

Swift entrance

Suzuki's larger, leaner new Swift surfaces some six months from launch

By MARTON PETTENDY

FIRST images of the larger, stiffer, safer and more spacious – yet allegedly lighter, more efficient and better performing – replacement for Suzuki's volume-selling Swift have emerged even earlier than expected, following last week's official line-off ceremony to mark mass production of the all-new car in Hungary.

Suzuki Motor Corporation marketing chief for our region Masaki Kato told GoAuto at last month's Kizashi launch that the third-generation small-car star would be revealed at the Magyar Suzuki plant in Esztergom by July – a month ahead of its European launch and three months before its formal global unveiling at the Paris motor show on September 30.

While a truck-load of new Swifts have been seen in blurry spy photos snapped in Europe over the past week, two official pictures have now been released and Suzuki says others will follow later this month – more than six months ahead of its Australian release in the first quarter of 2011.

The rear of Suzuki's redesigned global



B-segment hatchback is not shown, but the all-new five-door appears to be a subtle evolution of the distinctive Swift design that is more rounded in all directions.

The latest Swift retains its handsome overall profile and trademark styling cues, including blacked-out A-pillars and oversized front and rear lights, which are now less angular and separated by two prominent full-length shoulder lines that merge into one at the rear.

Suzuki has confirmed that compared with the outgoing Swift – sales of which are up 12.7 per cent so far this year, with almost 5300 sales making it Australia's fifth best selling light car – the MkIII Swift rides on a 50mm longer (2430mm) wheelbase and is

also 90mm longer overall at 3850mm.

Width is also up, by 5mm to 1695mm, while height is up 10mm to 1510mm, increasing space in the as yet unseen five-seat cabin, which Suzuki says has "a more dynamic feel, featuring black as its keynote colour with accents of silver throughout the car".

The rejuvenated Japanese manufacturer also claims extensive use of higher strength steel makes the new bodyshell – which is also said to be more refined in terms of underbody design – lighter and stiffer than before, offering lower fuel consumption and emissions, plus better impact safety for occupants and pedestrians.

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