

Hail to the new NYC taxi; Nissan cab unveiled

April 3 2012, By DEEPTI HAJELA , Associated Press



A prototype of the Nissan NV 200 New York City taxi is off-loaded from a truck, in New York, Monday, April 2, 2012. The iconic New York City taxi has gotten a passenger-friendly makeover from Nissan with low-annoyance horns, USB chargers and germ-fighting seats to cut down on bad odors. Medallion owners will be required to buy the Nissan NV 200 at a cost of about \$29,000 starting in late 2013. (AP Photo/Richard Drew)

(AP) -- In a cab and your cellphone just died? No problem. Just plug it in.

New cabs hitting the streets of New York City next year will have charging ports for riders' electronics. They'll also have more leg room, a large skylight roof to gaze at the city skyscrapers and even odor-reducing and anti-microbial fabric to help deal with, well, you know, anything you might smell in the backseat of a cab.

A prototype of the [Nissan](#) NV200 will be unveiled Tuesday. The model was selected from among three finalists in a city competition.

With a boxy shape and painted a brighter yellow than the city's current taxis, the cab offers a different experience for riders - starting with a flat, hump-less floor that makes shifting from one side to the other a simple task.

City Taxi and Limousine Commissioner David Yassky said busy New Yorkers looking to get from point A to point B would find plenty to appreciate about the rides that get them there.

"New Yorkers are pragmatic but they also appreciate quality. This is a higher-quality [taxi](#) ride than what they're getting today," he said Monday.

The doors on the vehicles slide open, so no more risk of hitting a passing bicycle messenger, and they'll all come with a navigation system, so no more getting lost in the outer boroughs. There are floor lights, to help find anything that may have fallen to the floor, as well as overhead lights for reading. Luggage can go into the cargo space in the rear.

The Nissan van, which beat out proposals from [Ford Motor](#) Co. and Turkey's Karsan, will be phased in beginning in October 2013 as older taxis age out of service. All current taxis, including the city's hybrid cabs, will be off the streets by 2018. Nissan spokesman Steven Oldham said the company would be undertaking a [pilot program](#) with the Nissan Leaf electric car to see if it would be feasible to make the taxis electric in the coming years.

The vehicles will sell for about \$29,000, and will come with the partitions included, Yassky said. Meters and the medallions will be the responsibilities of the buyers.

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