

AUTOMOBILES

Following Latest Riots, Burn-Resistant Cars Become Hot Sellers in France



Patrice de Kay is ecstatic about his new burn-resistant Toyota Land Cruiser

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Following a recent wave of riots in Paris, during which enraged youths set fire to over 1500 vehicles in a single night, area residents expressed frustration that their automobiles were unable to withstand the high temperatures involved. "I paid 50 thousand euros for Peugeot's most rugged off-road vehicle, and for what?" demanded Patrice de Kay, a resident of nearby Argenteuil. "They light the car on fire once and it just explodes? I expect more from a French-built car," he added. Following the incident, he purchased a burn-resistant 2006 Toyota Land Cruiser, and has had no further problems, despite six subsequent riots.

Concerns about burn-resistance have, until recently, fallen on deaf ears in the automotive industry. It wasn't until this year's outcry that Toyota, Ford, GM, Daimler-Chrysler, and Honda, among others, began to offer burn-resistant versions of their already popular models in France. "While the majority of burn-resistant models have been sold in Paris, we have experienced smokin' sales all over France," noted Honda President Takeo Fukui, steam somehow emanating from his forehead.

Industry executives are quick to point out that the cars are only burn-resistant on their exteriors. "We want to caution our French clients not to extinguish their cigarettes or blowtorches on the upholstery or dashboard," noted Charles Marshall, chief of engineering at General Motors.



"If I had only bought the new Ford Salamander, I wouldn't have to wear this retarded flame retardant suit," said NASCAR star Jeff Gordon.

"It would appear that such behavior could expose our clients to undue bodily injury, includ-

ing but not limited to frothing black bubbles of molten flesh searing through their eye sockets, charred clothing and/or brittle wisps of smoldering tooth fragments protruding from oozing lip tissue, blackened knobs of stick-like fingers pierc-

ing into violently gasping rib-cages, not to mention the hell of inhaling our patented vinyl seat cushions as they curl and slough off into still snuffing, steaming nostrils." He added, "Of course, when used responsibly, GM vehicles lead the world in burn-resistance."

In spite of the slightly higher cost for the burn-resistance option, such models are hot-sellers, noted Angela Dobson, head of marketing and sales at Ford. "For a while, we thought that the French would be avid consumers of hybrid vehicles, independent of their exterior ability to stop flame-throwers and Molotov cocktails. However, in recent months, it has become clear to our analysts that the French enjoy the process of combustion, both internal and external, to a far greater extent than we had ever anticipated. However, it is still a mystery how the French themselves seem to also be flame-resistant, considering their long tradition of imbibing flammable liquids with meals while simultaneously taking in excessive amounts of oxygen."

If sales for the month of February are any indication, burn-resistant models will constitute a robust growth area within the French market, with projected sales totaling more than 800,000 vehicles in the next year alone. French officials have conceded that car sales will depend heavily on whether rioters can sustain their rate of car-burning over an extended period. But some residents will be buying the new vehicles on principle. "For me, it's about product quality," noted Sophie Chirac, who plans to buy a flame-retardant BMW after her own Peugeot was suddenly incinerated. "I just can't risk having my mode of transportation go up in smoke."



The new burn-resistant Peugeot Saville can also be driven upside-down.

