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Kia Unveils Bold Novo Concept

Kia has given a broad hint at a possible sports car of the future with this bold fastback concept unveiled at the Seoul Motor Show.

Taking its name from the Latin 'novatus' (meaning renewed or refreshed), the Kia Novo is the latest in a line of sporting concepts that Kia Motors has been teasing the public with for the past three years.

Fittingly, 'novatus' also provides the origin of the English word 'innovation', which the Novo concept brings to life through its styling and high-tech interior features.

Designed at Kia's state-of-the-art Namyang design centre in Korea and based on a specially adapted version of the Cerato platform, the Novo bears a coupé inspired silhouette and unmistakable Kia styling. The Novo's minimal front overhangs, longer rear overhangs and fastback roofline give it a raked and sporty profile.

The smooth, geometric design of the car's shape is blended with a series of sharp, decisive lines that form around the body. The front of the Novo sports the latest interpretation of Kia's hallmark 'tiger nose' grille and slim new laser headlamps. Low, wide air intakes house additional laser headlamps, which frame the Novo's bold face, emphasise its stance and give the car a unique light signature. Rear-hinged doors complete the car's striking profile appearance with slim, central pop-out door handles running level to the finely sculpted aluminum door mirrors. The Novo's diamond cut alloy wheels feature a similarly sharp design, made up of straight edges and two-tone carbon and silver finish. Completing the Novo's contemporary look are the aluminum rear roof line and two-tone silver and green paint finish.

The Kia Novo's cabin is focused solely on the driver, with the minimalist interior providing few

distractions from the task of driving, while all occupants benefit from plenty of space thanks to the car's long body and intelligent packaging.

The dashboard is angled towards the driver and sharp lines are embellished with the use of leather, stitching and aluminum highlights. The instrument binnacle delivers information through a compact three-dimensional hologram display, while a 'blind control' touch pad next to the steering wheel allows drivers to control the car's many functions without having to take their eyes off the road ahead. The touch pad incorporates a fingerprint scanner, which automatically sets up elements of the car according to the driver's preferences, such as music selection, audio volume and the type of information displayed.

The four individual dark brown leather sports seats add to the minimalist ambience of the cabin, each made up of simple linear shapes and featuring built-in inertia reel seatbelts.

Matching its dynamic styling, the Novo is powered by the latest high-tech production Kia powertrain; a 1.6-litre 'Kappa' turbo gasoline direct injection (T-GDI) engine, which is paired to an all new seven-speed dual clutch transmission to power the front wheels.

The Kia Novo concept connects to the road through innovative new 'adaptive concave profile' tyres, with a sunken middle section between two contact points serving to cool the rubber and channel excess road water away from the wheels for greater grip. The unique 20-inch tyres feature two slim contact points on the outer edges to provide lower rolling resistance and reduce road noise, while contributing a higher level of grip under cornering.

"The Novo is yet another bold and innovative concept from the Kia design team – I can just imagine driving this car on some of our best roads in New Zealand," says Todd McDonald General Manager of Kia Motors New Zealand.

There are currently no plans to bring the Novo to production, though Kia has a history of delivering production vehicles that bear a strong resemblance to concept vehicles that precede them. Kia does say, however, that the Novo concept provides a glimpse into plans for its future compact car line-up.

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Photo caption: The Kia Novo fastback concept.

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