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2006 MAZDASPEED6 - THE ULTIMATE ZOOM-ZOOM MAZDA6

IRVINE, Calif. - The new *MAZDASPEED6* is the fastest accelerating, best handling and most advanced sports sedan Mazda has ever built.

Boasting a unique 2.3-liter direct-injection turbo-charged four-cylinder engine mated to a six-speed manual transmission and a high-tech Active Torque-Split All-Wheel Drive system, it's got all the performance and passion of a specialist rally replica, but with the refinement of a luxury sedan. There's no need to buy earplugs and hire a chiropractor every time you go for a drive.

Mazda's Zoom-Zoom philosophy is applied to every aspect of the *MAZDASPEED6* from a subtly aggressive bodykit to a cabin that's been created especially for the sporting driver.

But the *MAZDASPEED6* is not just about speed. As befits a top-of-the-line model, the *MAZDASPEED6* offers a host of creature comforts that the "rally replicas" could only hope for, such as comfortable and supportive seats with optionally available leather trim, a six-speaker AM/FM/CD sound system with an optional BOSE® audio system featuring a six-disc CD changer, and available xenon headlights, moonroof and DVD-based navigation system.

"The *MAZDASPEED* name is synonymous with amazing agility and road holding and the *MAZDASPEED6* doesn't disappoint," says Kevin Mori, *MAZDASPEED6* vehicle line manager for Mazda North American Operations. "What's all the more remarkable is that, unlike some rival rally-replica all-wheel drive sedans the *MAZDASPEED6* also achieves superb ride and refinement."

The *MAZDASPEED* banner incorporates factory-built vehicles that offer the highest-possible performance, yet are true to their donor vehicles; factory-developed and -warranted street and racing performance parts and accessories; and *MAZDASPEED* Motorsports Development, the company's racing division.

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MAZDASPEED MAGIC

Mazda has always been a powerplant pioneer. The 13B RENESIS rotary unit in the sensational RX-8 is the world's only production rotary engine and now the MAZDASPEED6 launches with a boundary-breaking engine of its own.

The all-aluminum 2.3-liter in-line four-cylinder, 16-valve engine in the MAZDASPEED6 is one of the first direct-injection, turbocharged, gasoline engines available in North America. Mazda uses the moniker Direct Injection Spark Ignition (DISI) to describe the engine. And this is just the first of a number of planned applications for this powerplant.

By introducing direct injection to a gasoline turbo application, Mazda circumvented the usual drawback of turbocharging – poor low- and mid-range torque – while meeting strict exhaust emission regulations. Both fuel mixture loading efficiency and torque are increased by injecting fuel directly into the combustion chamber. As a result, the turbocharger delivers much of its 15.6 psi of boost from approximately 2,500 rpm. The single-scroll turbocharger maintains exhaust temperature, allowing for reduced thermal capacity of the exhaust system, which, in turn, minimizes harmful emissions and allows the MAZDASPEED6 to meet both LEV-II state and Bin 5-A Federal regulations.

The 2.3-liter DISI engine produces 274 horsepower at 5,500 rpm and 280 lb-ft of torque at just 3,000 rpm. With the turbo spinning so eagerly, there's torque on tap at very low revs, giving the MAZDASPEED6 amazing in-gear acceleration. And the benefits of the DISI technology, coupled with a fast-spinning turbocharger, further support the original promise of MAZDASPEED6 being true to the original MAZDA6 concept.

Other enhanced components in the engine include steel connecting rods and crankshaft, increased diameters of connecting rod pins, optimized rod shape and the introduction of full floating pistons. Each and every moving part is stronger, more rigid and more durable. Literally hundreds of part numbers were changed from the standard MZR non-turbo engine in developing this powerplant.

A further benefit of DISI technology means the *MAZDASPEED6* offers a remarkable blend of low emissions, excellent fuel economy and high performance. In city driving, the *MAZDASPEED6* achieves 20 mpg, and 26 mpg on the highway.

A close-ratio, slick-shifting six-speed manual transmission is fitted and really encourages the *MAZDASPEED6* driver to explore this car's performance. The extremely small transmission employs triple cone synchronizers – which minimize shift effort – for first, second and third gears, with a double cone synchronizer for fourth gear, allowing for smooth up and downshifts. Brass synchronizers were chosen on select gears to minimize shift balking and maximize feel.

Mazda engineers specified a six-speed manual transmission as it was deemed to be the best mix of proper gear-spacing, ease of use and outright performance. No automatic is available, as the engineering team felt that a proper sports sedan should be equipped with a manual transmission, to fully involve the driver in the experience.

The dynamic driving experience is further enhanced by the *MAZDASPEED6*'s Active Torque Split All-Wheel Drive system. The all-new system yields a superb balance between driving excitement and stability under all road conditions. The torque transfer system found in the *MAZDASPEED6* adjusts front/rear torque distribution between 100:0 and 50:50 for optimum drive power to each wheel, and can react to wheel slippage much more quickly than conventional gear- or fluid-controlled systems.

The Active Torque Split system incorporates real-time input data on steering angle, yaw rate, lateral G force and engine status to determine road surface and driving conditions, then selects between Normal, Sports and Snow (slippery) modes to provide the most power and traction under all conditions. A torque-sensing limited-slip differential (borrowed from the Mazda RX-8 sports car) optimizes torque and ensures excellent power delivery when cornering or on slippery surfaces. To ensure consistent power delivery under all weather and driving conditions, the water-cooled Power Take Off center differential distributes torque to the rear axle.

The MAZDA6 Sports Sedan was already one of the most rewarding driver's cars in its class, but adding MAZDASPEED to the equation brings a whole new level of ability.

The MAZDASPEED6 rides lower than a standard MAZDA6 and the double-wishbone front and rear multi-link suspension setups have been tweaked to further enhance handling. In the front, a 25 percent higher spring rate for the coil springs and an increase in the diameter of the stabilizer bar from 23mm to 24mm sharpen turn-in and minimize understeer. In the rear, the spring rate has been increased by 37 percent, the stabilizer bar diameter increased from 21mm to 23mm and the rear cross-member reinforced.

With the retuned suspension acting in concert with the Active Torque-Split all-wheel drive system, the MAZDASPEED6 can corner faster and flatter than the regular MAZDA6. However, at no time does MAZDASPEED6 force occupants to suffer a poor ride or excessive road noise in exchange for outstanding steering feel and feedback, and prodigious levels of cornering grip.

Engine-speed sensing power assisted steering gives superb feel and lightweight 18-inch alloy wheels wear 215/45R-18 high performance tires to give excellent levels of grip. The generous stopping power is provided by 12.6-inch ventilated front discs, and 12.4-inch solid rear discs. Anti-lock Brakes (ABS) with Electronic Brakeforce Distribution (EBD) is standard and further reassurance comes with Traction Control and Dynamic Stability Control (DSC).

EYE-CATCHING STYLE TO MATCH THE BLINK-OF-AN-EYE SPEED

The MAZDASPEED6 looks fast but not furious. Rather than emulating the hardcore street racer styling, Mazda has subtly enhanced the flowing lines of the MAZDA6 with a range of styling enhancements that have echoes of the spectacular RX-8 sports car. At first glance there is no doubt this is still a MAZDA6, but with an all-new front fascia, hood, front fenders, headlights, rear fascia and tail lights, there's no mistaking that something special is under the hood.

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From the front, the most immediately attention-grabbing feature is the new grille and headlights. Headlight buckets receive a dark grey tint for a more aggressive look and feel, and fog lights are moved into the lower bumper area. Front fenders are aggressively flared to clear the larger wheels and send a powerful message. The hood is bulged in order to clear the intercooler mounted on top of the engine, and cleverly integrates a hood scoop to feed cold outside air to the engine – again , no boy-racer speed “tricks” here.

Extended side skirts, a re-profiled rear bumper with built-in diffuser and slots for the twin tailpipes, and a lip spoiler complete the aerodynamic and visual enhancements to the body. Every modification from a standard MAZDA6 is intended to convey a sense of power, sophistication and solidity, and looks – as it was – to have been designed to fit the car.

New black cloth sports seats are designed to hold driver and passenger tightly in place when exploring the MAZDASPEED6's serious cornering capability. An alloy pedal set has the benefits of saving weight, looking race-ready and providing enhanced feel for the driver. Scuff plates with stainless steel inserts are fitted on the door sills, and the instrument panel has a unique carbon-fiber-look trim. The door handles are chrome-plated and the power window switches are silver to add to the sporty feel of the cabin. Auto-up and –down operation for all four windows is standard – and the first time such a system has been fitted on a Mazda in the U.S.

The MAZDASPEED6 is available in six unique colors: Liquid Platinum Metallic, Black Mica, Whitewater Pearl Mica, Velocity Red Mica, Black Cherry Mica and Titanium Gray Metallic. Again, the overall effect is of subtle sporting intention rather than in-your-face street racer.

Audiophiles will love the BOSE® seven-speaker 200-watt sound system. Offering an in-dash six-disc CD changer and SIRIUS® satellite radio compatibility for access to more than 120 radio stations, this system provides exceptional clarity.

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The sound system and cruise control can be accessed from controls on the leather-wrapped three-spoke steering wheel and there is leather-wrapping for the gear shift knob and the parking brake handle as well.

Keyless entry with a retractable key is the standard way of accessing the cabin. Automatic climate control air conditioning with a pollen filter is also fitted.

The MAZDASPEED6 comes in two levels of trim: Sport and Grand Touring. To the standard equipment listed above, the Grand Touring adds leather-trimmed seats in either black or a special black-and-white finish, with eight-way power adjustment and adjustable lumbar support for the driver's seat. Both front seats are heated. The Grand Touring can also be specified with an electric tilt-and-slide moonroof.

Also unique to the Grand Touring model is the Mazda Advanced Keyless Entry & Start System, which allows the driver to access the vehicle and start the engine without having to produce a key. Instead, a credit card-sized device simply has to be kept in the driver's pocket. Upon approaching, the car "recognizes" the card and allows the doors to be unlocked – either the driver's door only or all four – and then allows the ignition to be started by the turn of a permanently attached "key" in the ignition. On the off-chance of a System failure, an emergency key is embedded in the card device and can be used in the doors and ignition in a conventional manner.

All models can be fitted with a navigation system and CAL Emissions Equipment.

SAFETY AND SECURITY – NEVER COMPROMISED

Passenger safety and security are key features of every Mazda vehicle.

The MAZDASPEED6 employs MARS (Mazda Advanced Restraint System), which comprises advanced dual front airbags with crash zone and driver's seat position sensors to ensure accurate deployment in the event of an accident.

Dual front side-impact airbags and side air curtains are also fitted as standard, alongside whiplash-reducing front seat headrests. The front safety belts have pretensioners with force limiters and all occupants benefit from three-point safety belts.

Child safety is catered for with child-locks for the rear doors and LATCH system for mounting child safety-seats. An alarm and immobilizer system is standard.

A four-year roadside assistance program is standard with every Mazda. One call to a toll-free number provides roadside assistance 24 hours a day, 365 days a year throughout the United States and Canada. A free loaner car can also be provided in the event a warrantable condition requires the use of alternative transportation.

The MAZDASPEED6 is covered by a comprehensive four-year/50,000-mile warranty that covers every part of the vehicle except those subject to normal wear.

Mazda North American Operations is responsible for the sales and marketing, customer parts and service support of Mazda vehicles in the United States. Headquartered in Irvine, Calif., MNAO has more than 700 dealerships nationwide.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: For more information on Mazda vehicles, visit the online Mazda media center at www.mazdausamedia.com.