



SHIFT

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RETRO COOL

Its difficult to understand the idea behind retro design. For everything from sunglasses to jeans, designing a new product comes with the mouth-watering prospect of designing something new, from scratch, and possibly defining the design direction for the coming decades. However, like the fashion industry, car-makers, for the most part of the 2000s, designed retro-styled cars perhaps because of a nostalgic fever and a yearning for simpler, cooler times. This week we bring you a roundup of the coolest retro-styled vehicles over the past decade and a half. (Yes, we know the Mini Cooper did not make the list. Read the part about the Fiat 500 to find out why).

SHAER REAZ



FORD MUSTANG

The Ford Mustang is one of the most important retro styled modern car, because this is where it started for the global post-2000 retro boom. The Mustang nameplate was wallowing in the depths of hyper-depreciating used car lots all across America, and Ford needed to invoke the Americana spirit of yesteryears. What better way than to take inspiration from the 1960s Mustang, examples of which are still being sold for nearly half a million dollars in auctions? It wasn't very original, using the 60's Mustang lines to great effect, but it was an instant hit and pulled Ford out of a slump in the US market.



FORD GT40/GT

The Ford GT40 was a halo car for Ford (having enjoyed extraordinary success in the 60's Le Mans races), and when the time came to launch a thoroughbred modern sportscar along with the Mustang, there was only one place to turn to for inspiration. Its almost an exact copy, the new one being wider and slightly taller (44 inches as opposed to the 40 inches of the original). Ballistic performance, great looks, winner.



MERCEDES SL/SLS

The Germans are not known for their nostalgic sensibilities, since almost everything they make looks forward and is packed to the brim with futuristic spaceship tech. Case in point, the original SL, which was so advanced that the rest of Europe would take at least 15 more years to catch up. The SLS invokes the incredible beauty of the SL and is a thoroughly refined GT, certain to be a future classic.



DODGE CHALLENGER

The Challenger, along with the Charger, was a huge part of muscle car culture in the early 70's. In the wave of retro-styled modern muscle cars that followed the Ford Mustang, Dodge came up with a Challenger that was basically a scaled up version of the original. It wasn't a huge hit, but it looked bonkers and captured the imaginations of pretty much everyone. In SRT Hellcat form, it was insanity at its best.



DATSUN 240Z/370Z

The soft spot that we have for the 240Z extends to sleepless nights followed by depressed days because we can't have one. The 240Z combined superior Japanese engineering and chassis balance with strikingly beautiful looks to make a sportscar that changed everything when it came out. Subsequent generations were equally enthralling, and the latest, the 370Z, keeps the legend of the Z-car alive, and does it really well. The visual relation to the original was ticked off with the 350Z, but was perfected in the svelte lines of the 370.



CHEVROLET CAMARO Z28

The original Camaro is perhaps the most instantly recognizable of the muscle car generation, besides the Mustang. It suffered a similar fate as the Mustang, with a bevy of models in the 80's and 90's amounting to nothing but resounding flops. With the Mustang and Challenger's spiritual rebirth injecting some juice into the muscle car competition, Chevrolet got its mojo back. The culmination of that is in the Z28, a brutish thug of a car in terms of both performance and looks.



JAGUAR E-TYPE/F-TYPE

The E-type is arguably the best-looking car ever made, relying on aerodynamic trickery instead of a designer's touch. The F-type, Jag's entry level sportscar, mimics those curves but falls slightly short of being earth-shatteringly beautiful like the original. Its still pretty enough to make you question your choice of marrying Marion Cotillard, if you were so lucky. Considering what we said there can be amounted to blasphemy in any international court, you can tell how good looking the F-type is, and how gorgeous the E-type would have to be to outshine that.



FIAT 500

Someone somewhere must have looked at the original Fiat 500and said "Well, isn't that the most Italian thing ever." You'd have to agree. Many will cry and whine and scream "Why isn't the Mini Cooper on this list?!!" but then next to the 500 and its subsequent rebirth, the Mini falls short. While the original Mini was tiny and a space saver, the new one is a poser and a betrayal of the values that made it great. The Fiat 500, old and new, operates on the same principle: hyper cute space saver which guarantees entry into any list of "cool". Mini can't touch this with its corporate-sellout vibe and niche marketing.



RANGER ROVER

The Range Rover is known for having a split personality from the first to the latest one: it could take you off-road with a sort of ease like nothing else sold, and after you're done mucking about in mud and over rock, you'd fit right in with hyper-formal folks having one of those rich people dinner parties. The original set the precedent, but until around the early 2000s, Ranger Rovers weren't huge sales successes. The retro-styled L322 changed all that.



TOYOTA FJ

The original FJ40 was iconic to the extent that almost every single Bangladeshi has seen one at some point, either in police-cruiser guise (climactic scene in Bangla movies where the police always show up late in battered blue FJ40s), or in the faded white of government service cars. Built to run for an eternity with major parts missing, the FJ40 was so reliable that people had a hard time getting rid of the damn things for something new. Toyota decided to give it to them with the all-new FJ, which is a let-down from the rugged original to be quite honest. Its aimed at the Californian surfer crowd than betel-chewing coppers in Bangladesh and India, but its still cool.



BMW VEHICLES TO COME WITH FREE AFTER SALES & REPAIR SERVICE IN BANGLADESH

All brand new BMW vehicles sold will come with free maintenance, repair and change of wear & tear parts. This announcement was made by Executive Motors, the authorized representative of BMW in Bangladesh, at a press conference in Dhaka. Within this offer the customer will get free maintenance, repair work along with spare parts on the vehicle performed within 5 years period of validity starting from the date of delivery or until 60,000 KM mileage is reached. Entitlement to the services is transferred to the next owner if the vehicle is sold during the period. It is however required that the purchased vehicle has been operated properly and that all service and

maintenance work required/recommended by the manufacturer has been complied with consistency and on time in accordance with the manufacturer-specified regulations in a BMW Service-authorized workshop. "BMW strives to provide unparalleled service to its clients. This is one more initiative by BMW to give its drivers a hassle free driving experience. We believe that you should focus your full efforts on enjoying the sheer driving pleasure of a BMW, while we take care of your car in every possible way free of cost" said Dewan Muhammad Sajid Afzal, General Manager, Executive Motors Limited during the press conference.

COLLECTIBLES

Maisto Datsun 240Z

Maisto's Premier line 240Z comes with high quality paint, accurate interior, detailed rims and tyres and a properly finished undercarriage. In 1:18 scale, the legendary Nissan Z-car is a prime piece of 1960's motoring for your collectible garage, and the Premier line tag makes it somewhat of a rarity next to the more bread and butter models. Others do it better, such as Kyosho and Sunstar, but their 240Z models are much more expensive, making the Maisto a bargain deal. The main difference between Maisto and the slightly more expensive Sunstar is the engine detail (separate mould with wires and tubing) and better moulding for the smaller pieces (such as signal lights and wipers) for the Sunstar, whereas the Kyosho is on another level. Maisto makes a hard bargain .

PHOTO: RAHIN SADMAN ISLAM

