

The Sky is the Limit: The MINI Beachcomber Concept.



MINI crosses borders, enters new dimensions of driving pleasure, and wins over additional target groups.

Once again, MINI achieves all this by consistently expanding the model range and through the unconventional creativity of MINI design. Just a few months prior to the launch of the brand's fourth model announced for autumn 2010, MINI is now demonstrating its potential for further enhancement of driving pleasure and diversity through another spectacular concept car: the concept of a brand-new type of vehicle proudly presented by MINI at the North American International Auto Show (16–24 January 2010) in Detroit.

The MINI Beachcomber Concept is a four-seater concept car designed consistently for maximum driving pleasure, taking up the enhanced options of the new MINI and combining these potentials with the vision of a radically open body concept.

ALL4 all-wheel drive and the variable interior give the MINI Beachcomber Concept abilities absolutely ideal for a spontaneous and active experience of freedom and leisure time. The potential offered by the car's modern drivetrain technology and space concept is used here to the greatest possible extent to ensure a highly emotional driving experience. Hence, the MINI Beachcomber Concept consistently does without doors, a conventional roof and all other body elements which might possibly limit the intensity of the occupants' encounter with their surrounding world. This makes the driver and up to three passengers one harmonious entity communicating directly with their surroundings – whether cruising through town, enjoying rough tracks in the mountains, or breezing along the beach.

The MINI Beachcomber Concept combines all-wheel drive with cutting-edge suspension technology, numerous body elements serving to make the car extra-strong and robust, as well as an elevated seating position. Generous spring travel and extra-large light-alloy wheels raise the entire car to a higher level. Access to the front and rear seats is nevertheless exceptionally convenient and easy thanks to the omission of doors and the entry cutouts extending all the way down to the seat bottoms, allowing the driver and passengers to get in and

out in one smooth and flowing process. A pleasant and interesting side effect is that the distance the occupants feel from their surroundings is reduced to a minimum.

The driver and passengers will also enjoy the driving pleasure created by this concept in everyday traffic under regular motoring conditions – simply because the MINI Beachcomber Concept retains its unmistakable character even when adverse weather conditions require use of the soft roof or the lightweight door and roof elements fitting on easily and conveniently within a few instants.

MINI entering new terrain – with a fourth model and a complete range of innovative ideas for the ongoing future.

The MINI Beachcomber Concept symbolises the elementary values of the brand in new, radical style – and at the same time the new model continues the current development of the MINI range in a particularly attractive manner.

Within just ten years after the re-launch of the brand, the fourth version of the MINI is now set to enter the market. As a unique crossover in the typical style of the brand, the new model offers a fascinating re-interpretation of that typical MINI design, with the functional convenience of four doors, four full-size seats, a variable interior, and a unique standard of driving pleasure now to be enjoyed for the first time also beyond the beaten track thanks to newly developed all-wheel drive.

The new production model now available from MINI goes far beyond the realms of urban mobility, inspiring the MINI designers to enhance that un-mistakable MINI feeling by adding further facets never seen before. Creating the MINI Beachcomber Concept, therefore, they are taking up the technical and concept qualities of the production model announced for autumn 2010, offering the ultimate expression of freedom in a car on this basis. The result is a new, incomparably open concept for a driving experience for all your senses, plus a degree of versatility greater than ever experienced before in discovering and enjoying new terrain.

The potential use and versatility of the MINI Beachcomber Concept is defined exclusively by the activities and preferences of its user. Clearly, the most authentic and natural surroundings for a car of this type are beaches where the MINI Beachcomber Concept, through its enhanced traction and radically open body, offers that unlimited freedom of movement it expresses from the start through its name alone.

The MINI Beachcomber Concept therefore allows the driver and passengers to actively live out their personal style, just like a kitesurfer, wakeboarder or triathlete is magically attracted to the hot spots of beach life the world over. Through its robust and versatile character, the MINI Beachcomber Concept furthermore follows in the footsteps of the Mini Moke, which, back in the 1960s, quickly became the epitome of adventurous motoring in your leisure time and in sports activities in sunny coastal regions.

Unique, typical of MINI, and with a great role model from way back when.

The MINI Beachcomber Concept is the vision of a car leaving behind all conventional standards and creating innovative momentum for individual mobility of the future. The combination of traction optimised by all-wheel drive for excursions beyond the beaten track, on the one hand, and an extreme focus on motoring in the open air, on the other, is quite unprecedented in the world of the automobile.

Now, therefore, the MINI Beachcomber Concept makes such a driving experience a truly attractive option, offering a harmonious blend of features only a MINI can provide in such authentic style. And since individual character, a clear focus on maximum driving pleasure, and the courage to create new concepts have always set the foundation for new models in the MINI range, this open-air all-wheel-drive concept clearly stands out from the beginning as a typical MINI.

The authentic style and character of the MINI Beachcomber Concept also results from the fact that the brand once already offered an extreme thrill of driving pleasure in the open air by conscious reduction to the very minimum: Way back in 1964, just five years after the market launch of the classic Mini, the creator of the first model, the world-famous engineer Alec Issigonis, already developed an all-open version of this revolutionary compact car.

The body of the Mini Moke, as it was called, was made up of hardly more than a floorpan, wide sills at the side, the engine compartment lid and the windscreen. A folding roof served – more or less – to protect the driver and passengers from precipitation.

With its robust structure and the drivetrain technology carried over from the Mini, this four-seater fun car became a great success particularly in the sunny regions of the USA and Australia. Production of the Mini Moke in Great Britain continued until 1968 with a production volume of some 14,500 units, following which production was continued in Australia and Portugal.

The MINI Beachcomber Concept now projects the principle of the Mini Moke into the 21st century. The rustic appearance of the car and its consistent concept of consciously reducing the body components and interior to a minimum clearly follow the tradition of the radically open Mini Moke back in the 1960s. This is indeed further accentuated by design language strongly inspired by the Mini Moke and enhanced by various striking details such as the characteristic radiator grille.

It goes without saying that the new model meets all modern demands in terms of space and comfort, efficiency and safety, while nevertheless retaining its clear focus on driving pleasure in direct contact with the surroundings.

Even ALL4 all-wheel drive goes back to a role model from the past, to be precise a prototype Mini Moke fitted by Alec Issigonis with two engines in 1963. On this test car appropriately referred to as the "Twini", the front and rear wheels were driven in each case by a four-cylinder from the Mini range of engines.

Versatile, modern, and safe at all times.

Modern and up-to-date from A–Z, the MINI Beachcomber Concept offers a wide range of innovations for consistent driving pleasure in the 21st century. The outstanding know-how in automotive development of a premium car maker in the areas of design, drivetrain, safety and production technology brings together the undiluted character of the concept car with a wide range of solutions most convincing in practice.

Measuring approximately four metres in length and with its highly versatile interior, the MINI Beachcomber Concept offers all the variability and spaciousness required for active leisure time. Consistently reduced to a minimum, the body of the car ensures an intense feeling of the sun shining in and the wind rushing by, while full maintenance of all MINI safety standards guarantees maximum occupant safety at all times.

The MINI Beachcomber Concept comes with a strong and stable body structure incorporating clearly defined load paths and deformation units serving to convey and consistently absorb impact energy in the event of a collision. Rollover safety also meets the highest demands made of an open car, the stable frame on the passenger cell able to withstand even extreme situations formed by substantially reinforced A-pillars and an equally strong D-pillar bar complete with an integrated lateral support element at the rear of the car. This additional safety component is indeed finished in body colour and, through its geometry

alone, conveys a supreme standard of strength and stability. It is made of high-strength steel for maximum stiffness on optimum weight, again in the interest of supreme safety.

This concept of intelligent lightweight technology serves to consistently lower the car's centre of gravity in the interest of superior agility at all times. Indeed, this agility is further enhanced by another special feature also standing out through its special look, with the lateral support element boasting recesses shaped to form the "MINI" model designation. Again, this special feature clearly visible from outside particularly when looking at the car from above further emphasises the spirit of pure adventure in the open air.

Extreme variability for all kinds of activities, weather and road conditions.

Single seats at the rear adjusting fore-and-aft as required and with backrests folding down completely offer the passengers a supreme standard of grand touring comfort tailored to their individual requirements and allow appropriate adjustment of transport capacities for all needs. In practice, this means that the driver and passengers are able to conveniently stow even bulky sports equipment such as mountain bikes or wakeboards securely held in position by special fastening systems.

When open, the MINI Beachcomber Concept is also able to carry extra-long objects such as surfboards without the slightest problem. Fastened firmly to the lateral support, surfboards fit conveniently into the car, sticking out at the top on the way to the beach.

The driver and passengers enjoy convenient access to the luggage compartment though the rear panel split vertically down the middle into two sections. Whenever necessary, the right-hand side may remain fully open for bulky objects extending out of the car at the rear. The left rear element, in turn, is a windowless door hinged at the side and extending up to the seat backrests. The additional storage case fitted on to the door is reminiscent in its round shape of a fully enclosed spare wheel holder of the type otherwise seen on a conventional offroader. But since the MINI Beachcomber Concept comes with runflat tyres and therefore does not require a spare wheel, the lockable case may be used to take along additional luggage, keeping beach mats, towels, surf shoes or similar odds and ends within easy reach at all times.

Flexible protection from wind and weather: soft roof or hardtop inserts.

The MINI Beachcomber Concept is built for the sunny side of life and is simply perfect for spontaneous action. Through its optimum flexibility, the car is able to meet all kinds of different requirements, naturally coping with any sudden change in exterior conditions.

This alone gives the MINI Beachcomber Concept all the qualities required for everyday motoring, with several options to cater for new demands and weather conditions.

The soft roof coming off the body completely and folding up into a compact unit offers particularly convenient and, at the same time, effective protection from rain and weather. Whenever required, the roof may be drawn over the car within a few instants like a tonneau cover on a boat, fastening conveniently on the windscreen frame, the rear panel and the side openings.

Made of an extremely light and, at the same time, very robust special fibre, the roof comes with transparent plastic inserts at the sides and at the rear serving as windows.

In its functional qualities, the roof follows the same standard as the most sophisticated and demanding outdoor wear combining maximum protection from wind and rain with minimum weight.

The lashing points holding the roof in position are equally strong, stable and user-friendly, with the four entry points and the rear door opening and closing easily when the roof is in place, naturally keeping out draughts and water from outside.

As a further option for reliable protection even in bad weather, the MINI Beachcomber Concept is available with accurately fitting plastic inserts on the roof, at the sides and at the rear. Made of an extra-light plastic material, these robust inserts carry over the principle of the removable hardtop to the doors and the luggage compartment lid of the car. And again in the interest of clear design and superior convenience, the inserts come flush with the body of the MINI Beachcomber Concept.

The door elements maintain their defined position through their firm connection to the opening points and the A- and D-pillars. They are likewise transparent at the top to provide good visibility to the outside, with the rear element held firmly in position through its contact to the left door element, the rear body panel at the right, and the loading sill.

The hardtop as such is connected to the windscreen frame at the front and rests in special mounts on the rollover crossbar. Precisely arranged connections joining the hardtop with the side and rear elements keep the entire structure extremely strong and stable, the appropriate connection being unfastened in each case when opening a door.

Typical MINI design, re-interpreted and concentrating on the essential.

Thanks to its clear design language, the body of the MINI Beachcomber Concept concentrating on the essential leaves no doubts that this is a genuine MINI. Unmistakable design elements reminiscent of the brand stand out clearly at first sight. And like on the MINI Crossover Concept presented for the first time at the Paris Motor Show in autumn 2008, the new model clearly reflects the ongoing process of MINI design and the introduction of MINI design language in a new type of vehicle. Indeed, both the smooth and firm design of the body and proportions typical of MINI show once again that this is clearly a member of the range.

Short overhangs front and rear as well as the wide wheel stance likewise bear the overall look of the brand on the MINI Beachcomber Concept. Here again, therefore, the new model comes with characteristic MINI design features at the front, side and rear re-interpreted on the new model. The extra-wide body frame even encompassing the wheel arches and extending down to the road emphasises the robust flair and character of this all-wheel-drive concept study. And thanks to greater ground clearance, the advantage of short overhangs front and rear comes out even more on rough terrain, allowing a particularly large ramp angle for even the toughest requirements.

Extending to the front in a dynamic sweep, the entire front section of the car is angled towards the road. The engine compartment lid is powerfully chiselled, the powerdome with its integrated air insert symbolising the outstanding muscle and performance of the turbocharged engine within the car.

The hexagon radiator grille again so typical of MINI comes with contour lines carried over directly from the front look of the Mini Moke. With its vertical position, three robust crossbars and additional integrated headlights, the radiator grille gives the MINI Beachcomber Concept particularly powerful and convincing presence.

The large, three-dimensional headlight units integrated in the engine compartment lid as a new interpretation of a characteristic design feature also boast a striking look. Accentuated by the classy chrome frame, the headlights follow the contours of the engine compartment lid and wheel arches, again confirming the increase in stature and spaciousness over the MINI models available so far. A large air intake at the bottom and foglamps moved far to the outside, finally, round off the front view of the car again in that unique style so typical of MINI.

Side view: new combination of robust strength and lightweight look.

Extending far into the side of the car, the headlights additionally emphasise the short front overhang. The powerfully designed wheel arches on the MINI Beachcomber Concept boast large 17-inch light-alloy wheels and offroad tyres with a rough tread.

The surrounds on the side direction indicators again so typical of MINI come for the first time in a diagonal shape in the extended A-pillar, creating a wide band in distinctive colour precisely at the same point as on the classic Mini and now forming an optical connection between the windscreen frame and the front wheels. This graphic element again underlines the solidity of the MINI Beachcomber Concept with its A-pillars appearing to rest powerfully on the front axle. At the rear the rollbar forms an equally direct line extending towards the rear axle of the car.

Massive side-sills along the front and rear entry points interact with the dark body frame to add a further touch of robustness, while the free view offered into the interior emphasises the lightness and agility of this concept car. Stylised push button elements around the entry point, like on the MINI Moke, indicate the option to fit a simple and straightforward cover for bad weather. The actual fastening and adjustment points for the soft roof, on the other hand, are not even visible from outside.

The graphic look of the rear end is formed in particular by the asymmetric design of the luggage compartment, the door element on the left and the storage case fitted on the outside symbolising the superior versatility of the car while the open section on the left emphasises the lightness and spontaneous functionality of the entire concept.

Over and above these specific features, the MINI Beachcomber Concept naturally comes with other design elements at the rear typical of the brand as such. The rear light clusters fitting like islands into the side panels, for example, stand upright and are surrounded by a wide band of chrome. Further down, the rear end is dominated by horizontal lines interacting with the muscular wheel arches to emphasise the sheer width of the car and its powerful stance on the road.

With the roof closed this convincing look of power and muscle is further accentuated by the growing width of the car in steps from top to bottom. The numberplate surround takes up the design and contours of the front air intake, while the rear air dam rounded off at the bottom again in typical MINI style comes with a robust underfloor protection element.

The interior: sophisticated, versatile, robust, and full of character.

The interior design of the MINI Beachcomber Concept likewise focuses on maximum driving pleasure in the great outdoors. Extra features added to the car as well as appropriate and conscious reduction to the minimum versus the existing models in the MINI range serve also within the interior to focus on the essential. The Center Speedo comes in that typical MINI design, comprising the usual display for navigation and audio functions.

With the MINI Beachcomber Concept being intended primarily for driving in the open air, the number of air vents has been reduced in the interest of additional loudspeakers on the HiFi system as well as special instruments for offroad motoring. These additional instruments are indeed spherical in shape, reminiscent of the displays in the cockpit of an aircraft.

A liquid-sprung compass fitted to the left of the steering wheel consistently tells the driver whether he is going the right way and moving in the right direction. A further special instrument to the right of the steering wheel, finally, presents an artificial horizon showing the angle of the car around its longitudinal and transverse axis.

Strongly contoured seats and an additional handle on the front passenger's side optimise driving pleasure on rough terrain. Open-pore footmats allowing a good view of the floorpan characterise the robust ambience of the car as well as the stitching seams on the seats matched specifically to this concept car.

The range of colour and trim within the MINI Beachcomber Concept again reveals the car's close link to nature, the surfaces and seat upholstery, in their design, following the elements of earth, air, water, and fire. All plastic surfaces on the instrument panel come in a newly developed grain look resembling the structure of dry earth.

The trim surfaces in the cockpit are finished in magnetic paint also used for the first time to create a special touch of flowing liquidity. And last but not least, the individually designed seats again oriented in their colours to the four elements serve as a symbol highlighting the versatility of the MINI Beachcomber Concept.

Center Rail with new features: everything the sportsman needs at your disposal at all times.

The Center Rail already presented in the MINI Crossover Concept plays a particularly important role in the new model. Extending from the instrument panel all the way to the luggage compartment, this fastening rail connects the front seats with the rear, emphasising the common driving experience enjoyed by the occupants on all seats.

A special fastening system developed for MINI enables the driver and passengers to place individual elements and components on the Center Rail, such as external music players and other devices, armrests for the front and rear seats, storage boxes, shelves and holders of all kinds.

The MINI Center Rail comes complete with an integrated cable duct allowing the user to connect a mobile phone or MP3 player in any position to the car's entertainment system by means of a holder fastened to the rail. A further option is to connect additional sources of light, a cooling box, a laptop or a GPS tracker safely and securely to the Center Rail, each with their own power supply.

The range of holders has been further extended especially for the MINI Beachcomber Concept, now including a stopwatch specially made for the new model, a bottle holder, a compact meal box as well as a case for cycling and swimming glasses, clearly reflecting the sporting character of this concept car and simply ideal for the triathlete.

The MINI Beachcomber Concept: variable and always open for maximum driving pleasure.

The MINI Beachcomber Concept offers driving pleasure in its purest form, concentrating on the essential elements required for genuine joy of individual mobility.

Introducing this concept, MINI once again proves the ability of the brand to convey values such as driving pleasure, lifestyle and premium quality, that is the values so typical of MINI, to a completely new type of vehicle.

From the start, the MINI Beachcomber Concept offers an outlook at an incomparable driving experience in new, unprecedented style reflecting the needs and wishes of a modern, lifestyle-oriented target group and the authentic character of the brand.

Following the MINI Crossover Concept opening up fascinating new options through the further extension of the brand family, the potential of the MINI's modern drivetrain technology and its flexible space concept is now being used consistently to offer additional driving opportunities in a new dimension. Indeed, the MINI Beachcomber Concept offers a particularly emotional driving experience, demonstrating these qualities once again in that unique style so typical of the brand. Clear proof, therefore, that unconventional creativity still serves today to open up the door to brand-new vehicle concepts pointing into a future bound to offer even more fascinating renditions of that unique feeling so characteristic of MINI.