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2012 Kia Cadenza Preview

Picking up where the Amanti left off. Maybe not.



By Michel Deslauriers,
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Monday, June 13, 2011

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For a car company that's enjoying steady market growth, it's hard to resist the temptation of taking on new challenges. The confidence gauge is redlining, the profits are falling from the sky and bonus-pumped product development staffers are targeting new market segments for the next onslaught.

PHOTO GALLERY



The Cadenza will arrive in Canada at the beginning of 2012. (Photo: Kia)

Kia, the Korean manufacturer who's currently turning everything it touches into gold, seems to think there is potential for another crack at the full-size sedan segment. Their previous offering, the baroque and unloved **Amanti**, didn't create much of a splash.

The Cadenza, however, will probably scream "cannonball!" as it jumps in the middle of a lightly-crowded pool. The Amanti would never have done that, even on a double dare.

If you've seen the new mid-size **Optima** in person, chances are it caught your attention. The Cadenza boasts a similar appearance, but with slightly softer character lines and, obviously, bigger proportions. The company claims the car's design was inspired by snow-capped mountains; that's something we haven't heard before, but if you think a snow-covered hill is both muscular and elegant, well we won't argue with that.

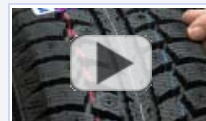
The Cadenza includes the brand's signature grille, illuminated headlight cluster surrounds and an Audi-esque rump with LED taillights. Knowing who they kidnapped their head designer from, this should come as no surprise.

With a wheelbase of 2,845 millimetres and an overall length of 4,965 mm, the Cadenza is shorter than all other full-size sedans except the Nissan Maxima, but Kia is announcing class-leading front headroom and legroom.

The new sedan's interior design is elegant, if not quite as striking as in the Optima; the more conventional appearance might be a logical decision, given the

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target audience. It should include however, the same 3.5-inch colour LCD trip computer, located in the speedo and tach, that's found in its smaller sister. A 12.3-inch LCD screen should also highlight the centre stack.



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In foreign-market Cadenzas (it's actually called the K7 in Korea), where the car is already on sale, interior features include available packages with suede, Nappa leather, aluminum accents, a power rear window sunshade, ventilated front seats, an overhead lighting console with LED lamps, a power panoramic sunroof, a heated steering wheel and a folding rear-seat armrest with auxiliary audio and seat heater controls. Exactly how many of these features will be carried over to our market remains to be confirmed (we say bring 'em all).

Safety features haven't been spared, as the sedan will be equipped with eight airbags, audible front and rear park assist, a rear view camera, a lane-departure warning system as well as traction and electronic stability control systems.

PHOTO GALLERY



Final specs, features and pricing should be available later this year. (Photo: Kia)

Although the Cadenza show car unveiled at the 2009 Seoul Auto Show flaunted 20-inch alloy wheels, our production version will likely feature 17- and 18-inch wheels instead. The Korean-market version makes do with a 2.4-litre inline-4 (201 hp) and a 3.0-litre V6 (270 hp), but we'll only get the company's 3.5-litre V6, serving up 290 horsepower and mated to a 6-speed automatic.

The Cadenza will arrive in Canada at the beginning of 2012. Final specs, features and pricing should be available later this year.

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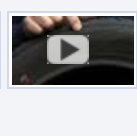
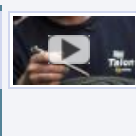
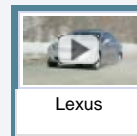
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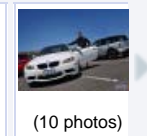
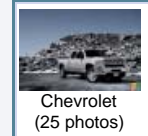


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