March 17, 2003: 2004 Cadillac XLR - Bold and Elegant Design Aims To Create A Future Classic

FOR RELEASE: March 17, 2003

CONTACT(S):
Jeff Kuhlman, Cadillac Communications

Kelly Cusinato, Cadillac Communications

David Caldwell, GM Product Communications

Bold and Elegant Design Aims To Create A Future Classic

Bold and edgy, yet elegant and refined, the design of the 2004 Cadillac XLR creates a striking new landmark for contemporary luxury and performance. The XLR's styling is a driving force behind this roadster aimed at creating a modern icon for Cadillac.

The car traces its roots back to Cadillac's audacious Evoq concept, which took the North American International Auto Show by storm, winning "best in show" when it was unveiled in January 1999. The Evoq drew widespread notice for its dramatic proportions and bold foreshadowing of Cadillac's then-new design theme and ambitious product strategy.

Vehicle Chief Designer Tom Peters was chosen to tackle the demanding task of turning a concept into a production car. Designing the XLR meant capturing the essence of the Evoq, while incorporating XLR's rear-wheel-drive Northstar powertrain and the chassis, which is based on GM's new

performance car architecture.

The result is a roadster that strikes a remarkable balance between boldness and refinement, expressing the XLR's blend of performance and luxury attributes.

"I like to describe this vehicle as a bow and arrow being drawn back, with a lot of tension and direction to it," Peters said. "Its form is stretched taught, very lean and muscular. The design projects chiseled form and pleasing style, but it also achieves all of those functional elements that are required for a world-class roadster."

Peters points out that though the car has a very linear and crisp look, the details reveal more.
"There are subtleties to the surface of this car. There really isn't a completely flat surface. There are slight crowns added throughout."

The XLR is an important new chapter in Cadillac design history, incorporating a bit of heritage into its unabashedly modern character. Cadillac styling cues played an important role in the XLR's appearance.

"Cadillacs in the past had very structured sections, crisp linear surfaces just as the XLR does," Peters said. "There is a very strong grille that harkens back to the heritage of Cadillac, but expresses this in a new way. The car is very American in its scale and the deliberate boldness of the surface development. The vertical headlamps are likewise expressive of Cadillac philosophy."

XLR's exterior appearance captures the dramatic presence of the concept, while adding touches critical for a luxury roadster. Compared to the Evoq, the XLR has a shortened front axle-to-dash distance and a rear axle pushed slightly rearward. The car's shape was altered slightly to accommodate appropriate trunk space and adequate rear vision.

Inside, the XLR again strikes a remarkable balance between luxury and performance attributes. The two-seat cockpit incorporates an impressive array

of high-technology features in a design that is at once modern and inviting. Eucalyptus wood trim blends with warm anodized aluminum accents to create a luxurious look and feel.

"The interior uses very contemporary architectural surfaces, expressed in a warm and comfortable way," said Peters.

After the Evoq laid the groundwork for Cadillac's new design direction -- recently embodied in the CTS sedan - the 2004 XLR enhances the theme with a dynamic presence that makes a significant mark in the luxury roadster arena.

Online URL:
https://www.xlr-net.com/knowledgebase/article/march-17-2003-2004-cadillac-xlr-bold-and-elegant-design-aims-to-create-a-future-classic-35.html