

IN THE MARKET FOR A NEW VEHICLE? WE'VE ALREADY DONE THE LEGWORK.

AJAC DETERMINES A DOZEN OF CANADA'S BEST for 2010

Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON – Seventy of Canada's top automotive journalists spent this week in the picturesque tourist town of Niagara-on-the-Lake; but not for the scenery or the wine tasting. Journalist members of the Automobile Journalists Association of Canada (AJAC) were here for the express purpose of determining the 'Best New' cars, trucks and SUV/CUVs in 12 different vehicle categories, as part of AJAC's annual Canadian Car of the Year Awards program.

The three days of intensive, back-to-back testing and evaluation are known in the automotive industry as "TestFest". The results of the journalists' test-drive evaluations were known today during a press conference wherein the winners in 12 categories were announced. The press conference was held at the Niagara Drive Centre located at the Niagara District Airport where "TestFest" is staged each year.

The winners are:

BEST NEW SMALL CAR (under \$21k) - Mazda3

BEST NEW SMALL CAR (over \$21k) - Mazda3 Sport

BEST NEW FAMILY CAR (under \$30k) - Volkswagen Golf Wagon TDI

BEST NEW FAMILY CAR (over \$30k) - Ford Taurus

BEST NEW LUXURY CAR - BMW 335d Sedan

BEST NEW PRESTIGE CAR - Porsche Panamera Turbo

BEST NEW SPORTS/PERFORMANCE CAR (under \$50k) - Volkswagen Golf GTI

BEST NEW SPORTS/PERFORMANCE CAR (over \$50k) - Audi S4

BEST NEW CONVERTIBLE - Audi A5 Cabriolet

BEST NEW SUV/CUV (under \$35k) - Subaru Outback

BEST NEW SUV/CUV (\$35k-\$60k) - Volkswagen Touareg TDI Clean Diesel

BEST NEW SUV/CUV (over \$60k) - Lexus RX450h

The results were compiled by the international accounting firm KPMG and kept confidential even from AJAC until this morning's press conference. They were determined from more than 46,000 individual data points established in the testing of 157 different vehicles.

The purpose of the AJAC awards is to provide consumers with a valuable resource they can use when researching the purchase of a new vehicle – one that includes a broad range of comparative information on vehicles that are new to the market. That information includes not just specifications and features but actual performance data and subjective ratings on up to 23 different characteristics – from interior roominess and comfort to ride quality and handling ability.

Our journalists' vote results - including all of the comparative test data amassed this week – are on our web site for use as a consumer resource buying guide. Consumers that want to compare a Nissan Cube

to a Kia Soul, or the Ford Fusion Hybrid with a Toyota Prius, or even a BMW 335 Sedan with a Mercedes-Benz E-Class Sedan, need look no further than the AJAC web site: www.ajac.ca > Canadian Car of the Year > 2010 Results Comparisons

Photos from the TestFest evaluation program and press conference are available on the AJAC web site as well on the various social networking sites.

The 12 category winners listed above now go on to compete for the honour of becoming the 2010 Canadian Car of the Year or the 2010 Canadian Utility Vehicle of the Year. These overall winners will be announced on February 11th, 2010, at the Canadian International Auto Show in Toronto, ON. Award winners for Best New Design and Best New Technology, presented by Shell Canada, will also be announced at that time.

In addition, an award for Best New Green Technology for 2010, also presented by Shell Canada, will be announced at the Montreal International Auto Show on January 14, 2010. As it has been for several years, Shell Canada was the official fuel supplier to the 2010 AJAC TestFest.

Several AJAC journalists who evaluated the brand-new models at TestFest are available across Canada for interviews to talk about the vote results and comparative data. Media are invited to visit the AJAC web site and log-in under "Ask An Expert," then choose the "Car of the Year" link for interviews once they've been validated.

Still looking to buy a 2009, 2008 , or even an older vehicle? AJAC archives the comparative test data and vote results from previous years on its web site. Check it out: www.ajac.ca > Vehicle Comparisons

For more information on the 2010 Canadian Car of the Year Awards, either visit our AJAC web site, call the AJAC office 1.705.924.3444, or send an email to: beth@ajac.ca.

This news release is brought to you by CNW Group: AJAC's official news wire service.
