

Contact: Amy Delcamp
Beth Ann Bayus

The All-new 2008 Dodge Grand Caravan and Chrysler Town Country Offer an Updated Recipe of New Powertrains That Gives Consumers an Inspired Driving Experience

- New six-speed transaxle is a minivan first
- New 4.0-liter, V-6 engine offers increased horsepower and torque
- Aerodynamic improvements and new suspension architecture add up to a pleasant driving experience

August 5, 2007, Auburn Hills, Mich. - A minivan-first six-speed transaxle is available for 2008 Dodge Grand Caravan and Chrysler Town & Country.

The six-speed transaxle benefits include smaller steps between ratios which change the engine speed less, resulting in shifts that feel smoother, a higher numerical first gear that launches the minivan more briskly than a four- or five-speed transaxle and wide open throttle kickdown shifts that engage at a slightly higher ratio to provide needed acceleration with less engine flare.

Proven powertrains like a 3.3-liter V-6 engine that can be fueled with E85 and new options like a 4.0 liter V-6 engine that produces 251 hp and 259 lb.-ft of torque give drivers plenty of fresh choices in the new 2008 Chrysler Group minivans.

"Increased horsepower and torque, along with increased launch and passing responsiveness, make the 4.0-liter, V-6 engine a pleasure to drive," said Larry Lyons, Vice President – Chrysler Group Front-wheel-drive Platform Team.

For 2008, three powertrains offer performance and value for a variety of minivan uses. The 3.3-liter V-6 flex-fuel-capable engine is mated to a four-speed transaxle and produces 175 hp (131 kW) and 205 lb.-ft. (278 N•m) of torque. The 3.8-liter V-6 engine is mated to a new six-speed automatic transaxle that produces 197 hp (147 kW) and 230 lb.-ft. (312 N•m) of torque. The new 4.0-liter V-6 aluminum engine is mated to the new six-speed automatic transaxle that produces 251 hp (189 kW) and 259 lb.-ft. (350 N•m) of torque.

Sequential multi-port electronic fuel injection, electronic throttle control, platinum-tip spark plugs and a wide-band detonation sensor system in the 4.0-liter engine allow operation on 87-octane fuels.

"Chrysler Group has been a leader in flex-fuel-capable vehicles," said Larry Lyons, Vice President – Chrysler Group Front-wheel-drive Product Team. "We sold our first minivan capable of running on E85 in 1998 and since then, Chrysler Group has sold more than 1,330,000 flex-fuel minivans."

Ride and Handling

For 2008, the Chrysler Town and Country and Dodge Grand Caravan minivans offer improved ride and handling characteristics and vehicle maneuverability. A new front-suspension architecture, new rear twist-beam suspension with coil springs and larger wheels and wider tires give the 2008 minivans increased steering responsiveness for a fun-to-drive experience. The MacPherson strut front suspension and twist-beam axle rear suspension are coupled with power rack-and-pinion steering for improved maneuverability.

Better maneuverability, taller outer-diameter tires, 16- and 17-inch wheels, an improved MacPherson strut front suspension and new rear trailing twist-beam axle suspension help improve the stance, ride and handling of the 2008 Chrysler Group minivans.

The new suspension architecture features MacPherson struts. The front cross member is isolated from the body,

reducing road noise and harshness. Upper and lower urethane coil spring isolators have been optimized for overall ride quality, quietness and handling, and have been tuned directionally to handle loads. The new minivan's front stabilizer bar with double ball-joint stabilizer links helps maintain a level vehicle attitude during cornering for a more comfortable and controlled ride. Double shear brackets and pipe nuts attach the front suspension cross member to the body to prevent road noise and transmission harshness from entering the passenger compartment.

A new twist-beam rear axle with coil springs provides improved stability and ride comfort. This improves anti-lift as much as 45 percent for dive and provides improved levelness, especially on the highway. The track bar is isolated from the axle and the body for less Noise, Vibration and Harshness (NVH) and improved handling. Self-leveling Nivomat™ shock absorbers are included with the minivan trailer tow package, which contributes to consistent ride and handling characteristics whether loaded or unloaded. The 2008 Dodge Grand Caravan and Chrysler Town & Country are the only minivans to offer the Nivomat shock absorber option.

The 2008 Dodge Grand Caravan and Chrysler Town & Country feature 37 percent high strength steel for optimum structural performance. Advanced steels incorporated in the body provide excellent impact performance, improved ride and handling characteristics, enhanced body stiffness and reduced NVH.

On average, body structure stiffness is increased ten percent on the 2008 minivans compared with the previous model. The increased stiffness provides less road shake and improved ride comfort for passengers. This increased body structure stiffness was achieved by optimizing the body panel stiffness at the suspension and powertrain mount attachments to reduce vehicle vibration. An additional Patch Constrained Layer (PCL) also was added to the rear wheel house to stiffen it and reduce road-induced noise, while a plenum was added to the instrument panel bracket to reduce steering-column shake at idle. In addition, a rail-to-sill brace was added at the C-pillar to reduce seat shake, and the steering column was redesigned to increase its stiffness for a more solid steering feel.

Noise, Vibration and Harshness Reductions

Aerodynamic improvements have reduced wind noise, while high strength and hot-stamped steel and improved structural body stiffness have reduced NVH on the new 2008 minivans. Additional acoustic treatments also have improved interior quietness.

A number of the features in the 2008 Dodge and Chrysler minivans were designed to minimize wind noise. For example, the all-new roof rack crossbows have a more aerodynamic shape, the all-new front doors have a rolled frame design to improve sealing and all-new wiper blades are positioned below the air stream to minimize wind noise. The new minivans also feature larger, aerodynamically shaped mirrors for better viewing and wind flow, as well as thicker side door glass to reduce wind noise.

Overall interior quietness on the minivans was improved with acoustic treatments such as additional seals and body fillers, engine box treatments including an under-hood silencer and shock tower silencers, more dash panel PCL coverage and an upgraded inner dash silencer to further reduce engine noise. Thicker carpet underlayment was added to reduce road and interior noise levels, while integrated seals with sill cladding also help reduce road noise.

-###-

Additional information and news from Stellantis are available at: <https://media.stellantisnorthamerica.com>