

## 2016 NEW ZEALAND CAR OF THE YEAR

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### Market well covered with New Zealand Car of the Year top 10

This year's New Zealand Car of the Year award finalists will force judges to make some hard decisions to determine their top pick.

The New Zealand Automobile Association and New Zealand Motoring Writers' Guild (NZMWG) will announce the 2016 Car of the Year at the Viaduct Events Centre in Auckland on December 7.

Members of the guild and the AA who have driven the top 10 cars will independently rank each of them on a number of elements including value, design and quality – the best of which will become the 2016 New Zealand Car of the Year.

Also the public has the chance to make its pick with the New Zealand Car of the Year People's Choice award.

The top 10 finalists for the New Zealand Car of the Year, in alphabetical order, are:

- Holden Spark
- Honda Civic
- Kia Sportage
- Mazda CX-9
- Mercedes-Benz E-Class
- Mercedes-Benz GLC
- Skoda Superb
- Subaru Levorg
- Suzuki Vitara
- Volkswagen Tiguan

AA Motoring Services General Manager Stella Stocks says the top 10 line up is a good representation of the market, from an entry level choice right through to the luxury end.

"It's pleasing to see many affordable options included in the top 10 list of finalists boasting a lot of safety technology and great design. There really is something for everyone with this year's line up," Ms Stocks says.

Mercedes-Benz has two contenders for Car of the Year in 2016 with its E-Class sedan and the GLC SUV. European manufacturers secure another two places in the finalists' list with the Volkswagen Tiguan and the Skoda Superb.

The compact Holden Spark packs in a range of features including personalisation options and a low price tag.

Last year Mazda had three models vying for attention in the top 10 and this year remains represented with its CX-9 seven seater. It's joined by the Suzuki Vitara, Kia Sportage, Subaru Levorg and Honda Civic.

Last year's New Zealand Car of the Year went to the BMW i3.

A judging panel of members of the NZMWG, plus representatives from the AA, met on Monday this week to decide the final 10 for the New Zealand Car of the Year.

The New Zealand Motoring Writers' Guild president, Liz Dobson, was impressed with the variety of vehicles in the top 10.

"Despite it being a relatively quiet year in terms of new vehicles being launched here, there was robust debate by the panel to decide the final vehicles as all of the contenders were strong candidates," Ms Dobson says.

"We had products that covered the spectrum, not only in categories but prices too. You just need to look at the final 10 to see the variety – there's a \$16,490 hatchback and also one of the technologically advanced vehicles in the world."

Ms Dobson said there was no surprise that SUVs made up the majority of the final 10.

"This is a reflection of the New Zealand market, where SUVs of all sizes make up nearly 40 per cent of new vehicle sales."

Ms Dobson said it was now up to the voting members of the Guild to pick what is the Car of the Year for 2016.

"Our members are based throughout New Zealand, and cover print and websites, giving a broad spectrum of opinions and vast knowledge," she says.

Alongside the main award, members of the guild will also vote on the best in class in a number of categories:

- Small car
- Compact car
- Medium/large car
- Luxury car
- Small SUV/crossover
- Medium SUV
- Large SUV
- Luxury SUV
- Utility
- Sports and performance

The safest car for 2016 will also be announced at the December 7 event based on Australasian New Car Assessment Programme (ANCAP) crash test results.

The New Zealand Car of the Year People's Choice award will also be announced on December 7. From November 1, the public will have a chance to vote for one of the top 10 finalists both on AA's Facebook page and website and earn a chance to win a 10-day Pacific Islands cruise for two.

*The New Zealand Automobile Association is an incorporated society with more than one million members. It represents the interests of road users who collectively pay more than \$2 billion in taxes each year through fuels excise, road user charges and GST.*