

Subaru launches next-generation Impreza WRX STI

by *Bend_Weekly_News_Sources*

Los Angeles - Subaru debuts the all-new 2008 Impreza WRX STI today at the Los Angeles International Auto Show. The ultimate performance Subaru is powered by a 305-horsepower Boxer engine and features a new level of driver-selectable powertrain- and dynamic handling-control. The 2008 WRX STI is built exclusively as an aggressively styled wide-fender 5-door model with a design strongly influenced by the brand's competition heritage.

-- All-New Platform with Competition-Inspired 5-Door Body

-- 305-HP Intercooled / Turbocharged Boxer Engine

-- New Multi-Mode DCCD All-Wheel Drive System and VDC

-- New Double-Wishbone Rear Suspension and 18-Inch Wheels

The 2008 WRX STI is the third-generation of the rally-bred supercar, which Subaru of America first launched to the U.S. market in 2004. Developed by Subaru Tecnica International, the high-performance and motorsports subsidiary of Fuji Heavy Industries Ltd., the WRX STI features an exclusive engine, drivetrain, suspension and interior.

The WRX STI's revised 2.5-liter intercooled turbocharged Boxer engine, now with Dual Active Valve Control System (Dual AVCS), produces 305 horsepower (SAE) at 6,000 rpm, a gain of 12 over the previous model. The 290 lb.-ft. torque peak is the same as before but arrives at 4,000 rpm, which is 400 rpm earlier, for better response. Significantly, the more powerful 2008 WRX STI achieves the very stringent Bin 5 Tier 2-Federal (EPA) and LEV2-California Tier 2/Bin 5 emissions certification.

The Driver Control Center Differential (DCCD) version of Symmetrical All-Wheel Drive - which remains exclusive to the Impreza WRX STI - takes driver-controlled response to another level for 2008. The DCCD system now offers three selectable automatic performance modes in addition to the six manual differential-locking settings. For the first time, the DCCD AWD system integrates the Vehicle Dynamics Control (VDC) stability and traction control system, also with three driver-selectable positions. The 2008 WRX STI offers five-spoke 18 x 8.5-inch wheels as standard. Also available are optional 18 x 8.5 in. BBS(R) forged aluminum-alloy wheels. All 18-in. wheels wear Dunlop SP600 245/40R18 tires.

New side-curtain airbags are standard, and the new Incline Start Assist feature can momentarily prevent the vehicle from rolling backward when being driven away from a stop on an incline. Even with the new, roomier 5-door body, special chassis reinforcements, new double-wishbone rear suspension and added safety features, the 2008 WRX STI (with the available BBS wheel package) weighs just 22 lbs. more than the 2007 WRX STI sedan. In addition, the 2008 WRX STI offers the added refinement instilled throughout the next-generation Impreza model line that was introduced for 2007.

The new suspension with special STI tuning along with the stiffer platform give the 2008 WRX STI the agile responses that have made this model a performance superstar. At the same time, the new WRX STI exhibits a more refined demeanor on any road. The Brembo Performance Brake System employs ventilated 4-wheel Super Sport anti-lock (ABS) disc brakes with Electronic Brake-force Distribution (EBD). The braking system is enhanced in the new 2008 WRX STI with slightly larger rotors.

The bulged fenders and rear quarter panels, along with the rear gate-mounted spoiler and aerodynamic ground effects, give the new WRX STI a direct link to Subaru competition cars. The hood scoop, brake-cooling air intakes and engine heat outlets are all functional. The standard high-intensity discharge (HID) low beams use manual height adjusters. Fog light insert covers add to the no-nonsense look, and fog lights are included with the BBS wheel option package.

Standard amenities include an automatic climate control system with cabin air filtration; a standard AM/FM premium stereo with 6-disc in-dash CD changer and 10 speakers, plus a vehicle security system with engine immobilizer. The Radio Broadcast Data System can display a variety of information, including a song's title and artist. For the first time, the WRX STI is available with an optional navigation system, which integrates a vehicle information center. In addition to an input for MP3 players, the center console also includes video jacks that can accommodate portable gaming devices. The WRX STI comes pre-wired for XM(R) or SIRIUS(R) Satellite Radio.