

2015 Mustang Unveiled

ALL-NEW DESIGN PAYS TRIBUTE TO HERITAGE, MOVES TO NEW HEIGHTS

By Derek Price
Green Shoot Media

After 50 years and more than 9 million Mustangs sold, Ford faced one of the toughest questions in the automotive world: How do you redesign an icon?

To create an all-new version of the Mustang — perhaps America's most iconic and popular performance car — Ford's designers and engineers had to balance respect for the Mustang's heritage with changes that bring it into the modern age for 2015. The result is what you see here: a drastically different car that remains every inch a Mustang.

FOR A NEW WORLD

For better or worse, the previous generation Mustang is in many ways a relic from an earlier era. Its solid rear axle, heavyweight feel and muscle-car styling would have looked right at home in the 1960s.

The new generation Mustang changes that. While the look is still heavily influenced by the early Mustangs — a good thing, in my opinion — there are changes under the skin that make it a much more modern vehicle than its predecessor.

The Mustang's old-school rear suspension design has finally been dumped in favor



The Mustang's design is completely new for 2015, marking a fresh generation of this iconic American car.

of an integral-link independent rear suspension, which should greatly improve the ride and handling. It also gets some new electronic goodies such as adaptive cruise control and Ford's Blind Spot Information System with cross-traffic alert.

Its cabin also looks like a nice improvement over the previous design, making more

use of soft-touch materials, classy looking stitching and a prominent digital display that is neatly integrated with the dash layout.

As a whole, the changes to the Mustang make it a more up-to-date car without sacrificing the essence of what the 'Stang has always been: a fun, stylish car for the masses and enthusiasts alike.

like a sports car and slightly less like a muscle car. Its hood appears longer and lower, making it more evocative of the original Mustang that had a hint of European flair to its design.

Taken as an entire package, though, there's nothing European about it. It's a very in-your-face design, one that's classically American without being overly reliant on retro styling.

For a car that is turning 50 years old — making it one of the world's longest cars in continuous production — it looks like it has a whole lot of life and excitement yet to come.

DESIGN

Ford's designers seem to have gotten the balancing act right on the new Mustang's body. It's got a completely new look with a sleeker, slipperier, cleaner shape overall, but it's still instantly recognizable as a Mustang at first glance.

To my eyes, the new Mustang looks slightly more

ONLINE EXTRA



See more images of the new Mustang in our online video: <http://bit.ly/newmustang>

Fresh American Performance

NEW MUSTANG ENGINES, SUSPENSION COMBINE FOR EVEN MORE FUN

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When the Ford Mustang was introduced in 1964, it immediately became the go-to car for people who wanted to go fast and have a good time.

While the all-new 2015 Mustang is clearly still about speed and smiles, it's going about that mission in a slightly different way. From the powerplant choices available under the hood to the way that power gets to the pavement, the new Mustang is in for some major performance changes when it hits the market in late 2014.

ENGINE LINEUP

The Mustang's base engine remains a 3.7-liter V6, which has proven to be a popular choice for its combination of power and fuel economy.

A 5.0-liter V8 will also continue to power the Mustang GT, but it gets a new valve-train and cylinder heads that bump the power output up to 420 horsepower, Ford says. Considering the new Mustang design is widely reported to be roughly 200 pounds lighter than the old one, the performance improvement should be noticeable in the new GT.

The biggest news under the Mustang's hood, though, is the addition of a turbocharged four-cylinder EcoBoost engine to the lineup. This 2.3-liter engine is estimated to produce



A three-engine lineup, including an EcoBoost turbocharged four-cylinder, adds to the 2015 Mustang's appeal.

305 horsepower while getting better gas mileage ratings than the V6.

Ford's EcoBoost engines have been well received in many of their other products, from the F-150 to the Focus, so offering the small but powerful turbo engine in the new Mustang is a logical step.

According to Ford, an updated manual gearbox will allow for smoother shifts, while the automatic transmis-

sion will offer paddle shifters mounted on the steering wheel, letting drivers shift when they want to and relax when they don't.

NEW SUSPENSION

Until now, the Mustang's rear suspension has been an anachronism, using a design that the vast majority of cars abandoned for different setups in the 1980s and '90s.

While virtually every other car has utilized independent rear suspensions that offer better ride and handling, the Mustang has long been a holdout with its solid rear axle. Drag racers loved the solid axle because of all the power it could reliably send to the pavement under heavy acceleration, but only a small percentage of Mustang buyers do serious racing. That means everyone else had to live with

the old-school design.

In the 2015 Mustang, though, that old-school rear suspension is being dumped in favor of an integral-link independent layout. That should give the car noticeably better ride and handling.

Ford says the new suspension's geometry, dampers and bushings have all been adjusted and designed specifically for the Mustang's high-performance needs.

Mustang Cabin Gets an Upgrade



HIGH-TECH FEATURES

If the new Mustang's look is retro, the functionality is just the opposite — contemporary and futuristic. Some of the features include:

- Intelligent Access with push-button start
- Microsoft Sync
- Ford MyKey
- Track Apps
- Shaker Pro audio
- Selectable drive modes
- Launch control
- Adaptive cruise control
- Blind Spot Information System
- Cross-traffic alert

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While the Ford Mustang has traditionally been a fun car to drive, its cabin hasn't always been its strongest point. Judging from the pictures and descriptions of the new 2015 Mustang, though, that could be changing.

Ford's designers started with a blank slate when creating the cabin for 2015, and the result looks like a major improvement over the previous generation 'Stang. Photos show more use of soft-touch materials with upscale-looking stitching on the dash,

plus a digital screen that looks more cleanly interwoven with the rest of the car's controls.

RETRO LOOK

Just like the outgoing Mustang, the

new version has an interior that is heavily influenced by 1960s styling.

With deep-set circular gauge pods, lots of chrome rings and a giant prancing horse on the steering wheel, the new Mustang doesn't directly copy the 1960s cars but is clearly evocative

of their feel.

If the build quality and materials are on par with Ford's other recently designed cars — particularly the Fusion — the Mustang could end up with one of the nicest interiors in its class.