

FCA 2021 SECRETS REVEALED

Most summers, we head to FCA's top secret Chelsea Proving Grounds, hidden deep in the woods west of Ann Arbor, to learn everything they have planned for the coming model year and to drive most of it, at facilities few get to even see. It's a great day and a great way to get our hands on all the latest, at the venue in which they're all born and get pushed the hardest. (Midday, we also get our hands on a Zingerman's Roadhouse sandwich and a Faygo pop, for the full Michigan experience.) This year, due to pandemic restrictions, we received all the scoop via teleconference, with much kept under embargo till now. (Wheel time will follow when possible.) Here are highlights:

ALFA ROMEO

Alfa Romeo celebrated its 110th anniversary on June 24 by reopening its Museum on the outskirts of Milano for a display of historic and modern vehicles on the facility's track. Other Alfa Romeo news for 2021 will follow later.

CHRYSLER

This lineup grows via a product grab from Dodge.

CHRYSLER 300. Chrysler simplifies the 300 lineup to Touring, Touring L and S, adding standard parking and blind spot tech to Touring L and 300S and the Red S Appearance Package standard on 300S. The upper two trims also offer new Comfort Group and Popular Equipment Packages.

PACIFICA, PACIFICA HYBRID. This popular minivan pair receive new suspension and AWD tech, restyled grilles and fascias, new wheels, self-sealing tires, and a new range of driver assist, pedestrian avoidance and other safety tech standard.

VOYAGER. The base model Pacifica was rebadged as Chrysler Voyager for 2020, a significant branding and marketing move, now that Dodge Grand Caravan drops out, clarifying Dodge as a perform-



Chrysler 300S with Red S Appearance // Chrysler Voyager

ance-focused lineup while defining Chrysler nicely.

DODGE

Dodge focuses its stable on performance (as well as law enforcement), discontinuing Grand Caravan (see Chrysler Voyager) and Journey.

CHALLENGER. The biggest news for Dodge's halo performance car is the 807-hp Challenger SRT Super Stock, covered elsewhere in this issue.

CHARGER. Dodge's four-door sedan also receives a new top performer, the 797-hp Charger SRT Hellcat Redeye, also covered elsewhere in this issue.

DURANGO. The stylish and highly capable Dodge SUV joins Challenger and Charger with its own new top performance model, the 710-hp Durango SRT Hellcat, also covered elsewhere in this issue.

CHARGER PURSUIT, DURANGO PURSUIT. News on Dodge's police vehicles will follow later.

FIAT

Fiat news for 2021 will follow later.

JEEP

CHEROKEE. Cherokee ups its standard tech inclusions across the lineup and adds more standard features in all models. New for 2021 is a Latitude LUX model with Nappa leather, dual-pane panoramic sunroof, nine-speaker Alpine audio and more. It's also the basis for an 80th Anniversary Edition with 19-inch wheels, premium leather with accent



Dodge Challenger SRT Super Stock // Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Redeye // Dodge Durango SRT Hellcat

stitching and many more special touches.

COMPASS. The "baby Grand" adds standard safety and security features, as well as an 80th Anniversary Edition as on Cherokee.

GLADIATOR. Big items for Jeep's midsize pickup include a 3.0L EcoDiesel V6 with ESS available across the lineup; full-time 4WD available on all trims; and an available forward off-road camera for Overland. Gladiator also has an 80th Anniversary Edition, and a rock-conquering new Willys model joins the lineup.

GRAND CHEROKEE. An 80th Anniversary Edition adds premium and style elements similar to the others, as well as a range of included tech and driver assist features. Other trims are upgraded with a number of luxe, appearance and convenience features now standard or available.

RENEGADE. This distinctive model offers an 80th Anniversary Edition, as well as new Jeepster Edi-



Jeep Wrangler 4xe chassis & powertrain // Rubicon 4xe

tion and Islander Edition models. Driver assist tech inclusions and infotainment systems are all upgraded, and style, utility and comfort features are boosted, with special attention to the Trailhawk.

WRANGLER. The brand-defining Jeep Wrangler gets a new range of engines, including both 2.0L (automatic) and 3.6L ESS (manual) powertrains, a 3.6L eTorque mild hybrid (auto only) and 3.0L EcoDiesel ESS (four-door only). Forward TrailCam is now available (accessible via Off-Road Pages). Rubicon gains Off-Road Plus as standard, with remapped throttle, shift and traction control. Wrangler Islander is a new model, as well as an 80th Anniversary Edition much as on the others. And...

WRANGLER 4XE. FCA has gone light on electrification so far—Fiat 500e EV, more recent eTorque mild hybrid V6, V8 and I-4 pickups and Jeeps—but that is about to change. A late announcement from Jeep, later than the rest of "What's New," brings us the Jeep Wrangler 4xe ("four-by-E"), joining Renegade and Compass 4xe models in the global market. With a full-blown 400V, 96-cell battery pack (below the rear seat, preserving both off-road protection and interior space) plus a 2.0L gasoline turbo engine, this 375-hp Wrangler four-door provides top-spec torque at low speed and quiet running through the canyons and woods for up to 25



Jeep Wagoneer / Grand Wagoneer concept reveal

miles in full EV mode—all Trail Rated, with the solid axles, full-time transfer case, extreme suspension and 30 inches of fording you'd expect.

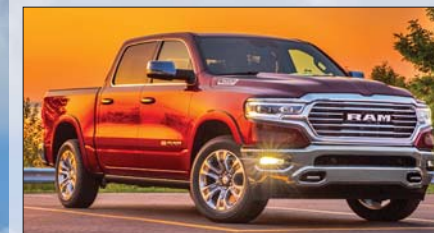
WAGONEER / GRAND WAGONEER. Long-running rumors of the return of Jeep's biggest vehicle took a giant step forward with this other later reveal, as a concept for now (badged Wagoneer up front and Grand Wagoneer in the rear). A three-row SUV for the first time, the concept aims firmly at the premium level, from finely-crafted interiors to tech points including separate user screens left-right-front-rear, as well as a world's-first McIntosh 23-speaker audio system. Revealed at the same time as Wrangler 4xe, Wagoneer is also set to move into the electrified space, while serving up a combination of off-road and urban-luxe personality.

MOPAR

Mopar news for 2021 will follow later.

RAM TRUCKS

1500. There's also a birthday celebration at Ram, with a lustworthy Ram 1500 Limited Longhorn 10th Anniversary Edition. Ram is first to receive FCA's new full-color heads-up display with five customizable areas including status of driver assist options. New options include an LCD digital rearview mirror, trailer reverse steering control, a wired trailer camera prep kit, new snow plow prep package,



Ram 1500 Laramie Longhorn EcoDiesel // Ram 2500 Heavy Duty Longhorn Mega Cab // Ram ProMaster City

power-fold trailering mirrors with or without 360-degree surround view, trailer light and tire check system, Off-Road Pages, and upgraded pedestrian detection and full-speed collision warning.

1500 TRX. Completely new is the 702-hp Ram 1500 TRX, featured elsewhere in this issue.

1500 CLASSIC. News on this truck will follow later. **2500-3500 HEAVY DUTY.** As the heavy duties' popularity continues to broaden, a new Limited Night Edition has monochromatic finish (in a range of colors) with black 20-inch wheels, grille and badges.

RAM COMMERCIAL

3500-4500-5500 CHASSIS CAB. This workhorse is fundamentally the same for 2021.

PROMASTER. Crosswind Assist is now standard. A digital rearview mirror is available, along with a number of new driver assist and safety tech.

PROMASTER CITY. Fog lamps are available on all models, and aluminum wheels on Tradesman. ■

FCA Chelsea Proving Grounds: "What's New" is an extensive and immersive event most years, but was not held during pandemic 2020.