

Up To Speed

Car Launches Are Getting The Market Back In Gear!

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the automobile market definitely slowed down, however the companies are bullish about the prospects as the lockdown norms ease across the country. In lieu of that, they continue to strengthen their product offerings and introduce new models, which is a good sign as it signifies that life is getting back on track. On that note, let's take a look at some of the big launches in recent times.

- Vikram Gour

5th Gen Honda City

Design: The new Honda City carries a sharp new look that is further accentuated by the full LED headlamps, LED DRLs, LED turn signals and a distinct Z-shape 3D wrap-around LED tail lamps. The car is now the longest and widest vehicle in its segment.

Interior & Equipment: The cabin has been kitted out rather well and is finished using upmarket materials. The 5th generation City also benefits from a fresh new console layout. In terms of space, the City boasts of the best in class knee room, legroom and rear

shoulder room. The All New City comes with Alexa remote capability and is equipped with the Next Generation Honda Connect with Telematics Control Unit (TCU) with a 5-year free subscription. The system offers over 32 features and aims to provide a sense of safety, security, convenience and peace of mind for customers.

Performance: Powering the new Honda City is the tried and tested 1.5 litre i-VTEC petrol engine that develops 121 PS of power and 145 Nm of torque. The i-VTEC is offered with an all-new 6 speed manual transmission and for those who would like an automatic, Honda



also has a new 7-speed CVT on offer. For the diesel lovers the City gets a new 1.5 litre i-DTEC diesel unit that delivers 100 PS of power and 200 Nm of torque. The diesel version is only available with a 6-speed manual transmission. The 5th generation Honda City prices start from INR 10.89 lakh and go up to INR 14.64 lakh.

Hyundai Venue IMT

Hyundai recently introduced the Venue compact SUV with an all-new intelligent manual transmission (iMT). Essentially a two-pedal clutch less technology, Intelligent Manual Transmission allows the driver to enjoy shifting gears like a conventional manual transmission.

New technology: The transmission includes a regular gear shift lever, an intention sensor, hydraulic actuator and a transmission control unit. This cutting edge technology doesn't compromise on performance or efficiency as it is touted to be rather responsive and at the same time extremely convenient for those who seek to enjoy the thrill of shifting gears, yet not have to worry about being fatigued by constantly operating the clutch pedal in stop-start traffic.

Built to perform: Hyundai is offering this new transmission only on the Venue that comes with the 1.0 litre T-GDI engine, which is a powerful unit that delivers a solid 120 PS of power. The Hyundai Venue iMT prices start at INR 9.99 lakh.

Mahindra Thar



Design: The new Thar carries an exciting new design that manages to look future ready yet draws a lot of inspiration from Mahindra's traditional roots. It continues to be a 2-door offering and key design elements include a bold character line along the shoulder, a sleek rounded bonnet, inset headlights and integrated bumpers.

Interiors: Boasting of a rather upmarket cabin that has four forward facing seats, the new Thar



comes packed with goodies that include roof mounted speakers, power windows, electrically adjustable ORVMs, central locking, an 18 cm touchscreen infotainment system with Android Auto and Apple CarPlay. USB connectivity, Navigation and a classy Adventure Statistics Display are also part of the package.

Performance: The All-New Thar is powered by two all-new engines which include an all-new mStallion 2.0 litre petrol unit that delivers 150 bhp and 320 Nm of torque and for the diesel lovers there is the 2.2 litre mHawk unit that delivers 130 bhp and 320 Nm of torque. Mahindra is also offering the Thar with 6-speed manual and 6-speed automatic transmission options, plus shift-on-the-fly 4x4 with a low crawl ratio.

Renault Duster 1.3 L Turbo

The Renault Duster continues to be an important part of the company's line up in India and over the years it has been tweaked to keep with the times. The Duster boasts of those

quintessential good looks and the cabin has also been improved to carry a more upmarket appeal. It is now offered with a new 1.3 litre turbo petrol engine. The Duster has been priced exceptionally well with the range starting from INR 10.49 lakh for the manual version and going up to INR 12.99 lakh for the CVT version.

Performance: The all-new 1.3 litre turbo petrol engine is touted to be the most powerful unit to ever power the Duster in India as it delivers 156 PS of power and 254 Nm of torque. This new BS6 compliant unit is also extremely frugal, making it ideal for those who are looking for a fun-to-drive urban SUV that scores both in terms of performance and efficiency.

Technology: The 1.3 litre turbo petrol engine is an advanced unit that boasts of the latest technologies such as gasoline direct injection and dual variable valve timing technology accounts. Both enhance performance as well deliver reduced emissions.





NEXA S-Cross Petrol

The S-Cross is the car that kick-started Maruti Suzuki's premium brand NEXA in the market. Over the years it has received constant upgrades, however the biggest change has come in recently with the 1.3 DDiS diesel engine being replaced by the tried and tested 1.5 litre K-Series petrol engine that is equipped with the company's next generation Smart Hybrid technology.

Petrol power: Delivering 100 PS of power, Maruti's 1.5 litre engine is also equipped with the company's next generation Smart Hybrid technology. It features a dual Li-ion battery set up that provides a torque boost as you accelerate which supports the internal combustion engine and helps reduce fuel consumption as well. With this new engine, the S-Cross will undoubtedly transform into a peppy crossover that will be an absolute delight to drive. As a product, it is spacious, feature-rich and boasts of a high level of comfort. Add to that, its upright

stance and rugged appeal ensure that it is the ideal vehicle for our roads.

Audi RS7 Sportback



Design: Audi India is out with the new RS7 Sportback. This versatile car is an all-out performance machine, yet has the space on board to ferry around your family in comfort and carry enough luggage too! The car boasts of a broad stance that is further accentuated by a distinctive roofline, pronounced character lines, a rear spoiler and typical RS detailing which all work to lend this machine a purposeful and sporty appeal.

Interior & Equipment: The cabin of the RS 7 Sportback carries a sporty

and futuristic look that is the result of high grade materials and defined contours. Key materials include Nappa leather upholstery, carbon, wood or brushed aluminium finishes on the inlays and high grade fabric. It boasts of special RS specific displays in the Audi virtual cockpit which give the driver access to tyre pressure, torque, performance, boost pressure, lap times and G-forces! The well-appointed cabin also includes a high end B&O infotainment system and you also get a nice flat-bottomed RS leather steering wheel.

Performance: Powered by a 4.0 litre V8 twin-turbo that generates 600 PS of power and 800 Nm of torque, the Audi RS7 Sportback can go from 0-100 km/h in just 3.6 seconds which is right in supercar territory. It also comes with a mild hybrid system and cylinder on demand technology that ensures a rather high efficiency for a car of this class. The legendary quattro system is standard as is the adaptive air suspension. Priced at INR 1.94 Crore, the Audi RS7 Sportback is a car that will get your adrenaline pumping!

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