

CLASSIC DRIVER

Chrysler Imperial Concept



In Detroit this week Chrysler is presenting its vision of the elegant cars it produced in the 30s, 40s and 50s brought right up to date. With its high vertical grille, and doors opening to reveal a wholly-accessible cabin, the car is intended to bear comparison with the latest products from Bentley and Rolls-Royce. Mounted on a 123-inch wheelbase, the new Imperial is 17 inches longer and six inches higher than a 300C saloon.

The roof was pulled rearward to enlarge the cabin as well as to create the luxury of length in side view. Most importantly, passengers sit nearly seven inches higher. Combined with the higher hood and deck and the large 22-inch aluminum wheels, this gives the Imperial the 'noble' stance the designers envisioned.



Hinged at the A and C-pillars, the wide doors can be flung open a la 'French doors' for a dignified entry and exit, revealing the absence of the customary B-pillar and permitting unfettered access to the entire interior. In contrast to the monochromatic 'Imperial Bronze' exterior, the high-contrast four-passenger cabin is two-toned in rich Bay Brown and buttery Birch Creme, inviting the viewer (the company states) into a 'world of supple leather and soft suede complemented by California burl wood and metallic-like accents rendered in a lustrous warm bronze'.



A simple touch pad with intuitive controls, mounted close-by on the suspended center console armrest, permits the driver to adjust settings for radio, climate and navigation functions. The driver air bag/horn pad is fixed, allowing the radio and cruise-control switches to remain settled in the same position regardless of the turning steering wheel. Two large circular pods bisect the floating wood-and-bronze instrument panel, and include sculpted gauges rendered in satin with polished aluminum bezels.



Since the windscreen glass is carried up onto the mid-point of the roof, front seat occupants enjoy a comprehensive view of the passing scene. All glass has a distinctive bronze tint to harmonize with the car's colour palette. Rear passengers can recline their individual seats while watching different DVDs, thanks to the console-mounted dual-view entertainment screen and wireless headsets. The rear seat headsets store in

the package tray at the touch of a button when not needed.

The rear wheel drive, independent-suspension car is powered by a 5.7L Hemi V8 (340hp/390ft.-lbs), has a A580 5-speed automatic gearbox and its **performance** is likely to be:

0-60 mph: 5.5 seconds

Standing 1/4 mile: 14.5 seconds

Top Speed: 160 mph

Dimensions:

Length: 214.1" (5439 mm)

Wheelbase: 122.9" (3123mm)

Front Overhang: 38.8" (985mm)

Width: 76.1" (1933mm)

Height: 63.6" (1615mm)

Track, Frt/Rr: 63.9"/64.5"

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