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Oliver Stefani: “The all-new FABIA looks considerably more dynamic and grown-up”

- › Head of ŠKODA Design in interview about the successful model’s fourth generation
- › The all-new FABIA “is an elegant car that evokes more emotions”
- › Historic vehicles from the ŠKODA Museum serve as a source of inspiration

Mladá Boleslav, 23 July 2021 – The all-new ŠKODA FABIA is larger, more modern and more emotive than its predecessor generations. One week ago, the first fourth-generation FABIA [rolled off the line at ŠKODA AUTO’s main plant in Mladá Boleslav](#). Oliver Stefani and his team are the force behind the new design of this successful model. In the following interview, the Head of ŠKODA Design describes the highlights of the new FABIA and which details are his personal favourites, while examining the influence of ŠKODA’s history on his current work.

How would you describe the fourth generation of the ŠKODA FABIA?

Oliver Stefani: The all-new FABIA looks considerably more dynamic and grown-up than its predecessors. It is a contemporary and elegant car that evokes more emotions with its new proportions and lines. The interior is firmly focused on the passengers, both in terms of ergonomic ease of use and especially when it comes to the customary, above-average amount of space provided.

What would you say are the design highlights of the new FABIA?

Stefani: How much time do you have ...? (*Laughs.*) There are numerous striking details we were able to implement for the all-new FABIA, including slim headlights with sharply defined lines, LED modules that look like ice crystals, a sculptured bonnet, and the dynamic roofline that slopes towards the rear. On the front doors, the lines of the body form a stylised representation of the Czech flag. Round air vents and soft materials, including textiles, make the interior look much more modern. A completely new feature for ŠKODA is the FABIA lettering on both sides of the cockpit cover – an incredibly nice detail, in my opinion.

Can you describe the experience of designing the new, fourth-generation FABIA from the ground up?

Stefani: That was a special task indeed. After all, the FABIA has been an important part of our portfolio for over 20 years now. Therefore, while implementing the current ŠKODA design language for the fourth generation, we also made sure to respect the essence of the FABIA.

What constitutes this essence of the FABIA? What is the common thread across all generations?

Stefani: A ŠKODA FABIA is always practical and functional, has an extraordinary amount of space for families and represents excellent value for money. In addition, every FABIA generation offers state-of-the-art technology at launch, as well as a contemporary design, which has become



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considerably more dynamic and emotive for the current, fourth generation. That means our target group now extends even further into the segment of customers focused on sportiness and lifestyle.

What distinguishes the new FABIA from its competitors?

Stefani: I am particularly proud that it combines a sporty and elegant shape with superior aerodynamics. Its drag coefficient – or c_d value – of 0.28 sets the benchmark in this segment, making it particularly efficient and economical to run. What I particularly appreciate about the interior on a personal level is its clear and symmetrical design.

How exactly are the various tasks distributed among the members of your design team?

Stefani: Karl Neuhold is responsible for the exterior design. His team works out how to reconcile technical requirements such as proportions and aerodynamics with those of the design. The interior design is overseen by Peter Olah. Kateřina Vránová is another crucial team member. Her department, Colour & Trim Design, brought fresh colours as well as sophisticated materials into the new FABIA, such as fabric covers for the instrument panel as seen in the OCTAVIA and the ENYAQ iV.

How does the collaborative process at ŠKODA Design work? Do you, as Head of Design, always lead the way?

Stefani: No, we always work as a team. One of our greatest strengths is our group's international composition. This results in a huge pool of ideas drawing on very different cultures. Another important aspect is that everyone can submit their own ideas, with no contribution discarded prematurely. We always try to give each idea the required space and time to develop.

The Czech car manufacturer has been around for over 125 years. Are you inspired by historic models?

Stefani: Oh, definitely. I spend a lot of time at the ŠKODA Museum, studying the historic vehicles. The quality and craftsmanship represented by these vehicles is impressive. Not many automotive manufacturers in the world have such a strong tradition and can draw on influences such as Bohemian crystal manufacture. Whatever we aspire to in the future, the brand's history is always there to remind us where we come from and what ŠKODA stands for. This guides us. It inspires us. Take the ŠKODA POPULAR MONTE CARLO. It absolutely is my favourite among our museum exhibits – uniquely beautiful, highly elegant and dynamic, simply a dream car that can serve as a source of inspiration for new vehicles to this day. So the Crystal Face of the ŠKODA ENYAQ iV, for example, references the POPULAR MONTE CARLO's chrome-plated protective grilles for the headlights. Additionally, we designers are inspired by the worlds of art and architecture as well as our daily lives. You just have to keep your eyes open.



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What should customers pay particular attention to when deciding on a new vehicle?

Stefani: The design, of course! Joking aside, a vehicle's design always plays an important role when deciding what car to buy. After all, this is the first thing you see every time you get in the car. The design should arouse emotions, because with emotions you can reach people and get them excited about something. It is often the key factor when we decide to buy a particular car – or give it a miss. Similar rules apply to the interior. You should simply feel good inside your car, because you may end up spending quite a lot of time in it. I also think it's important to consider quality in addition to advanced technology, comfort and safety. The all-new FABIA is an example that meets all these criteria – and that makes me proud.

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Source: ŠKODA AUTO



The all-new ŠKODA FABIA

The new FABIA is a front-wheel drive and available with a manual gearbox or an automatic 7-speed DSG. There is a choice of five petrol engines from Volkswagen Group's current EVO generation, which combine low emissions with increased efficiency and greater dynamics.

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Source: ŠKODA AUTO



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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 India, Russia and North Africa.
- › currently offers its customers ten passenger-car series: the FABIA, RAPID, SCALA, OCTAVIA and SUPERB as well as the KAMIQ, KAROQ, KODIAQ, ENYAQ iV and KUSHAQ.
- › delivered over one million vehicles to customers around the world in 2020.
- › 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; manufactures in China, Russia, Slovakia and India primarily through Group partnerships, as well as in Ukraine with a local partner.
- › employs more than 43,000 people globally and is active in over 100 markets.