

History of the Toyota FJ Cruiser by Betsy Bearden

Everything old is new again and this is certainly true of the Toyota FJ Cruiser. The FJ Cruiser is a retro version of the classic and beloved FJ40 Land Cruiser that was popular in the U.S. between 1960 and 1984. The Toyota FJ Cruiser first debuted in the U.S. in 2007, along with a TRD (Toyota Racing Development) Special Edition FJ Cruiser for that year.

From the beginning, it was clear to see that this is definitely not an SUV for sissies. This is truly the vehicle that allows you to boldly go where no one has gone before. Solid as a tank, and armed with 260 horsepower and 271 lb-ft of torque, the FJ Cruiser can crawl up a 30 degree angle, eat boulders for breakfast, climb “small” mountains and cross any stream with up to 27.5 inches of water, and has a 5000 pound towing capacity. We are not just messing around, here.

The Toyota Motor Company put a lot of serious time and development into the new FJ Cruiser to make sure it would live up to its earlier FJ40 Land Cruiser predecessors. In 2004, they created development mules (prototypes) and tested the mules in the Mohave Desert, Rubicon Trail, Angeles National Forest, and in Moab, Utah. When 2007 came around, they were ready to roll.

The first FJ Cruisers to hit the streets looked cool, had great on road manners, and muscled-up off road with ease to out perform any other in its class. This coupled with Toyota’s dependability, made it the perfect choice for those longing for the FJ40’s again.

Although the previous years offered the FJ Cruiser in two different models, the 2012 Toyota FJ Cruiser keeps the same iconic look and it offers one trim model. It seats five, and comes with two regular front doors, two half-sized rear-hinged doors, along with standard 17-inch steel wheels, air-conditioning, power windows and locks. To ensure comfortable seating for all types and sizes, it has an eight-way manually adjustable driver seat and a 60/40 split-folding rear seat for hiking, camping, and water-sports gear.

For easy clean up, it offers water-resistant cloth upholstery, and heavy-duty vinyl flooring. There is also Bluetooth connectivity, a six-speaker sound system with a CD player, satellite radio, an auxiliary audio jack, an iPod/USB audio interface and steering wheel controls. Toyota offers a number of packages, along with an off-road package so you can build your own FJ Cruiser to suit.

As far as safety: in crash testing by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, the FJ Cruiser received the top rating of "Good" (the highest possible) in the frontal-offset and side-impact tests.

Every adventurous person wants to own an FJ Cruiser and to be a part of the deeply rooted Land Cruiser history. Climb mountains, cross those streams, and follow every highway that leads you to your dreams in the one vehicle that's tough enough to get you there—the FJ Cruiser.

References:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Toyota_FJ_Cruiser

<http://www.edmunds.com/toyota/fj-cruiser/2012/>