2006 Lexus IS steals the show!

PLUS...
OUR EXPERTS ANSWER YOUR QUESTIONS
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FIND YOUR FAVOURITE IN THE NEW 2006 LINEUP
Yarisis surprisingly quick.

TOYOTA

Yaris.ca
Welcome to the new Driver magazine. With this debut our team was well aware that we needed to start off with a bang to grab your attention. Many ideas were discussed and debated but when it came to the customer profile it was clear who should be featured. Hidekazu Tojo is a Vancouver icon, his restaurant and imaginative dishes have helped put Vancouver on the map. By attracting worldwide attention, Tojo’s restaurant is on the ‘must see’ list of many visitors, not to mention the vast number of locals that frequent the place.

Tojo’s restaurant has helped shape the dining scene in Vancouver and the abundance of inspiring ingredients have helped shape Tojo’s. I have known Tojo-san for more than twenty years and have long admired his abilities and commitment to customers and his craft. As the ultimate host Tojo-san welcomes diners every night to enjoy a truly West Coast experience.

We arranged to interview Tojo-san at his restaurant and I couldn’t resist tagging along. Of course we had plans to discuss Tojo’s new vehicle, the Highlander Hybrid, but we wanted to find out more about Tojo-san, his history, his goals and gain a perspective you wouldn’t usually see as a guest in his restaurant. It started innocently enough with a few car questions, some reminiscing about the past and future plans. Little did we know the end of the interview was not really the end. Tojo, as the ultimate host, couldn’t help but offer us some Tojo’s Tuna and some ultra fresh Uni with mountain potato – even though it was late on a Friday afternoon and his chefs were looking stressed before the crowds impending arrival. But Tojo-san never lost his cool.

This profile is just one of the many interesting articles we have developed for this issue. Of course, there is coverage of the new and upcoming models. Look for “The Road Less Travelled” for some great tips on places to visit off the beaten path in Greater Vancouver in addition to some invaluable tips on vehicle maintenance in “Ask the Experts”.

Driver is delivered right to your front door because we want to bring you closer to our people, our passion (cars naturally!) and our commitment to bringing excitement back to car ownership. We hope Driver enhances your OpenRoad vehicle ownership experience.

Enjoy and let us know what you think!

CHRISTIAN CHIA
President, OpenRoad Auto Group

Send us your thoughts at:
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The Customers Always Write

Share your thoughts...

BUILDING LOYALTY ONE CUSTOMER AT A TIME...
I would like to take this opportunity to express my deepest appreciation for Assistant Service Manager Cameron Ma. He’s gone above and beyond the regular call of duty with regards to the way he has treated me as a customer with my IS300. I’m so pleased with his service, he’s the #1 reason that I’m dealing with Port Moody Lexus, and will continue to do so in the future.

James M.
OpenRoad Lexus Customer

THE FIRST, BUT NOT THE LAST TOYOTA
Service before and after the sale for my Prius has been top notch. My family has been a Chrysler family for the past 25 years, and this is the first Toyota any of us have purchased. I must say that I am impressed with the level of customer service your parts and service department offers along with the amenities for the waiting area. When the next family member is ready to purchase a car, you can be sure that it’ll most likely be a Toyota from your Port Moody location, and we’ll be looking for Kenneth Lee as he was the one who greatly helped me out with the Prius!

Daniel L.
OpenRoad Toyota Port Moody Customer

GREAT SERVICE AND ROOM TO BOOT
I would like to thank Ken Dyck for his approach to sales. He was friendly, informative, and stuck to the facts. We leased a Corolla and it is wonderful. My wife and I are both six feet tall and there is plenty of room. The trunk is huge for that size of car, which we need because we travel to many, many Irish dance competitions and shows. Our thirteen year old daughter loves it too. Thank you very much for a great dealership, selling a great product.

Vctor S.
OpenRoad Toyota Richmond Customer

OPINIONS FROM THE DRIVER’S SEAT... AND THE BACK SEAT
I have a Lexus GX 470. It is a wonderful and amazing SUV. I love driving it even though I drive it all the time I don’t get bored by it. It is an excellent SUV and thank you for letting me have the chance to have it in my life.

Navresh T.
Richmond Lexus Customer

Unbeknownst to this customer his daughter also sent her thoughts: I love our new Lexus. It’s a very comfortable SUV to sit in. I love the DVD player that’s in it and I love the navigation screen. The DVD player is great when you’re going somewhere far.

KUDOS
The service is always great!!!

David C.
OpenRoad Toyota Richmond Customer

The service at OpenRoad is excellent. Keep it up.

Joseph B.
OpenRoad Toyota Richmond Customer

A WARM WELCOME...
Your Sales Staff &Service Personnel are a pleasure to deal with. Today I brought my car in for service and found your people most congenial. You are most fortunate to have people of this caliber on your staff. Thank you again for the attention and good service.

Cecil D.
Richmond Lexus Customer

YOUR SERVICE GUYS ARE THE BEST...
especially Anke Minty. She is the reason why I come to Richmond Lexus.

Dr. P.
Richmond Lexus Customer

FIRST NEW CAR
Jim & I would like to thank you and your friendly and expert team at OpenRoad for all the help in getting me on the road in my first new car ever! What a feeling – I am very happy with the car and have been driving it all over the place in the last 2 days. Sean, your friendly and professional manner served to calm some unsteady nerves. I wish you all the best in the years ahead.

Teresa S.
OpenRoad Toyota Port Moody Customer

COMING THROUGH
I wanted to thank Hector from the Part Department for helping me when I needed it most. I purchased my two cars from Middlegate Honda several years ago but I lost my keys and needed help. He promptly and swiftly helped my after asking the necessary questions. Thank you Hector for the Legendary Service!

Peter T.
Middlegate Honda Customer

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Toyota FJ Cruiser

INSPIRED BY THE PAST
...WITH A TWIST

Way back in the early 1960s before anyone had coined the term “SUV,” the Toyota Land Cruiser FJ40 was making a name for itself anywhere the going got really tough, way off the beaten path.

That model was sold for a quarter century until 1983, and 20 years later, when Toyota showed a concept for a new short-wheelbase Land Cruiser at the Auto Show in Detroit, most people figured it was only a matter of time before it reached production.

Last spring, Toyota confirmed that the FJ Cruiser would be launched in early 2006, and fans of small, tough trucks are going to love it. The FJ Cruiser was developed as a basic, capable and affordable off-roader aimed specifically at young buyers with active outdoor lifestyles.

The new FJ will pay homage to the old model with numerous retro touches. The wide grille with the Toyota badging is the most obvious, joined by the upright windshield, white roof and wrap-around rear quarter windows.

The tough and straightforward theme of the FJ Cruiser is extended to the interior with a cabin designed specifically for basic functionality and flexible utility. The instrument panel features an exterior colour trim, and the faceplate with round inset instrumentation communicates a mechanical appearance.

The five-passenger FJ Cruiser rides on a modified 4Runner platform and features 17-inch steel wheels and four-wheel disc brakes. Power comes from a 4.0-litre V6 engine, generating 245 horsepower and 282 lb-ft. of torque. It is paired with a five-speed automatic transmission on both 4x2 and 4x4 configurations and an available six-speed manual on 4x4 models. GERRY FRECHETTE
Bank of Montreal – Immigrant Wealth Management Professionals

Bank of Montreal has committed itself to the cutting edge of immigrant and New Canadian services. BMO is the first big bank to open a dedicated branch in Chinatown to serve a dedicated Asian Banking Centre. However, recognizing that immigrants from all over Asia no longer just settle in and around the Chinatown area, BMO has established a new dedicated centre in the heart of Vancouver. BMO has incorporated a professional multilingual team to deliver the offerings of the current branch conveniently to serve immigrants and high net worth individuals throughout the Lower Mainland.

Immigration needs have shifted over the past 20 years and the formation of the BMO New Canadian Commercial & Wealth Management Centre in 1991 and 1992 has been to the new reality. Vancouver now attracts the majority of non-business and European category immigrants coming to Canada. These individuals require assistance in choosing the right capital that is not available in Canada. Professional immigrants and BMO employees have invaluable experience in immigration needs and are fully aware in delivering personal and commercial wealth management services to new Canadians.

BMO has always been a key supporter of immigration and settlement services and has introduced a diverse workforce that includes a high percentage of immigrants. It is therefore committed to see immigrants serving immigrants at BMO. The BMO New Canadian Commercial & Wealth Management Centre is comprised of first and second generation Canadian出生 and professional in a variety of languages, including English, Mandarin, Vietnamese, Cantonese, Japanese, Korean, Urdu, and Punjabi.

The Centre is also an arm of the BMO Business Development Group which offers multiple services in Private Banking, Commercial Lending, Mortgage Services and Investment Lending. The ability of BMO's dedicated employees to automate the convenience of making important financial decisions from the comfort of their offices is important. David Chang, Vice President of Business Development for British Columbia, believes that specifically creating an immigrant-friendly system as “I immigrated in 1967” and, indeed, that was a limited veto of support for the immigrant community. The government would have helped a little bit, but very few non-profit organizations social and community events which would help them. Next, it is important to offer immigrant-specialized services, and it is not just for businesses or government initiatives, but also for society. Immigrants are adapting to adjust their new cultures and, hopefully, we can provide a culturally friendly banking experience. That is why I believe that this BMO New Canadian Commercial & Wealth Management Centre is so important.

Richard Fader, Senior Vice President for British Columbia, states, “You are special to BMO’s New Canadian Commercial & Wealth Management Centre, as you are a special group of individuals who are the future of Canada, that support community initiatives, it is our responsibility to ensure that those people succeed in our country. At Bank of Montreal, we are committed to providing specialized services.”

Bank of Montreal is proud of its history of offering the best immigrant and settlement services and is continuouslysearching for ways to raise the bar. You can find the New Canadian Commercial & Wealth Management Centre at

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The unveiling of the Acura RD-X Concept at the North American International Auto Show in Detroit early this year marked the advent of the first small crossover-SUV for Acura, and it has since been announced that it will go on sale in 2006.

The RD-X has a combination of attributes that is much in demand these days – the performance of a sports sedan with the all-wheel drive capability and functional utility of an SUV.

The primary means by which these seemingly contradictory goals are met by the RD-X is via the Super Handling All-Wheel-Drive™ (SH-AWD) system currently found only in the RL luxury sedan. For those who might not be familiar with it, SH-AWD distributes torque not only between the front and rear wheels, but also between the left and right rear wheels. The result is superior traction on all surfaces and in all weather conditions, as well as increased cornering precision.

Beyond this, we know little of the mechanical specification of the RD-X, although one can confidently expect it to be equipped with one of Acura’s smooth and potent V6 engines.

The RD-X Concept did, however, showcase all manner of interior features, and most of them are likely to make it into production. Shift indicators showing a “+” and “-” are linked to the steering wheel-mounted paddle shifters, allowing the driver to track shifts, up and down. An eight-inch colour LCD screen dominates the centre of the instrument panel and displays information on the Navigation System. Navigation, audio, dual climate control and other features are controlled using the Interface Dial mounted in the centre of the instrument panel below the display. GERRY FRECHETTE
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Lexus LF-X

The new Lexus design language, seen already on the new GS and IS models, is called L-Finesse, and it includes innovation, confidence, dynamic posture, intriguing elegance and the infusion of technology as its core parameters.

One of the next Lexus vehicles to speak this language will be one that represents a segment – the large, luxury crossover SUV – that has not yet been seen in Lexus showrooms. The concept version of the LF-X was first shown at the Tokyo Motor Show in 2003, and Canadians had a chance to see it at the Toronto and Vancouver shows early this year.

Modern technology will allow the production version of LF-X, which will likely have a different name, to be almost all things to all people. Lexus’ objective was to look beyond the current SUV formulas and build a vehicle that expresses strong emotional styling with high levels of performance, utility, comfort and luxury.

Powering the LF-X is the silky-smooth V8 from the GS430 sport sedan. The 300 horsepower outputted by the 4.3-litre engine will be put to the ground through a five-speed automatic and all-wheel drive.

Intended to evoke the sophistication, functionality and luxurious comfort of an executive jet, the LF-X’s interior is remarkably clean and uncluttered with a driver-oriented feel. The instrument panel uses advanced technology to allow drivers to customize displays and information to their needs. Keeping with current trends, the LF-X has three rows of seating and DVD entertainment system.

The production version of LF-X is expected to reach OpenRoad Lexus showrooms in 2006. GERRY FRECHETTE
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The auto industry is becoming more competitive with each passing month, let alone every year. Nowhere is this more evident than at the auto shows that dot the globe.
IT’S AN EXTREMELY FULL CALENDAR.

Whether you are talking about the January shows in L.A. and Detroit, February in Chicago and Toronto, March in Geneva and New York, April in Vancouver, May in Seoul, June in London or, most recently, Frankfurt.

Detroit, home of the North American International Auto Show, is one of the world’s most significant shows, and easily the most important to Canadians. Why? Pretty well every Canadian model is first shown in Detroit, unless, like the previous Echo Hatchback and Acura EL, the model is not available in the U.S. The same scenario plays out for the new 2006 Yaris just introduced in Frankfurt (see page 26). The three- and four-door versions now replace both the hatch and four-door Echo, although this time around a three-door version will be available stateside in model year 2007. The upcoming

“Detroit is easily the most important show to Canadians.”

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Acura EL replacement, dubbed CSX (see page 33), will continue to be a Canadian exclusive.

Detroit introduced a bevy of new models, as well as a wide assortment of interesting concept cars. Of the latter, Acura showed the efficiently packaged RS-X compact sport utility, a subtly disguised version of a future model expected next year. Toyota impressed the automotive press with its FT-SX Concept crossover, a stylish example of where this popular new vehicle niche may go, but its Lexus division knocked everyone off their feet with its gorgeous LF-A sport coupe, the most daring example of the brand’s edgy L-Finesse design language to date.

Honda waited until February’s Chicago show to unveil its sporty Si Concept, what we now know as the all-new Civic Si coupe. Hyundai chose the same event launch its elegantly stylish Portico concept, which introduces some design elements expected in an upcoming midsize crossover model.

Probably more important to most Canadian consumers, Detroit also witnessed the all-new Hyundai Sonata mid-size sedan (see page 31), Toyota Avalon (see page 26) full-size sedan, Lexus GS luxury sedan, and Honda Ridgeline mid-size pickup unveilings, all now available and among the most competitive models in their respective market segments.
Geneva introduced the gorgeous new Lexus IS (see page 22), currently in launch stage and already developing an enthusiast following. The handsome Hyundai Grandeur, a model that was shown as the Azera to North American consumers in New York, was on the same stage as the new Accent sedan. This sporty little model will, like its Toyota Yaris rival, change perceptions about the subcompact class when it soon becomes available.

While most people who live outside of the world’s largest cities may never have enjoyed the excitement and fanfare that surround a major automotive show, Vancouver’s International Auto Show continues to offer a surprising number of new model introductions as well as a full assortment of concept cars on display. Make sure to get out and enjoy it when all the automakers once again converge on BC Place stadium next April.
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B.C. is crowded with busy tourist-trail attractions that many locals have visited several times over. While familiarity can certainly breed contempt when it comes to planning a day out – except for those of us happy to line up at the Capilano Suspension Bridge and pretend it’s our first time – there’s a clutch of rewarding, lesser-known area destinations just waiting to be discovered. These drive-worthy, off-the-beaten-path gems promise some unexpectedly engaging excursions for those who think they’ve seen all there is to see in their own backyard.
A visit to what may be the region’s best-kept museum secret is highly recommended for local adventurers. Langley Airport is the unlikely home of the Canadian Museum of Flight, a meticulously well-preserved celebration of aviation history that expertly caters to both plane-spotting geeks and those with a less insular interest in flying. Turn left at the hulking silver Dakota airplane out front and you’re met by a forest of colourful historic planes. These include vintage jets like the fang-toothed DH 100 Vampire and several camouflage-patterned warplanes. The most celebrated of these is a rare 1940s Canadian-made Handley-Page Hampden bomber, complete with several cramped gun positions that run along its body like transparent blisters.

A nearby hangar – an important shelter spot on rainy days – is bursting at the seams with display cases, information panels and a wild and wacky assortment of aircraft: you’ll have to make several circuits of this open-plan room to make sure you catch exhibits like the ultralight helicopter that’s little more than a flying armchair and a lacquered wooden glider that resembles an airborne chocolate egg. Among the more serious exhibits are displays recounting Canada’s wartime aviation contribution and the sad history of the AVRO Arrow jet fighter program.

Airplanes are a vital cross-Canada transportation mode today but their pre-eminent role was once taken by the railroad. The pioneering Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) created a goldmine of development wherever it built its stations, forging towns from forested landscapes that had existed untouched since creation. When Port Moody was named the CPR’s western terminus in 1879, it grew rapidly into the city that exists today. The story of the area’s rail-fuelled social and economic development is colourfully recalled at the charming Port Moody Station Museum.

This pretty 1905 red-painted station building houses informative displays on the region’s original Coast Salish inhabitants, as well as a recreated 19th-century kitchen and parlour complex and a fascinating photo collection uncovering Port Moody’s frontier days. Nostalgic visitors will also enjoy displays of familiar Tetley Tea, Mackintosh Toffee and Rowntree Cocoa packages as well as generation-defining toys like die-cast fire trucks and a “Shaky Scotty” mechanical dog.

Along with several interactive displays for kids, there’s plenty to please the train buffs, including a model of the first CPR train to arrive here in 1886 – it was one minute late following its 137-hour trip from Montreal. The original, high-ceilinged station waiting room has also been preserved and is lined with heritage railway posters. Visitors can even clamber aboard a 1920s train carriage parked outside, complete with a cosy wood-lined sleeper cabin and a surprisingly capacious ladies powder room.

While trains illustrate coal’s dominance as the leading power source of their era, hydro electricity was also developing as an →
alternative energy source at the time – as a trip to the fascinating Power House at Stave Falls, Mission indicates. Rather than being a stuffy mothballed industrial site, this clever interpretative centre in a former 1912 BC Hydro power plant mixes history, science and dozens of kid-friendly interactive games.

A vivid movie presentation explains what it was like to live and work here in the early 20th-century before sparking visitors’ imaginations with a kaleidoscope of hands-on experiments. A quiz game illustrates how little most of us know about the generation of electricity and a button-laden alternative energy section displays the nuts and bolts of wind power, fuel cells and solar energy. It’s the old Generator Hall that impresses most, though, with its giant turbine and generator units cleaned and ready for action.

Action of a different kind is the keyword over in Cloverdale, where a decades-old Sunday shopping tradition still draws thousands of keen-eyed, bargain-hunting BC residents. Cloverdale Flea Market has gained a justifiable reputation as the best bazaar in the West due to its winning combination of professional and amateur traders working hundreds of stalls. While it’s still a great place to pick-up cheap consumer necessities like batteries and branded razor blades, Cloverdale is also a good spot to browse for collectibles like trading cards, comic books and unusual antiques – I spotted a collection of trading cards, comic books and unusual antiques – I spotted a collection of...
vintage Art Deco teapots on my visit. Crafts are also on prominent display throughout the year and you’ll be lucky if you can walk away without buying seasonal specials like decorated Halloween corn cobs and locally-produced Christmas wreaths.

Although much of the trading activity takes place outside, there are also several cavernous indoor halls for those frequent drizzly “Wet Coast” days. Some of these covered stalls specialize in souvenirs, and savvy tourists have been known to leave with armfuls of maple leaf T-shirts for families and friends back home.

While Cloverdale’s bustling temple of capitalism is a firm favourite, there are other temples in the Lower Mainland that are a little more tranquil. Richmond’s Kuan Yin Temple is one of Canada’s finest traditional-style Chinese buildings and it opens its doors to thousands of Buddhist and non-Buddhist visitors every year. Modelled on the architecture of Beijing’s Forbidden City, the complex’s main structure is its sumptuous Gracious Hall. Decorated with deep red and gold exterior walls and topped with a →
“Everything you can imagine is real.”

Picasso

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gently-flaring roof of orange porcelain tiles, the interior is illuminated by colourful sculptures, breathtaking murals and several intricate embroidered wall hangings. Don’t miss the collection of exquisite Chinese paintings and antiquities on display here and be sure to drop by the calm-inducing classical garden, complete

**IT’S ALSO WORTH SAVING ROOM FOR A LIP-SMACKING VEGETARIAN LUNCH**

with an impressive array of elderly bonsai trees. Outside the garden, the grounds surrounding the temple house dozens of carefully-pruned trees and intricate sculptures. It’s also worth saving room for a lip-smacking vegetarian lunch at the complex’s dedicated cafeteria.

While good vegetarian food can temporarily sway the minds of the most dedicated carnivores, a visit to North Vancouver’s Maplewood Farm might make the transition permanent. Celebrating its 30th anniversary this year, this five-acre community favourite has introduced generations of city-slicking visitors to the cuddly side of pastoral life with its 200 highly-approachable birds and domestic animals.

There’s nothing high-tech about this attraction and that’s its charm. Kids can ride ponies and get up-close-and-personal with cows, fluffy chicks and African pygmy goats – including a cute new buck and doe pair born in March. The rabbits – many housed in a dedicated “Rabbit” area -- are available for petting to wide-eyed visitors who can also check-in with the “Goat Hill Gang,” a gaggle of curious but friendly animals who like to interact.

Staffed by volunteers, the farm is always a hive of activity so there’s plenty to see. Rainy days are also part of the planning at Maplewood and indoor respites can be found throughout the facility – the tropical greenhouse is particularly recommended on cold days since it also provides a deep infusion of warmth for chilled visitors.
The excitement surrounding Lexus’ new compact IS sport/luxury sedan is unlike anything the brand has ever experienced to date. Internet message boards are filled with enthusiastic prospective owners claiming to have cancelled orders of competitive German rivals after viewing photos of the new Lexus. With many of those same buyers thrilled with their decision to swap allegiances now that news of the model’s stellar performance is surfacing.

It should come as no surprise that attractive styling sells cars. Where the outgoing IS, which debuted four years ago, became popular among enthusiasts due to its entertaining driving dynamics and full assortment of features, the bends, folds and creases that made up its body panels didn’t combine into anything quite as alluring as those of the 2006 version.

Under the new model’s sculpted hood is a choice of two engines, the base IS 250 getting an all-new 2.5-litre, 24-valve DOHC V6 with an impressive 204-horsepower and 185 lb-ft of torque, routed to the rear wheels via a six-speed manual transmission or 6-speed automatic. This model is available with all-wheel drive too, opening up Lexus to an entirely new group of entry-luxury buyers. →
IS 350 COMES WITH A SOPHISTICATED 306-HORSEPOWER 3.5-LITRE V6, FEATURING 277 LB-FT OF TORQUE.

With the highest output in its class, the much more expensive Audi S, BMW M, Cadillac V and Mercedes-Benz AMG variants aside, the new IS 350 should ensure loyal IS fans look no further when trading up to a new car. Any premium compact buyer will think twice before paying more for a less reliable European model.

The IS 350 comes standard with a driver adaptable six-speed automatic that, when in “Power” mode has been designed to hold gears longer and spin to redline when enthusiastic driving is detected. Also appealing to sport-oriented drivers are paddle-shifters ideally placed behind the ergonomically designed steering wheel, which should help its owner achieve an estimated sprint from zero to 100 km/h in only 5.5 seconds. Incidentally, the IS 250 completes the task in a competitive 8.5 seconds.

Its double wishbone front suspension and multi-link rear suspension setup,
Any premium compact buyer will think twice before paying more for a less reliable European model...

The doors feel substantial and shut with vault-like precision, and like the brand’s larger GS and LS sedans, silence exterior noise to the point that only purposely audible mechanical melodies seep through the firewall.

Inside, the new IS is larger than the old one, especially noticeable to rear seat passengers. It’s an impressive step forward in a category long dominated by European brands, and one that should see Lexus’ overall fortunes rise. 

TREVOR HOFMANN

should take to the corners well, while electronic driver aids, such as electric “drive-by-wire” power steering, VSC stability control, and many others, should keep any overzealous enthusiasm under control.

Of course, four-wheel disc brakes with ABS and EBD are standard, as is a full assortment of safety features, such as driver and front passenger frontal airbags, side-impact and curtain-type airbags.

The tactile quality of its interior is equal to the superbly crafted Lexus GS, with high-end matte, soft-touch plastics, burnished metals, and glossy woods combining for an extremely upscale environment. Keyless entry with a push-button starter is standard, while a large, touch-screen LCD display acts as the main control interface for climate and audio functions. The unique, although controversial chronograph instrument cluster in the original IS has been replaced with a more straightforward Optitron gauge package, which should appeal to more drivers.

The Specs

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<th>IS 250/350</th>
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<td>PRICE RANGE:</td>
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<td>IS 250 RWD from $36,300</td>
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<td>IS 250 AWD from $41,900</td>
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<tr>
<td>IS 350 RWD from $48,900</td>
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<tr>
<td>ENGINE: 306-hp, 277 lb-ft of torque, 3.5L, 24-valve, DOHC V6</td>
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<td>PERFORMANCE: 0 - 100 km/h</td>
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<td>IS250: 7.9 sec</td>
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<td>BRAKES (front/rear): disc/disc, ABS, EBD, BA</td>
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<td>CURB WEIGHT (est. IS 250 RWD): 1567 kg (3,455 lbs)</td>
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<td>DIMENSIONS (L/W/H/WB):</td>
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<td>4,575 / 1,800 / 1,425 / 2,730 mm (180.1 / 70.9 / 56.1 / 107.4 in)</td>
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<td>SEATING CAPACITY: 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>CARGO VOLUME: 378 L (13.3 cu ft)</td>
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Further info: www.lexus.ca
AN ENTIRELY NEW APPROACH TO FULL-SIZE LUXURY

Toyota’s all-new Avalon, which came to market earlier this year as a late 2005 model, gives all competitors a thorough lesson on how to build an entry-level brand luxury car. It’s large, which is important in this class, stylish in an elegantly conservative fashion, and features Lexus-like interior and exterior build-quality.

The seats are large and well padded, although they still manage to support smaller occupants even during aggressive maneuvers. Its fully-automated climate control system is easy to use, and 12-speaker, rear subwoofer-equipped JBL audio system featuring a six-disc dash-mounted CD changer, cassette and AM/FM radio, sounds sensational. A DVD-based navigation system is also available, and works wonders.

Under the hood is a new 280-horsepower, 24-valve DOHC 3.5-litre V6 with 260 lb-ft of torque connecting through to the front wheels via a five-speed automatic transmission with manual-mode actuation. Refined yes, but it’s also plenty fast, with virtually no torque-steer even at full throttle. It continues such performance sedan characteristics with impressive handling, wonderful stability during high-speed touring and short, controlled braking.

In the end, despite its available performance and accommodating size, the slippery Avalon, featuring a drag coefficient of only 0.29, manages a thrifty 11.0 L/100 km in the city and 7.3 on the highway. And that’s real-world luxury today’s consumer can afford to enjoy.

TREVOR HOFMANN

CHANGING PERCEPTIONS ABOUT THE SUBCOMPACT CLASS

Yaris? What’s that? You might as well get familiar with the name now, as you’re going to hear a lot more about it for a very long time. While other automakers designate their cars with names of mammals, places and what-have-you in order to conjure up a positive associative image, Toyota often creates all-new names that mean nothing at first, such as Tercel, Corolla, or Camry, but soon become synonymous with quality and reliability.

The name Yaris has long been associated with such attributes in Europe, where it has represented the subcompact model known here as the Echo Hatchback, and now that Toyota Canada is adopting a new global strategy for small cars the Yaris is here. And with the name comes a car that will certainly change perceptions about the entire subcompact category. It’s built using Toyota’s large car methods, resulting in a solid little package that delivers a surprisingly comfortable ride, terrific handling, sporty acceleration and commendable high-speed stability.

Its monoform European styling is expressive while its interior layout is efficient, high in quality, comfortable, and larger inside than it appears from the outside. Power comes from a 106-horsepower 1.5-litre four-cylinder routed to the front wheels through a five-speed manual or four-speed automatic, while ABS brakes are optional.

TREVOR HOFMANN
### The Specs - AVALON

- **PRICE RANGE** (MSRP): $39,000 - $46,825
- **BODY TYPE**: 4-door sedan
- **LAYOUT**: front engine, FWD
- **ENGINE**: 268 hp, 248 lb-ft torque, 24-valve, DOHC, 3.5L V6
- **TRANSMISSION**: 5-spd auto with manual mode
- **BRAKES** (front/rear): disc/disc, ABS with EBD (optional Brake Assist)
- **CURB WEIGHT**: (min - max): 1,583 - 1,615 kg (3,490 - 3,560 lbs)
- **FUEL ECONOMY**: (city/hwy): 10.8 / 7.2 L/100 km
- **CARGO VOLUME** (trunk): 408 L (14.4 cu ft)
- **WARRANTY** (mo/km): 36/60,000 comprehensive - 60/100,000 powertrain

### The Specs - YARIS

- **MODEL RANGE**: 3-dr CE/RS, 5-dr LE/RS
- **PRICE RANGE** (base - 3-dr to 5 dr RS MSRP): $13,580 - $19,815
- **BODY TYPE**: 3-door, 5-door
- **LAYOUT**: FWD
- **ENGINE**: 106-hp, 1.5L, 16-valve, DOHC I-4
- **TRANSMISSION**: 5-spd manual (opt. 4-spd auto)
- **BRAKES** (front/rear): disc/drum (opt. ABS)
- **SAFETY**: front airbags
- **WARRANTY** (mo/km): 36/60,000 km comprehensive; 60/100,000 km powertrain
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2006 Honda Civic

BETTER IN EVERY WAY

Canada’s best selling car is better in every way for 2006. It looks fabulous, combines satisfying performance with high levels of refinement, and achieves superb fuel economy.

Once again a sedan and coupe model is available for 2006, the former featuring the option of a hybrid drivetrain and the latter able to be optioned out in sporty Si trim.

Like the Si, base Civics get a larger, improved engine, now making 140-hp. That means the new car’s acceleration is brisker, but not at the expense of fuel economy. Its estimated city/highway rating is 7.8 / 5.7 L/100 km!

The ride, while smoother over uneven pavement, is sportier than the outgoing Civic, managing corners with less body lean and braking in a more controlled manner.

During the Civic’s full-line introduction in Chicago, Honda rented out a private racetrack that proved to be an ideal testing facility for the new Si. Of course, the boost from its 197-hp 16-valve, DOHC four-cylinder and six-speed manual gearbox is intoxicating, but that drivetrain is also backed up by a car that handles tight corners at high-speed with stunning competence. Its stability at even higher speeds is also impressive, while wind and road noise is low for this class.

This is not only true for the Si, but also for the other models in the Civic lineup. While all trim levels offer a larger, more comfortable interior, I was especially impressed with the updated Civic Hybrid, which is smooth, quiet and overall a dream on the open highway, accelerating quickly via its efficient continuously variable transmission.

Its interior is a futuristic display of complex surfaces, not unlike the regular Civic in layout but featuring more metal-like surfaces combined with the already higher-than-average quality plastics found in every Civic, giving the Hybrid a technically advanced interior to match its sophisticated drivetrain.

Every Civic gets the unique dual binnacle instrument cluster, which includes one in the traditional location behind the steering wheel and the other atop the dash directly below the driver’s line of sight when looking at the road ahead. This allows for quick referencing of primary controls without compromising safety.

All switchgear is also extremely high-grade for the compact segment, especially the buttons, dials and knobs that make up the integrated audio and HVAC interfaces within the centre stack.

The new Civic, in its many variations, continues a long tradition of besting its competitors in the compact class.

TREVOR HOFMANN

The Specs  CIVIC

- MODEL RANGE: DX, DX-G, LX, EX, Hybrid
- PRICE RANGE (base – Hybrid MSRP): $16,800 - $25,800
- BODY TYPE: 4-door, 5-pass; 2-door, 5-pass
- LAYOUT: FWD
- ENGINE: 140-hp, 1.8L, 16-valve, SOHC I-4 (opt. 85-hp, 1.4L, SOHC I-4 gasoline-electric hybrid; opt. 197-hp, 1.8L, 16-valve, DOHC I-4)
- TRANSMISSION: 5-spd manual (opt. 5-spd auto, CVT)
- BRAKES (front/rear): disc/drum, ABS (opt. disc/disc, ABS)
- SAFETY: front and side curtain airbags
- WARRANTY (mo/km): 60/100,000 km comprehensive
News from our Dealerships...

OpenRoad Experience ▼

→ RL service excellence award
Richmond Lexus has received the prestigious Award of Excellence bestowed by Lexus Canada. The award recognizes the entire team at Richmond Lexus for their combined efforts to achieve high service standards.

→ Record setting
Port Moody celebrates 25 years and a record year. Not to be outdone by its sister store in Richmond, OpenRoad Toyota Port Moody is on pace for a record year in 2005.

→ Summer heat continues...
August was hot at OpenRoad Toyota Richmond. With the help of our valued customers, we delivered a pace-setting 332 cars, to make the dealership number one in Canada. Our customers enthusiasm hasn’t stopped, at the end of September and October our Richmond store continued to enjoy top spot in the nation.

→ Change of Address...
OpenRoad Hyundai is looking forward to moving into their new home in the Richmond Auto Mall. Early in 2006 OpenRoad Hyundai will make the move in next door to Richmond Lexus. The team at Hyundai look forward to serving customers at their new location.

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→ Consumers Choice...
OpenRoad Toyota Port Moody is proud to receive the Consumers Choice Award for 2004/2005 in the automotive sector.

→ Congratulations to North Shore Acura
The Service Department won the 2004 Acura Service Guild Award for Lifetime Owner Loyalty. According to Mark Chambers, Service Manager, “We are also tracking to also repeat this accomplishment for the year 2005.”

→ Hat trick for OpenRoad
OpenRoad Service Advisors proved their knowledge at the Toyota National Skills Challenge. Dean MacLean and Say Phin Lim of OpenRoad Toyota won gold and silver respectively while Brian Voth won bronze. Congratulations to all three, their knowledge and experience enables them to provide a better experience for our customers.

→ Finding culture in a car dealership?
OpenRoad Lexus was pleased to sponsor two events in the community. Chocolate, Port and More was held October 15 as part of the annual Tri-Cities Chocolate Festival. OpenRoad Lexus welcomed the Port Moody Arts Council and their supporters for their annual fundraiser on November 18 for an evening of music, food and celebration.

→ Instant Online Service Information for Toyota Owners
From a personal, password-protected homepage on the www.toyota.ca website, Toyota owners can now see information on their vehicle including Extended Care Policy coverage, service history and recommended maintenance. Owners are also given the ability to respond electronically to surveys, request service appointments and update their contact information online. Current owners can register on the Toyota website by clicking on the Club Toyota link, if their vehicle is from the 1996 model year or later.
VALUE WITHOUT COMPROMISE

Hyundai has improved the 2006 Sonata so thoroughly that only the name remains the same. The midsize model is all about refinement, with a superb ride, impressive handling, extremely smooth 4- and 6-cylinder engines, superb fit and finish inside and out, plus high quality materials in the spacious cabin.

It looks good too. Less formal than the outgoing model, the new Sonata boasts the stance of a premium sport sedan yet still manages to portray elegance from every angle.

The front wheels do the pulling via a 162-hp 2.4-litre four-cylinder engine in base trim and 235-hp 3.3-litre V6 in upper trim levels, while a five-speed manual or optional four-speed automatic shifts the entry engine, and a velvety-smooth five-speed unit with manual mode connects to the V6.

A full assortment of luxury, convenience and safety features, starting at an unbelievably low $21,900, tops out with power actuated leather seats, automatic climate control, power adjustable foot pedals, an auto dimming rearview mirror, a traction and stability control system, premium audio, and more for only $28,000.

Its expected top-tier reliability – Consumer Reports magazine rated last year’s Sonata the most reliable car available in North America – makes the new model a midsize value leader.

TREVOR HOFMANN
ELECTRIFYING PERFORMANCE

Lexus’ parent company Toyota plans to power twenty-five percent of its two-nameplate Canadian lineup with its industry-leading hybrid-electric drivetrains by 2010, and eventually offer Hybrid Synergy Drive as optional equipment on all of its cars, vans, trucks and crossovers. If the new RX 400h is an example of what’s in store, saying no to spending a little more on the innovative fuel saving technology will become extremely difficult.

The 400h’s 3.3-litre V6, combined with twin electric motors, delivers V8 power to match zero to 100 km/h sprints with BMW’s X5 4.4i, for less money than most premium automakers charge to move from a V6 up to a V8. What’s more, it gets the added benefit of compact car fuel economy and the peace of mind that comes from knowing the car you’re driving doesn’t spew out anywhere near as many harmful emissions as other SUVs.

Added to the hybrid package is every luxury feature available on the conventional RX 330 and then some. It’s an enjoyable vehicle to drive, with surprising acceleration, especially during highway passing maneuvers, tremendous agility in the corners, and a level of refinement synonymous with the Lexus name.  

TREVOR HOFMANN
New Car PROFILE

2006 Acura CSX

FUEL EFFICIENT LUXURY IS RIGHT FOR THE TIMES

The CSX will replace the popular EL nameplate in Acura’s 2006 lineup, and by doing so, becomes Canada’s least expensive entry-level premium model.

“Acura’s new CSX sedan is designed as a gateway product to Acura’s family of six luxury vehicles, from the RSX sports coupe to the RL luxury-performance sedan,” commented Jim Miller, executive vice president, Honda Canada.

While no photos are yet available, Acura has released a few details that should be of interest.

Under the hood is a 155-horsepower 2.0-litre four-cylinder featuring i-VTEC “intelligent” valve-control, which combines VTEC (Variable Valve Timing and Lift Electronic Control) with VTC (Variable Timing Control). The i-VTEC system improves performance across a broader powerband while reducing fuel consumption and lowering emissions.

Acura states that the new CSX’s suspension has been “tuned for a performance-oriented feel”, so expect nimble handling. The CSX will also feature drive-by-wire throttle control, four-wheel disc brakes and a lightweight speed-sensitive electric power steering (EPD) system for what Acura assures will be “sporty driving performance”.

Acura also promises its CSX will feature a “wide range of distinctive luxury and convenience features”, plus a “full compliment of standard safety features”, which are to include Honda’s new Advanced Compatibility Engineered (ACE) body structure for improving frontal collision safety with vehicles of “differing size”.

Expect it to arrive in showrooms later this fall. TREVOR HOFMANN

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The Specs

CSX

- PRICE RANGE (base MSRP): $25,400 – $31,900
- BODY TYPE: 4-door, 5-pass
- LAYOUT: FWD
- ENGINE: 155-hp, 2.0L, 16-valve, SOHC I-4
- TRANSMISSION: 5-spd manual (opt. 5-spd auto)
- BRAKES (front/rear): disc/disc, ABS
- MILEAGE (estimated city/hwy): 7.8 / 5.7 L/100 km
- SAFETY: front and side curtain airbags
- WARRANTY (mo/km): 60/100,000 km comprehensive

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The Specs

RX 400h

- PRICE RANGE (base MSRP): $62,200 – $69,700
- BODY TYPE: 5-door, 5-pass
- LAYOUT: Front gas engine plus front & rear electric motors/AWD
- ENGINE: 268-hp, 3.3L, 24-valve, DOHC V6 with two hybrid electric motors
- TRANSMISSION: Electronically controlled Continuously Variable Transmission (ECVT)
- BRAKES (front/rear): disc/disc, ABS
- MILEAGE (estimated city/hwy): 7.5/ 8.1 L/100 kms
- SAFETY: front and side curtain airbags
- WARRANTY (mo/km): 48/80,000 comprehensive; 60/110,000 powertrain
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- Current Air Care inspection: we guarantee that all cars purchased at any OpenRoad dealership have been Air Care certified.

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Other services offered:

- Helpful Business Office personnel for all your financing needs
- Trade Ins Welcome
- Professional appraisers on staff for vehicle evaluations
- ICBC insurance services available on site

A unique vehicle in our Preowned Department:

Here is a unique opportunity to check out OpenRoad Toyota-Richmond newest acquisition - the 1990 Toyota Sera, which was originally sold in Japan and the U.K. as a concept (only 16,000 Sera’s were produced between March, 1990 and December, 1995). Indeed, an upcoming desired collectible worldwide!

Photography: Dean Sanderson
OpenRoad supports the Eagle Ridge Hospital Foundation

OpenRoad Toyota Port Moody held their second annual Community Day on September 17 in support of the Eagle Ridge Hospital Foundation. The weather co-operated and many people came to enjoy the festivities. Activities included face painting, balloon animals, stunt bike shows by Trialsin Bike Store. Other sponsors that generously donated time and supplies for the event were M&M Meat Shop in Maple Ridge, Starbucks, Dairy Queen and the Port Moody Rotary Chapter. The raffle of a one year lease of a Toyota Corolla was awarded to Al Olson of Coquitlam and the event raised $1500 for the Foundation.

Richmond Flatlands Race sponsored by OpenRoad Toyota Richmond

Once again OpenRoad Toyota Richmond sponsored the Richmond Flatlands race in 2005. Despite the torrential rains, 400 runners came out for their ‘best time of the year’.

Congratulations...

to the Flatlands Race Coordinator (and OpenRoad Toyota Associate) Chris Dalhuisen for his nomination for the Community Spirit Award to honour volunteers in the City of Richmond. Chris has tirelessly volunteered with the Flatlands race along with Kajaks Track and Field Club.

Evergreen Foundation support by Toyota

Toyota continues to support the Evergreen Foundation’s efforts to create green space in the community. Most recently J. N. Burnett Secondary School was a recipient of a grant.
Hidekazu Tojo is the owner and head chef of the world famous Tojo’s restaurant – certainly one of the best Japanese restaurants in Vancouver – possibly one of the best in the world. He’s also the owner of a new 2006 Toyota Highlander Hybrid.

What sets Tojo’s fare apart from the competition is his vast knowledge of Japanese cuisine, an uncanny ability to source the freshest cuts of meat and seafood, and a life long devotion to culinary creativity.

During his rigorous apprenticeship in Japan, Tojo learned a healthy respect for hard-work, precision, quality, and customer service. As a stunningly successful restaurateur he’s learned that fantastic products and happy, healthy customers are critical to sustainable success.

Environmental sustainability is also important to Tojo. He strongly believes in the value of sourcing local products and he complies with the Canadian fishing restrictions. He follows the guidelines of the Farmed and Dangerous Campaign outlined by the Coastal Alliance for Aquaculture Reform which asks restaurant owners and chefs not to serve farmed, over-fished or endangered species of fish.

In light of Tojo’s dedication to quality products, outstanding customer service, and environmental sustainability, choosing a new 2006 Toyota Highlander Hybrid from OpenRoad Toyota seemed to be a perfectly natural selection. A truly environmentally friendly mid-size SUV that’s a far cry Tojo’s first vehicle, a 1972 Datsun 510.

We caught up with Tojo a few weeks after purchasing his new vehicle from OpenRoad Toyota. We asked him a few questions about his life, his restaurant, and he shared an idea with us about a parallel parking feature we had never considered.
So, have you had a chance to take your new Highlander Hybrid on any road trips? Only a few short trips here and there. A couple of weeks ago I took it out on the highway to see my friend's property in Abbotsford. I was impressed by performance on the highway – very quiet and smooth.

What do you like most about your Highlander Hybrid?
It looks good, and it’s very comfortable to drive. It’s fuel efficient, quiet, and well to be honest, I like everything.

What type of music do you listen to when you’re driving?
I like classic, soft music.

Your restaurant is reputed to serve some of the best Japanese food in Vancouver, some say Canada, some even say the world. With such a great reputation you must get some pretty famous customers. Who was your most memorable celebrity to visit your restaurant? Or favourite?
There are lots. Mel Gibson, Harrison Ford, Matt Damon, many famous people have enjoyed my restaurant. Robin Williams, Morgan Freeman, Kevin Bacon and many powerful politicians and business people too. But I appreciate every one of my customers and each is treated with utmost respect.

I understand that when you first came to Vancouver not many people had ever experienced authentic Japanese food before, let alone sushi.

I came to Vancouver in 1971 and at that time, Japanese food was not very popular. Some people had tried tempura or sukiyaki – lots of popular dishes but not sushi. Only a handful of Caucasians I knew of in Vancouver ate sushi and usually only tuna sashimi. Most of my first customers were more traditional Japanese people, so I began to experiment with new creations – the inside out California roll and my original, B.C. roll.

Wow, you invented the California Roll?
Yes that is true. Tojo-maki became known as the California Roll when you first came to Vancouver, were you worried that Japanese food might not catch on?
No, I’m always a positive thinker.

I read on your website that you had a long and very intense apprenticeship at a very fine restaurant in Osaka. You must have learned a lot.
Yes, I worked at a very traditional, high-end restaurant for many years. It taught me a tremendous amount. I would work 16 hours a day. Our shopping started at four or five in the morning. I trained very hard earning a low wage and working long hours. I was hard work but it has proven to be very good for me, I learned so much, not only about fish, but with meat, everything – how to cook, how to talk to customers, and patience too.

If somebody has never experienced Tojo’s, how would you describe your restaurant and its cuisine?
Japanese food has a lot of variety. It’s not only raw fish. I would start them off easy. Our cuisine is made with mostly local ingredients and produce. Then we create it to my own style.

Yes, your personal style is really what sets your restaurant apart. I’ve heard you know over 2000 recipes. Do you write them down or keep them all in your head?
Good food is just like music. This instrument here, this instrument there, then you put it all together. Seasonality is also very important. In the summertime we serve summer products, and in the winter when it’s cold people like hot dishes. But most of all, people are always looking for something new. I love to create new dishes.

With your tremendous success, what do you consider your greatest accomplishment?
I think it’s my original dishes. I love creating dishes that nobody else has thought of. When I first started over 25 years ago my friends told me that it would be impossible to have my own dishes. Now, most of the food I serve are my own creations. Many people say, ‘Oh you have a very traditional way.’ Yes, I use traditional techniques but in my own way. It’s Tojo’s style – delicious and healthy. It’s easy to make food that tastes good, but healthy too, not so easy. If you use garlic, butter, and cream it tastes good. But it’s not healthy.

I think most people would agree that sushi is pretty healthy. What is a common misconception about sushi, or a little known fact about sushi?
Most people, especially those from North America, think sushi is just raw fish. It is not. Some fish we cannot eat raw, we must cook...

Like fugu the poisonous blowfish?
Yes.

Do you ever serve fugu here?
In 1971, we had a lot of Japanese business people here. And fugu is most popular in the Osaka area. They would always ask me to serve fugu. I have a fugu license so in 1972 to 1974, we served fugu. The most poisonous parts are the brain, blood, and liver.

When you first came to Vancouver, were you worried that Japanese food might not catch on?
Yes, your personal style is really what sets your restaurant apart. I’ve heard you know over 2000 recipes. Do you write them down or keep them all in your head?

Did anybody ever die?
No!

That’s a relief. Dead customers are probably pretty bad for business and the restaurant business is pretty competitive in Vancouver isn’t it?
I love competition and we work very hard to be competitive and exciting to our customers. Vancouver has many exceptional places to dine so I must compare myself to those too. Not only at Japanese restaurants.

So, I know you just bought a new Highlander Hybrid, but what would your dream car be?
An H2 fuel cell car. But my real dream is to find a car that I can parallel park without having to back in. Just go sideways right into the space. My dream car will park sideways automatically.

Perhaps we should tell engineers and designers at Toyota about your idea?
Yes, then we could all park Tojo style!
“GOOD RIDDANCE” I THOUGHT ALOUD. THE TIME HAD FINALLY COME TO PART WITH MY LITTLE RED 1989 HONDA.

I had owned her since new, and she served me well throughout the last 16 years, but time had taken its toll. The cherry red paint leached away, the black bumpers now a milky grey. Cold mornings were especially difficult now, where I would say a little prayer before turning the key, hoping for a favorable response. I knew the time had come to move on to something new.

I decided to give her one final wash before placing my ad in the local paper. As I stood in the driveway, wash bucket in hand, I started to realize how much this car has meant to me. I remembered the many summer camping trips it took us on, and the endless work commutes; driving with the windows down, on a hot July day, singing along with my favorite song on the radio; the dent on the bumper from when my young son was making his first failed attempt at riding his bike. I remember wiping his tears away, and then watching him ride back down the driveway, laughing the next instant. I bought it during my first year of college, with money saved from numerous odd jobs. As the years passed by, it became the vehicle that took my children to school, soccer games and the like. Look inside and you can still spot the indentations the booster seats had left behind. I realized that over time, my car had become more than metal and four tires. It became a part of the family that I relied on day in and day out.

Soon after I placed the car for sale, a young man came to look at it. The young man explained he was a mechanic and wanted to buy a “fixer upper” and this was just what he was looking for. He gave me the eight-hundred dollars asking price, so I told him I would let him keep the bungee chords that held up the front bumper.

... my sixteen year old son asks me if he can “take it for a burn”. We compromise and go together for a drive to get a burger at the drive through.

We shook hands and he drove away happy with his purchase. I smiled as I watched the one working taillight fade in the distance.

A week later, I am the proud owner of a brand new minivan. The silver paint sparkles in the sun, not a single dent or rust spot to fret about. It seems like a new friend I don’t know a lot about yet, but look forward to creating many new memories with. This next chapter begins as my sixteen year old son asks me if he can “take it for a burn”.

We compromise and go together for a drive to get a burger at the drive through. “Cool Ride Dad, but I would have preferred a sports car” my son joked. Sure enough a new chapter had begun. And strangely enough, I somehow look forward to the next dent in that bumper.

BRIAN VOTH

Brian Voth is the Assistant Service Manager at OpenRoad Toyota Richmond

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**Q**: I recently got a small rock chip on my windshield while driving on the highway. It is pretty small so I was thinking about just leaving it. Any opinions?

**A**: Yes. Get it fixed as soon as possible! There is a good chance that small chip can expand to a large crack if left unattended. A chip can be repaired inexpensively, but a crack would require the entire windshield be replaced.

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**Q**: I haven’t washed my car for a couple of months and now I notice paint damage where some bird droppings were. Can this be easily fixed?

**A**: Unfortunately not. Bird droppings are acidic, and actually eat through the protective coating and the paint itself. The longer it sits, the more damage is done. You likely will require those areas to be repainted. It is advised to clean these droppings off as soon as you see them to avoid costly damage. Do not use a dry cloth or napkin as you can scratch the paint while cleaning.

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**Q**: At my last oil change, I was told my air filter was dirty and needed replacement. Can I wait until my next service?

**A**: I would not advise waiting until the next service. The function of your air filter is to stop airborne contaminants from getting into your engine. A clogged air filter will not allow enough air into the combustion chambers resulting in a “rich condition” (i.e. not enough air and too much gas). The final result will be lack of power, rough running, and excessive fuel consumption.

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**Q**: I hit a curb on a slippery corner while driving and now my car seems to pull to the right, and my steering wheel isn’t centred. Should I have it checked out?

**A**: Definitely. What has happened is your vehicle is now out of alignment. Depending on the severity of the impact, you may also have sidewall tire damage, a bent rim and worse case, possible bent suspension components. Hopefully, if you didn’t hit too hard, a simple alignment should fix your problem. (see Alignment box, facing page)

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**A**: Definitely. What has happened is your vehicle is now out of alignment. Depending on the severity of the impact, you may also have sidewall tire damage, a bent rim and worse case, possible bent suspension components. Hopefully, if you didn’t hit too hard, a simple alignment should fix your problem. (see Alignment box, facing page)
**Q** Do I need to install 4 snow tires or is 2 ok?

**A** The short answer is yes. A front wheel drive car with winter tires on the front wheels only would have decent straight line traction however braking and turning is going to be a handful. If you don’t have good traction on the rear of the vehicle you are apt to have pre-mature lock-up of the rear wheels and a tendency to skid when braking or turning.

**Q** Why do I get a musty smell when I turn on my air conditioning or blower fan?

**A** When the air conditioner is used, either during cooling or to defog the windows, a small amount of water vapor will condense on the cooling fins of the evaporator under the dash. These water droplets, along with small particles of dirt in the air, will cause a build up of mold or mildew on the evaporator, which will give you the musty odor. A variety of effective disinfectant sprays can be applied via the exterior air inlet vent to alleviate the odor.

**Q** Why is it necessary to change the brake fluid?

**A** Brake fluid will slowly absorb water moisture, which can cause corrosion to the insides of the brake components, leading to costly repairs.

**Q** Why do I have a brake vibration or pulsation when braking at highway speeds?

**A** If the problem is with the brake system, the vibration is most likely a result of thickness variation in the rotor. As pads squeeze a rotor that is not of uniform thickness, their effectiveness fluctuates — grabbing the thick spots and slipping over the thin. This in turn is felt as a pulsation in the pedal.
With a 230hp 6.0 engine, you've never seen a Hyundai like this before.
So you want to go racing, do you? You figure you are a very good driver, and you have the need for speed but are smart enough not to indulge it on the street. You know you’ll never be a pro driver, but you just have that competitive urge that you want to deal with from time-to-time.

Well, you are in luck, because there is a good race driver training program right here in the Lower Mainland of B.C.

The Sports Car Club of B.C. (SCCBC) runs the road racing program at Mission Raceway Park east of Vancouver, and every season, they hold two Driver Training programs, from which many of the drivers racing at the track have graduated. You can be one of them.

SCCBC’s Ray Stec filled us in on the program. “It starts with a five-hour classroom session on the basic theory of racing. The next weekend is the on-track portion, with two full days of instruction starting with basic exercises, culminating in high-speed lapping sessions."

You don’t need to already own a race car to take the course. “Your car should be a good, road-worthy street car,” Stec continues. “It will be put through its paces, so you might go through a set of brake pads, and you’ll put some wear on your tires as well.”

The next SCCBC Driver Training course will be in March, check the club’s website [www.sccbc.net] for all the details.

By the way, if you end up not going racing after taking the course, you will have at least improved your regular street driving. And there is nothing wrong with that. GERRY FRECHETTE
The Parting Shot

Christian Chia prepares to take on the field at the Asian Formula Renault.
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