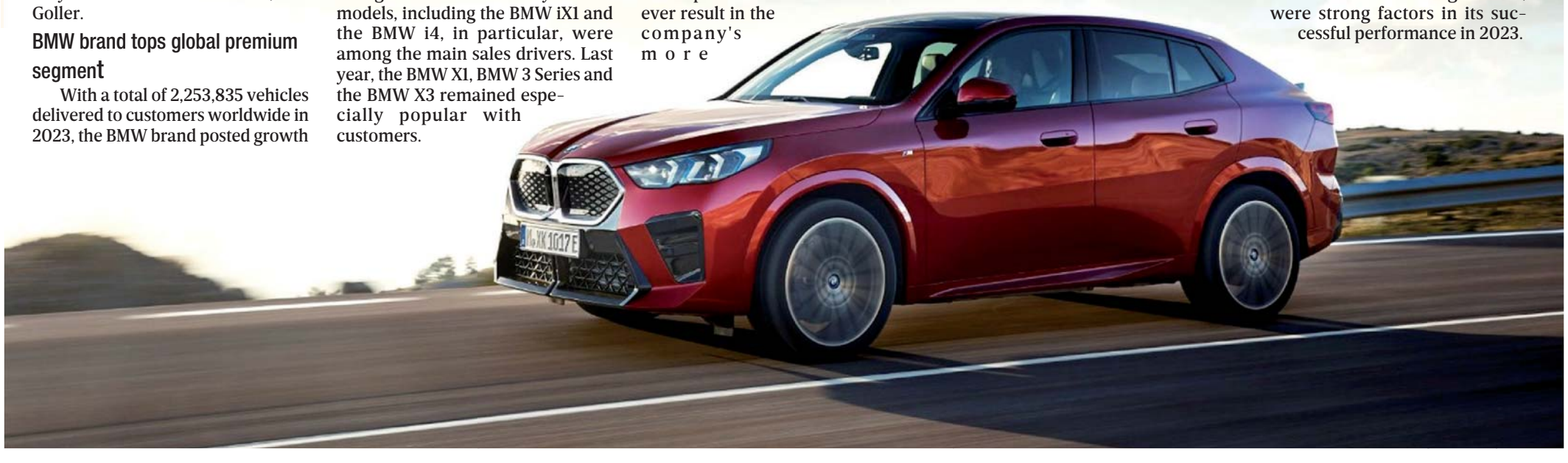
Rolls-Royce Motor Cars enjoyed a hugely successful 2023, with strong global demand for its products and Bespoke orders at record levels. The brand based at Goodwood in the UK delivered 6,032 cars to customers last year — the highest recorded in its history. Rolls-Royce reported sales growth in most of the 50 markets in which it operates.

Significant growth was also seen in the value of the marque's unrivalled Bespoke projects — the aspects of each and every Rolls-Royce hand-built at the company's home at Goodwood and which are entirely personal to the commissioning client. To support the ever-increasing global demand for complex and unique Bespoke projects, Rolls-Royce further expanded its international Private Office network: Shanghai opened in 2023, while offices in Seoul and North America were announced for 2024. The company also announced substantial new investment in the Home of Rolls-Royce at Goodwood, UK, principally to extend capabilities for Bespoke, including Coachbuild.

2023 was also notable for the introduction of Rolls-Royce Spectre, the marque's eagerly awaited, first fully-electric motor car. Deliveries of Spectre began as planned in the fourth quarter, with orders already stretching into 2025. Demand for all current Rolls-Royce models remains strong: Cullinan is the most requested model worldwide, followed by Ghost, with Phantom remaining the marque's pinnacle product.

BMW Motorrad crowns centenary year with highest sales in its history

With a total of 209,257 motorcycles and scooters delivered to customers — an increase of +3.1 % year-on-year, BMW Motorrad reported its highest-ever sales to mark its centenary year. The Europe, Asia, North and Latin America regions, in particular, all posted new sales highs and made a vital contribution to BMW Motorrad's record sales. The brand's compelling lineup, with successful products that define their respective segments, along with the market introduction of popular new models, like the powerful M 1000 R and the iconic R 1300 GS touring enduro, were strong factors in its successful performance in 2023.



All new 2024 Mazda CX-60 MHEV: Exceptional driving pleasure



All New Mazda CX-60 with 3.3 litre inline 6-cylinder MHEV has been introduced by National Car Company (NCC), the sole agent for Mazda vehicles in Qatar celebrating 50 years of their partnership in excellence with Mazda Corporation-Japan. The model now available in the state-of-the-art Mazda showroom at Al Nasr has created a lot of excitement among the SUV buyers in Qatar resulting in exceptional sales momentum for the new model. The new model comes with a unique front-engine rear-wheel-drive (FR) layout and is the debut of the longitudinal version of Mazda's Skyactiv Multi-Solution Scalable Architecture platform.

Besides the newly introduced 3.3-litre inline 6 cylinder MHEV, 3 variants of Mazda CX-60 are available for sale in Qatar, equipped with a high-performance 2.5-litre Skyactiv-G engine and 8-speed automatic transmission, all equipped with a whole range of new driver-centric technologies. All the models offer low emissions and excellent fuel efficiency with high levels of torque.

Crafted In Japan

The all-new Mazda CX-60 represents everything that Mazda has built into its DNA over the last one hundred years: from the great design, both inside and out, to Japanese craftsmanship and new technologies, all focused on creating a fantastic experience for the driver and co-passengers.

There is a pure grace to be found in the simplicity and sparse beauty of a traditional Japanese garden which exemplifies the design principle of "less is more." This principle was deftly applied to the new Mazda CX-60, imbuing the car with a subtle yet strong appearance. The car is in harmony with the surrounding nature, a value that is important in Japanese life, rather than attempting to dominate it as some of the contemporary SUVs often do.

Human Centricity

While getting behind the steering wheel, a comfortable seating position is extremely important to enjoy the pleasure of driving. The optimum positioning of the driver has always been a key component in any Mazda vehicle's development. However, Mazda researchers recently discovered that less than half of drivers position themselves correctly for comfort, safety and control and the new Mazda CX-60 gives a lot of emphasis to this aspect.

Engineered to give exhilarating responses that are also friendly to the environment, CX-60's front-engine rear-wheel-drive (FR) layout is the debut of the longitudinal version of our Skyactiv Multi-Solution Scalable Architecture platform. This all-new platform accommodates both four- and six-cylinder longitudinal engines of any capacity, as well as diverse electrification technologies such as our M Hybrid mild hybrid system. The design was directed by our unique Skyactiv-Vehicle Architecture concept, assuring that CX-60 works with the human body's inherent ability to maintain balance while in motion to place you in full command of the greater power of our newly developed engine. So, you can comfortably maintain a relaxed, well-balanced posture even as you experience the pleasure of controlling G forces in various driving situations.

CX-60's longitudinal powertrain layout allows i-Activ AWD to give you the best of both worlds: the neutral cornering characteristics of a rear-wheel-drive system combined with the reassuring stability of all-wheel drive. This full-time AWD system primarily delivers power to the rear wheels for the superior handling associated with the sports car's classic FR configuration, yet continuously monitors driving conditions to dynamically direct power to any of the four wheels as necessary. The result is a new level of high-speed, straight-line stability on highways, inspiring handling on winding roads, and reliably stable traction on snow or slippery surfaces.

At the front, a double-wishbone suspension system, optimally designed to take advantage of the extra space afforded by the longitudinal powertrain layout. At the rear, a multi-link setup. And now our newly developed Kinematic Posture Control (KPC) is introduced to leverage the inherent strengths of this suspension system to achieve smoother body movement in everyday driving and suppress body roll during high-speed cornering.

Mazda Proactive Safety

True driving pleasure requires more than just vehicle response and performance. It also demands the peace of mind that comes with feeling safe, secure and in control. In line with our human-centered design philosophy, Mazda Proactive Safety is engineered around you, the driver, to support you in anticipating and assessing your driving environment moment by moment, helping you to recognize and avoid danger beforehand rather than react after a hazardous situation has developed. i-Activsense with its full spectrum of remote sensing devices provides continuous 360º monitoring around the vehicle and alerts you to potential threats. And when necessary, its advanced autonomous control/brake systems assist in staying out of harm's way.

The centre console tray includes a Qi wireless charger to enable the charging of compatible smartphones and other devices placed on it when the engine is running.

The large panoramic sunroof provides an expansive top view and brings light to the entire cabin, delivering an open, airy feel to passengers in the front and rear alike.

With the advanced key in your pocket or bag, a quick kick beneath the sensor located under the rear bumper lets you open and close the rear power liftgate, a convenient feature when your hands are full or when you don't want to touch the car because it is wet or muddy.

All New Mazda CX-60 variants are on display and for sale at the state-of-the-art Mazda showroom located at Al Nasr, Doha.

For more information, visit Mazda showroom, call 44435965/44417859 or log on to www.mazda-qatar.com

Almana Group receives 'Best Value Mid-Size Sedan' award for Bestune B70



Bestune B70 wins 'Best Value Mid-Size Sedan' award in Qatar Car of The Year 2023

Almana Group received the notable 'Best Value Mid-Size Sedan' award for Bestune B70 at Qatar Car Of The Year (QCOTY) 2023 during a gala ceremony that took place on January 7, 2024 at The Chedi Katara Hotel & Resort, presented by Maqina Middle East, the region's leading automotive magazine.

Founder and Managing Director of Maqina Middle East Tarek Hawchar handed over the prestigious award to the Almana Group's Director of Sales and Marketing Amer Omar Hassan Yehia, Brand Manager Tamer Abdallah, and Group Marketing Manager Elias Irany.

The event spotlighted outstanding vehicles in numerous categories including SUVs, light trucks, commercial vehicles, and sedans.

Now in its fifth edition, the QCOTY has become a benchmark for automotive excellence in Qatar, annually celebrating the finest of SUVs, crossovers, sedans, pickups, and sports cars.

As part of the QCOTY selection process, Maqina Middle East's expert team rigorously tests and evaluates cars based on four key criteria: overall design, performance, safety, and technological advancements. This year's event saw sixteen categories crowned, each recognizing the most esthetically exciting, technically advanced, and powerful vehicles produced in 2023.

Commenting on the occasion, Hawchar, said: "Over the years, the QCOTY awards have earned the trust of discerning customers and automotive brands in Qatar. This year's competition was particularly fierce, with each contender pushing design, performance, safety, and innovation to the limits. Our 2023 winners, however, have not only met but also exceeded our rigorous criteria, exhibiting innovation, performance, and cutting-edge technology at their finest. Congratulations to all the winners! Thank you for your contribution to the advancement of motoring in Qatar."

QCOTY is an annual special edition and the ceremony is held by Maqina & MSW to recognise automotive achievement after positioning most of the vehicles in the country into their paces and crowning the best.

Bestune

Bestune, the ultimate performance luxury sedan-comes into being through FAW Group's more than 60 years of advanced automobile experience, carrying forward the philosophy of combining cutting-edge engineering with uncompromising quality. The technically innovative Bestune features world-class design and technology, delivering exhilarating driving performance, bold and enduring styling, advanced active and passive safety features, and extraordinary fit and finish.

The Bestune B70 is a world-class 4-door sporty that comes with an elegant design and features impressive performance that is beyond perfect for smooth driving in addition to enhanced technology for a better steer experience.

The 5-spoke 18" alloy wheels have a sporty and stylish appearance and the unique cluster features colourful, clear, and easy-to-read. The 6-airbag system consists of driver and passenger airbags, front-side airbags, and front and rear curtain airbags to keep the driver and passengers safe.

Mid-size sedan Bestune B70 impresses with its stunning design, cutting-edge technology, radar safety features, and top-notch performance. Available in 2 variants; 1.5Turbo Engine and 2.0Turbo Engine; the 1.5 Turbo engine delivers 165 HP and 258 torque paired with a 7-speed Dual Clutch Transmission whereas the 2.0T Engine produces 220 HP and 340 HP is mated with a 6-speed Automatic Transmission, the B70 has dimensions of 4,810 mm in length, 1,840 mm in width and 1,455 mm in height, along with a 2,800 mm wheelbase.

In line with Bestune's design ethos, the B70 features a hexagonal grille at the front, adorned with a distinctive raindrop pattern. Its Y-shaped headlights incorporate downward-pointing, boomerang-style LED daytime running lights, and the lower bumper enhances the car's sporty appearance.

The B70 boasts a sloping roofline that lends it a coupe-like aesthetic, complemented by a straight waistline that accentuates the sedan's streamlined look. Adding to its allure are the flush-mounted hidden door handles, which enhance the overall appeal of the Bestune B70.

The interior features a driver-oriented dashboard that enhances accessibility and overall driving experience. A 12-inch display, comprising an LCD instrument panel linked to the central screen, showcases a newly designed user interface.

The premium variant's exterior comes equipped with LED headlights, LED daytime running lights, 18-inch alloy wheels, electrically folding heated door mirrors, a panoramic sunroof, rhythmic rear LED lights, a square tailpipe, intelligent high beam control, and welcome/puddle lamps. Inside, the car offers leather seats, six-way electric adjustment for the driver's seat, heated front seats, a seat courtesy function, door ambient lighting, a multifunction steering wheel, a leather-covered steering wheel, and dual-zone automatic air conditioning.



FROM LEFT: Tamer Abdallah, Brand Manager, Amer Omar Hassan Yehia, Director Group Sales & Marketing, Tarek Hawchar, Founder Managing Director – Maqina, and Elias Irany, Group Marketing Manager at the award function.

In line with Bestune's design ethos, the B70 features a hexagonal grille at the front, adorned with a distinctive raindrop pattern. Its Y-shaped headlights incorporate downward-pointing, boomerang-style LED daytime running lights, and the lower bumper enhances the car's sporty appearance.

For safety, the vehicle provides lane-keeping assist, traffic sign recognition, a blind-spot information system, lane-change decision aid, adaptive cruise control, lane departure warning, forward collision warning, automatic emergency braking, a 360-degree camera system with 3D view, lane-change assist indicator, electronic parking brake, auto hold, anti-lock braking system, electronic brakeforce distribution, brake assist, electronic stability control, front and curtain airbags, and rear sensors. Entertainment and information features include a 7-inch LCD instrument cluster, a 12.3-inch infotainment screen, and six speakers.

The limousine variant has all the premium variant attributes with a 2.0 turbo Engine with 6AT and an additional exterior that includes 19" alloy wheels, rear rhythmic LED light, and a hidden door handle. The extra interior features are ambient lighting with starry sky lighting trim. Additional safety features include front parking sensors and infotainment features including a wireless charger and digital key.



Almana Group has represented some of the world's major international companies. This has enabled them to engage in several of the largest and most lucrative projects across Qatar, some of which will remain as the mainstay of Qatar's economy for the years ahead.

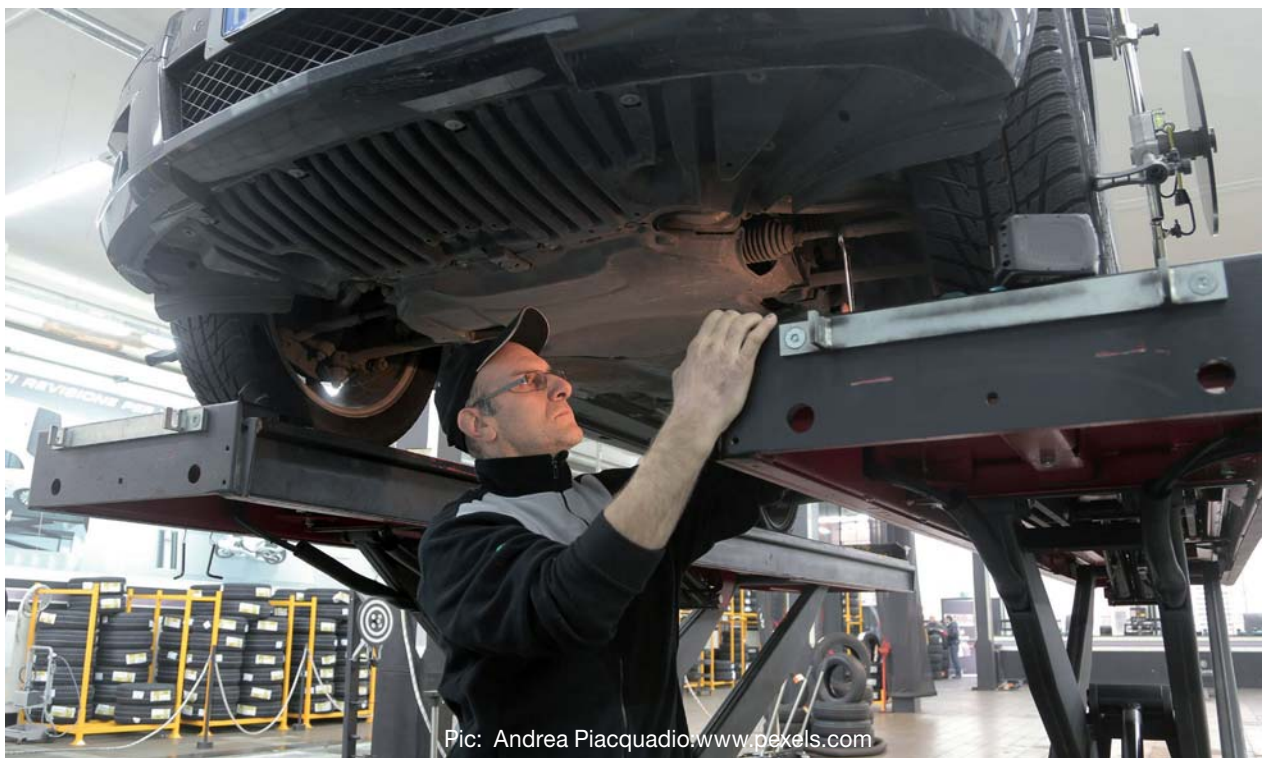
"Although the Group features diverse industries and various subsidiaries, our corporate culture remains ingrained in best practices, integrity and a results-oriented approach. We are proud of our track record and we shall continue to explore further horizons to establish our presence, scale new heights, forge new alliances and contribute to Qatar's growth," a group statement said.

Established on 15 July 1953, FAW Group employs 175,000 people across the globe selling products in more than 70 countries worldwide, and has five production bases and 14 factories. FAW is a diversified maker of quality automobiles with a total sales of over seven million vehicles worldwide. FAW maintains the lead market position within China while continuing to expand into new international markets, executing a carefully planned strategy to build a comprehensive global organization. FAW takes advantage of the latest cutting-edge technologies, processes, and management practices to bring customers the latest in the automobile world.

Adhering to FAW Group's long history of automobile manufacturing, the Bestune brand is representative of high-quality performance. Bestune brand is present in 30 countries including Latin America, the Middle East, Europe, Asia, and Africa. Bestune has won several prestigious automobile awards which shows its robust comprehensive strength in performance, research, and development.

Bestune's factory covers an area of 270,000 square meters, with a construction area of 200,000 square meters. The production capacity can reach 200,000 vehicles per year. The factory includes four workshops for stamping, welding, painting, and assembly. Most of the internal production equipment is imported from Europe. With a highly automated production line, it's a Chinese automobile production base of leading high quality and high level.

Good maintenance practices are important for longevity and optimal performance of your vehicle


Pic: Andrea Piacquadio/www.pexels.com

Embarking on a journey beyond the sheer aesthetics of car detailing, it's essential to recognize the profound impact that good general maintenance and regular upkeep can have on the overall health and longevity of a vehicle. While the allure of a meticulously detailed exterior and interior is undeniable, the backbone of a reliable and enduring automobile lies in consistent general maintenance practices. In this exploration, we delve into the symbiotic relationship between meticulous detailing and routine maintenance, uncovering how these practices, when harmoniously integrated, fortify not only the visual appeal but also the mechanical resilience of your cherished vehicle.

Car detailing, a meticulous process involving the comprehensive cleaning, restoration, and protection of a vehicle's surfaces, is a practice increasingly embraced by car enthusiasts seeking to maintain the pristine condition of their automobiles. While professional detailing services abound, the allure of achieving professional-level results in the comfort of one's own driveway has led many to delve into the world of DIY car detailing. This article explores the manifold benefits of car detailing, emphasizing its role in preserving resale value, safeguarding against environmental elements, enhancing aesthetics, extending the vehicle's lifespan, improving interior air quality, and maintaining overall performance. Furthermore, it sheds light on the importance of incorporating regular general car maintenance into the care routine, creating a holistic approach to ensuring the longevity and optimal performance of your vehicle.

Preserving the resale value of a vehicle is a paramount concern for many owners. Car detailing emerges as a key strategy in this regard, as it involves meticulous cleaning and restoration, ensuring the vehicle maintains its aesthetic appeal over time. Potential buyers are often drawn to a well-maintained and detailed car, which can command a higher price in the competitive used car market. By investing time and effort in detailing, owners not only enjoy a pristine vehicle during their ownership but also secure a higher resale value when the time comes to part ways with their beloved automobile.

Protection against environmental elements is another critical aspect of car detailing. The application of specialized protective coatings serves as a shield, safeguarding the vehicle's exterior from the detrimental effects of UV rays, bird droppings, tree sap, and road salts. These elements, if left unchecked, can corrode and damage the paint and various surfaces of the vehicle. Detailing, therefore, becomes a proactive measure, acting as a barrier against environmental hazards and contributing significantly to the preservation of the vehicle's exterior integrity.

The enhanced aesthetics resulting from car detailing go beyond mere vanity. A meticulously detailed car exudes a sense of cleanliness, shine, and overall visual appeal. This not only boosts the owner's pride in their vehicle but also contributes to the overall aesthetics of the automobile. The meticulous cleaning, polishing, and waxing involved in detailing contribute to a vibrant and glossy finish, transforming the vehicle into a standout presence on the road. This attention to detail not only enhances the external appearance but also reflects the owner's commitment to maintaining their vehicle in top-notch condition.

Extending the lifespan of a vehicle is a practical outcome of regular detailing practices. Beyond the cosmetic benefits, detailing prevents the accumulation of dirt, grime, and contaminants that can corrode or damage various components of the vehicle over time. By addressing these issues promptly, owners contribute to the overall longevity of their vehicles, mitigating the risk of premature wear and tear. In essence, car detailing becomes a proactive approach to preserving the mechanical integrity of the vehicle, ensuring it remains reliable and operational for an extended period.

Improved interior air quality is an often-overlooked yet crucial aspect of car detailing. Interior detailing involves thorough cleaning of the cabin, eliminating dust, allergens, and odors. This not only contributes to a healthier driving environment but also enhances the overall driving experience. A clean and well-maintained interior provides comfort and ensures that occupants are not exposed to harmful particles and allergens. Regular vacuuming, cleaning of surfaces, and the application of appropriate conditioners to materials such as leather and vinyl contribute to a fresh and inviting interior ambiance.

Beyond aesthetics, car detailing extends to the realm of performance maintenance. The practice involves cleaning and conditioning essential components, including the engine bay, to ensure optimal functionality. A clean engine bay not only enhances the visual appeal but also contributes to the efficient operation of the vehicle. Removing dirt and grime from engine components prevents overheating and potential damage, thereby maintaining the vehicle's overall performance and functionality.

In addition to the benefits of car detailing, incorporating regular general car maintenance practices further fortifies the vehicle's longevity and performance. Routine tasks such as oil changes, tire rotations, and brake inspections are crucial in preventing mechanical issues and ensuring the vehicle's overall health. Consistent checks and top-ups of fluid levels, including coolant, brake fluid, and transmission fluid, contribute to the smooth operation of various systems. Addressing minor issues promptly, such as replacing worn-out belts or addressing unusual sounds, prevents them from escalating into more significant and costly problems.

The art of car detailing extends far beyond a mere cosmetic endeavor. It encompasses a holistic approach to vehicle care, encompassing preservation of resale value, protection against environmental elements, enhanced aesthetics, extended lifespan, improved interior air quality, and maintained performance. Car enthusiasts keen on maintaining the pristine condition of their vehicles find solace in the DIY approach to detailing, relishing the opportunity to achieve professional-level results in the comfort of their own driveway. When coupled with regular general car maintenance practices, this comprehensive care routine becomes a powerful strategy for ensuring the longevity and optimal performance of your beloved vehicle. As the saying goes, a well-detailed and well-maintained car is not just a mode of transportation but a testament to the owner's commitment to automotive excellence.





Tesla arrives in Qatar with futuristic interiors and autopilot thrills

PRAMOD PRABHAKARAN
THE PENINSULA

Tesla, the name everyone associates with electric vehicles, has finally introduced their models in Qatar. Model 3, Y, X, and S have finally hit the streets of Qatar. As the third Middle Eastern nation after UAE and Jordan to welcome this coveted EV brand, the arrival marks a pivotal moment for sustainable transportation in the country.

The first thing you notice entering a Tesla car is the sleek and minimalist interiors. Unlike most other cars in the same price bracket the dashboard of the car we drove, Model S, had just a huge screen, a 17" touchscreen with left-right tilt offering 2200 x 1300 resolution. This touchscreen controls everything from temperature, entertainment and navigation to technical options. There are no knobs, sticks or physical buttons. Everything is digital and it feels futuristic. They took it to another level by eliminating the start and stop buttons. Just get into the car by unlocking the door using the app on your phone, press the pedals and drive off or give the address to the car and let it take you. Just swipe down on the same large screen in case you want to reverse and swipe up to move forward.

All Tesla models in Qatar come with their much-anticipated Autopilot included. It is not a fully autonomous vehicle yet as it must comply with local regulations, but the Level 2 automated system currently available in their vehicles is a game changer when it comes to driving. We recently had the exhilarating opportunity to test it firsthand on Doha's moderately busy roads. Imagine navigating traffic, the car effortlessly maintaining lane position and adjusting speed, while you lightly hold the steering wheel, a silent partnership guiding you towards your destination. It's a glimpse into the future of driving, and it's arrived in Qatar.

But Autopilot is just the tip of the Tesla iceberg. These vehicles are packed with cutting-edge technology, from the industry-leading battery range for effortless long journeys to the intuitive touchscreen interface that controls everything from climate to entertainment. Safety is paramount, with features like automatic emergency braking and blind spot monitoring providing constant peace of mind.

The drive from Msheireb Downtown to Msheireb was fun and as the Tesla officials said exhilarating. Model S is considered one of the fastest-accelerating sedans in the world, able to sprint from 0-60 in less than two seconds. We didn't take on that challenge but surely it had a kick when you start from a stationary position. The car gets a life of its own the moment you press on the pedals.

Another interesting factor was the autopilot feature. Even though it's still not in completely autonomous mode, the feature worked perfectly fine during the little time we tested the vehicle on Qatar roads. Just punch in your address and the car will take over, provided you keep your feet away from the pedals. It will take a little getting used to as we had a tough time thinking about what to do with our feet and overthinking if the car would apply the brake at the right time.

The Model S we drove applied the brakes at the right places and accelerated when needed, overall making it a very cautious and fun driving experience at the same time. Model S is available from QR318,490 and offers up to 723 km of range.

"Autopilot is an advanced driver assistance system that is classified as a Level 2 automated system for use only with a fully attentive driver with their hands on the wheel. This means Autopilot also helps with driver supervision. When used properly, Autopilot reduces a driver's overall workload, and the eight external cameras provide an additional layer of safety that two eyes alone would not have," Tesla officials explained.

Following the launch of its online configurator in December, Tesla opened a Pop-Up Store in Doha recently, its first physical presence in Qatar. Located in Doha Festival City, this Pop-Up location will give the opportunity for car enthusiasts to see and test-drive Tesla vehicles, but also to know more about breathtaking performance, cutting-edge technology and convenient charging solutions.



Open 7 days a week from 10am to 10pm, and until 11pm on Thursday, Friday and Saturday, the Tesla Festival City Pop-Up is located on the Ground Floor, Luxury Court.

An exclusive showroom is expected to be ready soon.

"In the coming months, a permanent Tesla Store will open in Doha Festival City, alongside a service centre, where Tesla owners will have access to quick and seamless service for their car, through thoroughly trained Tesla Service Technicians. Tesla owners will also have access to the first Supercharger location in Qatar, at Doha Festival City. It will be followed by more Superchargers later this year," Tesla officials said during a media interaction.

The delivery of the vehicles will start in the first quarter of this year and the service centre is expected to be ready by then. The Tesla officials said that they will also have a mobile service centre which will go to the customer to get the work done.

Tesla's mission is to accelerate the world's transition to sustainable energy. Sustainable transport being a key element of this transition, Tesla offers 4 vehicles in Qatar, each with unique characteristics and features designed to cater to a wide range of customer preferences. Whether you are a family of 7, a young couple who likes camping in the desert or a seasoned driver who wants to enjoy peaceful drives along the coastline, there is a Tesla for you.

Despite their distinct qualities, they all share the unmistakable Tesla DNA, marked by a commitment to sustainability and energy efficiency, cutting-edge and intuitive technology, exhilarating performance and sleek design.

Model 3 - Everyday Sedan

Your ideal daily driver with five-star safety ratings and nimble handling—all at our most accessible price. Model 3 is available from QR 168,490 and offers up to 678 km of range (WLTP Est).

Model 3 played a pivotal role in accelerating the adoption of electric cars by offering an accessible, high-performance, and technologically advanced option that appealed to a broader audience. It helped shift perceptions about electric vehicles from being seen as niche products to becoming more mainstream. Launched late last year, the upgraded Model 3 brings more refinement, comfort and premiumness - inside and out - while staying true to Model 3 sleek, uncluttered design aesthetic.

Model Y - Midsize SUV

Ready for anything with long range, a spacious cabin and enough room for everyone's gear. Model Y is available from QR188,490 and offers up to 565 km of range (WLTP Est).

Model Y is the best-selling vehicle of any type in the world throughout 2023. Its Performance variant goes from 0 to 100kph in only 3.7 seconds and features a dedicated Track Mode, which allows drivers to customize handling, providing even more control over how their car behaves on track. Track Mode gives you the ability to tune your car's performance, including motor balance, stability assist and regenerative braking.

Model S - Premium Sedan

One of the highest performing, most technologically advanced production vehicles ever built. Combiningthe highest level of comfort and refinement with room for 5 adults and their luggage, at a premium travel experience. Model S is available from QR 318,490 and offers up to 723 km of range (WLTP Est).

Model S Plaid is capable of accelerating from 0 to 100 kph in 2.1 seconds, with a 322kph top speed and 1020hp. It uses 3 motors with carbon-wrapped rotors, allowing higher speeds. A Tesla-first technology.

Model X - Premium SUV

A spaceship for up to 7 people with extra storage and towing capacity, plus falcon wing doors that offer easy access to rear seats and cargo space. Model X is available from QR338,490 and offers up to 625 km of range (WLTP Est).

Model X Plaid also uses 3 motors and goes from 0 to 100kph in 2.6 seconds. With 1020hp, Model X Plaid is also the most powerful production-SUV you can buy.

Charging

A critical component of the adoption of electric vehicles is to create a seamless and convenient charging experience wherever customers choose to travel. Tesla owners can enjoy the convenience of plugging in anywhere to charge. Whether it's at home, in the office, or on a long-distance road trip, Tesla has you covered.

The most convenient way to charge a Tesla is at home. Tesla vehicles provide ample range for daily travel. Most owners drive during the day and replenish the balance of remaining charge at night, waking to a full battery in the morning. Imagine never going to a gas station again.

Designed and built by Tesla, Supercharger stations charge your car in minutes rather than hours, with a power up to 250kW. The Tesla Supercharger network is the largest and most reliable ultra-fast charging network in the world, with more than 55 000 individual Superchargers available globally. Model S adds up to 322 kilometers of range in just 15 minutes.

Between the Supercharger network, convenient home charging solutions including the Tesla Wall Connector and the fast expansion of public and private charging networks, consumers from Qatar now have access to ubiquitous charging infrastructure enabling convenient daily and on-the-go charging experiences.

Tesla Autopilot

All Teslas come with Autopilot included. Tesla believes that technology can help improve safety. That's why Tesla vehicles are engineered to be the safest cars in the world. The unique combination of passive safety, active safety, and automated driving is crucial for keeping not just Tesla drivers and passengers safe, but all drivers on the road.

Autopilot is an advanced driver assistance system that is classified as a Level 2 automated system for use only with a fully attentive driver with their hands on the wheel. This means Autopilot also helps with driver supervision. When used properly, Autopilot reduces a driver's overall workload, and the eight external cameras provide an additional layer of safety that two eyes alone would not have.









1962 Ferrari 330 LM/250 GTO

THE WASHINGTON POST / BLOOMBERG

Bugatti, Ferrari are the most expensive classic cars of 2023

In a year defined by cooling values and economic uncertainty, collectors remained resolute in their willingness to pay top dollar for the rarest cars in the world.

On November 13, a 1962 Ferrari 330 LM/250 GTO by Scaglietti sold for $51.7m at an RM Sotheby's sale in New York City. The antique racer was the most expensive Ferrari ever to sell at auction, and it's been the most expensive car sold publicly in 2023.

It walloped returns in the three next-priciest sales: a $30.2m 1967 Ferrari 412P Berlinetta sold by Bonhams on August 17; an $18.8m Formula 1 Mercedes sold via RM Sotheby's on November 17; and a $18m 1962 Ferrari 250 GT SWB California Spider sold by Gooding & Co on March 2. A 1964 Ferrari 250 LM that sold for €15.7m ($17m) at an Artcurial auction on July 5 was the fifth most expensive car to sell in 2023.

Still, several soft results in the latter part of the year, plus such ongoing macroeconomic factors as wars in Ukraine and Gaza, indicate that collectors' appetites may cool in the coming months.

"We are talking about non-essential items, and people are starting to be more careful about what they buy," says Juan Diego Calle, the founder and chief executive officer of Classic.com, which compiles data on classic cars. "I don't think the top of the market is impacted by interest rates, but [top collectors] are impacted by macroeconomic events. They start thinking: 'OK, wait, are we going into a war? Where is the world headed?'"



1967 Ferrari 412P Berlinetta

Subtle Cooling

The top of the classic car industry this year can be described in just three words: nothing new here. Of the 10 cars sold publicly at the highest prices, seven bore the badge of the dancing stallion from Modena, Italy, including a 1972 Ferrari 312 PB that sold for €12m at RM Sotheby's on May 19. The other marques on the list will be familiar to any blue-chip collector: A 1957 Jaguar XKSS sold for $13.2m at RM Sotheby's on August 18 and a 2022 Bugatti Chiron Profilée sold for €9.7m at RM Sotheby's on January 31.

The Bugatti - the only modern road car in the top sellers of the year - is notable because it is among the last Bugattis expected to be powered solely by combustion. Bugatti is expected to debut a new hybrid vehicle next year. The move will make existing models even more valuable, says Craig Jackson, the chairman and CEO of Barrett-Jackson Auction Co.

"You can force consumers to [go electric], but that's going to make the last of the petroleum cars more valuable," says Jackson, who counts a number of Bugattis in his own collection. "I've been buying them up myself."

The eye-watering prices belie a challenging year. The whopping $51.7m paid for that 1962 Ferrari 250 GTO was $10m less than RM Sotheby's had expected; initial internal estimates had valued it "in excess of $60m." (The lower price didn't seem to put a damper on the festive mood during the elaborate sale, which was hosted by comic James Cordon amid much cheering and shouting in the Awakening theater at the Wynn Las Vegas. In an auction recap, Steve Weitman, hotel president, described it as "the perfect complement" to the F1 race weekend.)

October, the first month of the year to record a dip in dollar volumes of public sales relative to those in 2022, experienced a 23.4% drop from the previous year, according to data from Classic.com. As of November 27, this year has brought a 3.7% decrease relative to the same period in 2022: some $3.9bn in sales versus $4bn last year.

At the recent RM Sotheby's auction in Las Vegas, 80% of the lots sold went for less than their low estimate, according to K500, a consumer guide for the classic car market. A pair of Ferrari LaFerraris, hybrid supercars generally valued at more than $4m, and a 1990 Ferrari F40 GT, failed to sell at all.

"It was a typical late-2023 auction," Steve Wakefield wrote in K500's end-of-sale analysis.

The auctions at Monterey Car Week in August, a bellwether for the collector car market, had already revealed vulnerabilities. That 1967 Ferrari 412 P that took $30.2m at Bonhams had been estimated to sell for as much as $40m. A 1964 Ferrari 250 LM reached a high bid of $17m at RM Sotheby's but still missed its reserve and failed to sell during the auction.

By the end of that week, total sales reached roughly $400m across five auction houses, down from $473m in 2022. The average sale price was $477,981, down from $591,768 last year.

Familiar Faces

Still, such brands as Bugatti, Ferrari and Mercedes-Benz are close to market resistant. A 2002 Mercedes-Benz CLK GTR Roadster that RM Sotheby's sold for $10.2m on November 17 and a 1962 Ferrari 250 GT SWB Berlinetta that Gooding & Co sold for $9.5m on August 18 round out the top 10 car sales for 2023.

"At the very top, what I see is simply a very healthy market," says Calle.

The message is clear: Collectors this year have spoken with their wallets to say they're buying fewer cars-and for the time being, they'll stick with the brands they know.

THE WASHINGTON POST / THE PENINSULA

Seven things to know about protecting your car from thieves

Car theft is something we dont hear of in Qatar like in some other parts of the world. These tips might come into use when people visit or stay in some of those countries where car theft is an issue.

More than 1 million vehicles were stolen in the United States in 2022, according to the National Insurance Crime Bureau, and nearly 500,000 vehicles were reported stolen in the first half of 2023. Nobody, regardless of where we live or the deterrents we put in place, is immune to this kind of crime. So what can we do to keep our wheels safe?

Cale Gould, the statewide public outreach coordinator for the Colorado Auto Theft Prevention Authority, says self-assessment is a good first step. Consider what make of car you drive and what kind of security features it has. "Any vehicles older than five years may be a problem, because older technology is more vulnerable," he says. Vehicles that use a key instead of a push-button ignition is at a higher risk, as are most lower-end models of Kia and Hyundai without an immobilizer, which is an electronic security device that prevents the engine from being started unless your key fob is nearby. If your vehicle falls into these categories, you may want to add layers of security.

Everyone has suggestions on how to secure your wheels - from gadgets and chains to GPS locaters and kill switches. But what works, and what is just window dressing? Here are expert suggestions on some of the best preventive measures - and what's not worth the money.



1. Always take your keys with you

This sounds like a no-brainer, but nearly 60 percent of cars stolen in Minnesota had the keys in them, says Joseph Boche, a special agent with the Minnesota Commerce Fraud Bureau who oversees the state's auto-theft prevention program. "Cup holders are not for your keys and fobs," he says. Do you love how your side view mirrors automatically unfold when you get in the car? Higher-end vehicles often have fobs that trigger or turn on these features. That makes it easy for thieves to spot a parked car that likely has the keys still in it, so they jump in, start it and drive away, adds Boche.

2. Keep your keys secure

Even when you do take your keys with you, where you leave them also matters, Boche says. Stash them out of sight, not on a hook by the garage door when you are parked at home. Don't hide an extra key in a magnetized box under the car's door or bumper. For extra protection, store key fobs in signal-blocking pouches called Faraday bags, available online for less than $10. This prevents thieves from using a device to clone the unique signal from your key fob, then fooling the car into thinking your key fob is close by so they can unlock it and start the ignition.

3. Visual deterrents help

An old-fashioned steering wheel club (about $20) is a good investment and provides decent security. It's easy to use, and, while it's not foolproof, it's enough of a hassle for thieves that they are likely to bypass your car for one without a steering wheel club. Gould also likes parking boots - you can get something similar to what towing companies use for $50 to $80 online. "You put it on the driver-side front tire or wherever it can be seen. Thieves find them hard to overcome, as they can't drive the car or a motorcycle away," he says. Skip the steel cords for steering wheels - which can be cut off easily - or gear shift immobilizers, which Gould calls "cumbersome."

4. Register your wheels

Many municipalities are creating registration systems to help in the recovery of stolen vehicles. For example, DenverTrack allows vehicle owners to sign up and preauthorize the Denver Police Department to access the car's GPS system if the vehicle is stolen. When the owner reports the theft, police can track the vehicle in real time to hopefully locate and return it. Participants receive a sticker to place on their car alerting potential thieves that it is registered. Police in Washington, D.C., launched a pilot program in November to provide drivers in selected areas with free digital tracking tags for their vehicles.

5. Install a kill switch

Rocco Casullo, the president and owner of Casullo's Automotive Services in Buffalo, has seen an increased call for aftermarket GPS tracking and anti-theft devices, saying he's installing three or more per week. Kill switches, while not a visible deterrent, are one budget-friendly option, he says. Hidden in the glove box or in another discreet spot, a kill switch (or engine interrupter) effectively immobilizes the vehicle. "The engine won't start until you flip the switch, so if you don't know there's a switch, you can't start the car," says Casullo, who estimates the cost of installing one to be about $200.

6. Go high-tech

Even if you have an older vehicle, you can install a high-end security system that includes an alarm, blinking security lights when the system is armed (thieves tend to bypass blinking lights), a remote starter, GPS tracking, and smartphone apps that track its location and/or alert you if your car moves. Depending on the features and enhancements, these devices run from $300 to $700, Casullo says.

7. Don't take matters into your own hands

While Air Tags, GPS locaters and other tracking devices can help, if you do locate your missing car, don't try to retrieve it yourself, say law enforcement experts. Most stolen cars are being used to commit other crimes, and you don't want to get injured tracking down your wheels. Call the police and let them do their job.

JAECOO J8 wins award for best 7-seat luxury SUV


Officials with the award.

Elite Motors Company, the exclusive agent for the international Chery brand in the Qatari automobile market, announced that the JAECOO J8, the latest Chery international model, won the award for the best luxury 7-seat SUV. The award was received by Mohammed Amin, Marketing Director, and Anis Abu Raslan, Corporate Sales Manager.

Engineer Ahmed Al Sibai, Executive Director, expressed his happiness, saying: "We are happy to win awards for the third year in a row for international Chery models, and we are also particularly proud of the JAECOO J8 model winning an award as the best 7-seat luxury SUV, the latest Chery model, which won fourth place in sales in the Qatari market. We expect more sales after the luxury brand JAECOO joins the list of models operating under the roof of Elite Motors, and we promise our customers more achievements that are in the interest of our customers."

Al Sibai added, saying: "Since the international Chery brand announced the launch of JAECOO models, we have sought to enrich the Qatari market with this distinguished model. Thank God, the JAECOO J8 was launched internationally for the first time in October of last year, specifically at the Geneva International Motor Show, which was held in Doha."

Al Sebaei confirmed that the JAECOO J8 is the brand's masterpiece in design, cabin equipment, smart technologies, and performance.



Equipped with superior off-road capabilities, the J8 is of great importance in pioneering a new market in the field of "off-road SUVs" with the continuous development of JAECOO and opening the doors to the best travel experience for users.

With a waterfall-shaped front grille design, befitting a premium brand, JAECOO J8 reflects the concept of high quality at first sight.

JAECOO J8's overall mature style expresses unique artistic depth by displaying the car's lines with soft strokes of natural light on the sharp shoulder line running the length of the body.

The JAECOO J8's cabin design displays premium elegance without exaggeration. The SUV, whose seats are largely covered in Nappa leather, not only provides passengers with a comfortable travel experience but also provides a more spacious ambience. The roof lining, made entirely of matte black suede, not only provides a very comfortable feeling but also contributes to the insulation of the cabin by improving sound absorption. TOM's faux wood combines the visual texture and tactile feel of natural wood, creating extraordinary elegance.

JAECOO J8 provides a friendly environment by blending superior design style with advanced technology. The cabin is equipped with a 24.6-inch ultra-smart curved display, a custom 14-speaker Sony audio system and rhythmic ambient lighting in 255 colours in a waterfall style. Enjoying a unique audio-visual experience while driving, users can access air conditioning settings through the ultra-sensitive air conditioning system called "540 Stereo". Passengers in each row can adjust the air temperature to their preferences. Thanks to the contribution of "C-PURE Cubic Cabin Technology", a spacious and comfortable temperature is provided, making the air inside the car fresher and healthier.

The JAECOO J8 offers a flexible and smooth driving experience that can easily adapt to 7 basic driving scenarios. Suitable for every scenario, intelligent all-wheel drive delivers power transfer. JAECOO J8 with CDC height adjustable magnetic suspension; It can adjust the vehicle height according to different loads and road conditions and combines advanced comfort with superior road holding characteristics. At the same time, it can provide off-road enthusiasts with balanced off-road driving enjoyment.

