

Want a "New" Miata NA?

Classic sports cars never die. They're simply remanufactured and get to live again. It's happening to the Mazda MX-5 in Japan.

Mazda has an official program to buy up, restore, re-engineer and re-issue first generation MX-5s from that pivotal 1989-98 era. In Japan, where the MX-5 is sold as the Roadster and this rebuild program is called 'Refresh', the project is as much about reviving the spirit of that first-generation MX-5 as it is about Mazda exploring new market areas, networking the various parts of its empire and using the Internet for new e-promotion and marketing.

Mazda E&T, the special ops division that's come up with the idea and is doing all the work, is offering two different MX-5 models to suit wants and budgets: Version 1 and more tweaky Version 2.

With each "Refresh-ed" car, engine and carpets come out and the car is repainted (you get a choice of colors). The top is changed and the plastic rear window is exchanged for glass. The body gets second-generation gusset plate welding to add stiffness. The suspension has been modified, front and rear, and features Bilstein shocks and springs and the brakes are beefed up. A MazdaSpeed strut tower bar bolts in place and the head cover of is buffed up and gains an aluminium oil filler cap. Inside, the trim color is black only, and there's a cool MazdaSpeed 240km/h (149mph) speedometer and serial number plate. All interior parts that need replacing are replaced. In US dollars, this conversion runs approximately \$11,736. You can, however, tag on a wide range of goodies from the MazdaSpeed catalogue. Plus, Mazda E&T will overhaul the engine for you, to standard spec, for another \$1600 (USD) if you ask them.

Then there's Version 2. The biggest single difference is the works-built engine with MazdaSpeed high-lift cams and high-compression pistons, lifting compression to 10.5:1. A MazdaSpeed clutch and flywheel is added to handle the extra power and improve throttle response. The Version 2 base price is just over \$14,600 (USD). Of course, you can add lots of goodies to this version also, driving the price up accordingly.

The downside to all this? "Refresh" is only offered in Japan, so unless you want to travel to Japan to buy a "new" car, we're out of luck.

Thanks to Steve Jacobson for finding this information. You can read the whole story at this website: <http://www.channel4.com/apps26/4car/jsp/main.jsp?lnk=220&pageid=5652>

Classifieds

For Sale - 1990 Acura Integra. 144,000 miles, runs great, automatic, sunroof, white w/ blue interior, serviced regularly. Looking to sell in order to upgrade my Miata. \$2500. Call Steve Jacobson at 317-570-4598 or email him from the classified area of the club website.

For Sale - Two Brickyard 400 tickets, Stand A, Box 2, Row T, seats 6 & 7. \$80 face value. Call and make an offer! Work: 317-381-2238 or Home: 317-821-0554. I can deliver, or meet you before the race. Christian Kramer.

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