



Check out next week's SHIFT for a scoop on our top 10 picks from the on-going Geneva Motor Show 2016

SHIFT

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Royal rumble – 2016's performance SUVs

SHAER REAZ

The world is SUV-crazy right now. With a host of brand new SUVs being shoved out the dealership doors before they can be re-stocked in every part of the planet (including Bangladesh), you'd think that the environmentally conscious car buying crowd would get over the post-2010 SUV obsession and move on to smaller, more economical vehicles. The market for SUVs has done anything but shrink, and the following are proof of the fact that luxurious, compact, performance oriented SUVs are only increasing in demand.



BENTLEY BENTAYGA

It might be a cathedral on wheels and be built solely for the purpose of carrying around footballers with questionable taste, but the one thing we can say for certain regarding the Bentayga is that it is possibly the ugliest thing we have laid eyes on in recent years. It is horrendous. Moving this hideous cathedral is a 6.0 litre twin-turbocharged W12 putting out 600 bhp and 663 lb-ft of torque, good for a 4.1 second 0-100 km/h sprint and top speed of 301 km/h.

MASERATI LEVANTE

Unlike Bentley's brute, the Italian offering comes with boatloads of grace and style, and is so much sleeker that we sort of can (and will) overlook the fact that Maserati, like Bentley, should not ever get it into their heads that building SUVs is a good idea. At launch, the Levante will come with a couple of V6 offerings, with a performance version possibly getting a turbocharged V8 from the Quattroporte.



JAGUAR F-PACE

Think Jag XJ on stilts and you get the F-Pace. One reader went so far as to call it "a fitness machine of some sort". Aside from the stupid name, the F-Pace has a range of engine options from the economical to the mad: the top grade F-Pace comes with a 370 BHP V6. Its not as powerful as the Bentayga, but it's a lot lighter and honestly, we think it's kind of good looking. There's a chance it might cannibalise the Range Rovers that sister company Land Rover makes, but it's not like rich people have much brand loyalty when it comes to SUVs. They'll possibly buy both.

PORSCHE MACAN GTS

The Cayenne's baby brother gets more power and more aggression for 2016, with 20 more horsepower leading to a figure of 360 BHP. There's also Porsche's PDK gearbox and active suspension. It's probably the most performance oriented SUV here, but does it come with the luxury? Of course, it's a Porsche.



We asked the readers to pick between the Bentley CathedralOfHorrors and Maserati NeverShouldHaveHappened. Here's what they said.

Oyshy Enayet – "Bentley because the only Italian SUV thingy should have been the original Lamborghini LM-002 and that's that."

Ayan Rahman – "Leaning towards the Bentayga, but if the Levante

sounds anything like the Ghibli, then Levante. With prettier rims and a darker shade of colour."

Md Samir Iqbal – "The front end of the Bentayga looks like the beast from Disney's Beauty and the Beast.

Even the color matches. The white Italian Levante is what I'd choose (hoping it comes with a lifetime's supply of lasagna)."

We asked the readers to pick between the Jaguar WhatIsThisFitnessMachine and Porsche MacauThatParrotSpecies. Here's what they said.

Shoeb Saleheen – "If I had to choose between these two, I'd take the Porsche over the Jag any day-even if the Jag was offered free. IMO, Jaguar has been slow to play catch-up in this segment. Also consider the

fact that purists also screamed murder when Porsche announced they would be building an SUV - but then the Cayenne came and it was, in every sense, a Porsche."

Zayan Khan – "I actually love the

Macan and F-Pace and I don't really mind Jag building an SUV."

Munajj Ahamed – "That JAAAAAG looks pretty good to me."

Volvo's design revolution

Let's admit it. Volvo makes the best looking "normal" cars on the planet, and we're all a bit surprised that the straight edge Swedes can design a car that is both sleek and soulful. Thomas Ingenlath, who moved to Volvo as Design Chief after the departure of Peter Horbury, has turned Volvo around and made it the most stylish carmaker in Europe. Don't agree with us? Do a before/after comparison search for Volvos from the early 2000s and now.



The XC90 is possibly the best looking SUV, ever. Its basically a box, but that's what makes it crazy – how do you make a two box shape this beautiful?



The best-looking station wagon in the world? The V90 Estate sets a class of its own in terms of wagon design.



It's not all exteriors, Volvo has upped it's interior game as well. Like fine coffee, the XC90's interior is a fine mix of old age materials and new age tech, wrapped up in sleek, smooth design.



The V40 won't ever make any list of the best looking cars in the world, but from every angle, it is definitely a contender and a winner in our books. Who says hatches can't look gorgeous?



2016 SSANGYONG TIVOLI

First impressions

A Range Rover Evoque-ish side profile, a raised Mini Clubman rear stance and a unique fascia with head lamps pointed outwards reminiscent of an angry bull's horn- the Tivoli has the right curves and angles with two striking body lines that accentuate the wheel arches in beefening up the small SUV. It is not an off roading 4WD SUV, yet has 2+3 seating arrangement and a boot space to fit in a "luggage party" haul. Size doesn't matter, but proportion does for an automobile to be visually appealing. Unlike the previous oddly proportioned stable mates, the Tivoli is rather a pleasant surprise.

Time to climb in- abundant space for you to stretch out in the front and rear alike. Even with the slanted roofline, rear head room seemed enough for someone with more than average height. Even though the interior is splashed with multiple colors (black in two shades and beige) and materials, it doesn't feel cheap. There are abundant nifty storage compartments for your daily necessities everywhere- we found 11 between the rear boot and front glove box. Thumbs up for the

Multitude of features

To make life a tad bit forgiving, SsangYong has thoughtfully put dual zone air conditioners and ventilated/ heated front seats. After a hectic & sweaty bazaar duty, retreat into the front seats and get your butt air cooled if you so desire. To make driving less frantic in the grizzly traffic where everyone scavenges for space, the Tivoli comes with front and rear sensors that send in visuals in the twin gauge instrument cluster. There's the mandatory 7" navigation system too with rear camera features, not to mention Bluetooth, HDMI and steering mounted audio controls.

How's it to drive the thing?

A 1.6 liter horizontally placed petrol motor turns the front wheels via a 6 speed autobox. Indeed the figures are small- 128 hp and 118 lb-ft beyond 4,500 RPM; but with a gentle tap of the right foot, the Tivoli lurches forward, quickly shifting and picking up speed with no drama at all. Very, very normal. A few settings needed to be fiddled with to rid the boredom- D to M in the gear lever, Normal to Sport in the

steering controls and turning the traction control off. The little SUV is so much sharper to handle, steering more responsive and fun; there is however insignificant difference in the acceleration, but the rev climbs all the way up to almost 5,800, holds momentarily before shifting up.

The Tivoli's suspension has split personality disorder- although it handles the bumps brilliantly, you will feel some of the nasty pot holes. But you do get great seats to cushion that. The brakes are soft, and a combination of front and rear discs along with ABS and ESP with this little SUV is impressive that gives you an assured sense of being in it.

Verdict

For a locally assembled car, the Tivoli is joyous to drive around. Ignore the false exhaust tips and you will be content with a great city tourer.

For a detailed feature and specs, head to our site. For more info, contact SsangYong Millenium Motors Limited.

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COLLECTIBLES



RUSTING HOT WHEELS

This week we bring you a rust effect custom Hot Wheels, custom work done by Joshua Barrokh. Using paint and hours of detailing work, the rust effect looks amazing. Look for a detailed story on our site, thedailystar.net/shift.

