



**ŠKODA**  
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## **ŠKODA FELICIA (1959–1964): The convertible with the rhythm of the 1960s**

- › The combination of graceful design and sophisticated technology made the open-top ŠKODA FELICIA one of the most popular Czech cars of the post-war period
- › The convertible was developed and built at the Kvasiny plant

**Mladá Boleslav, 4 August 2020 - The open-top ŠKODA FELICIA was one of the most attractive vehicles in its class between 1959 and 1964. The convertible produced at the Kvasiny plant quickly became an export hit and enjoyed sales success on demanding markets in Europe and overseas. In its home country, however, the elegant 2+2-seater remained a rare sight. In addition to the basic model with a 50 hp (36.8 kW) 1.1-litre four-cylinder engine, from 1962 onwards the range was extended to include the even more powerful FELICIA SUPER with a 1.2-litre engine with an additional 5 hp.**

For almost half a century ŠKODA had, practically without a break, offered vehicles with open bodywork – from the very first car from Mlada Boleslav, the L&K Voiturette A from 1905, until the end of production of the ŠKODA 1101/1102 nicknamed ‘Tudor’ in 1952, when a brief period without convertible models began, while the employees of the Kvasiny plant, on their own initiative, developed the ŠKODA 440 Export, which they presented at the Brno Exhibition Centre in September 1956. This unique model was based on the two-door 440 ‘Spartak’ saloon, the predecessor of the very first OCTAVIA generation. It provided the inspiration for more prototypes and a so-called “review series” of ten vehicles, which were built in 1957. Finally, in September 1958, the Czech car manufacturer presented the series version of the 450 Cabriolet and delivered the first units to customers shortly afterwards.

At the beginning of 1959, the FELICIA took the baton, which lived up to its Latin-derived name, and proved to be a stroke of luck for ŠKODA. Its all-metal bodywork was supported by a robust central tubular frame, thus continuing a long tradition that was also reflected in the independent suspension of all four wheels. Transverse leaf springs were used on the rear axle, while coil springs were installed at the front. Modern telescopic shock absorbers were also incorporated. The longitudinally mounted front engine drove the rear wheels via a four-speed transmission. The first FELICIA chassis was built in Mladá Boleslav on 14 January 1959. It received its bodywork at the Kvasiny plant, where the vehicle was also finished.

A 1.1-litre four-cylinder engine with 50 hp (36.8 kW) provided the propulsion. In addition to the standard folding roof, ŠKODA also offered a removable hardtop made of fibreglass-reinforced plastic from August 1960. At that time, a trained team of two people would need around 20 minutes to assemble or dismantle it. In addition to the driver and front passenger seats, the interior also offered two smaller seats in the rear.

The elegantly designed FELICIA immediately attracted a great deal of attention at international motor shows in Geneva, Leipzig and New York as well as at many other trade fairs in South America and Africa. In its second year, the annual production volume of the FELICIA rose to 4,210 units, two-thirds of which were sold abroad. There they also found celebrity owners – such as the



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famous Canadian ice hockey player Maurice Richard, who scored more than 1,000 goals in his career.

In March 1961, ŠKODA presented the FELICIA facelift in Geneva. In addition to its more striking radiator grille, the raised rear wings with drop-shaped lights also made a memorable impression. The lid of the tank filler neck could be unlocked from the vehicle interior, and the gear stick of the four-speed transmission was moved from the steering column to the centre tunnel and impressed drivers with its particularly short shifting distances.

The FELICIA SUPER was launched in 1962. Its newly developed 1.2-litre four-cylinder engine was ventilated by two carburettors made by the Czechoslovakian brand Jikov and generated 55 hp (40.4 kW) – enough for a top speed of 135 km/h, while consumption was kept to a relatively low 9.5 litres of petrol per 100 kilometres. Between 1959 and 1964, ŠKODA built a total of 14,863 units of the FELICIA and the FELICIA SUPER.

The yellow ŠKODA FELICIA, which is taking part in the excursion to mark ŠKODA AUTO's 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary, dates back to 1961.

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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.