

The best of both worlds

Rendezvous, Buick's exciting new entry in the booming truck market, combines many of the best features of sport utility vehicles, premium sedans and minivans.

"We're proud to introduce Rendezvous as the Buick SUV — a new breed of sport utility that goes beyond the usual vehicle categories," said Buick General Manager Roger W. Adams. "It's really the best of

all worlds — in terms of versatility, security and comfort.

"With our reconfigurable interior, we believe this is the most versatile vehicle in the utility market," he added. "It's a great product for today's active families — and a great example of General Motors' strategy to reach beyond traditional constraints and become the industry's product innovation leader."

Unlike traditional SUVs of about the same size, Rendezvous offers seven-passenger seating with its optional — and comfortable — third row of seats. Need fewer seats? Rendezvous can be easily reconfigured to create a huge cargo space of 108.9 cubic feet.

Rendezvous can be ordered with Versatrak, GM's innovative all-wheel-drive system that provides sure-footedness on all

roads. And it can be equipped to tow up to 3,500 pounds.

The first truck-based Buick in nearly 80 years, Rendezvous will be introduced as a 2002 model, with production beginning in the spring of 2001.

It was unveiled at press conferences in early February of 2000 at the Chicago Auto Show and in San Diego,

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— Roger W. Adams
Buick General Manager

Calif., in conjunction with the Buick Invitational Golf Tournament.

Buick officials say there are several reasons why it would build a truck-based vehicle after all these years. One, of course, is that today's U.S. vehicle market is about half trucks. Another is that a specific opportunity was seen for Buick to reach out to new customers.

"Our research shows that the boomer and generation X groups, who tend to buy SUVs and other trucks, acknowledge there's plenty of quality behind the Buick marque," Adams said. "So the opportunity is there to transfer what a variety of customers like about a Buick to a premium vehicle built according to a completely new formula — highly functional, enjoyable to drive and very luxurious."

Rendezvous Brand Manager Jack Bowen said that "by combining the best features and design elements of today's SUVs, premium sedans and minivans, we've been able to create a vehicle with real comfort, all-road and all-weather driving security and flexible cargo versatility. Buick Rendezvous is ready to handle the pace and diversified tasks of today's hectic life."

And Mark L. Reuss, its vehicle line executive, noted that Rendezvous is the first SUV with a combination of three-row seating, a low flat load floor, all-wheel drive and independent rear suspension.

"Our primary objective was to design a more innovative vehicle than those available today," Reuss said. "The marketplace is congested with three of these and a dozen of those. To stand out and be recognized as something special, you need to be dramatically distinctive. This is one goal I am sure we have achieved."

Of Rendezvous' design, Liz Wetzel, its design chief, said her team used Buick's "heritage of distinctive styling, power, comfort and security as a foundation, but took Rendezvous even further to add simplicity, practicality and durability — characteristics that are gaining in importance."

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