

MINI

US Press Information



For Release: **EMBARGOED until September 15, 2009**

Contact: Nathalie Bauters
 MINI Communications Manager
 201-930-3166
 nathalie.bauters@miniusa.com

REFRESHINGLY DIFFERENT: The MINI Roadster Concept.

Woodcliff Lake, NJ – September 15, 2009... MINI Roadster Concept: fresh ideas for an intense driving experience.

MINI evokes new fascination and a wonderful new experience time and again. For each model in the range offers unique opportunities to enjoy supreme driving pleasure and unmistakable style.

Now the MINI Roadster Concept once again sets a new trend for individual mobility borne out by the brand. A purist vehicle concept, elegant design and fascinating, sporting driving characteristics all come together in this unique car to offer the vision of an open two-seater catering for the demands of a modern and self-confident target group.

The new concept car carries over the features typical of MINI to a new segment, the MINI designers thus bringing out yet another attractive facet in the character of the brand. So the world debut of the MINI Roadster Concept at the 2009 Frankfurt Motor Show will add a new perspective to the future of the MINI brand, presenting yet another great path of development.

The MINI Roadster Concept takes up features typical of the brand and re-interprets these unique strengths in a refreshingly new manner. Individual style, premium quality and a perfect match of driving pleasure and efficiency just right in this day and age determine the character of this compact two-seater. And through its design alone, the MINI Roadster Concept reflects the focus on maximum driving pleasure with nothing but the sky above.

The MINI Roadster Concept is clearly recognisable at very first sight as a MINI. At the same time, with its two seats, a tight-fitting soft roof and innovative rear-end design,

MINI USA

Mailing address
PO Box 1227
Westwood, NJ
07675-1227

Office address
300 Chestnut Ridge Road
Woodcliff Lake, NJ
07677-7731

Telephone
(201) 930-3166

Fax
(201) 307-3607

Internet
MINIUSA.com

the new model opens up new perspectives both in the context of the brand and in the segment of compact roadsters.

MINI Roadster Concept: making every trip a new experience.

Spontaneous pleasure is the stronghold of the MINI Roadster Concept. The car offers everything it takes to provide a truly emotional experience also on short trips – and at the same time it urges the enthusiast to escape the driving conditions encountered so often in city traffic.

Deliberately limited to two seats and optimised for weight, the concept clearly shows its uncompromising agility right from the start. Its stylish look and the high-quality interior ambience give this two-seater truly exclusive character, such innovations alone enabling the concept car to aggressively meet the future challenges of modern mobility.

The existing range with all its diversity already proves the exceptional potential of the brand in a most impressive manner. The MINI, MINI Clubman and MINI Convertible are already well-established in the market as unique characters, embodying the driving pleasure so typical of the brand in individual style different on each model.

Ongoing enhancement of the model portfolio has already enabled MINI to reach additional target groups, with the popularity of the brand constantly increasing over the years. Now the MINI Roadster Concept provides new options to enjoy the agile handling, premium quality and individual flair of the MINI in a new, truly unique and unprecedented manner.

From the start the concept car naturally considers the possibilities to use the advanced engines available in the MINI range – engines which stand out through their dynamic power and the efficient use of fuel. The superior efficiency of the engines is indeed combined from the start with a whole range of further efficiency-oriented technologies created as part of the BMW EfficientDynamics development strategy and featured by MINI as MINIMALISM to guarantee enhanced driving pleasure on even less fuel and lower emissions.

To achieve a high standard of sporting performance, the MINI Roadster Concept might possibly be powered by the 1.6-litre twin-scroll turbocharged engine already featured in the MINI Cooper S. Boasting direct gasoline injection, this superior power unit delivers maximum output of 128 kW/175 hp and peak torque of 240 Newton-

metres/177 lb-ft increasing briefly with the Overboost function to an even more superior 260 Newton-metres/192 lb-ft.

With its spontaneous and direct response and smooth surge of power, this outstanding engine offers everything it takes to boost this open two-seater directly to the top of the compact roadster market, making it a supreme performer right from the start.

Fifty years of MINI: strong tradition, promising future.

Presentation of the MINI Roadster Concept in the anniversary year of the brand combines a retrospective view of the brand's highly successful history with the great appeal of the current model range to offer a wonderful outlook into the future. Introduction of the classic Mini fifty years ago hailed the advent of a revolutionary vehicle concept destined for ongoing fame and popularity for decades to come. Now the current models in the MINI range interpret the traditional values of the brand in modern style, setting the standards for driving pleasure, premium quality and individual flair in the small car segment. And as a vision demonstrating the ongoing flexibility of this unique character, the MINI Roadster Concept clearly presents the exceptional potential of the brand both today and in the future.

The innovative body configuration of the MINI Roadster Concept is combined with the modern drive technology of the current MINI models as well as the features of the brand developed over years and decades. Hence, the study is the result of an ongoing development process opening up attractive options also for the years to come.

**Exterior design: unique proportions,
style and the power of expression so typical of MINI.**

The body design of the MINI Roadster Concept visualises the identity and innovative power of the brand in a truly fascinating combination. The strong family resemblance is borne out above all at the front end of the car through numerous details typical of MINI and through styling features characteristic of the brand as a whole. At the same time the individual look of this unique two-seater is just as unmistakable, created by new and different proportions as well as the innovative design of the rear end.

An integrating factor bringing all models together is the design language so typical of MINI, to be admired on both the elements characteristic of the brand and on new, innovative features. In its design, the MINI Roadster Concept is therefore refreshingly different but nevertheless comes with all the flair and style so well-known on the MINI.

So in an incomparable manner this concept car expresses the ability of MINI design to bring out extroverted style with class and sophistication.

The new two-seater measures 3,714 millimetres (146.2") in length and 1,683 millimetres (66.3") in width. Height of the car is 1,356 millimetres or 53.4".

These dimensions, together with the special contours of the rear end, provide truly unique, sporting and dynamic proportions. At the same time, again reflecting the typical look of the brand, the MINI Roadster Concept comes with extra-short body overhangs front and rear accentuating the athletic stature of the car and alluding even at a standstill to the unique handling characterised by thrilling agility and lauded as that unparalleled go-kart feeling.

The front end is the same as on the MINI Convertible all the way to the A-pillars, while the windscreen is strikingly low and raked to a greater angle. Particularly with the roof opened to the back, this clearly brings out the purist openness of the car.

A short luggage compartment lid forms the rear panel behind the roof folding up into compact dimensions and providing convenient access to the luggage compartment separated from the passenger compartment. With the roof closed this gives the car a notchback look clearly distinguishing the MINI Roadster Concept from the MINI Convertible. Unlike the production model, therefore, the body of the concept car follows the so-called three-box philosophy.

Familiar resemblance at the front.

The front view of the MINI Roadster Concept comes with all the characteristic features also borne out by the four-seater models in the brand. Smoothly balanced contours on the engine lid with large and equally smooth radii, large headlights, the homogeneous design of the radiator grille and a wide air intake at the bottom create that special look so typical of MINI, an expression of openness and flair.

Looking at the car from the front, however, you immediately realise a significant difference from the MINI Convertible, the windscreen both lower and raked to a greater angle giving the MINI Roadster Concept a very different look also from this perspective. The car is strikingly low and stands out clearly as a particularly sporting representative of the MINI brand.

The hexagon radiator grille and the large round headlights are unmistakable design elements re-interpreting their counterparts on the classic Mini in new, modern style.

The direction indicators are integrated in the headlights, with the new three-dimensional surrounds for the positioning lights and the foglamps directly below.

While on the MINI Roadster Concept the chrome radiator grille is the same as on the MINI Cooper S, the inner section of the grille comes with bars in body colour at first sight distinguishing the MINI Roadster Concept from the other members of the MINI family. A further point is that the bonnet stripes continue into the radiator grille to provide an additional sporting feature.

The engine lid with its particularly striking curvature bearing reference to the power unit within, as well as the stylised opening, are again the same as on the particularly powerful and fast version of the MINI already lauded for its performance.

Powerful side view, tight-fitting soft roof.

An attractive combination of design features typical of the brand and brand-new highlights also characterises the side view of the MINI Roadster Concept. The front side panels come directly from the MINI Convertible, just as the diagonal body joint so characteristic of every MINI between the engine lid and the side indicator surround again in the same style as on the MINI Cooper S provides an unmistakable sign of distinction with historic roots. The classic Mini was characterised here by a visible welding seam on the body.

The short, low-angle A-pillars merge gently into the roofline with the roof closed, while the glazed part of the passenger cell referred to as the greenhouse is a lot smaller than on the current production models. This provides a strikingly low silhouette clearly emphasising the superior sportiness and performance of the car.

The high waistline accentuates the powerful character of the car even more than on the current production models. In conjunction with the large wheels and the black stripe extending round the body at the bottom, this creates a particularly compact look, the muscular surfaces on the body and the powerful stance of the car on the road alluding from the start to a very intense and extremely agile driving experience.

Both open and closed, the concept car clearly stands out as a roadster, boasting an attractive waistline slightly rising up to the rear and retaining its linear form even with the roof open.

The passenger compartment limited to two seats is protected whenever required on account of wind and weather by a high-quality textile roof reduced in its dimensions to an absolute minimum. The distance between the windscreen frame at the front and the rear end of the roof behind the seats is deliberately kept to a minimum, with the soft roof merging smoothly into the body. The low seating position for the driver and front passenger nevertheless guarantees generous headroom at all times.

The soft top on the roadster opens and closes manually in a simple process taking only a few seconds thanks to the compact dimensions of the roof. The decision not to give the car a power roof not only reduces the weight of the MINI Roadster Concept even further, but also adds to the puristic flair of the car: This two-seater is an uncompromising companion for the enthusiast with an active lifestyle, ensuring maximum driving pleasure under all conditions in close interaction with the driver.

Innovative rear-end look in the design language typical of MINI.

The soft roof of the MINI Roadster Concept rests low down in compact arrangement when open behind the seats, merging smoothly and harmoniously with the straight waistline rising up slightly all the way to the rear end of the MINI Roadster Concept. When closed, on the other hand, the contours of the roof from a roadster-like roofline merging into the low rear end beneath the rear window.

The rear view is characterised by innovative design features clearly originating from the design language so typical of the MINI. The side sections, rear air dam and luggage compartment lid all come together to form a smooth and harmonious sculpture not only boasting the cascading style so typical of the brand, but also taking up existing elements in a new, unique look.

Increasing step-by-step in width from top to bottom, the rear view of the MINI Roadster Concept gives the car a particularly powerful stance on the road also from this angle, the wide track symbolising the strong grip of the wheels for supreme agility, a particularly sporting style of motoring, and safe handling at all times.

The rear light clusters surrounded by wide chrome frames in their upright arrangement are also typical of the brand. The design of the wheel arches and the horizontal flow of the rear panel at the top, on the other hand, take up the design language already to be admired at the front.

In its breakdown and configuration, the rear air dam again shows a clear resemblance to the structure of the front air intake, featuring a diffuser split up into two elements for a smooth and swirl-free flow of air beneath the car.

Impressively functional: large storage space and through-loading to the passenger compartment.

The unusually large and generous luggage compartment beneath the short rear end in typical roadster style offers lots of space for a car of this kind. Deliberately creating the car without a rear seat bench, the designers of the MINI Roadster Concept offer additional options to take along even large and bulky objects in the luggage compartment, thus optimising on the benefits offered by a compact roadster with this concept.

With the soft roof of the MINI Roadster Concept resting directly behind the seats, luggage capacity remains the same at 250 litres or 8.8 cubic feet with the roof both open and closed. And thanks to the low sill, loading the luggage compartment even with heavy and bulky objects is very easy and convenient.

Like the soft roof reduced in size to a minimum, the extra-large luggage compartment is the result of the roadster concept implemented consistently on the car. At the same time the function-oriented design of the new model in typical MINI style provides a range of carefully conceived features setting also the regular production models from MINI clearly aside from their competitors in the market.

This principle borne out on the current production models by features such as the Easy-Load function on the MINI Convertible makes a lasting contribution to the superior substance of the car. The result is a whole range of innovative solutions quite unique in this segment and underlining the premium character of the MINI brand.

On the MINI Roadster Concept these features include through-loading from the passenger compartment to the luggage compartment quite unique on such a compact roadster, the bulkhead between the passenger compartment and the luggage compartment incorporating a lockable opening. This gives the driver and passenger the opportunity to reach their travel utensils in the luggage compartment while driving, keeping bags with, say, beverages, a music CD or maps safe but readily accessible at all times.

Consistent safety concept: stable body structure and rollbar moving up instantaneously when required.

Consistent consideration of occupant safety right from the start in developing the MINI Roadster Concept again underlines the particular quality of this concept car, the safety features provided following the safety technology already developed for the MINI Convertible.

The MINI Roadster Concept therefore comes with an exceptionally strong and stable body structure, the stiff passenger cell, high-load bearing elements and precisely defined deformation zones including crash boxes at the front serving to smoothly divert and absorb impact energy. At the same time the concept car boasts a particularly stiff floorpan as well as extremely strong A-pillars and side-sills.

Occupant safety in the event of a rollover, obviously a particular challenge in an open car, has also been given special consideration in the comprehensive safety system developed for the MINI Roadster Concept, a full-size rollbar moving up instantaneously whenever required from behind the headrests, thus following the same philosophy presented for the first time on the MINI Convertible.

This single-piece aluminium bar spanning the entire width of the interior and moving up electromechanically when required within 150 milliseconds, together with the reinforced windscreen frame, provides maximum occupant safety as part of the passenger cell. In its resting position the rollbar does not extend beyond the headrests, thus not obstructing the driver's visibility to the rear. And designed as a single-piece element, the rollbar allows full integration of the through-loading connecting the luggage compartment and the passenger compartment.

Interior: elegant and sophisticated ambience with exclusive colours and materials.

The MINI Roadster Concept simply begs the driver and passenger to enjoy spontaneous driving pleasure with nothing but the sky above. The powerful flair of the exterior and the soft roof opening and closing quickly and conveniently with one single movement of your hand gives this concept car particular appeal and wonderful driving qualities.

The MINI Roadster Concept therefore addresses in particular a young and modern target group wishing to enjoy the full pleasure of driving in the open air as part of their

active lifestyle, showing their appreciation of a premium car and the individual style of the MINI brand.

The sophisticated character and quality of this two-seater is clearly expressed not only by the harmonious and typical design of the exterior, but also by the high standard of craftsmanship, high-class materials and an exclusive range of colours within the interior.

Wide-opening doors offer the driver and passenger convenient access to the interior where they will enjoy sports seats with ample, high-quality padding in Lounge leather. A three-spoke leather sports steering wheel complete with multi-function buttons ensures smooth steering even in tight bends and on winding roads, as well as safe and easy operation of the car's audio and communication functions. All other control elements are arranged ergonomically for convenient use, taking the frequency of their operation into account.

The breakdown of the cockpit, the dashboard and centre console all follow the particular style of interior design so typical of MINI. Horizontal lines and air vents positioned far to the outside accentuate the sheer width of the dashboard and, at the same time, the generous look and dimensions of the interior. The slender centre console, in turn, offers the driver and passenger maximum legroom and freedom of movement, while the structure of the door panels now follows a new interpretation with the main elliptic element fully closed.

The rev counter on the MINI Roadster Concept again comes directly behind the steering wheel, with the speedometer forming part of the central instrument in the upper section of the centre console. Well-known as the Center Speedo, this striking instrument also comprises the audio system as well as the car's entertainment and navigation functions.

The MINI Roadster Concept comes with a multi-functional display in the cockpit enabling the driver to choose the information presented. Placed to the left of the rev counter, this display serves among other things to inform the driver exactly down to the last minute how long he has been driving with the roof down, thus providing the same function as the Always Open Timer already featured on the MINI Convertible today.

This additional instrument is activated as soon as the driver starts the engine and completely opens the soft top of the car.

Apart from the Always Open function, this control instrument comes with five further indicators again typical of MINI, combining the driving pleasure of the MINI Roadster Concept with sustainability and a feature typical of the MINI Community: The Nature Guard function tells the driver how efficiently he is driving at the moment and whether the position of the gas pedal is appropriate for the speed at which the car is travelling and the gear selected. At a glance, therefore, the driver can see how to save fuel.

Should the driver wish to enjoy maximum performance, on the other hand, the Highspeed Shifter gear indicator tells him when and how to use the maximum power of the engine.

Supplementing this performance program, the Gravity indicator presents the lateral forces, g-forces and the direction of acceleration acting on the driver and the car.

Heart Beat, to present the next example, visualises the speed of the engine by referring to the human heart beat as a yardstick: The more sporting the driver's style of motoring, the faster the heart will beat.

Buddy Radar, finally, is a MINI Community feature showing the driver where other MINI drivers are currently out on the road nearby the MINI Roadster Concept.

The colours and materials within the MINI Roadster Concept clearly symbolise the exclusive style of the car and a strong focus on quality. Wooden interior trim and carefully selected colour highlights on the door linings and seat upholstery, for example, provide specific contrasts to the interior kept discreetly in black. At the same time the sporting elegance of the interior is additionally accentuated by the piping on the leather seats and the Chrome Line finish.

New standard of go-kart feeling thanks to the optimisation of weight and modern suspension technology.

With its current model range, MINI already sets the standard for driving pleasure going far beyond the small car segment. And now, in its purist form, the MINI offers all the character of an agile performer with supreme handling in bends and on winding roads. The MINI Clubman and MINI Convertible, in turn, combine the unique handling so typical of the brand with their own distinctive features and qualities.

Powerful engines and suspension technology far superior in the small car segment ensure a unique driving experience under all conditions, front-wheel drive, powerful disc brakes on all four wheels, the front axle with McPherson spring struts and a central arm rear axle with aluminium longitudinal arms and anti-roll bars providing the foundation for unparalleled safety and agility on the road.

EPS Electronic Power Steering with speed-related power assistance enables the driver to steer precisely through bends, providing consistent feedback on road surface and driving conditions. At the same time on-demand variation of power assistance helps to make the car even more efficient. Equipped with this kind of modern drivetrain and suspension technology, the MINI Roadster concept would be perfectly suited to provide a new and very appealing rendition of that go-kart feeling so typical of the brand. Doing without a fixed roof and introducing appropriate body reinforcements instead, the shift in weight on the car enhances its agility to an even higher standard. This, in turn, noticeably reduces body movements and optimises the car's steering behaviour in bends.

Traditional values, modern quality, future-oriented concept.

Practical qualities, sporting talent and a high standard of all-round economy have helped to ensure the popularity of the brand over no less than five decades. Representing the epitome of modern lifestyle, this small car has indeed become an outstanding success the world over.

Through all these years and decades MINI has re-invented itself time and again, always remaining faithful to its underlying philosophy. The anniversary year is therefore the ideal time to present the MINI Roadster Concept as yet another look into the future of the brand. This, therefore, is the vision of a sporting two-seater combining sophisticated design and exclusive features with spontaneous driving pleasure under the open sky and the uncomplicated enjoyment of premium motoring.

The traditional values of the brand also help to give the MINI Roadster Concept its unmistakable character, modern drivetrain technology providing further opportunities to combine an even higher level of performance with efficiency optimised to a new standard. At the same time the innovative concept of the car caters for the challenges of the future, offering a clear focus on both driving pleasure and all-round quality. So where less is more, the MINI Roadster Concept is a supreme rendition of purist design, offering style and enthusiasm of the highest standard.

MINI in the US

MINI is an independent brand of the BMW Group. In the United States, MINI USA operates as a business unit of BMW of North America, LLC which has been present in the United States since 1975. Royce Motor Cars NA, LLC began distributing vehicles in 2003. The BMW Group in the United States has grown to include marketing, sales, and financial service organizations for the BMW brand of motor vehicles, including motorcycles, the MINI brand, and the Rolls-Royce brand of Motor Cars; DesignworksUSA, a strategic design consultancy in California; a technology office in Silicon Valley and various other operations throughout the country. BMW Manufacturing Co., LLC in South Carolina is part of BMW Group's global manufacturing network and is the exclusive manufacturing plant for all X5 Sports Activity Vehicles and X6 Sports Activity Coupes. The BMW Group sales organization is represented in the U.S. through networks of 338 BMW passenger car centers, 335 BMW Sports Activity Vehicle centers, 142 BMW motorcycle retailers, 86 MINI passenger car dealers, and 30 Rolls-Royce Motor Car dealers. BMW (US) Holding Corp., the BMW Group's sales headquarters for North America, is located in Woodcliff Lake, New Jersey.

Information about BMW Group products is available to consumers via the Internet at:
www.bmwgroupna.com
www.miniusanews.com

#

Journalist note: Information about the BMW Group and its products is available to journalists on-line at the BMW Group PressClub at the following address:
www.press.bmwgroup.com/us.html. Broadcast quality video footage is available via The NewsMarket at www.thenewsmarket.com.

#