



VERVE CONCEPT NOTCHBACK REVEALS NEXT STEP FOR FORD'S NEW SMALL CAR VISION

GUANGZHOU (China), November 19th 2007 – Ford is revealing more about its vision for a new global small car family at the 2007 Auto Guangzhou show in China, where a second Verve Concept – this time a stylish four-door notchback aimed specifically at Asian customers – is revealed alongside the exciting three-door model first seen at Frankfurt Motor Show in September.

The pair of dynamic Ford Verve Concept vehicles are stars of the fifth annual Guangzhou International Automobile Exhibition. The fact that Ford staged the global reveal of the four-door version of the Verve Concept at Guangzhou signals the increasing importance of Asia in Ford's global plans.

Sporty and coupé-like, the new Verve Concept notchback reinforces the design vision for Ford's future small car designs first previewed in the three-door hatchback Verve Concept that was a major star at Frankfurt.

Ford will unveil the third and last Verve Concept vehicle in January at the North American International Auto Show in Detroit.

“By adding a four-door model for Asian customers into the Verve Concept story, the picture of Ford's big plans for the small-car segment is becoming clearer,” said John Fleming, Ford of Europe's President and CEO. “Our future small car is being developed as a global car - designed and engineered by the European arm of Ford's global product development team and manufactured globally. These two Verve Concepts demonstrate how confident Ford is in its direction and how we can tailor the vehicle's appeal to consumers in Asia as well as in Europe.”

Ford's European design team created both of the Verve Concepts which apply 'kinetic design' form language successfully for the first time to a small car. The Verve Concept vehicles clearly display a European flair and premium touches not previously seen in this segment.



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Once all have been revealed, the trilogy of Verve concept cars will provide an advanced indication of Ford's design vision well in advance of the production models. This approach is similar to the way in which the Ford iosis Concept preceded the production model of the new Mondeo.

Expressive Design

Side by side in Guangzhou, the two Verve Concepts bring the latest iteration of Ford's 'kinetic design' form language to the heart of Asia.

Their colours are inspired by the world of fashion; the regal 'Frosted Grape' exterior colour of the new Verve Concept four-door notchback complements the bold 'Hot Magenta' of the Frankfurt three-door hatchback like a well-coordinated ensemble.

Ford designers, buoyed by the enthusiastic reaction in Europe to the first Verve Concept, will be carefully studying reactions to the new notchback by Asian consumers.

“The Verve Concepts are our first public expression directionally of some of the thinking that will be contributing to the dynamic design DNA of our next-generation small cars,” said Martin Smith, Ford of Europe's Executive Director of Design. “As concept vehicles they are radical and innovative, but I'm confident that when our customers see the final production versions they will be surprised at how expressive and innovative they are in both design terms and features.”

The new Guangzhou Verve Concept notchback execution brings new hints about Ford's approach to sedan variants of its future small car family and builds on the very distinctive look of its hatchback sibling. They both share strong front-end graphics that, with the advent of the new Mondeo, are now becoming recognised as the bold, new face of Ford.

A notchback version of Ford's new B-car range, however, is not planned for sale in European markets.



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Sleek and Poised

Martin Smith's exterior design team – led by Stefan Lamm, Chief Exterior Designer, Ford of Europe – took full advantage of the notchback shape to stretch the 'kinetic design' signature elements and create a very sleek and dynamically poised personality.

The notchback displays a sleek, pillarless side window profile providing a bold graphic statement, along with strongly defined wheel arches that communicate tension and muscularity. Its dramatic C-pillar shape contributes to this feeling of dynamism, while the rear body and decklid shapes coherently build on the toned and fit 'kinetic design' look with full surfaces and bold lines.

As with any top fashion model on the catwalk, Guangzhou's' new Verve Concept is dressed well. From its seductive colour to the smallest detail, Verve Concept evokes an air of premium quality not usually found in the small-car segment.

The rear glass of the Verve notchback is shaped to correspond with the forms of the high-mounted, two-piece tail lamps. This unique and premium execution, first seen on the new Mondeo, is now translated into a smaller car.

A dark chrome diffuser at the lower bumper is consistent with the design of the hatchback but shaped specifically for the notchback design.

Like its sibling, the notchback Verve's face is bold and sporty, yet friendly and engaging. The front is dominated by a large, inverted trapezoidal lower grille and a large Ford oval badge centred in the compact upper grille opening.

The lower grille features a strong eggcrate graphic; its vertical and horizontal blades bonded by an array of intriguing 'bullet' shapes. The lower grille and badge treatment are the design team's signature elements to communicate the Ford design DNA in future products.



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The bonnet features highly sculpted dynamic forms. This form treatment combines with the more pronounced, rearward-stretching head lamp units – inspired by Mondeo – to give the face of the Verve a friendly, open and inviting personality. The prominent headlamps feature two projector beams and a light-emitting diode (LED) array.

Both Verve Concepts share a distinctive 18-inch, 12-spoke, two-piece alloy wheel design that gives more drama to the vehicle's stance. The wheels have a precise, jewel-like feel to their design and are surrounded by low-profile tyres featuring a sidewall stripe that complements the exterior body colour.

“The first stage of our Verve journey started with the hatchback, appropriately revealed in Frankfurt and clearly aimed at the highly competitive and style-driven European B-car market”, commented Smith. “Stage two for Guangzhou is to show how we can create a specific bodystyle exclusively for Asian customers but one that is also clearly part of the same 'kinetic design' family.

“Looking at the dynamic Verve notchback and the sporty Verve hatchback together, you can begin to see just how exciting the new Ford small car range will be when it hits the market,” Smith said.

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Pictures are available on www.fordpress.be

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