

SKODA

130
YEARS

NEWSLETTER NO. 3

Škoda and Design



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A tradition of good taste

The creators of Laurin & Klement’s original design language (1905–1925), and of Škoda’s early decades, remain largely unknown – modest figures working quietly behind the success of a Czech brand.

The profession of automotive designers only diverged from that of bodywork engineers and production technologists in the second half of the 20th century. Even then, many global carmakers relied on the services of external industrial designers, renowned sculptors and graphic artists. From the 1950s through to the 1990s, Italian design studios in particular set the pace. The Škoda 720 ID saloon, penned in 1969 by a young Giorgetto Giugiaro, never made it into production for political reasons. By contrast, the Škoda Favorit (1987) went down in history as the most advanced car of the Eastern Bloc – thanks in no small part to the styling created by Nuccio Bertone’s team.

From 1991 onwards, Škoda’s design evolved within the Volkswagen Group, which provided both strong backing and a wealth of experience. This support enabled Škoda to establish its own in-house Design Department. Over the past three decades, five design chiefs have taken the helm, each refining and shaping the brand’s unmistakable design language.

In its 130 years, Škoda has come an extraordinarily long way. The current Modern Solid design language, first applied to a production car with the Elroq in 2024, is the work of more than 150 specialists representing almost 30 nationalities. It succeeds in blending – with character and originality – the often-competing demands of aesthetics, function, manufacturability, and regulatory requirements.



“Let us pay attention to the Laurin & Klement Voiturette! Its appearance is, in a word, charming; the lines are elegant – a perfect small-scale edition of the great cars. Elongated, low and very comfortable.”

Vilém ‘Henry’ Heinz, newspaper review of the L&K Voiturette A, the first automobile from Mladá Boleslav (1905)



“What makes a good designer? Curiosity about every aspect of life and a strong intuition. In everything we do, we try to spark emotion and avoid being average.”

Oliver Stefani, Head of Design, Škoda Auto

Concept Cars and Design Studies

Publicly presented studies and concept cars – the real-world previews of future Škoda production models – have a very long tradition. They have never been just ‘art for art’s sake’. Even the most futuristic prototypes without direct successors advanced Škoda’s progress in design, aerodynamics and technical concepts.

Ciao Škoda!



The presentation of concept cars, design studies and even elegantly styled production models is no longer confined to traditional motor shows or the virtual world. A perfect example came this April with the world premiere of Škoda’s sportiest compact SUV, the Elroq RS – unveiled on Italian soil at the renowned Milan Design Week.

“I think Škoda is a well-balanced brand. It’s like a piece of clothing you can wear all the time – elegant yet sporty, ready for an evening out with friends as well as a business meeting,” said Marcantonio, the artist behind the sculptures in Škoda’s exhibition.



1935

Škoda 935 Dynamic

The most progressive carmakers began experimenting with aerodynamics even before the Second World War. Elegant, rounded streamlining, inspired by the teardrop shape of water flowing through air, reduced drag significantly. This made it possible to drive faster, cut fuel consumption and lower noise levels – not to mention reducing the spray of dirt onto the bodywork. The Škoda 935 Dynamic, powered by a two-litre flat-four ‘boxer’ engine mounted behind the rear seats, was fitted with an electromagnetic pre-selector transmission and boasted a top speed of 130 km/h. The only example ever built is today a treasured gem of the Škoda Museum collection.



1969

Škoda 720 ID

Following the launch of the rear-engined Škoda 1000 MB (1964), work also began on higher-class models with a more traditional layout. In February 1969, Škoda secured a partnership with the forward-looking Turin studio ItalDesign, founded only the year before by the then 30-year-old stylist Giorgetto Giugiaro. The rising star of automotive design visited Mladá Boleslav in April 1969, and by the end of August Giugiaro’s team, working with Škoda engineers, had taken the Škoda 720 ID project from sketches all the way to a fully functioning prototype. This exceptionally elegant 4.4-metre saloon, riding on 14-inch wheels, reached a top speed of 157 km/h. For political and economic reasons – above all, the invasion of Czechoslovakia by the armies of five communist states – the project sadly never advanced beyond a handful of prototypes.



1976

Škoda Buggy type 736

Mladá Boleslav also turned out several cars made simply for leisure, fun and the joy of summer driving. One such creation was the Buggy Type 736, based on Škoda 110 mechanicals and inspired by the brand's autocross winners of the early 1970s. This 'doorless personal cabriolet', powered by a 1.1-litre engine delivering 45 horsepower (33 kW), proved remarkably agile off-road. Just five were built, the last in 1975. Apprentices from Škoda's own vocational school in Mladá Boleslav played a part in its construction, while the design itself came from in-house stylist Josef Čech.



1993

Škoda Favorit Fun

The first model regarded as a true 'show car' – designed purely for exhibitions with no immediate plans for production – was the Škoda Favorit Fun. Developed after Škoda became part of the Volkswagen Group, the project was led by Brazilian designer Günter Karl Hix. The bright yellow leisure car caused quite a stir, and just a few years later, customers were offered a production spin-off based on its successor: the Škoda Felicia Fun (1997), which stood out with several clever, unconventional touches.



2003

Škoda Roomster

At the Frankfurt Motor Show in September 2003, Škoda unveiled a family MPV concept that made brilliant use of its compact dimensions and offered an airy, highly flexible interior. Its name, Roomster, was a play on words: 'roomy' for its generous space and 'roadster' for its sporty flair. Although only slightly longer than the Fabia of the time, it was nearly 80 mm wider than the contemporary Superb. Rear access was via a single sliding door on the right-hand side – a safety feature designed so children would not step straight into traffic. Inside, the flat floor allowed the rear seats to slide lengthways by up to 750 mm, while turning the front seats around created a lounge-style layout. The production Škoda Roomster followed three years later.



2007

Škoda Joyster

Unveiled in Paris that autumn, the Škoda Joyster was all about leisure and fun – its name playing on ‘joy’. Beneath the panoramic roof sat four individual sculpted seats, with plenty of storage space for everyday items. The lower section of the tailgate featured a clever two-step opening system: the first extended the boot floor, while the second, folding out with one hand, transformed into a bench strong enough for two people and rated to carry up to 150 kg. Another neat touch were the storage boxes attached to the backs of the front seats, which could be removed and worn as backpacks thanks to their integrated straps.



2022

Škoda Vision 7S

With the Vision 7S, a large all-electric SUV concept, Škoda introduced its new Modern Solid design language for the first time. Measuring five metres long and offering three rows of seating for seven people, the Vision 7S was built for long journeys – whether for work or family life. Its door panels featured interactive illuminated surfaces that shone coloured light through the fabric, which could be used to jot down quick notes with a fingertip or keep children entertained with doodles. Among the interior highlights was an integrated child seat, placed in the safest possible location – within the centre console, extending back to the second row. This arrangement kept the youngest passenger in view of everyone, with the driver and front passenger able to monitor the child via a camera feed.

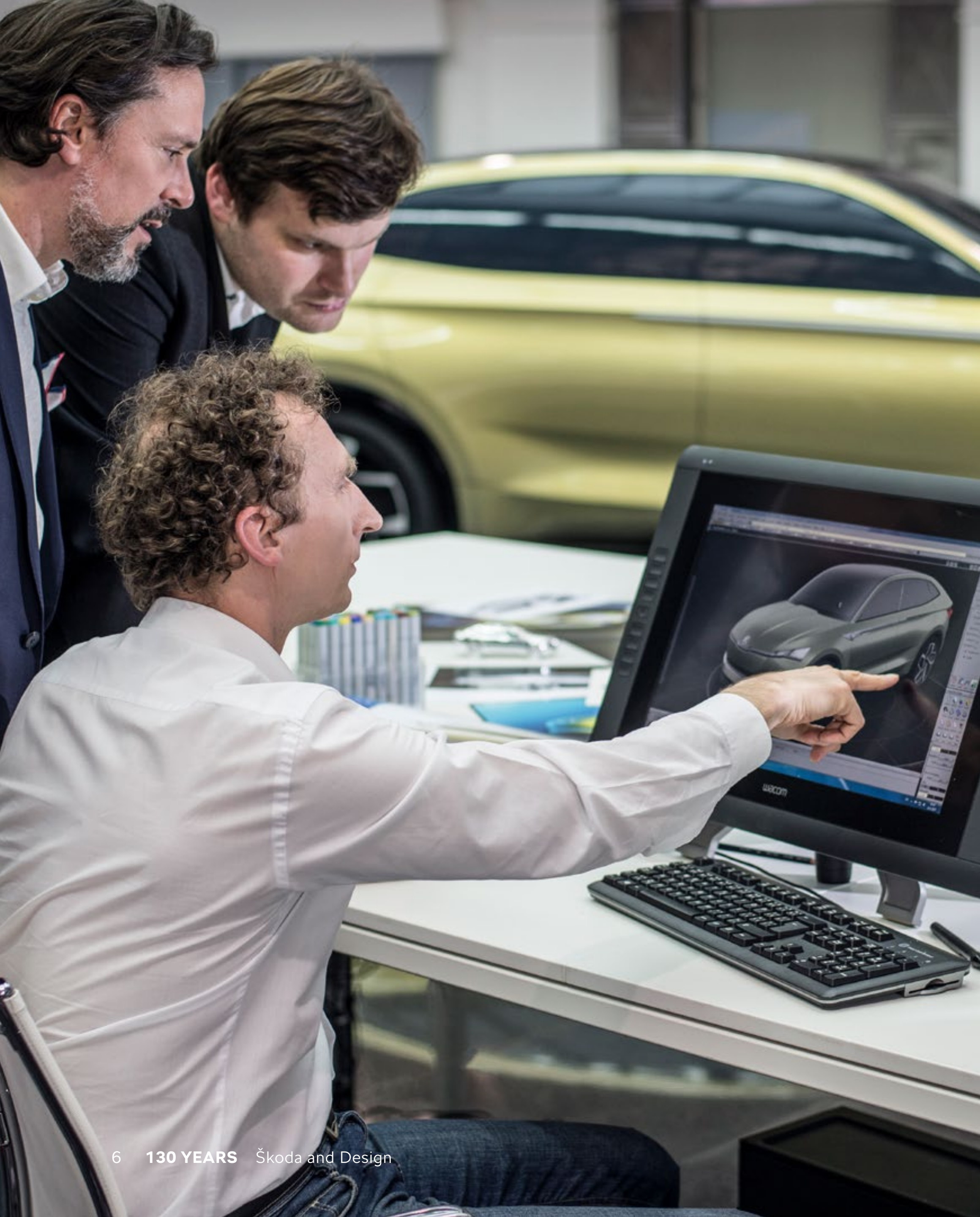


2025

Škoda Vision O

With the Vision O, Škoda recently introduced the electrified future of its long-standing Combi heritage and incorporates the next generation of its Modern Solid design language. The Škoda Vision O offers a glimpse into the near future of estate cars, a segment where Škoda leads the European market. Its body combines the strengths of both passenger and utility vehicles, setting out the key features of this concept.

The new concept car shows how Škoda incorporates its customer first approach into designing a new car. It was developed thinking inside out – entirely from the customer’s perspective. Inside, the Vision O focuses on space, comfort and intuitive functionality, its balanced aesthetics underlined by clean, uncluttered surfaces. A strong emphasis is placed on recycled and renewable materials, supporting the principles of the circular economy. The ‘O’ stands for circularity – reflecting Škoda’s commitment to sustainable mobility, recycling and reuse of components. The car impresses with a bold design that takes the Modern Solid language to the next level: aerodynamically sculpted lines, a flowing roof profile and a steeply raked windscreen give the concept car elegance and confidence in equal measure.



Škoda Design Department

The continuity of Škoda's 130-year evolution is reflected in the very home of the Škoda Design Department – a graceful Art Nouveau villa built in 1890 on the banks of the Jizera. Another team is based on Masaryk Embankment in the heart of Prague. Naturally, the designers work closely with other departments and representatives of the brand, ensuring the specific tastes and needs of customers are taken into account. Today, Chief Designer Oliver Stefani leads a team of around 150 people from more than 30 different countries. This diversity has long been key to creating distinctive, attractive products that win acclaim across more than 100 markets worldwide.

For most of its history, Škoda relied on the creativity and skill of its in-house stylists, though it did occasionally turn to renowned international designers. During the decades of state ownership, however, design was often overlooked and undervalued. In 1984, the Mladá Boleslav plant had just a two-person design team, headed by Václav Capouch, with a handful of artistically minded individuals also working at Kvasiny and Vrchlabí.

Following Škoda's integration into the Volkswagen Group in the summer of 1991, Brazilian designer Günter Karl Hix began building up a dedicated Design department. At that time, Škoda Design still occupied just two rooms, with around a dozen staff. The first model makers who shared their expertise with Czech colleagues came from New Zealand and the UK. Instead of today's virtual reality, clay models dominated the workflow – at scales of 1:5 or, following Volkswagen's standards, 1:4, and increasingly often at full size (1:1). Equally impressive were the huge sheets of film used to map out the car's proportions. With special adhesive tapes, designers would lay down the outlines of the vehicle's front, rear, side and top views – the starting point for detailed technical drawings.

Did you know...?



At Škoda's Czech plants, employees drink 'Curiosity Fuel' – coffee grown, roasted and packaged in line with sustainability principles. And it goes further than the coffee break: in keeping with the circular economy, even the husks of the beans are put to use. Working with supplier Bader, Škoda has developed a process where this by-product is used in tanning the leather for seat covers in the Škoda Octavia and Kodiaq Suite trims. There are other examples too – for instance, the leather in the Škoda Superb Laurin & Klement is tanned using wastewater left over from olive processing.

Škoda Auto's Chief Designers of the modern era



1993–1998

Dirk van Braeckel

* 1958 in Deinze, Belgium

Alma mater: Royal College of Art, London

After studying electrical engineering, Dirk van Braeckel completed design studies at the prestigious Royal College of Art in London. He joined the Volkswagen Group in 1984 as an exterior designer for Audi. Six years later, Group Chairman Ferdinand Piëch entrusted him with the task of defining a new design language for Škoda's upcoming model range. Van Braeckel's team delivered milestone projects such as the first-generation Škoda Octavia (1996) and Octavia Combi (1998), as well as the Škoda Fabia (1999). From 1999 onwards, his career continued successfully at Bentley in the UK, which had just been integrated into the Volkswagen family.



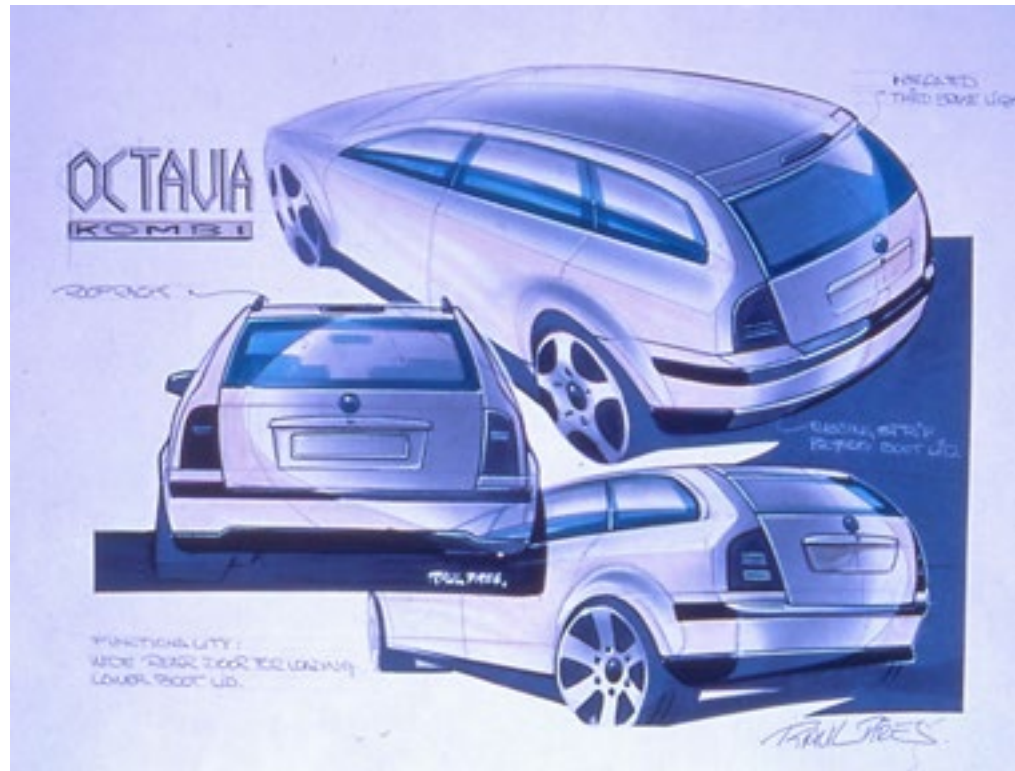
2000–2006

Thomas Ingenlath

* 1964 in Krefeld, Germany

Alma mater: Royal College of Art, London

Thomas Ingenlath also began his career at Audi within the Volkswagen Group before moving to lead the Škoda design team in 2000. His signature is visible on the first-generation Škoda Superb (2001), launched as a saloon, and on the Tudor coupé concept (2002), a motor show highlight of its time. Other major contributions include the Octavia II (2004), as well as forward-looking concepts such as the Roomster (2003) and the Yeti (2005). Ingenlath was known for 'painting with light' – it was his idea to give Škoda cars their distinctive glowing red 'C' shapes in the rear lights.





2005–2007

Jens Manske

* 1962 in Hamburg, Germany

Alma mater: Royal College of Art, London

Jens Manske took over as Head of Škoda Design following a successful career as Chief Designer at Mercedes-Benz. Under his leadership came the second-generation Škoda Fabia (2007) and the brand's flagship Superb II (2008), notable for its ingenious blend of Combi estate and Hatch features. His tenure also saw the creation of striking concept cars such as the Škoda Joyster (2006). After leaving Mladá Boleslav, Manske continued his career within the Volkswagen Group, this time in North America.



2008–2017

Jozef Kabaň

* 1973 in Námestovo, Slovakia

Alma mater: Royal College of Art, London

While still a first-year student in Bratislava, Jozef Kabaň placed second in a Škoda design competition, and by the age of 20 he had joined Volkswagen. He went on to work for Bugatti and Audi before becoming Head of Škoda Design in February 2008. Kabaň shaped a new design language for the brand, drawing inspiration in part from traditional Czech cut crystal glass. His key contributions include the Vision D concept (2011), the third-generation Octavia (2013), and above all the Superb III (2015), derived from the Vision C study (2013). Škoda's SUV offensive also began under his leadership, with the Vision S (2016) heralding the Kodiaq (2016), followed by the more compact Karoq (2017).





2017–now

Oliver Stefani

* 1964 in Braunschweig, Germany

Alma mater: California Art Center College of Design

Oliver Stefani studied industrial design in Braunschweig and transportation design in California. Between 1992 and 2016 (with a short break), he worked in Wolfsburg, and from 2015 was responsible for exterior design at Volkswagen. On 1 September 2017, he became Head of Škoda Design in Mladá Boleslav. His team created concepts such as the Vision X (2018) and Vision iV (2019), as well as the brand's first all-electric production models – the Enyaq iV and Enyaq Coupé iV (2020/2022). The Vision 7S study (2022) introduced the new Modern Solid design language, applied for the first time to a production model with the Elroq (2024). The estate-car concept Vision O (2025) points to the brand's future, taking the Modern Solid design language to the next level. Known for his collaborative approach, Stefani gives plenty of space to young designers, encouraging their creativity within the team.



Škoda's Most Beautiful Production Cars

Good design is more than just love at first sight – whether at the excitement of a world premiere or the surprise of spotting a new model in everyday traffic. Its success lies in transcending borders, cultures and generations, and in standing the test of time. Across Škoda's 130-year history there has been no shortage of models to capture the imagination of motorists, often across several generations. And there are strong contenders for future design classics among today's line-up too...

Škoda Popular Monte Carlo

The Monte Carlo Rally in January is one of the world's most famous motorsport events – originally conceived, incidentally, to attract wealthy visitors to Monaco outside the main season. Škoda's sporting success there led to a limited series of Popular roadsters and coupés carrying the Monte Carlo name. Motorsport spirit is clear in every detail, from the protective grilles over the headlamps to the stabilising fin on the tapering rear of the streamlined body – features unusual to modern eyes, but pure 1930s flair.





Škoda 1000 MB (1964)

Nicknamed Žábrovka ('the gilled one') for the slatted air intakes set into its rear wings, the 1000 MB was Škoda's breakthrough rear-engined car – a model that distilled the purposeful yet elegant style of the 'swinging sixties'. Note the subtle detail of the fuel filler: could there be a more graceful solution than the discreet cap hidden beneath the Škoda badge on the front wing? Designed entirely in-house, the MB featured a fully self-supporting body and rolled off one of the most advanced production lines in Europe at the time.

Škoda 110 R (1970)

For more than half a century, the 'R' (nicknamed 'Erko') has held a place in Škoda's golden hall of fame – and among collectors, it remains one of the most sought-after models of all. This iconic rear-engined coupé stayed in production for a full decade, with over 57,000 units completed at the Kvasiny plant. Its legacy lived on in successors such as the Garde and Rapid. And since 2022, fans of dynamic two-door cars have found a modern counterpart in the Škoda Enyaq Coupé – whose RS version outguns the 110 R with more than five times the power from its dual electric motors.





Škoda Felicia Fun (1997)

Almost one in ten of the 1.4 million Škoda Felicia cars built was the purely work-focused pickup. From this base came the Felicia Fun, a leisure-oriented model with its cheerful holiday-yellow paintwork. It caught the eye not only with its bright looks but also with a clever ‘party trick’: the ability to increase seating from two to four, while still leaving space for sports gear in the load bed. Produced in Vrchlabí between October 1995 and August 2000, just 4,016 were made – making it a highly sought-after youngtimer today.

Škoda Superb III (2015)

The third modern generation of Škoda’s flagship Superb, built on the Volkswagen Group’s MQB platform, debuted at the Geneva Motor Show in February 2015. Despite its famously generous space for both passengers and luggage – particularly legroom – the Superb impressed above all with its harmonious proportions. Its distinctive design drew inspiration from the tradition of Czech hand-cut crystal. Just three months after the launch of the Hatch version, the equally elegant Combi estate also reached customers.





Škoda Elroq (2024)

The all-electric Škoda Elroq is the first production car to sport the Modern Solid design language. “Modern Solid is based on three key values – it stands for robustness, functionality and authenticity,” explained Škoda’s Head of Design, Oliver Stefani. The model also introduced the brand’s new wordmark logo, prominently set into a wide crease on the bonnet. Another debut was the Tech-Deck Face – a grille-like element concealing sensors, visually linked to the bonnet edge and its characteristic Škoda line. The Elroq is one of the bestselling electric cars in Europe and even achieved a milestone of its own, becoming the bestselling electric car in Europe in April and July.



Creativity without limits

Thanks to today's technology – not just the professional tools used at Škoda Design, but also software available to the wider public – virtual car design can now be executed at a remarkably high level. The resulting visualisations are often indistinguishable from real cars, and at the same time, they allow for computer-based simulations and testing. No wonder that a brand with 130 years of history, like Škoda, tempts designers into playful 'reincarnations' of legendary models, giving them fresh, futuristic interpretations. So what might some of **Škoda's most iconic cars look like if reimaged for tomorrow?**



Voiturette A: **The Autonomous Carriage**

Designer: Jü-chan Chang

In the eyes of this Chinese designer, the historic Voiturette takes on a new life as a two-seater autonomous carriage – ideal for carrying tourists around Prague.



Škoda Popular Monte Carlo: **Funky roadster**

Designer: Ljudmil Slavov

Inspired by the exceptionally elegant sports car of 1936, Slavov created a fresh concept with retro details that, in his words, "strikes a funky note".



Škoda Felicia: Bohe Vita

Designer: Martin Leprince

A Czech twist on la dolce vita: this futuristic reincarnation reinterprets one of the most beautiful Czechoslovak cabriolets, the Felicia, produced from 1959 to 1965.



Škoda 1203: Off to the Campsite

Designer: Daniel Hájek

Rather than a straightforward retro treatment, Hájek designed a modern, timeless vehicle that pays tribute to the 1968 debut of the legendary Škoda 1203 van.



Ferat: A Dark Film Star

Designer: Baptiste de Brugiere

This young French designer wasn't afraid to push certain elements of the infamous car from the 1981 cult film *Upír z Feratu* (Ferat Vampire) to dramatic new extremes.



Slavia B: Modern Café Racer

Designer: Romain Bucaille

A motorbike enthusiast, Bucaille remained true to two wheels. His creation is a modern electric café racer inspired by the Laurin & Klement Slavia B of 1899.



Škoda 200 RS: In Factory Colours

Designer: Daniel Petr

Although the silhouette recalls the original of 1974–1975, this vision is otherwise thoroughly modern and distinctive. Petr retained the period red-and-white livery, enhanced with gold wheels and a rear spoiler.



Škoda 130 RS: WRC Details

Designer: Aymeric Chertier

Chertier chose not to reinvent the legendary rally car of 1975–1980 but to refresh it. Preserving its essence and iconic lines, he added subtle touches inspired by World Rally Championship cars.



Ferat: Vampires Still Bite

Designers: Giuseppe Campo and Stanislav Sabo

The notorious film car also caught the imagination of this international duo, who applied the Modern Solid design philosophy to their vision – with its clean, flowing lines offering a new take on the cult classic.



Škoda Favorit: Everyday Companion

Designers: Ljudmil Slavov and David Stingl

Reimagined as a friendly, practical hatchback for daily life, this modern interpretation of the 1987 Favorit reflects the Simply Clever spirit: compact, yet versatile enough for every occasion.

Škoda Sport: Beauty in Simplicity

Designer: Daniel Petr

The only Škoda ever to start at Le Mans – the Škoda Sport of 1950 – provided the basis for this study. Petr translated its simple, elegant lines into the contemporary Modern Solid design language with striking effect.



Škoda Vision GT:

Bridging Past and Future

Designers: Andrej Denysko, Andrii Bahriichuk, Romain Bucaille, Jounggeen Kim, Filip Krol, Julien Petitseigneur

This purely electric virtual single-seater was created by a team of designers who took inspiration from the Škoda 1100 OHC racing prototype of 1957 – blending motorsport heritage with futuristic vision.



Tour de France Trophies by Škoda Design

For the 112th staging of the **Tour de France**, Škoda Design once again created the trophies for the winners of the green jersey (points classification) and the white jersey (best young rider). This year's crystal trophies carry a special Škoda logo marking the brand's 130th anniversary.



“You’ve Got to Laugh”

The automotive world is often a serious place – but there’s no reason not to have a little fun. From time to time, Škoda has released design ‘specials’ as April Fools’ pranks that were convincing enough to fool many. On 1 April 2015, for example, the brand announced its entry into a “promising new sector” with the **Škoda VisionSea** – a hybrid sports yacht. A year later, a press release unveiled the **Škoda Snowman**, a plug-in hybrid snow groomer “going on sale” that December. And in October 2022, to coincide with the NHL ice hockey clash in Prague between the San Jose Sharks and the Nashville Predators, Škoda presented a pair of mascots: **the Sharyaq and the Prediaq**.



Did you know...?

Škoda Design also creates or collaborates on projects far outside the automotive world. Examples include a limited edition of the **legendary Czech Botas sneakers**, released for Škoda's 130th anniversary, and a **special series of unique wristwatches** produced with the Czech watchmakers Prokop & Brož.



Marketing

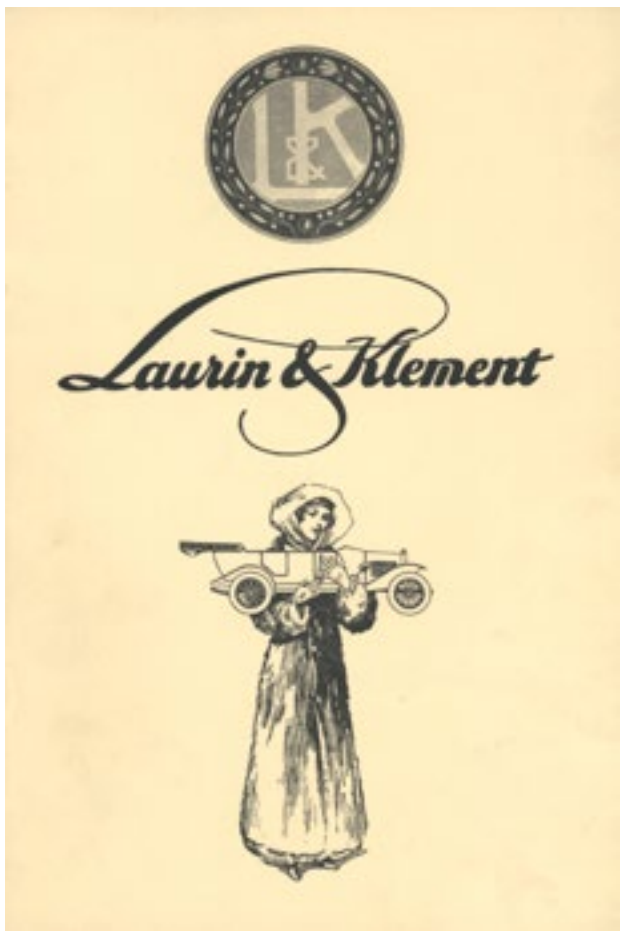
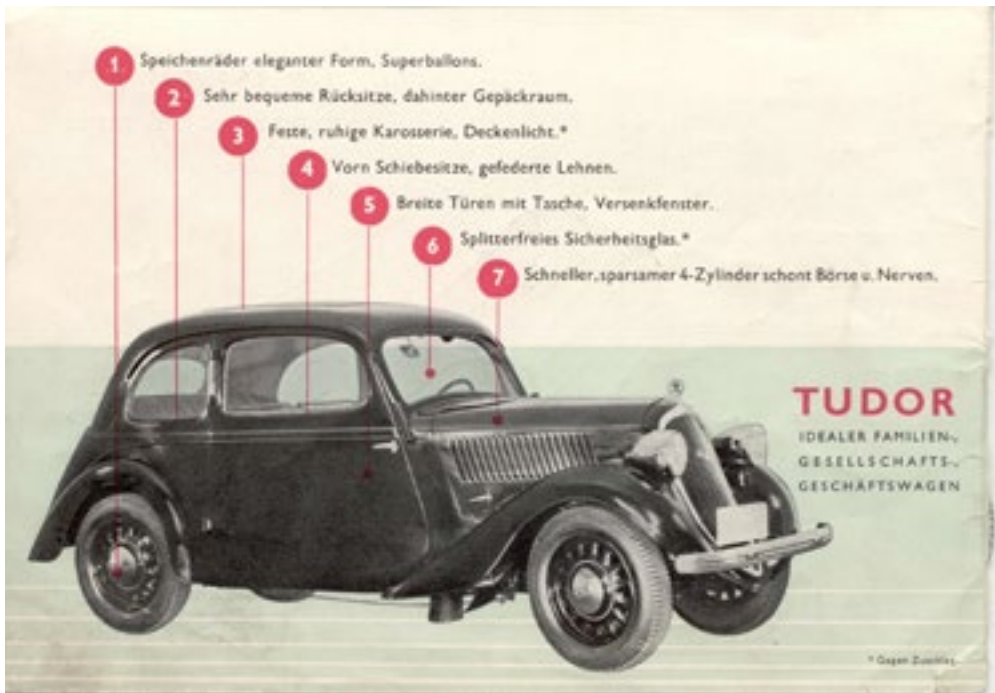
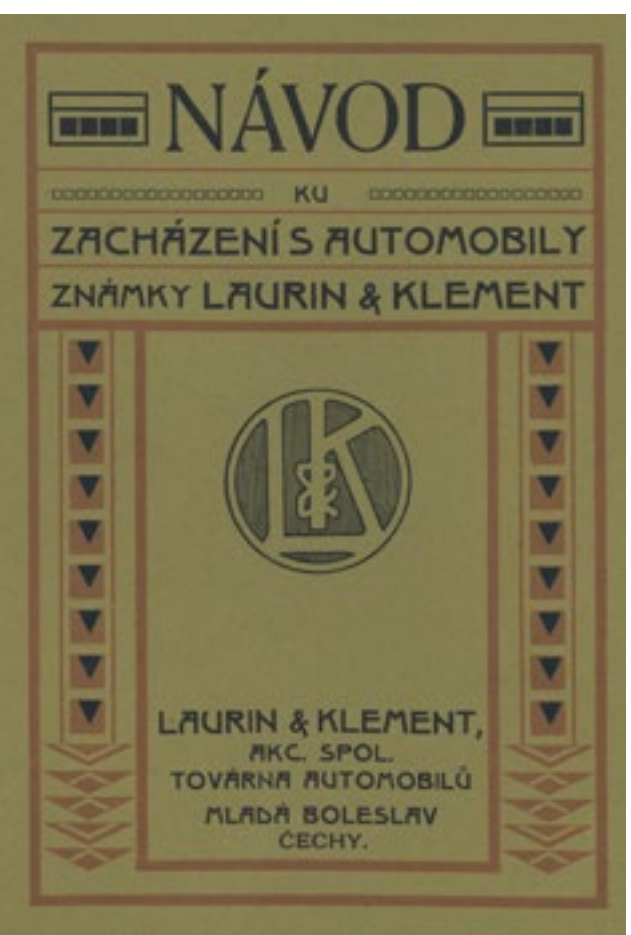
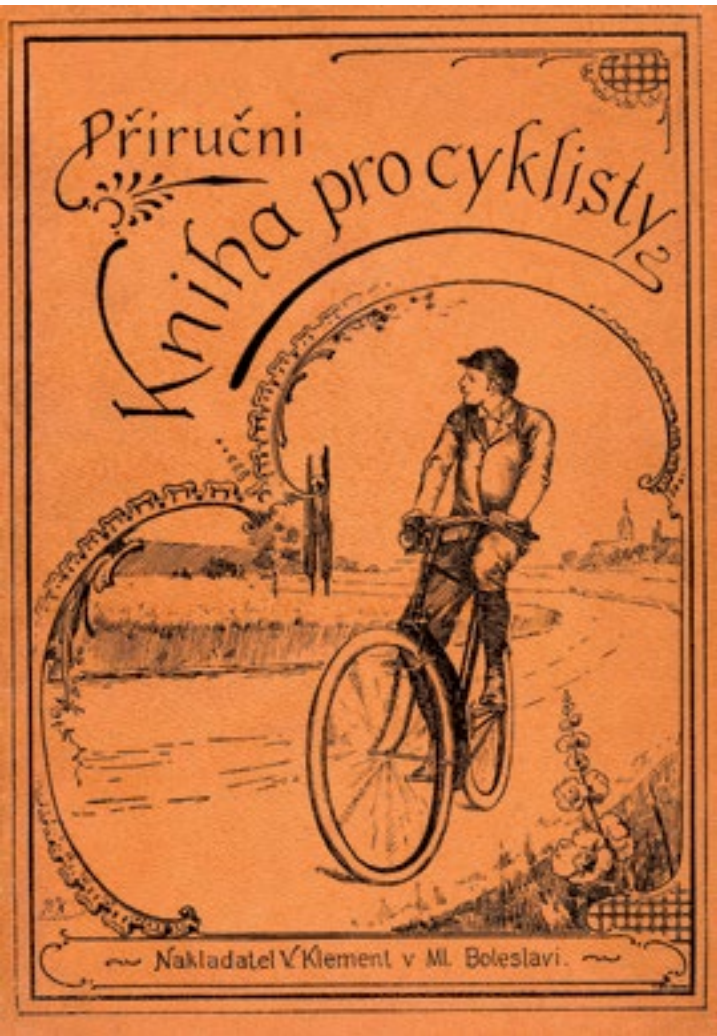
Changing aesthetics through the ages: The evolution of L&K/Škoda advertising

The very first adverts, posters and brochures for Laurin & Klement were shaped by Václav Klement himself. A bookseller by trade, he supported bicycle sales with his own brochure on cycling – which he personally wrote, printed and distributed. The graphic style, with its decorative Art Nouveau templates, is unmistakably of its time.

Sporting success quickly became a persuasive sales factor, especially the unofficial ‘world championship’ title won at Dourdan, France, in 1905. The concept by technical director Václav Laurin was ahead of its time – even aesthetically. On his motorcycle, the engine, fuel tank and accessories were purposefully and elegantly integrated into the frame.

By 1912, the company was spending 90,000 crowns on advertising – equivalent to around 27.5 kg of gold – while producing only 397 cars that year. Design hallmarks of the era included brass radiators, large acetylene gas headlamps, sweeping wings with long running boards, and the high beltlines of enclosed bodies.

During the First Republic, charcoal drawings, watercolours and gouache were widely used, complementing the almost exclusively black-and-white photography of the period. Even then, Škoda worked with leading artists and specialists in modern forms of promotion.





One of the most popular interwar formats was 'cinema advertising'. Against the backdrop of black-and-white silent films (silent well into the late 1920s), colourful hand-painted glass slides stood out vividly on the silver screen.

Advertising never stopped, even in the 1930s when sales to private customers had largely dried up. Patriotic campaigns helped strengthen people's belief that better times would return.

During communist Czechoslovakia, the country's declining printing industry meant many foreign Škoda representatives preferred to commission their promotional materials through advertising agencies abroad.

In the 1990s, Škoda caught attention with the slogan 'IQ + ♥ = ŠKODA', and with daring stunts such as a Felicia hung by its doors from a crane to demonstrate the car's strength and safety.



1946–1991: Success Against All Odds



The post-war settlement in Europe, and Czechoslovakia's inclusion within the Soviet sphere of influence, meant that industrial production – including car manufacturing – followed a path very different from that of Western Europe. The nationalisation of large enterprises and the centrally planned economy, guided more by political directives than by industrial expertise, gradually took their toll. Material and component supplies became unreliable, production efficiency declined, and demand for innovation was limited.

Yet despite these obstacles, the workforce in Mladá Boleslav repeatedly showed they could make the most of the circumstances – creating unique technical solutions and new models that found success even in foreign markets.

The launch of the Škoda 1000 MB, for example, turned the company into a showcase of metallurgical technology. In its newly built plant, Škoda became the first carmaker in Europe to use high-pressure die casting of aluminium-alloy engine blocks – applying a principle patented by factory owner Josef Polák as early as 1922.

An equally fascinating story lies behind the Škoda Favorit. Here too, determination and ingenuity proved decisive. It is often said that what ultimately convinced Volkswagen's management to bring Škoda into the Group in 1991 was not just the car itself, but the skill, persistence and improvisational talent of the development and engineering team – a living example of the famous 'golden Czech hands'.



Did you know ...

... how Škoda came by its 'Italian style' design? In 1983, representatives from Mladá Boleslav travelled to the 53rd Geneva Motor Show with a difficult mission: to secure a design partner for a new car that, by government decree, was to be styled 'in the Italian fashion'. At the show, they approached Giorgetto Giugiaro, who had already collaborated with AZNP on projects in the 1960s and 70s – but he showed little interest in working together again. The Pininfarina studio was tied up with other contractual commitments. In the end, however, Škoda reached an agreement with the renowned Turin design house Stile Bertone, led by its charismatic founder Giuseppe 'Nuccio' Bertone. That partnership marked the starting point for the design of the Škoda Favorit.



1946

NATIONALISATION AND THE ŠKODA 1101 'TUDOR'

At the end of 1945, government decrees nationalised the carmaker, merging it with the Vrchlabí bodyworks and the Kvasiny plant to form AZNP (Automobilové závody národní podnik). In May 1946, production began in Mladá Boleslav of the first post-war model – **the Škoda 1101, nicknamed 'Tudor'**. At Vrchlabí, an ambulance version also went into production. Between 1946 and 1952, a total of 66,904 Tudors were built in civilian form, with about two-thirds exported to foreign customers.



1964

NEW PRODUCTION LINE FOR THE ŠKODA 1000 MB

In March, the brand unveiled a new production line for the revolutionary **Škoda 1000 MB**. It featured a self-supporting body and a rear-mounted one-litre four-cylinder engine – the first in the world to be mass-produced using high-pressure die casting in aluminium. This application of advanced technology rightly attracted attention from experts across Europe and beyond. The MB made its domestic debut in September at the Brno trade fair, before appearing internationally at the Paris and London motor shows. Demand was strong – 70% of production went for export.



1975

ŠKODA 130 RS

Just a year after the first Škoda racing models to carry the now-iconic Rally Sport (RS) badge – the 200 RS and 180 RS – the company launched the **Škoda 130 RS**. Widely regarded as one of the finest competition cars of its era, it went on to secure major titles, including victory in the 1981 European Touring Car Championship and a memorable double class win at the 1977 Monte Carlo Rally.



1976

A CAR FOR EVERY FAMILY: ŠKODA 105/120/130

Debuting at the Brno Trade Fair in September, the new Škoda 120 was a major facelift of the 110 saloon. With its rear-mounted engine and rear-wheel drive, it was designed as an affordable family car. Further versions soon followed, their numerical designations reflecting engine sizes from 1.0 to 1.3 litres – the 105, 120 and 130. From August 1978, **the 120 GLS** became the flagship of the range, while from 1981 the line-up was expanded by a coupé version, first called the Garde and later the Rapid.



1987

THE REVOLUTIONARY ŠKODA FAVORIT, STYLED IN ITALY

As the rear-engined era came to a close, a completely new concept arrived: the **Škoda Favorit**, styled by the Italian studio Stile Bertone. Against all odds, and under huge time pressure, Škoda's employees achieved a remarkable feat – a rapid transition to a modern front-engined, front-wheel-drive hatchback. The Favorit entered the market in 1988, followed in 1990 by the practical and popular Forman estate and, soon after, a two-seater pickup.



1991

JOINING THE VOLKSWAGEN GROUP

Although Škoda remained a strong domestic leader, the Velvet Revolution of 1989 and the rapid social and market changes that followed made it clear that survival and success in the new, highly competitive environment would require a strong strategic partner. In December 1990, the **Czech government chose Volkswagen** as part of the privatisation of the Mladá Boleslav carmaker. On 16 April 1991, Škoda officially became the Group's fourth brand, beginning its transformation from a regional player into a globally successful company.



Youth leads the way

The Student Car Project, launched by the Škoda Academy in the 2013/2014 school year, has grown remarkably over the past decade. Each year, students – supported by various departments across the company – bring bold and imaginative ideas to life. With guidance from Škoda's Head of Design, Oliver Stefani, and experts from the Technical development as well as other departments, their first sketches of interiors and exteriors are eventually transformed into a real, driveable car, based on a production model from the brand's line-up. Many of the finished cars have left fans wishing they could buy them straight off the production line.



2014: Škoda Citijet

The Sky Above

Right from the start, the students were bold enough to make a radical cut – literally. They removed the roof from a Škoda Citigo, added numerous modifications, and created Škoda's first cabriolet in many years.



2015: Škoda Funstar

An Unconventional Pickup

In the second year, 23 apprentices again chose to dramatically alter a production model, this time transforming a Fabia into an eye-catching pickup. Its public debut took place at the prestigious GTI Treffen by Lake Wörthersee in Austria.



2016: Škoda Atero

Coupé with Impressive Sound

Based on the Škoda Rapid Spaceback, the Atero became a dynamic coupé with a distinctly sporty design, 18-inch wheels – and an audio system packing 1,800 watts and 14 speakers.



2017: Škoda Element

Beach Buggy with a TV

Finished in pearlescent yellow with bold black accents, this beach buggy used the electric drivetrain of the Citigoe iV. Inside were anatomical seats and plenty of extras for a proper beach party: a fridge, 400-watt speakers and even a TV mounted behind the front seats. Power came from an additional battery and a solar panel.



2018: Škoda Sunroq

An SUV Cabriolet

The apprentices once again dared to chop off the roof – this time from a Karoq. The result was the Sunroq, an appealing open-top SUV. The students also added imaginative lighting effects: LEDs illuminated the door handles and wheel arches, while Škoda lettering was projected onto the road from the bumpers and all four doors.



2019: Škoda Mountiaq

Ready for Rough Terrain

A pickup any off-road enthusiast would covet! Starting with a Kodiaq, the students transformed it almost beyond recognition, equipping it with all the essentials for heavy terrain: raised ground clearance, a reinforced frame, winch, light bar and snorkel intake.



2020: Škoda Slavia

Sports Spider with Historic Roots

Created in Škoda's 125th anniversary year, this open-top sports car was based on the Scala and drew inspiration from the Škoda 1100 OHC racing prototype of 1957. The Slavia featured multicoloured LED ambient lighting and two-tailed lion embroidery beneath the speakers – a subtle tribute to Czech history.



2022: Škoda Afriq

Built for Rally Dakar

For this rally special, the students used a Kamiq body with Octavia 4x4 technology, with strong support from Škoda Motorsport. Many details came straight from the Fabia Rally2 evo, including auxiliary headlamps, a roof vent, quick-release fasteners for the bonnet, and a rear hatch with an integrated spoiler.



Did You Know...?



The Student Car Project follows in the footsteps of an earlier initiative: in 1975, apprentices from Škoda Auto's Vocational School built four examples of the Škoda Buggy Type 736.

Note: The annual tradition of implementing a student project was interrupted in 2021 by the Covid-19 pandemic and in 2024 by the reconstruction of the Škoda Academy workshops.

2023: Škoda Roadiaq

Mobile Office and Camper

Inspired by the company's Let's Explore motto, students reimagined the all-electric Enyaq as a mobile office that doubled as a camper. The modified rear hatch could hold a tent; inside, one person could sleep in comfort and had access to a kitchenette, a 27-inch monitor and full office facilities, including internet.



2025: Škoda L&K 130

Tradition Meets Tomorrow

The tenth Student Car is also the first to use the technology of the Superb – in its plug-in hybrid version – and it celebrates Škoda's 130th anniversary in grand style while paying tribute to the cycling roots of its founders.

The apprentices devised an ingenious pickup layout with an electrically extendable rear section, making it easier to access two bicycles in the load bay, while a third can be carried on the roof. They even transformed the original rear right-hand door into a sliding door to give the mechanic more working space.

A built-in fridge behind the driver's seat keeps drinks cool in bidons during the ride, and the overall design reflects the needs of a fully fledged team support vehicle for professional cycling races. Its qualities have already been put to the test by Tour de France riders Andy Schleck and Zdeněk Štybar.



Škoda Muzeum

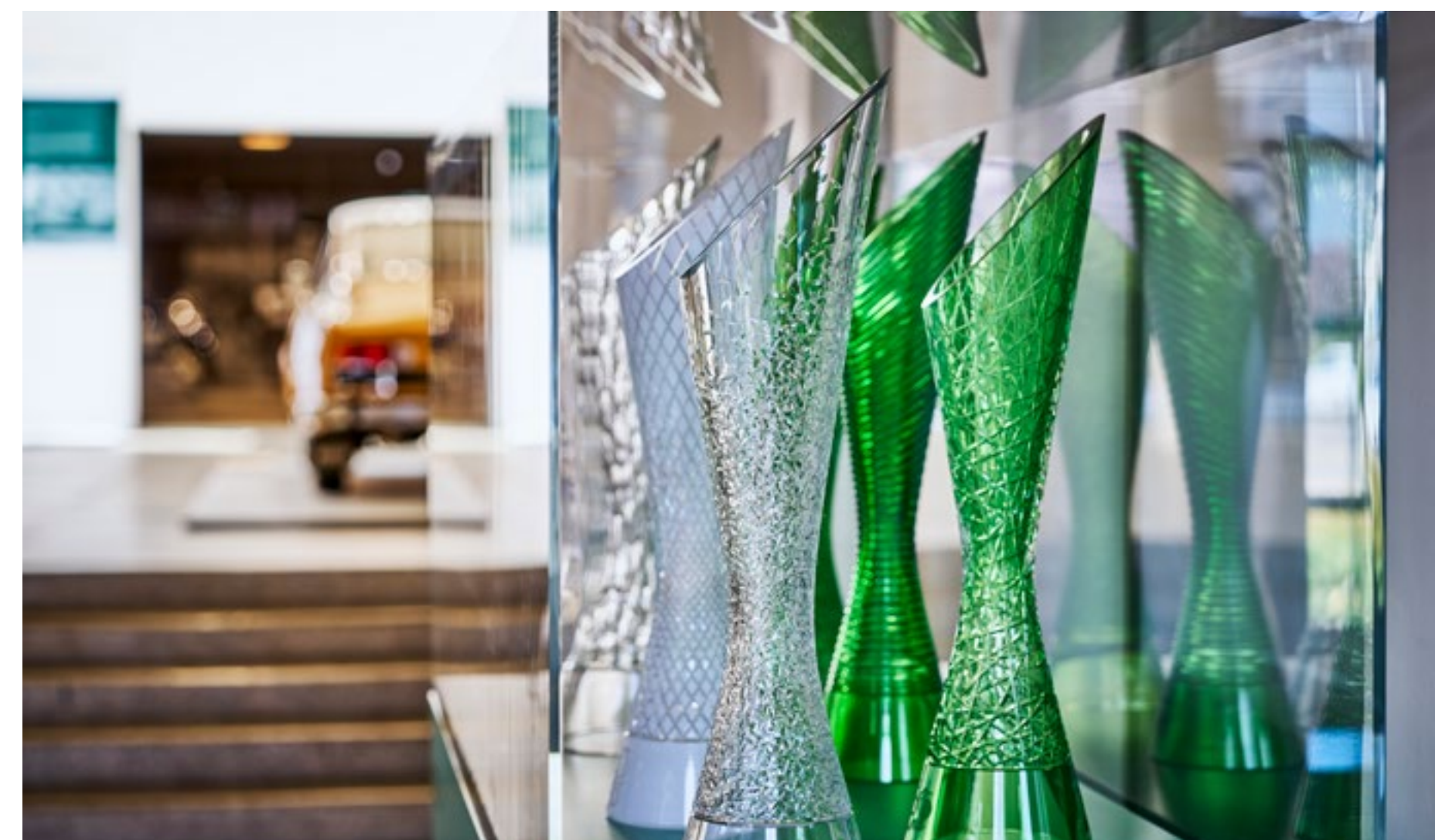
Beyond Cars: A Celebration of Style

The most representative showcase of Laurin & Klement/Škoda design can be found at the Škoda Museum in Mladá Boleslav, which in February 2025 welcomed its four-millionth visitor.

Alongside the permanent exhibition, a special display is running until 11 January 2026. It highlights major milestones and fascinating details from the company's 130-year history.

In addition to information panels, 30 cars on display and an interactive map of the main plant's development, the exhibition also shines a spotlight on Škoda Auto's sponsorship activities. Visitors can see colourful ice hockey and cycling jerseys, underlining Škoda's long-standing partnerships. The ice hockey shirts reflect Škoda's record as the longest-running main sponsor of the IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship.

Another prestigious partnership is with the Tour de France, the world's most famous cycling race. On show is a Škoda Enyaq from 2024, specially modified for the race director, along with the trophies for the winners of the past 14 editions. These crystal trophies have been designed by Škoda Design and produced in collaboration with Czech glassmakers since 2011. Each year's design has been unique, varying in both shape and technique – one striking example featuring thousands of tiny crystals of 'stardust' applied to the glass surface.



130
YEARS

Celebrating 130 years of rich history, innovative approaches and a vision for the future of the company.

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