

Toyota unveils 'green' sports car

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This combo photo shows two views as Japanese auto giant Toyota Motor unveils the new concept light-weight four-seater sports car "FT-86 Concept" in September 2009. With a low centre of gravity and a special two-litre boxer engine developed by partner Subaru, the rear-wheel drive FT-86 is said to handle like a race car but with less damage to the environment.

Toyota unveiled Tuesday a new lightweight, sporty concept car inspired by an iconic coupe from the 1980s, saying its vision of the future was both mean and green.

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The cherry-red concept car, which will go on display at this month's Tokyo Motor Show, aims to rekindle passion for its Corolla AE86 of the 1980s.

"Everyone thinks sports cars won't sell but there is a huge demand, particularly among middle-aged men who have fond memories of the Corolla 86 and who would like to drive it once again," Toyota engineer Tetsuya Tada said.

"When green cars become prevalent, consumers will choose brands that offer something extra," Tada said at a preview of the vehicle.

Toyota will also display a new version of its electric concept car -- based on its compact Toyota iQ -- at the Tokyo Motor Show, which opens to the public from October 24 through November 4.

The four-seater FT-EV II runs on lithium-ion batteries and has a top speed of more than 100 kilometres (62 miles) an hour.

Toyota, the pioneer of petrol-electric hybrid cars, has said it aims to launch an electric car in the United States by 2012.

"We think the time is almost ripe for cost levels, batteries and performance to evolve one step further," said Akihiro Yanaka, who oversees the FT-EV II project.

The electric concept car, less than three metres (9.9 feet) long, has solar panels on its roof and is designed to be easily recharged at shopping malls or at home.

The Mainichi newspaper reported Tuesday that Toyota and Subaru-

maker Fuji Heavy Industries were considering jointly developing [electric vehicles](#) that could go on sale in the early 2010s. Toyota declined to comment.

Toyota's smaller rival Nissan plans to roll-out the world's first mass-produced electric car next year.

Read also: [The Audi e-tron concept electric car](#)

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