Cheap Thrills: kbb.com Names 2010 Top 10 Coolest New Cars Under $18,000

Editors Choose Top Cool, Affordable Rides; Continued Emphasis on Personality, Versatility, Technology

IRVINE, Calif., May 21 /PRNewswire/ -- The 2010 Top 10 Coolest New Cars Under $18,000 today were named by the expert editors from Kelley Blue Book, www.kbb.com, the leading provider of new car and used car information. The vehicles that made Kelley Blue Book's 2010 list of Top 10 Coolest New Cars Under $18,000 -- typically a gas-sipping and obviously affordable bunch – keep getting cooler each year. More fun, more practical and more amenity-laden than ever before, today's entry-level vehicles deliver more than simply affordable and efficient transportation.

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Even when the economy is in the doldrums the ever-present beat of inflation seems to tick-tick-tick in the background, so each year kbb.com's Coolest Cars Under $18,000 threshold becomes harder to meet. While there was talk of possibly raising the limit to $20,000 this year, the kbb.com editors decided to see what $18,000 would buy new-car shoppers in the current economy, ultimately coming to the conclusion that there are still some very cool rides to be had for less than $18,000.

Certainly, there are many good cars available for less than $18,000 that will get you from point A to point Z with a minimum of fuss. However, many of them also will do it with a minimum of fun, which is something the kbb.com editors feel is "just plain wrong" for their coolest cars list. With that in mind, while the kbb.com editors use the same set of criteria that consumers use in examining vehicles they might purchase -- safety, fuel economy, interior size, comfort and technology – they also factor in that certain something extra, that 'je ne sais quoi,' that separates the dullards from the brilliant. The twin factors of fun-to-drive and fun-to-own are important considerations, as is the decidedly subjective "cool factor."

"Every year, automakers step up their game in the sub-$18,000 category, and this year is no different from the rest," said Jack R. Nerad, executive editorial director and executive market analyst for Kelley Blue Book's kbb.com. "The marketplace for 'cool,' versatile, affordable cars, bursting with personality and boasting the same (if not better) technology as some luxury cars with triple their price tags, is only getting more crowded. This signals a great time for car buyers, especially younger first-time buyers or those just looking to save some cash, as steep competition in the under-$18,000 range will inevitably lead to great deals."

The editors compiled the list of qualifying vehicles using Kelley Blue Book's New Car Blue Book® Values, which reflect real-world transaction prices and provide a more useful comparison point than Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Price (MSRP). Every vehicle on the list can be purchased for less than $18,000.

Select Choices from kbb.com's 2010 Top 10 Coolest New Cars Under $18,000 List

2011 Ford Fiesta

2010 Hyundai Elantra Touring

2010 Mitsubishi Lancer

2010 Suzuki SX4

2010 Honda Fit

For the remaining Top 10 Coolest New Cars Under $18,000 choices, including full editorial commentary and reasoning behind each of the editors' picks, visit the Top 10 Coolest New Cars Under $18,000 story in kbb.com's Latest News section at http://www.kbb.com/CoolCars2010.

New-Vehicle Research Tools Available on Kelley Blue Book's kbb.com

- Full expert reviews of new 2010 (and some 2011) model-year vehicles, including print and video
- Pricing, specifications and information on optional features
- Resale value information
- Safety data
- Rebates and incentives information
- Side-by-side comparison tool
- Consumer reviews and ratings
- Photos and 360-degree views
- Latest information about alternative-fuel technologies and gas-sipping vehicles at KBB® Green
- Dealer price quote

About Kelley Blue Book (www.kbb.com)

Since 1926, Kelley Blue Book, The Trusted Resource®, has provided vehicle buyers and sellers with the new and used vehicle information they need to accomplish their goals with confidence. The company's top-rated Web site, www.kbb.com, provides the most up-to-date pricing and values, including the New Car Blue Book® Value, which reveals what people actually are paying for new cars. The company also reports vehicle pricing and values via products and services, including software products and the famous Blue Book® Official Guide. According to the C.A. Walker Research Solutions, Inc. - 2009 Spring Automotive Web Site Usefulness Study, kbb.com is the most useful automotive information Web site among new and used vehicle shoppers, and half of online vehicle shoppers visit kbb.com. Kelley Blue Book's kbb.com also is a W3 Gold Award winner, sanctioned by the International Academy of Visual Arts. Kbb.com is a leading provider of new car prices, used car Blue Book Values, car reviews, new cars for sale, used cars for sale, and car dealer locations.

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