



ŠKODA
SIMPLY CLEVER

PRESS RELEASE

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ŠKODA SUPERB (1934–1949): Founder of the traditional flagship model series

- › Between 1934 and 1949, ŠKODA produced a total of 890 units of the luxurious SUPERB with six and eight-cylinder engines
- › The modern SUPERB has been the Czech car manufacturer's flagship model series since 2001.

Mladá Boleslav, 4 August 2020 - The name SUPERB was first used to denote the flagship of ŠKODA's model range in 1934. Even at that time, this name was synonymous with a comfortable, quiet and responsive vehicle that was characterised by a spacious interior, high-quality engineering, extensive equipment and a powerful engine. The SUPERB 3000 OHV, built in 1939 and now owned by the ŠKODA Museum, often represents the Czech car manufacturer at classic car events.

The comprehensive product portfolio of the Mladá Boleslav-based company included luxury vehicles as early as the beginning of the 20th century. Following numerous models that were still being produced according to the traditional concept with a ladder-frame chassis, vehicles of an entirely new generation entered the market in 1934. The most striking features of the ŠKODA 637 D and K, as well as the ŠKODA 639 and ŠKODA 640 was their innovative central tubular frame chassis and sophisticated independent wheel suspension

The first mention of the SUPERB model designation is found in a diary entry by Karel Hrdlička, then the senior manager of the Mladá Boleslav car plant, on 22 October 1934. Initially, the modernised ŠKODA 640 was given this nickname, which won out over the alternative 'Regent'. It soon became clear that this vehicle was indeed 'superb'.

The developers paid great attention to eliminating driving noise and vibrations in the large ŠKODA. In addition to the independent wheel suspension, the comfortable characteristic curve of the leaf springs (arranged in duplicate on the rear axle), as well as the SV in-line six-cylinder engine with superior running performance, ensured a smooth driving experience. The 2,492cc engine provided 55 hp (40.5 kW) and also had a decisive influence on the type designation '640': The '6' stood for the number of combustion chambers and the '40' for the engine output, which in this case was given in kilowatts instead of hp as was previously the case. The car, which was up to 5.5 metres long, achieved a top speed of 110 km/h with a standard consumption of 14 litres per 100 kilometres. The car was decelerated by uniformly acting hydraulic brakes.

Series production of the ŠKODA 640 SUPERB started in March 1935. Customers' keen interest was soon reflected in the four-week delivery period for models with closed bodywork. Interested parties had to wait twice as long for convertible versions. In 1936, a modernised version appeared, which for the first time bore only the name SUPERB. The displacement and output of the six-cylinder engine were gradually increased, the equipment became more extensive with each model year, and the design was continuously refined. As the market leader's flagship, the ŠKODA SUPERB soon became a symbol of elegant, dynamic, comfortable and high-quality cars.



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In 1938, after building more than 600 six-cylinder engines with SV control of laterally positioned valves, ŠKODA switched to the more efficient OHV concept with valves in the cylinder head. The new 3000 OHV engine with a displacement of 3,137cc powered the SUPERB from then on. It generated an output of 85 hp (62.6 kW) at 3,500 rpm and – unlike numerous competitor models – already featured a modern 12-volt electrical system. The light and torsionally rigid central tubular frame in combination with independent suspension continued to ensure a high level of driving comfort on the roads, which were usually extremely poor in those days. With the product upgrade in the spring of 1939, ŠKODA replaced the two-part wing bonnet with a one-part cover that folded upwards to the rear. Customers who opted for the SUPERB 3000 OHV also had a choice of different model variants: from a notchback vehicle to a semi-convertible with fixed window frames and a saloon with a glazed partition between the front and rear seats. In addition, bodies could also be custom-built according to individual customer wishes.

The black SUPERB limousine from the ŠKODA Museum fleet is 5.2 metres long, 1.8 metres wide and 1.72 metres tall. Its unique features include two spare wheels in the front wings and two reserve seats that turn the car into a seven-seater. Also part of the permanent exhibition is the one year younger SUPERB 4000 - the only surviving example of a small series that had a larger V8 engine. The newly restored SUPERB OHV from 1948 attracts the attention of museum visitors with its metallic gold colour and more modern body shape. ŠKODA phased out production of the first SUPERB series in 1949.

In 2001 ŠKODA reintroduced the signature model designation. Since then, it has again been used to denote the flagships of the Czech car manufacturer's product range. Around 136,000 units of the first new SUPERB generation had rolled off the production line by 2008, the second – available with four-wheel drive and also as the SUPERB COMBI – found more than 600,000 buyers between 2008 and 2015. The current third generation has been on the market since 2015. It received a facelift in 2019 and since then has also been available as the SUPERB iV with plug-in hybrid drive.

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ŠKODA AUTO

- › is this year celebrating 125 years since the company was founded during the pioneering era of the automobile in 1895, making it one of the longest-established car manufacturers in the world.
- › currently offers its customers nine passenger-car series: the CITIGO, FABIA, RAPID, SCALA, OCTAVIA, KAROQ, KODIAQ, as well as the KAMIQ and the SUPERB.
- › delivered 1.24 million vehicles to customers around the world in 2019.
- › has belonged to Volkswagen Group since 1991. The Volkswagen Group is one of the most successful vehicle manufacturers in the world. In association with the Group, ŠKODA AUTO independently develops and manufactures vehicles, as well as components such as engines and transmissions.
- › operates at three locations in the Czech Republic; manufactures in China, Russia, Slovakia, Algeria and India mainly through Group partnerships, as well as in Ukraine and Kazakhstan with local partners.
- › employs over 42,000 people globally and is active in more than 100 markets.
- › is pressing ahead with the transformation from a traditional car manufacturer to the 'Simply Clever company for the best mobility solutions' as part of the ŠKODA 2025 Strategy.