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The 2006 Jeep® Commander Is a Modern Interpretation of Heritage Jeep Design

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One look at the new 2006 Jeep® Commander's upright posture and classic lines and you know that its design theme is nothing but pure Jeep. That's because designers reflected on the Jeep brand's six-plus decades of heritage for inspiration.

Design cues were inspired by classic Jeep vehicles such as the Willys Station Wagons (1946 to 1962), the Jeep Wagoneer (1963 to 1991), and especially the Jeep Cherokee (1984 to 2001). While different in many ways, each of these vehicles shared important similarities: taut lines, sharp angles and planar surfaces.

"It was from this incomparable Jeep heritage that an SUV with classic Jeep styling, in an unmistakably modern package, was conceived. Commander is also a dramatic departure from the Jeep Grand Cherokee," said Trevor Creed, Senior Vice President – Design, Chrysler Group.

Rugged Exterior

The exterior design of the 2006 Jeep Commander is simple, bold and purpose-built. Two inches longer and nearly four inches taller than the Jeep Grand Cherokee, the Commander has a real presence without being intimidating.

There are two models: Commander and Commander Limited. Standard on both models is the signature Jeep seven-slot grille – a body-color grille on Commander, chrome on the Limited.

The grille is anchored at both ends by a distinctive quad-headlamp assembly. The stacked headlamps are circular and truncated across the bottom with detailed parabolas. Simulated Allen head bolts in the headlamp module contribute to the feeling and look of precise construction. The technical appearance is repeated in the taillamps as well.

The more upright windshield angle provides a distinctive vehicle with greater interior spaciousness. The Commander's long, clamshell hood is flat, reminiscent of the hood of the Jeep Wrangler. Also upright are the backlight and liftgate at the rear end of the vehicle.

Form follows function in the design of the stepped roof. The roof is raised 3.15 inches to provide more headroom for occupants in the second and third rows. While clearly evident from outside the front of the vehicle, the stepped roof is most appreciated from inside the Commander. Viewed from either side, the stepped effect is concealed by a cleverly designed roof rack rail, standard on all models. The rack's crossbar stanchions are similar to a buttress-style bridge support, and each side rail has three integrated tie-downs.

Exclusive to the Limited are D-pillar assist handles that extend from the roof rail of the vehicle. The handles are black with chrome inserts in the grip area. The assist handles work in conjunction with the black molded-in-color step pad to provide access to the roof rack. The step pad has a diamond-plate texture that provides a rugged, non-skid surface for a person stepping on the rear bumper to gain convenient access to the roof of the Commander.

Completing the Commander's stance are its more vertical body sides and upright side glass. The front and rear doors feature bright chrome body side moldings which are incised with the vehicle name, "COMMANDER."

A New Direction in Interior Design

Commander is the first Jeep vehicle with three rows of seats. Arranged in stadium style, each row is higher than the one in front of it, providing second- and third-row passengers with enhanced forward visibility. The seats are broad-shouldered, giving them an air of formality. Dual-firmness foam helps to keep the seats soft, yet firm enough for long trips or off-road adventures. The second row splits 40-20-40 and the seatbacks recline. The third row splits 50-50

and, to ensure rear passenger comfort, are available with a rear heating and air conditioning system. Both rows fold forward to provide a flat load floor for maximum utility.

The Commander model features cloth seats, with optional leather. The standard seats on the Limited model are premium leather. And, all outboard seats have head restraints.

Helping to open up the vehicle and provide a more spacious feeling are CommandView™ skylights. Located in the roof above the second row, these two fixed, tinted-glass skylights are packaged with the available power sunroof. Each CommandView skylight has a roller shade that can be pulled horizontally to block out light when desired. The Commander is the first Chrysler Group vehicle with CommandView skylights.

Additional utility is provided via the storage bin located in the load floor behind the third-row seats. The top panel of the bin is removable and reversible. One side of the panel is carpeted and level with the third row of seats. The opposite side is molded-in plastic with a diamond-plate texture – designed to stand up to dirty or muddy gear that may accompany an active lifestyle, such as off-roading or outdoor sports. Safely under the bin are provisions for securely storing the jack and tools.

The two-tone color scheme on Commander's instrument panel and interior trim exemplifies the vehicle's attention to interior detail. The upper instrument panel is new, with exposed Allen head bolts contributing to the mechanical, constructed look of the vehicle. They complement the exterior bolt heads incorporated on the fender flares.

The interior design incorporates a series of circular elements. The new gear shift knob of the gated shifter is round, as are the eight air vents, the steering wheel pad, the interior door handles, the grilles that conceal the door speakers, and the four round gauges that grace the simple, clean design of the purposeful instrument cluster. A new "JEEP" medallion dominates the center of the steering wheel and shift knob, with an Allen head bolt design – round, of course – providing additional aesthetic interest.

"The Commander is an excellent example of the value added by design. The attention to detail from a quality, content and design execution has become a hallmark of Chrysler Group's Product Design Office," said John Sgalia, Director – Jeep Design.

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