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Mazda MX-30 e-Skyactiv R-EV wins

Innovation Award at Top Gear Electric Awards 2023

* Mazda MX-30 e-Skyactiv R-EV features a 17.8kWh battery and 830cc rotary engine generator.
* The MX-30 R-EV is offered in three grades, as well as the limited-edition Edition R model.
* Always driven via the electric motor, the MX-30 R-EV series PHEV has a 53-mile pure EV range.

The Mazda MX-30 e-Skyactiv R-EV and its unique rotary generator unit have won the Innovation Award at this year’s Top Gear.com Electric Awards. Having made its European debut at the Brussels Motor Show in January, the unique Mazda MX-30 e-Skyactiv R-EV series plug-in hybrid will arrive in the UK later this year where it will join the pure electric Mazda MX-30 e-Skyactiv in Mazda’s electrified line-up.

A series plug-in hybrid that offers new ways of using a car as a battery electric vehicle, the R-EV has a 17.8KWh battery and a 53-mile pure electric range, while using Mazda’s unique rotary engine technology, the all-new 830cc single-rotor petrol engine acts as a generator to enable longer distance drives without range or charging anxiety. With no mechanical connection between the engine and the wheels, the rotary unit simply acts as a generator, ensuring the MX-30 R-EV always drives via the electric motor to deliver a seamless EV driving experience.

Commenting on the award, Top Gear, Editor, Jack Rix, said: “It might not be connected to the wheels in any way, and yes a successor to the Le Mans-winning 787B would have been nice, but the rotary is back… and that makes us very happy indeed.”

With more than half a century of expertise in the development of rotary engines, Mazda selected the rotary powerplant for this application due to its unique ability to produce the required output from a small, light and easily packaged unit. The rotary engine is placed neatly alongside the generator and high-output motor in the engine bay. The combination of the 17.8kw battery and 50-litre fuel tank create a unique series plug-in hybrid with a flexible total range of over 400 miles, while a WLTP CO2 output of just 21g/km ensures class-leading environmental performance.

Compatibility with both AC charging and rapid DC charging is another benefit, meaning 3-phase AC charging takes around 50mins, while for maximum customer flexibility, DC rapid charging can be completed in around 25 minutes. The Mazda MX-30 R-EV has three drive-modes to suit different driving situations: Normal, EV and Charge, and thanks to a 125kw/170ps output, it delivers slightly better acceleration performance than the 145ps fully electric MX-30.

Available to order now, the Mazda e-Skyactiv R-EV is offered in the same highly specified grades as the all-electric e-Skyactiv MX-30: Prime-Lime, Exclusive-Line and Makoto – while bespoke to the R-EV, the range is topped by the Edition R. Revealed on the Brussels Motor Show stand, this limited edition launch model has stand out features inside and out, and is offered exclusively in the unique colour combination of Jet Black with Maroon Rouge side pillars and a black roof.

With the R moniker standing for ‘return’, just 400 Edition R models will come to the UK to celebrate the return of the rotary engine. The Maroon Rouge colour accent pays homage to the roof colour of the Mazda R360 – Mazda’s first passenger car. Inside, the front seat headrests are embossed with the rotary symbol and Edition R name, while the mats feature the rotary badge and a single white line of 2.6mm stitching matching the width of the rotor apex seal grooves. The same nod to the rotor apex seals can be found on the sculpted sides of the key, which also features horizontal sides that curve at the same angle as the sides of the rotor.

All versions of the Mazda MX-30 e-Skyactiv R-EV feature a rotor badge on the front wings and an e-Skyactiv R-EV badge on the tailgate. Unique wheels differentiate the R-EV: Prime-Line with a dark grey finish and Exclusive-Line, Makoto and Edition R a black diamond cut finish. Prime-Line and Exclusive-Line R-EV models are priced identically to the BEV version, giving customers ease of choice with price parity. Makoto R-EV models demand a small £450 price premium over the pure electric version and at the top of the MX-30 range is the R-EV only Edition R, which is limited to just 400 examples in the UK.

Between the launch of the Mazda Cosmo in 1967 and production of the RX-8 ending in 2012, Mazda mass-produced more than 2 million rotary engines. Adapted to meet the needs of our times the rotary engine is now back being used as a power generator rather than a drive unit. The new 8C rotary engine is a 830cc single rotor with a 120mm rotor radius and 76mm rotor width, its compact size enables coaxial placement and integration with the electric motor, decelerator and generator to achieve a unit with an overall width of less than 840mm, allowing it to fit under the bonnet without changes to the MX-30 body frame.

Thanks to the use of aluminium, the engine is over 15kg lighter than the twin-rotor Renesis engine used in the RX-8. The use of direct fuel injection reduces emissions and increases fuel economy, while the engine also features an Exhaust Gas Recirculation (EGR) system to improve efficiency at low rpm and low load running. With a 50-litre fuel tank the rotary generator allows for long-distance travel without the need for regular fuel station stops.

A 17.8kwh battery was chosen to ensure a enough capacity for a 53-mile electric-only driving range while at the same time considering the environmental impact of the battery over the entire vehicle life cycle. The MX-30 R-EV’s high output 122kw/166ps electric motor can produce up to 260Nm of torque, while the new R-EV retains the same relaxed, accurate and engaging driving experience as the pure-electric MX-30.

The MX-30 e-Skyactiv R-EV features three driving modes: Normal, EV and Charge, however the choice of mode does not affect maximum vehicle speed. Normal mode delivers electric drive as long as there’s enough battery charge. If more power is required than the battery level can deliver - for example, when accelerating - the rotary engine generator will activate based on the degree of accelerator opening and supply the battery with more power. Thus the MX-30 e-Skyactiv R-EV delivers outstanding acceleration performance and ensures drivers can always enjoy the car.

Drivers can turn EV mode on when they want to stay in electric drive for as long as possible. This mode will ensure the vehicle uses electric drive exclusively until the battery is completely drained. It should, however, be noted that if the driver needs to accelerate suddenly and purposefully depresses the accelerator pedal significantly beyond a certain point (equivalent to the kickdown switch function on a standard automatic transmission vehicle), the rotary engine will activate and generate the power needed for the car to accelerate as powerfully as possible.

Charge mode can be used to safeguard the necessary amount of battery for situations such as the need to save zero emissions running for particular urban environments, additionally drivers have the option of setting the amount of battery charge they want to reserve in increments of 10%. The generator will activate when battery charge drops below the specified reserve level, charge the battery to the set level, and maintain that level of charge. Once battery charge is above the set level, the car will operate in the equivalent to Normal mode until the battery depletes to the specified level. It will then use the rotary engine generator to keep the battery at that level.

Commenting on the reveal of the Mazda MX-30 e-Skyactiv R-EV, Jeremy Thomson, Managing Director, Mazda Motors UK, said: I’m really excited about the new MX-30 R-EV joining our electrified line-up in the UK this year. A great example of Mazda’s challenger spirit, thanks to its unique technological approach, it’s a car that’s the perfect solution for customers who want an electric car for everyday usage but the flexibility to undertake longer journeys without the reliance on charging infrastructure. It’s great that Top Gear has recognised this technology with their Innovation Award and we can’t wait to introduce this car to our customers.

Adding, “with the option to choose either the pure electric MX-30 or the new R-EV version depending on their needs, our customers now have even more choice. Whichever version they choose they get the same seamless electric drive experience, engaging handling and first-class cabin, which features unique materials and premium design. It’s the latest example of how Mazda’s Multi Solution Approach ensures we have cars to suit all our customer’s needs by improving environmental performance with a combination of electrification and clever internal combustion engine technologies”.

Already a Top Gear award winner, ahead of its arrival later this year, the Mazda e-Skyactiv MX-30 R-EV is available to pre-order now.

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Further press information is available at [www.mazda-press.co.uk](http://www.mazda-press.co.uk)

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*For further information please contact one of the following:*

Graeme Fudge, PR Director | T: 01322 622 691 | E-mail: [gfudge@mazdaeur.com](mailto:gfudge@mazdaeur.com)

Owen Mildenhall, PR Manager | T: 01322 622 713 | Email: [omildenhall@mazdaeur.com](mailto:omildenhall@mazdaeur.com)

Monique Clarke, Press Officer | T: 01322 622 650 | Email: [mclarke@mazdaeur.com](mailto:mclarke@mazdaeur.com)

Martine Varrall, Press Officer | T: 01322 622 776 | Email: [mvarrall@mazdaeur.com](mailto:mvarrall@mazdaeur.com)

Ref: 230405DRAFT