

Immediate Release**CALIFORNIA DREAMIN' 2000****Toyota Unveils Celica Convertible Concept at 2000 Los Angeles Auto Show**

Toyota U.S.A. have pushed back the reality of dark wintry skies with thoughts of summer by unveiling a Celica convertible concept at the 2000 Los Angeles Auto Show. Based on the all-new Celica, the convertible concept embodies the free-spirited California lifestyle and fits in with this year's LA Auto Show theme of "California Dreamin' 2000."

The Celica convertible concept was developed in Southern California by Calty Design Research, Inc., Toyota's U.S. styling studio in Newport Beach. Conversion to a convertible required very little design change. A soft-top was installed and the sleek lines that run from the front bonnet adopted in the design of the new rear boot lid. The soft top folds neatly under a hard tonneau cover.

The interior was fashioned to give it a feeling of race car aggressiveness blended with sophisticated style. The centre console shares the convertible's unique blue exterior colour. The seats are upholstered with leather; the fronts trimmed in grey and vivid blue ultrasuede accented with grey pearlised leather. The back seats consist of solid grey leather with grey perforated seat backs over blue fabric. Pearlised grey leather is also applied to the top and bottom of the steering wheel. Well, this is California.

The convertible is powered by a 1.8-liter, four-cylinder DOHC all-aluminium engine that generates 180 horsepower at 7,600 rpm. It utilises variable valve timing and lift, with intelligence control (VVTL-i) to open up a new era of performance from 6,000 rpm to the redline at 7,800 rpm. VVTL-i increases the intake/exhaust lift when the engine speed is high to improve output and fuel efficiency. This engine comes to UK Celica coupes later in 2000.

For enhanced performance and an added look of aggressiveness, the Celica convertible is equipped with 17-inch wheels.

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