

INTERNET

Jaguar Land Rover blows the ceiling off with newest SUV

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Range Rover Evoque Convertible

By FORREST CARDAMENIS

Jaguar Land Rover is fulfilling expectations as a leader in identifying new market segments with its latest vehicle.

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The Range Rover Evoque Convertible is the first luxury compact SUV convertible and maintains the all-terrain capabilities the brand is known for. The vehicle is another testament to how Land Rover has found new market niches to separate it from other luxury automakers, which are increasingly encroaching on the SUV market.

"We aim to continue delivering bold vehicles that meet the varying needs of our customers," said Maria Rodriguez, product communications coordinator, **Jaguar Land Rover** N.A., LLC. "This includes adding new powertrains, introducing new technologies and strengthening our designs. In this case we did that by going back to our roots and designing a convertible."

Through the roof

Land Rover has released footage of the vehicle's final road test, conducted in Herefordshire, UK, to reassure consumers that it will not sacrifice performance with a retractable roof.

All New Range Rover Evoque Convertible All Terrain Testing

The video begins with footage of off-road performance vehicles of the past, reminding the viewer that the brand has always specialized in all-terrain automobiles. Over the footage, a voice emphasizes this by twice saying "every Land Rover," assuaging any doubts about the performance of the latest vehicle before they can be raised.

A number of the Range Rover Evoque's selling points, including hill descent control, terrain response and four-wheel drive, are then highlighted. Most impressively, the vehicle can wade in water half a meter deep, with sensing technology keeping the driver informed of how deeply the vehicle is submerged.

Because it measures up to other Land Rovers in its all-terrain capabilities but is also a convertible, the driver "can experience the great outdoors like never before," the narrator says over landscape shots.



The Evoque Convertible can wade in 0.5m of water

Mike Cross, Land Rover chief engineer, vehicle integrity, said in a statement, "Land Rover prides itself on being a class leader when it comes to all-terrain capability and the Evoque Convertible is no different. Thanks to a combination of innovative engineering and the application of advanced technologies, Evoque Convertible will deliver a dynamic and assured SUV experience that has been tested around the world. We call it 'The Convertible for all Seasons.'"

The vehicle, which was announced in March, will not be publicly revealed until next month but is eyeing a release in the spring. However, using a performance video to convince skeptics that a first-of-its-kind vehicle will not disappoint before an official reveal will likely create new anticipants and build excitement before competitors have a chance to sway those skeptics.



Range Rover Evoque Convertible

Range Rover vehicles once dominated the luxury SUV market, but recently other big name automakers, such as Bentley, have revealed their own SUVs. As more automakers add SUVs to their lineups, Land Rover must find other market segments to corner to avoid losing brand enthusiasts who initially chose the brand for its high-performance SUVs.

Speeding ahead

Recently, the automaker has expanded its market with a different offering unique among luxury automakers.

In September, Jaguar Land Rover unveiled its "fortress on wheels," the new Range Rover Sentinel.

The vehicle, which the brand bills as a "mobile fortress," is designed to withstand 7.62mm high velocity, armor piercing incendiary bullets, 15kg TNT blasts and DM51 grenade explosions that target either the underside of the vehicle or its body. The mobile fortress could differentiate the brand from high-end luxury SUVs entering the market from Bentley, Aston Martin, Lamborghini and others ([see story](#)).

Britain's Aston Martin is among luxury automakers preparing entry into the SUV market.

Aston Martin announced plans in March to design a luxury crossover SUV as it looked to raise more capital and expand into uncharted categories.

During the Geneva International Auto Show, the same event the Evoque Convertible was first announced, Aston Martin's chief executive Andy Palmer said that the brand has secured approximately \$230 million in additional funding to begin planning for its crossover SUV model. The news was shared during Aston Martin's presentation of its electric concept car the DBX, expected to be in showrooms by 2019 ([see story](#)).

For Land Rover, the Evoque convertible is as much a throwback and a look at tradition as it is a step forward into a new market.

"Open-air all-terrain motoring is a big part of the Land Rover heritage; adding the Range Rover Evoque convertible to our line-up simply plays to that history," Ms. Rodriguez said. "Capable, all-terrain vehicles with bold and progressive designs, Land Rover vehicles hold a strong position within their respective segments and we expect the Evoque convertible to continue this trend."

Final Take

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