

AUTOMOTIVE

## China's EV potential is reflected in Beijing Auto Show

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*The Vision Mercedes-Maybach Ultimate Luxury is intended as a chauffeured car. Image courtesy of Mercedes-Benz*

By BRIELLE JAEKEL

Electric vehicles are again taking the main stage at a major auto event, the Beijing International Automotive Exhibition, but Mercedes, Qiantu and BMW seem to be leading the way in luxury battery-powered cars.

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EV seems to be the common thread throughout every auto show in the past two years, as governments across the world crack down on regulations and automakers innovate. At this year's Beijing show this is especially true as China's market is primed for EV, but luxury is not lacking.

"A major theme in luxury auto is electrification," said Julie Blackley, communications manager at **iSeeCars**, Woburn, MA. "Many automakers have recently made announcements to electrify their lineups by either unveiling EVs, with an emphasis on SUVs, or by setting aggressive benchmarks to offer electric versions of each of its models."

### EV innovation

German automaker Mercedes-Benz has made the biggest news in luxury in Beijing.

Mercedes is sharing its vision of luxury through an electric concept car designed to serve as a mobile butler.

The Vision Mercedes-Maybach Ultimate Luxury crossover vehicle melds the properties of a saloon with those of a sport utility vehicle, creating a hybrid that offers space, security and comfort. As brands seek to makeover the driving experience with technology and innovations, Mercedes' concept uses modern touches to reinforce Maybach's positioning and personalization ([see story](#)).

BMW has combined luxury and electric themes with its latest concept car that it unveiled at the show. The Concept iX3 SUV showcases BMW's fifth generation eDrive tech and is powered by its new and improved batteries.

While the design is a concept, it could be in production by 2020.

The iX3 SUV is said to have horsepower of 270, which is even more than the gas-powered X3 that is currently on the road.



BMW says the SUV can travel up to 249 miles before recharging, and along with it comes a new charger design that could fully power a car in only 30 minutes.

However, Chinese automakers made significant impact regarding electric vehicles and luxury.

FAW Group debuted an impressive sports car concept named E-Jing GT, which is electric.

Qiantu released two new electric designs that embrace elegant features such as the K20, a sports model and its Concept 1. It is unsure yet when these models will be put into production.

#### Auto show innovation

Luxury automakers also recently clambered to reveal their most innovative features at this year's Geneva Motor Show, where electric tech was the dominating theme.

Land Rover, Mercedes, Bentley, Lexus and Maserati are only a few of the brands that dropped new model reveals in Geneva, Switzerland. Many designs are looking to a shift in the market, with luxury SUV and crossover designs making waves and electric concepts becoming more prevalent ([see more](#)).

"The ultimate luxury innovations came from the Vision Mercedes-Maybach Ultimate Luxury concept with high-end feature including a built-in tea set, automatic controls that can play music to align with your current mood and set routes based on your calendar and climate controls to optimize comfort," iSeeCars.com's Ms. Blackley said.

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