

New SEAT Tarraco

## This is how you design an SUV

- / **Robust, elegant exterior lines are key elements when designing these vehicles**
- / **Subdued metallic shades are on trend on these large size models as a symbol of elegance**
- / **The new member of the SUV model lineup is decked out with sophisticated fabrics and trim**

**Martorell, 09/09/2018.** - **“It has to be a car that conveys personality, strength and prestige”** was the assignment that SEAT Design director Alejandro Mesonero-Romanos gave to his team. But how do you get a mixture of paints and ground mica to turn into an elegant colour? Or what selection of fabrics makes the interior of a car look sophisticated? Now that the SEAT Tarraco has made its world debut, we discover what is behind the creative process of this kind of vehicle and the keys to what is going to be the company’s new design language:

- **Love at first sight:** 65% of SUV customers base their purchase decision on exterior design. In fact, their lines are one of their characteristic features: **“They’re more aggressive, powerful and imposing”**, says brand exterior designer Xavier Villanueva. The front end is one of the most important parts of the SEAT Tarraco: **“the grille is positioned more vertically compared to other kinds of vehicles. This gives this first large SUV a longer bonnet, and raised robust lines”**, he adds.

- **New challenges for designers:** The passenger compartment of an SUV is comparatively larger than on other models. These new volumes present a challenge to the design team: **“customers look for the right balance between comfort, ergonomics, performance...this is another aspect to consider when designing an SUV”**, adds Daniel Hervás, Interior Design Project Leader at the company. In the specific case of the SEAT Tarraco, adding a floating screen was a challenge for the team: **“despite its dimensions, we have to make sure that the lines of the centre console remain light”**, concludes Hervás.

- **Personality through colour pigment:** **“The size, silhouette and target fully determine the colour range of each model. Each segment features its own colours”**, comments Jordi Font, Head of Color&Trim department. The palette of an SUV has to express **“safety and protection”**. **“It requires subdued or metallic shades, and depending on its size, you can play with features such as a two-tone roof or certain trim elements”**, adds Font. The colour palette of the SEAT Tarraco includes eight shades **“that give it the elegant genes that define its personality”**, he concludes.

- **Dressed for the occasion:** When selecting the trim for SEAT’s largest SUV, designers worked with premium materials: **“we chose melange fabrics, and for the first time, matte chrome trim features that give the car an added touch of sophistication”**, explains Amanda López



from the Color&Trim department. In order to verify the multiple combinations of interior design, they resorted to virtual reality.

- **Virtual reality, the best resource:** Whether it is used to define the interior look, the exterior lines or aerodynamic aspects, this technology plays an increasingly decisive role: **“Before, with the renders, designers could see their work with 60% realism. Thanks to virtuality, that figure goes up to 90%. This helps save a lot of time”**, says Manel Garcés, manager of visualisation at SEAT. Thanks to meetings and working side by side, the Visualisation department offers the necessary tools to optimise the work of the designers: **“In very little time, the interior design team gets a 3D look at what they sketched just minutes before”**, adds Garcés.

- **Four model makers and more than 320 hours:** Despite the use of new technologies, making a clay model is still essential in order to appreciate the life-size dimensions of the new vehicle for the first time. 5,000 kilos of clay was used to shape the Tarraco, and the biggest challenge was to **“control the volumes and proportions of such a large car”**, says Carlos Arcos, responsible for Exterior physical models at SEAT.

- **All pencils down:** The work of the entire department concludes with the freeze design, a resin replica of what will be the final vehicle, and which is then used to approve the lines of the new model. This is the last step in the design process, and from this point on the idea is handed over to the engineers.

SEAT is the only company that designs, develops, manufactures and markets cars in Spain. A member of the Volkswagen Group, the multinational has its headquarters in Martorell (Barcelona), exporting 80% of its vehicles, and is present in over 80 countries on all five continents. In 2017, SEAT obtained an after tax profit of 281 million euros, sold close to 470,000 cars and achieved a record turnover of more than 9.5 billion euros.

The SEAT Group employs more than 15,000 professionals and has three production centres – Barcelona, El Prat de Llobregat and Martorell, where it manufactures the highly successful Ibiza, Arona and Leon. Additionally, the company produces the Ateca and the Toledo in the Czech Republic, the Alhambra in Portugal and the Mii in Slovakia.

The multinational has a Technical Centre, which operates as a knowledge hub that brings together 1,000 engineers who are focussed on developing innovation for Spain’s largest industrial investor in R&D. SEAT already features the latest connectivity technology in its vehicle range and is currently engaged in the company’s global digitalisation process to promote the mobility of the future.

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