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35 years of freedom on wheels: Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles presents the future of the model series with the California CONCEPT

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- The concept vehicle for a new generation of the California camper van will receive its world premiere at the Caravan Salon trade fair (25 August – 3 September) in Düsseldorf
- The future generation of the California will continue to be fully produced in Hanover
- The premiere of the first California “made in Hanover” also took place exactly 20 years ago at the Caravan Salon

In 1988, the first California based on the VW Bus (T3) made its global debut at the Caravan Salon trade fair. Exactly 35 years and 260,000 vehicles built later, Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles (VWCV) is once again presenting a world premiere at the industry’s biggest event in Düsseldorf: the California CONCEPT – a look ahead to the future of the model series. The production version of this new California generation will also be built in Hanover from 2024.



The California CONCEPT show car provides an outlook on the future of the campervan from Hanover.

California CONCEPT – everything new so that everything stays the same. For many, the California Beach, Coast and Ocean models are already the epitome of freedom on wheels. With the California CONCEPT, Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles will provide a glimpse into the future of the most successful camper van of all time for all visitors to the Caravan Salon trade fair in Düsseldorf (25 August – 3 September 2023).

Based on the long Multivan, the California of tomorrow is once again unique in its class. Additional innovative ideas also reinforce the dual concept of a van that is ideal for day-to-day use but also transforms into a camper van fit for any adventure in next to no time. After all, it is not just the outstanding driving characteristics of the Multivan launched in 2021 combined with 35 years of experience that make it the ideal camper van for our times: for the first time, the California CONCEPT also offers the advantages of plug-in hybrid technology for even more flexibility and a remarkable level of comfort on the road. It is powerful, economical and stands for future-oriented and responsible mobility with its all-electric range. At the same time, its long-distance suitability provides security when driving away from major traffic routes. It is therefore not just the neighbours on the campsite who will enjoy the hybrid drive as the vehicle glides silently past them. And it goes without saying that



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this camper van will also be "smart". In conjunction with the interactive "Cali on Tour" app, the current California 6.1 is already one of the most advanced vehicles in the segment. The concept vehicle will be presented at the Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles stand in Hall 16 (D52-01).

California – a way of life. The California is more than just a camper van, it is a motoring way of life, an ambassador for freedom. Over four generations, more than 260,000 units of this compact camper van have been sold to date. They all have one important detail in common: the pop-up roof. A tent at a height of almost two metres. And as one secret that can be revealed before the world premiere, that is why the California CONCEPT will of course be on show in Düsseldorf with a pop-up roof.

Looking back – 35 years of the California. The history of the California began in 1988 with a special camper van model based on the T3 generation of the Transporter. Later that same summer, this first California was showcased at the Caravan Salon trade fair (still held in Essen back then). It was available to order in the two colours "Pastel White" and "Masala Red". The interior designers demonstrated their sense of style with the cleanly designed white-grey kitchenette. The camper van cost DM 39,900. The attractive price, clever details and robust technology of the Transporter van immediately made the California a bestseller – 5,000 units were sold already in the first year. In the years that followed, the California evolved from a special model into its own model series, becoming increasingly popular and winning over 22,000 camper van drivers in just three years.

The change from the T3 to the T4 in August 1990 was equivalent to a technical revolution. After four decades of rear-wheel-drive Transporter vehicles with four-cylinder flat engines, the commercial vehicle specialists simply turned everything on its head: They moved the engine forwards and powered the front axle from there. This changed everything: the design, the running gear, the engines and the space available. There was now significantly more space, especially in the rear. And the California T4 made perfect use of this extra room: providing more space to travel than any other camper van of that time. The slogan on the adverts for the market launch was: "Hotel California. A quiet location, comfortable equipment, panoramic views guaranteed", taking its reference from the Eagles song and the West Hollywood hotel featured in it. All in all, the California T4 was yet another hit, selling around 39,000 units by 2003.

The California based on the fifth generation of the Transporter introduced a new dimension of comfort for compact camper vans. However, this California also remained true to the innovative space concept of the original model. By 2015, around 55,000 camper enthusiasts had opted for a T5 California, which had long since become the most successful camper van in its class. Details such as the bed with slatted mattress base integrated into the pop-up roof, the camping chairs stowed in the tailgate, or the camping table clicked into the sliding door gave the California its reputation as the Swiss army knife for campers. The California based on the sixth generation of the Transporter followed in 2015; with its numerous assistance systems, it took sales to a new level: In 2017, the T6 California broke the record of the model series with 15,155 new registrations in one year.

On 30 August 2019, Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles presented the California 6.1 – of course at the Caravan Salon. More than 175,000 California vehicles had been built by this time. The new California 6.1 seamlessly continued the success story of its predecessors. One of its new features was a touchscreen in the roof console, which



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could be used to control all the main camper van settings and call up a wide range of information. On board the California CONCEPT, this display will be transformed into a screen in tablet format and show a new smart side of this camper van. And by the way: no one has ever claimed that a California should have only one sliding door. The Caravan Salon 2023 will certainly be exciting.

Notes for editors: You will find this text along with the pictures [here](#) and at www.vwn-presse.de



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All images:



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"Smart" camping? With the California CONCEPT, of course.

Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles

We Transport Success, Freedom and Future

As a leading manufacturer of light commercial vehicles, the Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles brand (VWCV) is reshaping the transportation of goods, services and people in a fundamental and lasting way. Our vehicles transport construction workers, families and adventurers, bread rolls, parcels and surfboards. Every day they help countless people all over the world to do a good job, they operate as mobile workshops and they bring paramedics and police personnel to wherever they are needed. At our sites in Hanover (D), Poznań (PL), Września (PL) and Pacheco (ARG), around 24,000 employees produce the Transporter, the new Multivan, Caddy, Crafter and Amarok model lines, and since May 2022 the ID. Buzz – the fully electric version of our iconic Bulli. Within the Volkswagen Group, VWCV is also the lead brand for autonomous driving and for mobility offerings such as Mobility-as-a-Service and Transport-as-a-Service - areas in which we are shaping the future of mobility. In this way, the brand is transporting the society of tomorrow with all its requirements for clean, intelligent and sustainable mobility. It is this that Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles stands for with its brand promise: We transport success, freedom and future.

Information on all aspects of the Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles brand and the Hanover site can be found at:



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