



Press Information

Kitted out for big adventures: The X-raid Team and the MINI Countryman with off-road design.

Countdown on for the Dakar Rally 2013 – Champions perfectly equipped to defend their title with the MINI ALL4 Racing, 2012 winner Stéphane Peterhansel and Original MINI Accessories.

Munich. Preparations are running at full speed as the X-raid Team's MINI ALL4 Racing cars limber up for the defence of their Dakar Rally crown, beginning on 5 January 2013. And the X-raid Team has also invested its trust in the MINI Countryman and Original MINI Accessories for the rally world's most exacting challenge. For example, the service vehicles which will accompany the team over the full rally distance of more than 8,000 kilometres (just under 5,000 miles) through Peru, Argentina and Chile will be equipped with the off-road design package. These eye-catching retrofit components from the Original MINI Accessories range ensure that the MINI Countryman cars preparing for their role in the Dakar Rally will be kitted out even more effectively to soak up the constant fluctuations between gravel roads, desert tracks and mountain passes. Back in more "normal" territory, the MINI Countryman with off-road design displays its sporting talent and ambitions more clearly than ever when it comes to leaving the beaten track behind.

Rarely has a partnership had its sights trained so clearly on victory as the X-raid Team / MINI collaboration at the 2012 Dakar. The five MINI ALL4 Racing cars sent out by the X-raid Team demonstrated impressive reliability, speed and endurance as they stormed to the front of the field. In the end it was the French duo of Stéphane Peterhansel and co-driver Jean-Paul Cottret who wrapped up overall victory, ahead of team-mates Nani Roma (Spain) and Michel Périn (France). The three other MINI ALL4 Racing cars also finished in the top ten overall. This was the 10th Dakar win of Peterhansel's career – and he's determined that it will not be his last. At the MINI United festival in May, Peterhansel revealed his desire to repeat his triumph in the MINI ALL4 Racing in 2013.

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The Frenchman's announcement kick-started the countdown for the title defence, and all those involved at the X-raid Team and MINI have since been pulling out the stops to make it happen. The MINI ALL4 Racing has been in top form again this year, as it proved most recently with victory in the FIA World Cup for Cross Country Rallies in the hands of X-raid Team pairing Khalifa Al Mutaiwei and Andreas Schulz. However, the meticulous preparations for the Dakar Rally adventure reach far beyond ensuring the race cars' readiness for the job at hand. The team's service vehicles also play an important role in its success, so must likewise be kitted out with all the necessary tools. This is another area in which MINI provides valuable support, in the form of both expertise and cars set up to the last detail for the extreme challenges presented by the Dakar Rally.

Boasting powerful engines, ALL4 all-wheel drive and premium-car levels of quality, the MINI Countryman has all the ingredients to deliver maximum reliability in the heat of rally battle. And now the off-road design components from the Original MINI Accessories range have added even greater depth to the car's ability. The four-piece exterior accessories set provides protection from stone chips on gravel tracks and accentuates the MINI Countryman's characteristically generous ground clearance.

The off-road design addenda consist of silver-coloured add-on parts for the front and rear apron and side skirts. These components have been specially developed for the MINI Countryman and meet the exacting standards of the BMW Group in terms of design, materials, workmanship and safety. All of which means retrofitting them does not affect the terms of the vehicle's warranty. Sales and fitting are handled by the MINI dealer network, MINI subsidiaries and MINI service partners; a short pit stop is all that's required to give the MINI Countryman the off-road design treatment.



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The Original MINI Accessories range also contains an array of other options which emphasise the MINI Countryman's rugged character and broad spread of uses. Among the items available are 18-inch light-alloy wheels with run-flat tyres, mud flaps for the front and rear wheel arches, auxiliary headlights, and all-weather floor mats and a protective load compartment cover made from hard-wearing PVC. Plus, its four doors and large tailgate help the MINI Countryman to demonstrate exceptional versatility when it comes to interior usage as well.

The model range spans three petrol variants, three diesels and the ultra-sporty MINI John Cooper Works Countryman model. The latter is equipped as standard with the ALL4 all-wheel-drive system, which can also be ordered as an option for the MINI Cooper S Countryman, MINI Cooper SD Countryman and MINI Cooper D Countryman.

The MINI Countryman's wide track, long wheelbase, short overhangs and low centre of gravity are all hallmark MINI features and ensure safe and agile handling characteristics, both on the road and when excursions over more challenging terrain are called for. The "wheel-at-each-corner" design principle underpinning the classic Mini – the forefather of all current MINI models – was central to its sporting capability and its numerous successes on the rally scene. A trio of overall victories in the Monte Carlo Rally sealed its status as a 1960s racing icon and, with its spectacular success in the Dakar Rally and the FIA World Cup for Cross Country Rallies, MINI is now well on the way to emulating the brand's legendary winning streaks of years gone by.



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The BMW Group

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In 2011, the BMW Group sold about 1.67 million cars and more than 113,000 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax for the financial year 2011 was euro 7.38 billion on revenues amounting to euro 68.82 billion. At 31 December 2011, the BMW Group had a workforce of approximately 100,000 employees.

The success of the BMW Group has always been built on long-term thinking and responsible action. The company has therefore established ecological and social sustainability throughout the value chain, comprehensive product responsibility and a clear commitment to conserving resources as an integral part of its strategy. As a result of its efforts, the BMW Group has been ranked industry leader in the Dow Jones Sustainability Indexes for the last seven years.

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