Kelley Blue Book Editors Name the Cars of Summer

10 Great New Cars for All of Summer's Great Activities

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According to the calendar, today is the first day of summer bringing warm weather, vacations and outdoor activities. The editors and vehicle experts at Kelley Blue Book, the trusted resource for new and used vehicle information, today name a 'best car' for some of summer's top activities.

Kelley Blue Book Editor's Picks for the Cars of Summer

Best Car for a Coastal Drive: Nissan 350Z Roadster
Best Car for Country Road Drive: Subaru WRX STi
Best Car for Going to the Beach, River or Lake: Honda Element
Best Car to "Park" in Under the Stars: Audi A4 Cabriolet
"THE" Car to Be Seen In: BMW 645 Ci
Best Car for Cruising the Boulevard with Friends: Scion tC
Best Car for "The Graduate": Mazda3
Best Car for Off Road Fun in the Sun: Jeep Wrangler SE
Best Car for Camping/Hiking: Subaru Forester
Best Car for Towing Recreational Equipment: Ford F-150

Editor's Comments on Each Vehicle

Best Car for a Coastal Drive
Nissan 350Z Roadster

For a warm summer's drive up (or down) the coast, the 350Z incorporates the best of both worlds, a fun to drive roadster that combines classic with contemporary styling and sports car handling.

Best Car for Country Road Drive
Subaru WRX STi

Its power and agile ability to handle a winding country road make the Subaru WRX STi a driver's dream. The under $35,000 price tag makes it attainable to a wider range of drivers. For the true enthusiast, there's almost nothing as exciting as a brisk drive in a WRX STi, twisting your way through a country road.

Best Car for Going to the Beach, River or Lake
Honda Element

Not too many other vehicles allow the owner to change out of their sandy clothing, then practically hose out the interior to remove sand and dirt. Plus, the wide open doors and flat bed seats make it a uniquely versatile utility workhorse.

Best Car to "Park" in Under the Stars
Audi A4 Cabriolet

Imagine yourself parked high on a hill, gazing at the lights of the city below with a comfortable and stylish interior surrounding you and your favorite person. The stellar combination of luxury, road handling and an easy-to-drop convertible top, make this a great car to "Park" under any star.

"THE" Car to Be Seen In
BMW 645 Ci

If you could pick any car you wanted to drive into the valet of your favorite restaurant this summer, the BMW 645 Ci would make one heck of a stylish valet entrance and probably get parked right up front. In the 645 Ci, BMW brings together sport-engineered performance and exquisite luxury amenities.

Best Car for Cruising The Boulevard with Friends

Scion tC

It's got to be new and it's got to be cool to get a reaction when you're cruising to your favorite hangout. Even with its standard powerful engine and 17" sporty spoke wheels, the tC is sure to get plenty of attention while cruising down the boulevard this summer.

Best Car for "The Graduate"
Mazda3

The stylish Mazda3 offers more variety than its competitors, allowing each owner to customize the vehicle to their liking. Options like MP3 player and navigation make it a hit in almost every demographic.

Best Car for Off Road Fun in the Sun
Jeep Wrangler SE

The unique yet almost unchanged design of the Jeep Wrangler has made it an off-road hit on both sun-bathed and snow-covered roads. The SE model's small 4-cylinder engine sits back close to the Wrangler's firewall, helping it attain better front-to-rear balance, a benefit that comes in handy when encountering precarious off-road situations.

Best Car for Camping/Hiking
Subaru Forester

Getting to the trail head with all your gear requires a safe vehicle with great gas mileage and versatile all around utility. With its five-star crash rating, fuel economy and room for almost everything, Forester provides function and all-wheel drive handling, which makes it a natural for most camping and hiking jaunts.

Best Car for Towing The Boat/Recreational Equipment
Ford F-150

Ford's new F-150 has rugged good looks on the outside along with a luxurious, feature-rich interior that can accommodate plenty of people, toys and gear. As for towing capacity; the F-150 is king in the half-ton arena due to its top-rated optional 9,900 lb towing capability.

Criteria for the Cars of Summer include models currently available or available by August 2004 and not exceed an MSRP of $75,000. For more information on these vehicles, reviews, dealer invoice pricing and transaction pricing, please visit www.kbb.com.

About Kelley Blue Book (kbb.com)

Kelley Blue Book is the most trusted vehicle information resource by both consumers and the auto industry, providing research tools and up-to-date pricing on thousands of new and used vehicles, including the company's New Car Blue Book Value, which reveals what a new car is actually selling for. Since 1926, car buyers and sellers have relied upon Kelley Blue Book for authoritative and unbiased information to make well-informed automotive decisions. The company reports vehicle prices and values via products and services including the famous Blue Book Official Guide™, software and Internet site, kbb.com. Kbb.com has been rated the No. 1 automotive information site by Nielsen//NetRatings and No. 1 and first visited automotive site by J.D. Power and Associates five years running. No other medium reaches more in-market car-buyers than kbb.com; one in every four American car-buyers complete their research on kbb.com.

SOURCE: Kelley Blue Book

CONTACT: Robyn Eckard of Kelley Blue Book, +1-949-268-3049, reckard@kbb.com

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