

Spectrum of green cars eye LA auto show crown

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The Chevrolet Volt is shown after being named "Green Car of the Year" at the LA Auto Show in 2010. Five environmentally friendly cars are vying for the crown of Green Car of the Year at the LA Auto Show this week -- each using different fuel or fuel combinations.

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Demonstrating the growing range of options available for motorists wanting to cut their carbon footprint, the shortlist includes all-electric, gas-electric hybrid and natural gas-powered models.

The finalists for the accolade, the winner of which is to be announced on Thursday, are: the [Honda Civic](#) Natural Gas, the Volkswagen Passat

TDI, the Mitsubishi i, the [Toyota Prius](#) V and the [Ford Focus](#) Electric.

"There's all-electric, a diesel, a natural gas and there's a hybrid," said John O'Dell, senior editor at Edmunds.com -- a leading website for car buyers.

"That shows the industry is finally getting to the point where there's some consumer choice in green offerings. When you look at those vehicles, they run the gamut of fuel types, price range and vehicle types," he told the Los Angeles Times.

Last year the annual Los Angeles show's [green car](#) crown went to the 2011 [Chevrolet Volt](#), which beat back competition from Asian rivals including Nissan and Hyundai.

Of this year's finalists, the Mitsubishi and Ford contenders are all-electric; the Prius is a larger version of the popular gas-electric hybrid, the Volkswagen runs on diesel, and the Honda uses natural gas.

"We have some choices," said O'Dell, "and there will be far more choices a few years from now."

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