

The perfect everyday companion: 25 years of the Škoda Octavia Combi

- › On Tuesday 3 March 1998, at the Geneva Motor Show, Skoda presented a new station wagon, in many respects surpassing the limits of the lower middle class
- › The legacy of the legendary Škoda Octavia Combi is currently being continued by the fourth modern generation
- › Over the past 25 years, the practical estate has been delivered to more than 2.8 million customers in dozens of countries around the world

Mladá Boleslav, 1 March 2023 – On 3 March 1998 Škoda lifted the curtain on the first Octavia Combi of the modern generation at the Geneva International Motor Show. Serial production of the future bestseller had already started a couple of weeks earlier, in February 1998, in a modern production plant in Mladá Boleslav. Over the past 25 years, the legendary model has become one of the most successful station wagons in its category in many countries. The current fourth generation also offers electrified versions: a plug-in hybrid drivetrain in the Octavia Combi iV and an Octavia Combi e-TEC with mild-hybrid technology. Some of the traditional strengths of the practical Škoda Octavia Combi include an excellent price/performance ratio, a wide variety of assistance systems and a top level of active and passive safety. This was once again confirmed in December 2022 by the most demanding Euro NCAP tests, valid until 2028.

Tradition obliges

Already since 1959, the Octavia range has represented a milestone in the more than 127-year history of Škoda. An even more practical version, the Octavia Combi, with a spacious and variable "combination body" offering both the advantages of passenger and light commercial vehicles, was launched on 11 September 1960. With a length of just 4065 mm, a width of 1600 mm and a height of 1430 mm, the Škoda Octavia Combi could carry 690 liters of luggage in addition to five passengers, and up to 1050 liters when occupying two seats. There was also a sleeper arrangement and a number of other practical equipment features. Between 1961 and 1971, 54,100 of these cars left the Kvasiny plant. As a basis for the Octavia, Škoda used the traditional concept with a backbone chassis frame and a front-mounted four-cylinder petrol engine driving the rear wheels. The robust construction combined with a ground clearance of 175 mm has proven itself even in demanding operating conditions.

Modern career

Another and even more successful chapter began in 1992, shortly after the integration of the Czech car manufacturer into the Volkswagen Group. The newly developed Octavia was the first Škoda based on the Group's A4 chassis platform and the design team led by Dirk van Braeckel was already working in a digital CAD environment. The production of the Škoda Octavia, initially with a liftback body, began in September 1996 in a completely new assembly hall of the Mladá Boleslav plant, one of the most modern in Europe. From September 1997 onwards, about 200 units of the new Octavia Combi were produced as part of the pre-production. The so-called zero series had not yet been delivered to customers. Production started in February shortly before the official world premiere on Tuesday 3 March 1998 at the prestigious Geneva International Motor Show. The first buyers took delivery already in May 1998. The four-and-a-half-meter wagon had a wheelbase of 2512 mm, was six millimeters longer and 26 mm taller than the liftback. The 548 to 1,512 liters of luggage space was among the largest in the class.

The timeless elegance of the bodywork scored with experts and customers alike, as evidenced by the Czech National Design Award (1999) - but mainly by sales statistics. In 1998, the Combi version accounted for 15 percent of sales of the Octavia model range. In 2001 the percentage had already gone up to 40.5 percent. During its 13-year career, 470,600 cars were built.

A video provides period footage of the first modern generation of the Octavia Combi at [Škoda Storyboard](#).

Growing popularity

From summer 2004, the second generation of the Octavia Combi was produced alongside the first modern generation (internally called A4). The purposeful coexistence lasted for six years, as the two cars complemented each other perfectly on the market. The modern shapes of the succeeding Octavia A5 were designed by a team of designers led by Thomas Ingenlath. By 2013, 881,200 customers had opted for the estate, accounting for 33% of global Octavia sales.

The third Octavia Combi (A7), launched on 7 March 2013, was even more successful. The range has gradually expanded to include an Octavia Scout, an outdoor version with an advanced 4x4 drive, automatic transmissions and many other modern features. Between 2012 and 2020, 1,195,500 units of the third generation of the Octavia Combi left the Škoda production plants.

Fourth generation: electrification

Launched in November 2019, the fourth generation is Skoda's first-ever series production model with mild-hybrid e-TEC technology. For the first time ever, Škoda is also offering a

plug-in-hybrid Octavia Combi iV which is available in the sporty Octavia Combi RS iV too. The fourth modern generation of the brand's bestseller surpassed the quarter of a million units delivered to customers. The Škoda Octavia Combi thus reached more than 2.8 million customers in total over the past quarter of a century.

From March 1 to May 17, the story of the Octavia will be recalled by an exhibition at the Škoda Museum in Mladá Boleslav.

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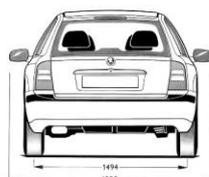
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The modern era of the Škoda Octavia Combi began in the spring of 1998. The first generation of the elegantly designed car has reached 470,600 customers during its 13-year career.

Source: Škoda Auto

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The Škoda Octavia Combi was originally a classic concept model with a front engine driving the rear wheels. Between 1961 and 1971, 54,100 of these robust cars were built at the Kvasiny plant.

Source: Škoda Auto



The perfect everyday companion: 25 years of the Škoda Octavia Combi

From the summer of 2004, the successor to the first modern generation of the Škoda Octavia Combi was produced alongside the A5. The purposeful coexistence lasted for six years, as the two cars complemented each other perfectly on the market. By 2013, 881,200 "a-fives" had been built.

Source: Škoda Auto



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The third edition of the Octavia Combi (2012-2020: 1,195,500 units) further strengthened Škoda's position in the global market. Production and assembly also took place in a number of foreign plants, including in Ukraine and India.

Source: Škoda Auto



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The current fourth generation (A8, from 2020) also offers electrified versions of the plug-in hybrid iV and mild-hybrid e-TEC. Traditional strengths include, in addition to an excellent price/performance ratio, a wide range of assistance systems and a top level of safety.

Source: Škoda Auto

Škoda Auto

- › is successfully steering through the new decade with the Next Level – Škoda Strategy 2030.
- › aims to be one of the five best-selling brands in Europe by 2030 with an attractive line-up in the entry-level segments and additional e-models.
- › is emerging as the leading European brand in important growth markets such as India or North Africa.
- › currently offers its customers twelve passenger-car series: the Fabia, Rapid, Scala, Octavia and Superb as well as the Kamiq, Karoq, Kodiaq, Enyaq iV, Enyaq Coupé iV, Slavia and Kushaq.
- › delivered over 731,000 vehicles to customers around the world in 2022.
- › has been a member of the Volkswagen Group for 30 years. The Volkswagen Group is one of the most successful vehicle manufacturers in the world.
- › independently manufactures and develops not only vehicles but also components such as engines and transmissions in association with the Group.
- › operates at three sites in the Czech Republic; has additional production capacity in China, Russia, Slovakia and India primarily through Group partnerships, as well as in Ukraine with a local partner.
- › employs 45,000 people globally and is active in over 100 markets.