Kelley Blue Book's kbb.com Names Top 10 Family Cars of 2011

Editors Recommend a Wide Variety of Vehicles to Meet Every Family's Needs, Highlight Important Features

IRVINE, Calif., Feb. 24, 2011 /PRNewswire/ -- The expert editors from Kelley Blue Book's www.kbb.com, the leading provider of new car and used car information, today named the Top 10 Family Cars of 2011. In this annual list, the kbb.com editors recommend what they feel are the very best of the best vehicles for families this year, highlighting specific important attributes for each car and detailing why it made the Top 10 for 2011.

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More than ever, families now come in all shapes and sizes, so it only makes sense that the family vehicles of today follow suit. Whereas back in the dark recesses of time the typical family owned a sedan or station wagon, now contemporary families can choose among SUVs, crossovers, minivans, wagons and hatchbacks, in addition to the prosaic family sedan. While it certainly can be nice to have options, a wide variety of choices also can make the choosing all the more difficult, so each year the editors of Kelley Blue Book's kbb.com pool their collective knowledge and expertise to decide the Top 10 Family Cars.

Among the wealth of criteria the kbb.com editors use in the spirited judging are the characteristics that make vehicles family-friendly. Safety, comfort, economy of operation, child-friendliness, a reasonable purchase price and good resale value are tops in the consideration process. The kbb.com editors believe that all of the worthy vehicles on this year's Top 10 Family Cars of 2011 list will provide excellent service and a fine ownership experience for the families who choose to make them their own.

"This year was especially difficult for the kbb.com editors to narrow down the Top 10 Family Cars of 2011 choices, as there is such a variety of new cars on the market today that have appealing features for the American family; capable versatility, value, safety and economical factors, to name a few," said Jack R. Nerad, executive editorial director and executive market analyst for Kelley Blue Book's kbb.com. "Just as there is no perfect family, there is no perfect family vehicle that is just right for all families, all the time. However, there are many great options available on the market today in various segments, and the kbb.com editors chose a wide variety of what we feel are the Top 10 Family Cars that should be on every family's consideration list for 2011."

Select Choices from Kbb.com's Top 10 Family Cars of 2011 List, with Fair Purchase Prices*, Editorial Commentary

*(*Kbb.com's Fair Purchase Price is the amount consumers typically are paying for the vehicle, based on actual new-vehicle transactions from across the country).*

2011 Chevrolet Traverse - $29,219

No stranger to this list, the Chevy Traverse remains among the most family-friendly vehicles on the market. Practical features like seating for up to eight passengers, abundant cargo space, impressive fuel economy and a five-star overall crash rating from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) appeal to our pragmatic side, while the 2011 Chevy Traverse's attractive exterior styling and surprisingly nimble handling help win over our emotions.

2011 Ford Explorer - $27,487

The 2011 Ford Explorer isn't just new from the tires up, it's different. Whereas every Explorer before it featured truck-style body-on-frame construction, the newest Explorer is a car-based crossover vehicle with unibody construction. The results? Better ride, better handling and better fuel efficiency, to name a few. It doesn't offer all the towing or off-road capabilities of its predecessor, but it delivers far more than most families will ever need. Top it all off with sharp styling and a well-appointed interior and you've got the best Explorer ever.

2011 Honda Odyssey - $26,980

As the gold standard of minivans, the Honda Odyssey easily makes our list of family haulers. Designed to please the whole family, including the driver, the 2011 Honda Odyssey offers surprisingly responsive handling while maintaining a comfortable highway ride. The kids will be more impressed by the extra-wide 16-inch rear video display that can function as two side-by-side monitors and show two movies at once.

2011 Hyundai Sonata - $20,145

The all-new 2011 Hyundai Sonata has taken the mid-size sedan market by storm with a compelling mix of design, quality and value. The Sonata also is chock-full of safety features, comes with one of the best warranties on the market, and even offers a fuel-sipping hybrid model. With enough style and versatility to transform effortlessly from child-hauler to client shuttle on a daily basis, the 2011 Hyundai Sonata is an easy choice for someone who needs to impress while still being practical.

2011 Volkswagen Golf - $18,390

In much of Europe, where wagons and hatchbacks enjoy the same popularity that sedans have in the United States, the Volkswagen Golf is as much a family car as the Toyota Camry is here. With a starting price under $20,000, hatchback versatility, true European driving dynamics and an interior that rivals those of some much pricier cars, the 2011 Volkswagen Golf is a perfectly practical family car that also satisfies a desire for something nice and fun.

For the remaining five vehicles on the Top 10 list, including full editorial commentary and reasoning behind each of the editors' picks, visit the Top 10 Family Cars of 2011 story in kbb.com's Latest News section at http://www.kbb.com/car-news/all-the-latest/top-10-family-cars-of-2011.

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