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MARKHAM KIA
It's about time everyone had a well made car.
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Part sport-utility. Part urban-utility. And finally, part of the Canadian landscape.

Although Mitsubishi products have been available in the United States for two decades, you couldn't buy one from a dealer here. That's because there were no dealers.

Still, that didn't stop persistent Canadians from doing a little cross-border shopping to bring back the odd example here and there. The most obvious is the proliferation of last-generation Eclipses, from the Lower Mainland to the Maritimes. What's an Eclipse? A sporty number that's nearly identical to dearly-departed Eagle Talon.

It's a clear indicator that Canadians are interested in what Mitsubishi has to offer (eight current vehicles and three new models), and the company is responding with a country-wide dealer network.

If that wasn't a big enough challenge, there's also a brand-new model — the Outlander sport ute — for a brand-new market.

In the age of bigger not necessarily being better, mini-SUVs are all the rage. With the Outlander, Mitsubishi is finally taking the plunge, mainly because it's tired of missing out.

It won't be an easy road here. Ford made its Escape. Honda has its CR-V. And then there's a Forester, a Tribute and a RAV4 to contend with. Indeed, the view from the other side of the glass has been a decidedly envious one for the folks at Mitsubishi. Canada was the only major global automotive market in which the company had no representation. Consider the new (or is that new, new?) Outlander a versatile welcome mat.

As a five-door crossover vehicle, the Outlander offers the capability of a mid-size SUV in a stylish, car-like package. It will seat five without cramping anyone's style. It will accept snowboards when the weather calls for a ride.

Feel free to think of it as a rolling Swiss Army knife. A tall station wagon. A hatchback with sport-utility styling cues. Another player in an increasingly competitive segment.

So why should you consider this Mitsubishi?

The Outlander's options are just a little different, which, in the end, may make it less of the same.

It comes with a lower ride height than a typical small SUV, easing entry and exit without

sacrificing a command-of-the-road seating position and view over the hood.

Similar in philosophy to the Honda CR-V, the Outlander is powered by a 140-horsepower 2.4-litre four-cylinder engine. No V6 is planned. A four-speed Sportronic automatic transmission allows for manual-style, clutchless shifting and is the only drivetrain offered. The all-wheel-drive Outlander is longer than most of the competition and comes complete with freshly modified, fully independent suspensions: MacPherson struts up front; and a multi-link coil-spring setup out back. Mitsubishi says that means a car-like nimbleness with more cargo capability, better visibility and more ground clearance.

Two trim levels, base LS and upscale XLS, will be offered, and pricing will start at less than \$27,000 with air conditioning, cruise control, power windows, power door locks, keyless entry, a stowable cargo cover, power heated mirrors, roof rails, a 140-watt AM/FM/CD with four speakers.

It's a reasonable sum not all that different than the competition.

And, if anything, the Outlander at least resembles its peers. The front styling takes its cues from the Pontiac Vibe, while the large, tubular roof rack looks eerily like the Nissan Xterra's, while the tail lights resemble those from a Lexus.

On the inside, the five-passenger interior is simple, sporty and logical. Large round instruments with a raised dual cowl make it stand out from the crowd.

Of course, the most important option might be the fact there's a mini-SUV offered by Mitsubishi in this country.

It was a long-time coming — too long — but worth the wait.

MITSUBISHI
launches a new
small sport-utility
vehicle in
a new land

Outlander

**Be a
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it's kids stuff.**

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