

AUTOMOTIVE

Toyota launches redesigned \$179K chauffeured model

June 25, 2018



The Toyota Century has been updated. Image courtesy of Toyota

By STAFF REPORTS

Japanese automaker Toyota is giving its Century upscale chauffeur-driven model its first makeover in two decades.

Subscribe to **Luxury Daily**
Plus: Just released
State of Luxury 2019 **Save \$246 ▶**

Originally launched in 1967 to mark the 100th birthday of Toyota Group founder Sakichi Toyoda, the Century is exclusive to the Japanese market and is primarily used by businessmen and figures such as the emperor. The Century is now getting its third full makeover in its 50-year lifespan, with design details that focus on craftsmanship and comfort.

Model makeover

The Century's design puts the focus on the back seat. Toyota has made the VIP passenger area more spacious by increasing the wheelbase.

Additionally, the difference in height between the scuff plate and the floor of the rear seats has been shortened, making it easier for passengers to enter and exit and ensuring that floor mats lay flat.

The left rear seat has a leg rest and massage function. Travelers can also take advantage of an entertainment center and rear touch screen controls for audio, curtains and air conditioning.

Advances were also added for safety, such as a pre-collision system to avoid crashes and lane departure warnings.

The exterior of the car is laquered in a newly developed black dubbed Kamui. Applied in seven layers, the color is finished with a clear coating containing black paint.

Craftsmen use wet sanding to ensure the color is even.

Toyota's craftsmen use traditional skills for the Century

On the front grille is a phoenix emblem, which takes an artisan six weeks to engrave.

With this new Century comes a new distribution strategy. Previously, the car was only available at special Toyota stores rather than the marque's dealerships. Now the Century will be released nationwide in Japan at Toyota

dealerships.

Priced at 19.6 million yen, or about \$179,000, the vehicle is slightly more accessible than those from chauffeur-centric luxury brands such as Bentley and Rolls-Royce. Toyota is aiming to sell 50 Century cars in Japan per month.

Toyota is not alone in looking to up the passenger experience in chauffeured cars.

German automaker Mercedes-Benz 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](#)).

© 2020 Napean LLC. All rights reserved.

Luxury Daily is published each business day. Thank you for reading us. Your [feedback](#) is welcome.