

Ford Edge Sport To Get Mustang V-6

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DETROIT (AP) — The Ford Edge Sport is getting sportier with a new engine swiped from the Ford Mustang.

Ford Motor Co. said Wednesday that the 2011 Ford Edge Sport — the high-performance version of the Edge, which is one of the country's top-selling mid-size crossovers — will have the same engine as the Mustang sports car. It's the first time the Mustang's 3.7-liter engine has gone into an Edge.

The 305-horsepower V-6 engine will give the Edge Sport 40 more horsepower than the current model — and 41 more horsepower than the V-6 on the Chevrolet Equinox, a close competitor that outsold the Edge in the first half of this year.

But Ford stressed that the 2011 Edge Sport will have the same fuel economy as the current version, which gets 20 miles per gallon on the front-wheel-drive version. That's because the engine is more efficient and Ford has made other fuel-saving changes, including improving the vehicle's aerodynamics and lowering the idle speed.

The Edge Sport has other sports-car touches, including paddle shifters on either side of the steering wheel for shifting gears. The transmission reverts to automatic mode when the paddles aren't in use. The Edge Sport also has new 22-inch forged aluminum wheels, a painted black grille and sport-tuned suspension for a firmer ride.

The Edge Sport also has the industry's first iTunes tagging system, an option that lets customers tap a button if they hear a song they like on the radio. The system captures the song for later purchase on iTunes.

Elaine Bannon, the chief engineer of the Ford Edge Sport, said the bigger wheels and more powerful engine are the kinds of upgrades performance-oriented customers might make on their own. She said her team wanted to make the Edge Sport the Mustang of the staid, family hauling crossover segment. Crossovers are SUVs built on a lower car platform.

Bannon said the Edge Sport, which has been on the market for two years, doesn't make up a big percentage of Edge sales but generates excitement about the vehicle.

"It's the soul of the lineup and gives a glow factor across the lineup," she said.

The Edge Sport goes on sale at the end of the summer. It will start at \$36,220, or about \$9,000 more than the base model Edge.

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Ford also announced Wednesday that the 2011 Edge SEL and Limited versions, which have a 285-horsepower V-6 engine, will have the best fuel economy among their V-6 competitors. They are rated at 19 miles per gallon in the city and 27 on the highway.

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