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Hold Your Horses: The History of the Deux Chevaux (France's Most Popular Car)

Come See Citroën 2CVs at Lane Motor Museum

May 24, 2007 through October 29, 2007

Nashville TN, March 20, 2007---Lane Motor Museum will showcase France's most popular car during the featured ***Hold Your Horses: The History of the Deux Chevaux (Two Horsepower - Citroën 2CV Exhibit)***. The exhibit offers ten 2CV vehicles with various body styles. They are similar in that underneath them all is a production Citroën 2CV chassis. Regular admission rates will apply to view the featured exhibit.

Citroën has been a large European car manufacturer since the early 1900s. In 1949, they started producing the 2CV. The 2CV was a small-engine, medium sized car designed to provide realistically priced transportation to rural Frenchmen who had little interest or knowledge of motor cars. The engines were air-cooled and the cars were designed to be robust and operate under the most adverse conditions with a minimum of maintenance.

The vehicle suspension was fully independent, interconnected front to rear, and supremely comfortable. Body panels were easily detachable for low cost repairs. Road holding was excellent even by today's standards, and the car offered delights of high-speed motoring at relatively low speeds.

While the 2CV was designed to offer minimal-cost rural transportation, critics claimed it would be a commercial failure. But owners were overwhelmed at the car's qualities – if offered a comfortable ride, it was spacious, and it was economical. The 2CV continued in production until 1990 with almost 7 million cars produced.

Lane Motor Museum will showcase these vehicles during the Citroën 2CV exhibit:

1954 Citroën 2CV (ripple bonnet)

Designers of the 2CV were challenged to build a car that would carry two people and a 250 pound sack of potatoes at a speed of 37 miles per hour. When the 2CV was unveiled at the Paris Salon in 1948, the press found it laughable. Originally 2CVs were only available in grey. Although production exceeded 121,000 units in both 1970 and 1971, Citroën tried to phase out the 2CV. In 1982, they were still turning out 500 cars a day. Even through the 1990s, people preferred the low-priced, older styled model.

1962 Citroën 2CV 4x4 Sahara

Citroën wanted to create a four wheel drive car for use in Africa to withstand the rugged terrain encountered during oil and mineral exploration. Instead of going with a standard configuration, Citroën mounted one engine in the front and one engine in the rear to create four wheel drive. Separate ignition switches control the engines. Citroën 2CVs were made in many variations, and the Sahara is one of the rarest models. Approximately 700 were produced.

1975 Citroën 2CV (Hoffmann Cabriolet)

While Citroën never produced a convertible, several companies were available throughout Europe to convert a stock 2CV into a roadster. This standard 2CV was modified by Hoffmann Design in Germany into a cabriolet.

1964 Citroën Bijou

Citroën's British subsidiary at Slough created the Bijou – giving it the distinction of being the only Citroën designed and built outside France. They used the same platform and mechanical elements as the 2CV. The body is made from fiberglass-reinforced plastic. The Bijou was a commercial failure as it was intended to be faster than the original 2CV. The Bijou did have a slightly higher top speed, but the fiberglass body was 150 pounds heavier than the standard 2CV, making the Bijou slower to accelerate than the standard 2CV. Only 213 Bijous were made.

1968 Citroën Mehari 4x4

Introduced in 1968, the Mehari was a new multi-purpose, all terrain pick-up joining Citroën's family of light, flat twin vehicles. The Mehari was originally designed with a plastic body which prevented corrosion problems and resisted impact. The Mehari was a practical, economical fun car in the newly emerging leisure vehicle and beach buggy market.

1969 Citroën Ami 6

The Ami (the French word for friend) is built on the same chassis as the 2CV. It was designed to cover the gap between the 2CV and the D-series and it filled the demand for Citroën to produce a middle-income, mid-size car. While the Ami utilizes 95% of the mechanical components of the 2CV, it has a very different design and appearance. The most sticking difference is the full-width, reverse-sloping rear window. As well as allowing for a panoramic view to the rear, this raked-back window also helps provide a larger trunk and better headroom for rear seat passengers.

1971 Citroën 2CV Truckette

The Truckette was designed to be a commercial version of the immensely popular 2CV. The mechanical elements of the 2CV were used as the basis for this small truck. Perfect for the streets of urban France where parking is tight and commercial vehicles are taxed by their size. During the 1950s-70s, the Truckette was the vehicle of choice for delivery service. Citroën did not import Truckettes to the United States.

1978 Citroën Dyane 6

Officially announced in 1967, the Dyane was conceived both as a modern version of, and an eventual replacement for, the venerable 2CV. Using the engine, suspension, and chassis of the 2CV, but with a completely new and enlarged body, it truly was a full-blooded member of the "A" series range. Although a better vehicle in many ways, it never achieved the popularity of the 2CV; production ceased in 1983. Ironically the Dyane – the hoped for replacement of the 2CV – had a shorter life than the 2CV.

1981 Citroën 2CV (Yacco replica)

As far back as the early 1930s, Citroën teamed with Yacco, an oil company in France, for endurance testing on Citroën automobiles. By 1950, Citroën introduced the ever popular 2CV. The Yacco special 2CV is a right hand drive replica of a record breaker in the tradition of the earlier endurance testing. Sponsored again by Yacco, a production car was chopped, lightened, lowered, and shortened to compete in the 1953 Bol d'or Race at Monthéry, France. The 'Barbot Special' succeeded in breaking 9 international records – two of which were 12 hours at 90.9 kph (56.5 mph) and 24 hours at 85 kph (52.8 mph).

2002 Burton

The Burton Brothers of the Netherlands established Duckhunt Company in 1993. This company specialized in servicing Citroën 2CVs. With their passion for car design and technology, combined with their love of the 2CV, they designed the Burton and production began in 2000. This car has beautiful lines, careful attention to detail, and the highest quality fit and finish, while using reliable, easily available Citroën 2CV components. The Burton offers superior performance and comfort.

About Lane Motor Museum

Lane Motor Museum showcases approximately 150 unique cars and motorcycles from around the world. Cars on display represent countries from Asia, Europe, and North and South America, and date from 1924 to 2003. Highlights of the Museum include the largest Czechoslovakian vehicle collection outside Europe, microcars, amphibious vehicles, alternative fuel vehicles, competition cars, motorcycles, military vehicles, and prototypes. The Museum also offers a display of automotive art, a special play area for children, and a gift shop.

Lane Motor Museum is open Thursday through Monday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Closed: Tuesday & Wednesday; Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day & New Year's Day. Regular admission is \$5 for adults, \$3 for seniors (55+), and free for children 17 and under. Group rates are available. Lane Motor Museum is located at 702 Murfreesboro Pike just minutes from Downtown Nashville. For more information about the Museum, call (615) 742-7445 or visit the website at www.lanemotormuseum.org.