

History of the Toyota Avalon By Betsy Bearden

Toyota Motor Manufacturing in Georgetown, Kentucky manufactured its first Toyota Avalon in 1994. Since it rolled off the assembly line, the full-size Avalon has gained the reputation of becoming the flagship sedan for Toyota in the United States and in several other countries worldwide.

The name Avalon conjures the imagination to think of legendary, far away lands where Knights rode on horseback to protect their secret, mythical island from invaders. In fact, Avalon comes from the word Camelot, so it's no wonder its meaning seems magical; even more interesting is Toyota's constant references to royalty and the golden Crown.

The reference to royalty began with the Toyota Crown, which was produced in 1955. Since then, other prevalent models have shared that reference. In 1992, Toyota discontinued making the Toyota Cressida in the United States and the Avalon picked up where the Cressida left off. Cressida is the Greek name for Gold; Camry loosely translates to Crown in Japanese; Corolla and Corona loosely translate to small crown. Truly, a lineup of blueblood royalty, wouldn't you say?

As of 1992 when the Cressida was discontinued in the United States, Toyota used a stretched base from the Camry to design the Avalon. It started out as a front wheel drive, as opposed to the rear wheel drive Cressida that housed a straight inline 6, and the Avalon was given a 3.0 liter 1MZ-FE V6 engine making 192 hp and 210 pound-feet of torque. Since the year of its inception, the Toyota Avalon was the first Toyota model that offered a non-touch screen navigation system.

As of today, the Avalon has a modern, sleek exterior and an upscale interior that leaves you wanting for nothing. From heated and ventilated front seats to a voice activated navigation system, and reclining back seats and flat floorboard for extra legroom. The 2012 Toyota Avalon houses a 3.5-liter V6 rated at 268 horsepower and 248 pound-feet of torque. A six-speed automatic transmission is standard.

It is probably not by chance that Toyota's flagship car was so appropriately named: it is just the kind of car in which modern-day Knights would travel to reach their destination in style. *To Avalon!*

References: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Toyota_Avalon; http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Toyota_Camry