

Electric vehicles get spotlight at Los Angeles Auto Show

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Tom Doll, President and CEO of Subaru of America, Inc. introduces the 2023 Subaru Solterra EV at the AutoMobility LA auto show Wednesday, Nov. 17, 2021, in Los Angeles. Credit: AP Photo/Marcio Jose Sanchez

Battery-powered vehicles will get top billing at the Los Angeles Auto

Show, which opens this week after a year's hiatus due to the novel coronavirus.

Subaru, which has seen strong sales growth in the U.S. during the past decade, will unveil its first all-electric vehicle, a smallish SUV named the Solterra.

VinFast, a Vietnamese automaker that plans to start selling in the U.S. next year, will show off two all-electric SUVs.

Auto shows have been waning in importance because auto companies have decided to avoid the expenses and unveil vehicles at their own events. Automakers showing new vehicles have only 10 news conferences planned for the L.A. show this year, many from electric vehicle startups. In 2019, the show said it had 25 global reveals from automakers.

But the shows are still big draws for customers in metro areas who want to see what's new, all in one place.

Subaru's Solterra, about the size of a Forester gas-powered SUV, can go about 220 miles (350 kilometers) on a single charge, and will have the brand's trademark all-wheel-drive to go off the road and handle inclement weather.

The automaker says the Solterra's lithium-ion battery can be charged with home alternating current chargers and also has the ability to handle DC fast charging on the road. Its electric motor puts out 215 horsepower.



Attendees take a closer look at the 2023 Subaru Solterra EV at the AutoMobility LA auto show Wednesday, Nov. 17, 2021, in Los Angeles. Credit: AP Photo/Marcio Jose Sanchez

Subaru says the five-passenger Solterra will go on sale sometime next year. The price was not released.

Vietnam's VinFast is introducing the VF e35 midsize and VF e36 large electric SUVs at the show.

Michael Lohscheller, the automaker's global chief executive, said VinFast plans to start taking orders in the spring and delivering vehicles in the U.S. in the fall. Initially the SUVs will be built at a new factory in Vietnam, but VinFast has plans to build a U.S. factory that would start

producing in the second half of 2024. The company currently is looking at sites.

The VF e35 will have a maximum range of 310 miles (499 kilometers) per charge, while the larger e36 will be able to travel up to 422 miles (679 kilometers) per charge, Lohscheller said in an interview Wednesday.

He wouldn't reveal the prices yet.



Karim Habib, head of Kia's Global design Center, introduces Kia's EV9 concept vehicle at the AutoMobility LA auto show Wednesday, Nov. 17, 2021, in Los Angeles. Credit: AP Photo/Marcio Jose Sanchez



Cars from various automakers are displayed at the AutoMobility LA auto show Wednesday, Nov. 17, 2021, in Los Angeles. Credit: AP Photo/Marcio Jose Sanchez



Russell Wager, Vice President of Marketing for Kia America, introduces the Kia Sportage HEV at the AutoMobility LA auto show Wednesday, Nov. 17, 2021, in Los Angeles. Credit: AP Photo/Marcio Jose Sanchez



The 2023 Subaru Solterra EV is introduced at the AutoMobility LA auto show Wednesday, Nov. 17, 2021, in Los Angeles. Credit: AP Photo/Marcio Jose Sanchez



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Tom Doll, President and CEO of Subaru of America, Inc. introduces the 2023 Subaru Solterra EV at the AutoMobility LA auto show Wednesday, Nov. 17, 2021, in Los Angeles. Credit: AP Photo/Marcio Jose Sanchez



Henrik Fisker, Chairman & CEO at Fisker Inc. stands in front of the company's new EV, the Ocean, at the AutoMobility LA Auto Show Wednesday, Nov. 17, 2021, in Los Angeles. Credit: AP Photo/Marcio Jose Sanchez



VinFast CEO Michael Lohscheller introduces the new VF e35 EV at the AutoMobility LA Auto Show Wednesday, Nov. 17, 2021, in Los Angeles. Credit: AP Photo/Marcio Jose Sanchez



Attendees wait for the unveiling of the VinFast VF e35 and VF e36 EVs at the AutoMobility LA Auto Show Wednesday, Nov. 17, 2021, in Los Angeles. Credit: AP Photo/Marcio Jose Sanchez



Toyota's lineup of electric and hybrid vehicles are displayed at the AutoMobility LA Auto Show Wednesday, Nov. 17, 2021, in Los Angeles. Credit: AP Photo/Marcio Jose Sanchez



VinFast Chief Design Officer David Lyon fields questions after introducing the company's new EV, the VF e36, behind him, at the AutoMobility LA Auto Show Wednesday, Nov. 17, 2021, in Los Angeles. Credit: AP Photo/Marcio Jose Sanchez



The new VinFast VF e35 EV is shown at the AutoMobility LA auto show Wednesday, Nov. 17, 2021, in Los Angeles. Credit: AP Photo/Marcio Jose Sanchez



VinFast Chief Design Officer David Lyon, left, walks off the stage after introducing the company's new EV, the VF e36, center, at the AutoMobility LA Auto Show Wednesday, Nov. 17, 2021, in Los Angeles. Credit: AP Photo/Marcio Jose Sanchez



Henrik Fisker, Chairman & CEO at Fisker Inc. at right, shows his company's new EV, the Ocean, at the AutoMobility LA Auto Show Wednesday, Nov. 17, 2021, in Los Angeles. Credit: AP Photo/Marcio Jose Sanchez



VinFast Chief Design Officer David Lyon fields questions after introducing the company's new EV, the VF e36, behind him, at the AutoMobility LA auto show Wednesday, Nov. 17, 2021, in Los Angeles. Credit: AP Photo/Marcio Jose Sanchez



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VinFast, with a U.S. headquarters in Los Angeles, plans to sell vehicles through its own network of stores, with much of the order process done online. Already the company has plans for 60 stores in California alone. It also will have some service centers and mobile service, Lohscheller said.

"We would come to your home and fix it for you," he said.

VinFast is part of Vietnamese conglomerate Vingroup, which is providing capital to expand electric vehicle sales to the U.S. and

eventually Europe, Lohscheller said. VinFast plans to do a U.S. public stock offering for further fund-raising in the next year or two, he said.

The company already is selling cars with internal combustion engines and electric powertrains in Vietnam, he said.

Los Angeles Auto Show promoters say it will have more test-drive opportunities than at past shows, including an indoor electric vehicle test track as well as outdoor test drives.

Press days for the show are Wednesday and Thursday, and it opens to the public from Nov. 19-28.

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