

For Immediate Release

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**2008 MAZDA MX-5 MIATA: LEGENDARY TWO-SEAT CONVERTIBLE  
SPORTS CAR REMAINS A SEGMENT FAVORITE**

“Award-winning,” “segment-saving,” “world’s best” – are just a few phrases used over the years to describe the Mazda MX-5. Since its inception in 1989, MX-5 has received more than 150 awards, including named *Car and Driver* “10 Best” seven times. MX-5’s success is due to its simple concept, minimal necessary weight and mechanical complexity, affordability and fun-to-drive characteristics. With more than 800,000 units sold, MX-5 continues to set sales records, making it the world’s best-selling two-seat roadster, and cementing Mazda’s place in the annals of sports car manufacturers.

The 2008 MX-5 enters the model year with new driver’s seat-lifter with manual adjustment, standard Tire Pressure Monitoring System (TPMS) and a six-disc CD changer for Touring and Grand Touring models. Unchanged is the very essence of the “oneness of horse and rider” – the development credo of the original Miata – as elemental and as true as ever.

The heart of the MX-5 remains a highly-responsive MZR-series 2.0-liter, 166-horsepower (at 6,700 rpm) powerplant (158 for A/T models). The MX-5 has a light and compact engine, featuring chain-driven double overhead camshafts, lightweight fly wheel, variable intake valve timing, electronically controlled port fuel injection and coil-on-plug ignition. Revving smoothly to its 6,700 rpm redline, the 2.0-liter engine delivers 140 lb-ft of torque at 5,000 rpm for driving exhilaration throughout the rev range.

“The MX-5’s popularity is not duplicated by many and has become a global icon, crossing over into pop culture and appearing in movies, television shows, books and video games,” said Tetsu Nakazawa, MX-5 vehicle line manager. “It’s driven by racers every weekend at race tracks across the country and is often used by drivers taking a joy ride up the coast. In any application, the MX-5 is readily capable to handle the road or track ahead of it.”

### **TRACK INSPIRED**

Mazda, of course, has a distinguished history of producing great sports cars. The first Mazda sports car to win worldwide recognition and praise was the rotary-powered Cosmo Sport launched in 1967.

The RX-7, which followed in 1978, won the hearts of sports car enthusiasts and claimed many important race victories. The original MX-5 Miata, launched in 1989 as a 1990 model, revolutionized the affordable two-seat roadster market. Two years ago, Mazda's introduction of the RX-8 redefined the boundaries of sports car design by offering spectacular performance and comfortable accommodation for four adults in one innovative sports car package.

All of Mazda's considerable expertise and passion for designing great sports cars was drawn on for the latest third-generation MX-5.

### **RACE-READY FROM THE DEALERSHIP**

Too much weight is bad for athletes, and just as bad for sports cars. Weight hurts acceleration, throttle response, handling and agility. It negatively affects braking distances and fuel economy. Mazda engineers worked hard to make the MX-5 light-weight – while building a roomy, safe car.

Weight-saving measures include the use of an aluminum hood and trunk lid and many aluminum suspension and braking components. There is widespread use of high-strength and ultra high-strength steel in the unitary construction body, which boosts body strength while simultaneously cutting weight. The 2.0-liter engine has an aluminum block and head, and the intake manifold and cam cover are made from lightweight composite plastic. In the end, MX-5 is very light weight, yet the car is roomy for tall or large adults, and safe for everyone, thanks to its strong body and safety features (including standard side airbags and ABS anti-lock brakes for all versions).

How is this combination possible? By utilizing the 'gram strategy'. One of the imperatives for Mazda engineers was making every gram count by assessing the weight of the vehicle in the smallest possible increments. Under this 'gram strategy' imperative, for example, the design of the rear-view mirror was simplified, thus trimming 84 grams, or 0.19 lbs. While not a surmountable difference on its own, by applying this strategy throughout every nook and cranny of the MX-5's design, Mazda engineers were quite effective in building a light, roomier, stronger and safer sports car.

Front suspension is by double wishbones, as in the best sports cars and race cars. They provide linear toe, caster, and camber changes as the wheels travel up and down. Anchor points are reinforced to provide the desired lateral stiffness and made from aluminum to reduce weight. No suspension system better relays feedback so accurately to the driver, nor induces such all-around stability. The new multilink rear suspension has long links to help linearity.

Springs are coil all around, and dampers are gas-filled for more accurate wheel control on difficult and taxing roads.

### **FEARLESS 2.0-LITER ENGINE PROVIDES EXHILIRATING PERFORMANCE**

The sophisticated 2.0-liter four-cylinder engine gives strong performance, has an inspiring exhaust note, and most important of all, is brilliantly responsive. It reacts to driver commands with lightning-quick reflexes, and offers progressive power delivery. Such linearity is the key to all of the MX-5's driving controls. The MZR-series engine is shared with the engine used in MAZDA3, MAZDA5, MAZDA6, CX-7, Tribute and B-Series.

The engine is mounted front mid-ship, for ideal handling balance and nimbleness. It uses an aluminum block and head for lighter weight and structural rigidity, ultimately improving performance and refinement. Chain-driven double-overhead camshafts and 16-valve breathing are used for improved revving and flexibility. Variable intake valve timing improves low-end torque and high-end power.

Maximum power is 166 horsepower at 6,700 rpm (158 horsepower for A/T models). For good tractability and ease-of-driving, at least 90 percent of peak torque (140 lb-ft) is available from 2,500 rpm to the 6,700 rpm redline (fuel cut off is at 7,000 rpm).

Standard equipment is a close-ratio five-speed manual transmission, and a six-speed manual gearbox is available, with gear ratios close-stacked to enhance the joy of sporty driving. Short, quick shift strokes have been achieved by use of triple-cone synchros on the first four gears.

“Miata-like” shift quality quickly became the benchmark for the industry when the first MX-5 launched in 1989. The third generation MX-5 takes performance feel to an entirely new level – think, and the car all-but changes gears on its own.

A Sport A/T automatic transmission adds dimension to the MX-5’s personality. Six ratios are provided to improve acceleration, driving refinement and freeway comfort. Paddles mounted behind the steering wheel command upshifts while buttons positioned on the spokes are used for downshifts. Coordinating engine torque with the shift sequence, results in smooth, seamless, and fast gear changes. The Sport A/T-equipped car is a joy to drive, with gear ratios perfectly matched to the engine’s horsepower and torque output.

## **TWO-SEAT ROADSTER WITH STYLING THAT IS PURE**

The design direction given to the designer of the third generations MX-5: To convey fun and modern styling but retain the iconic feel of the earlier generation MX-5 Miatas.

The first- and second-generation MX-5 Miata exterior design is a rounded shape with a wide footprint, large-radius corners and deep side contours. On the third generation, the soda-bottle shaped center section is eliminated. Instead, the designers have used an entirely new oval shape in which the seating area is now the widest portion of the car. It makes for a roomier, safer cockpit and yet still expresses the compact look of a lightweight sports car.

Side surfacing is rounded yet taut – like the skin over a muscled body. Door mirrors continue the elliptical theme established by the original MX-5 Miata.

Head and tail lamps are mounted inboard to reinforce compactness, central to the car’s design philosophy. The tail lamps combine the traditional elliptical shape from previous design generations with new, modern materials. The rounded grille opening is similar to the original MX-5 Miata, and is part of the car’s iconic shape. The front bumper is clean and aerodynamically shaped. Seat-back bars add an eye-catching detail to the rear view.

Side skirts, tire-area deflectors and the front spoiler are designed to control airflow under the body and along its sides, minimizing drag.

The soft top provides a sporty, classic appearance with a flatter upper surface and a longer rear contour that flows smoothly into the rear deck. The lowered shape blends smoothly with surrounding body contours so well that no separate ‘tonneau’ cover is needed.

The Z-fold design makes erecting and folding the roof even easier. It uses a simple, central latch handle.

Introduced in 2007, a Power Retractable Hard Top model is available (covered in a separate release). This addition to the lineup builds on the soft-top two-seater’s zest for life by enhancing year-round comfort and security. Opening and closing cycles last only 12 seconds, making this the fastest power-operated retractable hard top in the U.S.

## **ENVIRONMENT TO ENJOY DRIVING**

The interior design theme balances comfortable snugness below shoulder level with openness above, to give the impression of riding in open air.

The T-shaped instrument panel is consistent with Mazda design-DNA while the center console accentuates the backbone of the car. Strong horizontal and vertical theme lines connote rigidity and sports car capability. The black center stack is as simple and functional as possible. The arched hood over the instrument cluster and four circular vents are part of the MX-5’s cabin identity.

Wind in the hair is one thing, but nobody enjoys cockpit turbulence and buffeting, especially on long drives. Small quarter windows block drafts between the windshield pillars and door mirrors into the cockpit. An aero board located between the seat back hoops is tall and perforated to slow down reverse-flow air that rushes into the cockpit. Mesh construction helps to reduce weight.

The quality of craftsmanship used in the MX-5 is quite unlike any MX-5 before. From the details of bright-trimmed gauges to the “piano-black” finish on the dash, the MX-5 feels and looks like a far more expensive vehicle than it actually is.

## **MODELS AND ACCESSORIES**

The MX-5 Miata was conceived primarily for the U.S. market, and throughout its 18-year history, America has always been the biggest market for what has become the world's most popular two-seat convertible. The SV model represents the least expensive way of getting into an MX-5. As with the next step-up MX-5, it gets a five-speed manual gearbox, 16-inch aluminum sports wheels, power-assisted door mirrors, dual exhausts, power windows, cloth upholstery, AM/FM/CD player with four speakers, dual front airbags and side airbags. In addition, the MX-5 gets air conditioning and a leather-covered steering wheel.

The Touring version, in addition, gets fog lamps, cruise control, Remote Keyless Entry with retractable key and steering wheel-mounted cruise and audio controls and adds a six-disc CD changer for 2008.

The six-speed manual gearbox with leather shift knob is standard on the MX-5 Miata Sport, as are bigger 17-inch alloy sports wheels. The Grand Touring gets heated leather seats, faux leather door trim, cloth soft top, and a BOSE® audio system with seven speakers.

When upgrading to the Grand Touring with Premium Package, the vehicle gets Mazda Advanced Keyless Entry & Start System, DSC with Traction Control, Anti-theft alarm and HID headlights. Premium Package 1 adds Limited Slip Differential.

All 2008 Mazdas come with a roadside assistance program. With a call to a toll-free number, owners can access roadside assistance 24 hours a day, 365 days a year throughout the United States and Canada. In addition, a comprehensive three-year/36,000-mile warranty covers every part on the vehicle except those subject to normal wear. Also, all 2008 models receive a five-year/60,000 mile powertrain warranty and a five-year/unlimited-mileage corrosion warranty.

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Headquartered in Irvine, Calif., Mazda North American Operations oversees the sales, marketing, parts and customer service support of Mazda vehicles in the United States, Canada and Mexico through nearly 900 dealers. Operations in Canada are managed by Mazda Canada, Inc., located in Ontario, Canada, and in Mexico by Mazda Motor de Mexico in Mexico City.

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