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**Mazda MX-5 named Best Convertible at 2018 What Car? Awards**

* The Mazda MX-5 takes What Car’s coveted Best Convertible title for the third year in succession.
* What Car? Best Large SUV for £27,000 to £35,000 title awarded to the all-new Mazda CX-5.
* From the 1st March the MX-5 convertible range is enhanced with the new limited edition Z-Sport.

The Mazda MX-5 has been named Best Convertible by What Car? for the third year in succession. In a year that sees the MX-5 convertible range grow with the launch of the limited edition MX-5 Z-Sport, Britain’s leading monthly car review magazine has once again honoured the latest generation of Mazda’s iconic roadster.

Commenting on its victory, What Car? Editor Steve Huntingford said, “it takes a special car to win a What Car? Award, let alone win one three years in a row as the MX-5 now has. However, Mazda appears to have hit upon the perfect open-top recipe: from its quick and easy roof mechanism to its hugely entertaining handling and tempting pricing, the MX-5 is easily the best convertible on sale today. It even manages almost 50mpg in real-world conditions.”

The lightest MX-5 since the iconic original, the Mazda MX-5 is shorter, lower and wider than the Mk3 it replaced. With the smallest overhangs and lowest centre of gravity yet, its dynamic proportions and Mazda’s KODO: Soul of Motion styling reflects its focus on driving pleasure in an unmistakably contemporary and dynamic way. Featuring Mazda’s award-winning SKYACTIV technology, the MX-5’s ultra-efficient petrol engines and lightweight chassis ensure that agility and driver engagement is taken to a new level. With prices starting at £18,795, perfect 50:50 weight distribution and more technology than ever before, the MX-5 convertible has firmly re-established Mazda’s dominance of the affordable sports car sector.

Collecting the What Car? Award, Mazda Motors UK Managing Director, Jeremy Thomson said, “We’re delighted that What Car? has once again recognised the MX-5 convertible. This car is our brand icon and it embodies all that is great about our products. Its fun to drive character has strengthened the bond between Mazda and its customers for more than 25 years, and today it’s the ultimate example of how our SKYACTIV Technology and KODO design philosophy help us deliver stylish, spirited and great to drive cars that have the love of driving at the heart of their appeal.”

Adding, “The latest MX-5 has already won over countless keen drivers and with special versions like the forthcoming Z-Sport, we continue to produce distinctive limited edition models that deliver extra equipment and unique styling to create a soft-top roadster that blends exclusivity with the value for money you’d expect of the world’s best-selling two-seater sports car”.

On sale from the 1st March, the new Mazda MX-5 Z-Sport stands out thanks to its deep cherry red fabric hood, 17-inch black BBS wheels, and free-of-charge Machine Grey Metallic paint. Inside, it features Sand Leather seats, plus Z-Sport floor mats and scuff plates.

Exclusive to the UK and limited to just 300 cars, each car comes with an individually numbered Z-Sport plaque on the dash, and thanks to being based on the 2.0-litre 160ps Sport Nav, the £25,595 Z-Sport features a limited slip differential, Bilstein dampers and a strut brace to ensure it has the dynamic excellence to match its sporty exterior looks.

In addition to the MX-5 convertible’s award, the all-new Mazda CX-5 was named What Car’s Best Large SUV in the £27,000-£35,000 price category, while the 2.2 SKYACTIV-D 2WD Sport Nav CX-5 was commended in What Car’s True MPG independent real-world fuel economy testing. “The new CX-5 builds on the strengths of the original, but the interior is nicer, plus there’s more kit inside, and in our real-world MPG tests, the 2.2-litre diesel CX-5 out-performed all of its 2.0-litre rivals, as well as many smaller capacity 1.6-litre rivals,” commented What Car?

With 2018 What Car? awards for two of Mazda’s most successful vehicles, 2018 has got off to a winning start.

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