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2012 Fiat 500, 2013 Dodge Dart and 2012 Jeep® Patriot Named to Consumer Guide Automotive's '10 Coolest Cars Under $18,000' List

July 1, 2012, Auburn Hills, Mich. - Consumer Guide Automotive's Daily Drive editors named Chrysler Group LLC's 2012 Fiat 500, all-new 2013 Dodge Dart and 2012 Jeep® Patriot as picks for their "10 Coolest Cars Under $18,000" list.

"We chose cars that were cool to look at—interior and exterior—fun to drive, and reasonably practical," Tom Appel, publisher for Consumer Guide Automotive, said.

Consumer Guide Automotive editors test-drove and evaluated each new car with a base U.S. Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Price (MSRP) under $18,000.

The 2012 Fiat 500 topped the list as the coolest car under $18,000.

"The 500 makes its mark as a maneuverable, fun-to-drive, economical city runabout with a fistful of character," Rick Cotta, managing editor for Consumer Guide Automotive, said.

The Fiat 500 caters to a new generation of Americans who want their vehicle to be as engaging, individualized, ecologically responsible and technologically savvy as they are. With its city-friendly four-passenger size, engaging driving dynamics, fuel-efficient 1.4-liter MultiAir engine and standard state-of-the-art BLUE&ME™ Handsfree Communication technology, the 2012 Fiat 500 offers a driving and ownership experience unique in the marketplace. And, with 14 available exterior paint colors, two interior environments and 14 unique seat color and material combinations, every new 2012 Fiat 500 will be distinct.

Coming in as Consumer Guide Automotive's No. 2 pick is the all-new 2013 Dodge Dart.

"Chrysler knocked Dart's cabin out of the park and into the upper deck," Ed Piotrowski, editor for Consumer Guide Automotive, said.

With an available fun-to-drive 1.4-liter MultiAir Turbo engine, great ride and handling characteristics compliments of the Alfa Romeo-based chassis, innovative interior style featuring high-quality materials, splashes of color--like Ruby Red and Citrus Peel--and cool technology not found in the segment, like the available class-exclusive 8.4-inch Uconnect Touch Screen and 7-inch thin film transistor (TFT) customizable gauge cluster, as well as class-leading safety features, such as 10 standard air bags, and innovative style including available class-exclusive LED "racetrack" taillamps and integrated dual exhaust, the 2013 Dodge Dart sets a new standard in the compact car segment.

Also making the list at No. 10 is the 2012 Jeep Patriot.

"Allowing you to say you drive a Jeep is reason enough," Cotta said.

The 2012 Jeep Patriot, the best-priced compact sport-utility vehicle (SUV) in America, offering consumers segment-leading 4x4 capability and excellent fuel economy, aggressive exterior styling, clever interior features and unsurpassed off-road capability with the Freedom Drive II system. The 2012 Jeep Patriot is unmistakably a Jeep, designed to appeal to compact-SUV buyers who want traditional Jeep styling with best-in-class off-road capability at an affordable price.

“We are honored to have three of our vehicles featured on Consumer Guide Autmotive’s list,” said Reid Bigland, President and CEO – Dodge Brand and Head of U.S. Sales. “Not only do we strive to provide quality products that are both visually appealing and cost-friendly, but we also aim to create vehicles that are fun-to-drive.”

For more information about Consumer Guide Automotive’s “10 Coolest Cars Under $18,000,” visit their new Daily Drive blog site at http://cgdailydrive.com/hey-kbb-heres-our-list-of-the-10-coolest-cars-under-18000/.

About the 2012 Fiat 500 models

Building on the attributes that made the original version an icon more than 50 years ago – the 2012 Fiat 500 models provide an entirely new generation of drivers with the best of Italian motoring: craftsmanship, style and safety, combined with fun-to-drive small-car efficiency.

Expanding on the qualities that have made the original Fiat 500 (Cinquecento) a timeless and efficient automobile, the 2012 Fiat 500 Cabrio (500c) adds open-air freedom and even more driving enjoyment.

With its all-new 160 horsepower 1.4-liter MultiAir Turbo engine, the recently launched Fiat 500 Abarth is designed for track-day enthusiasts and driving purists who want the ultimate high-performance small car with the pedigree of an exclusive Italian exotic. The Fiat 500 Abarth offers track-tuned suspension and brake systems, race-inspired design, and technology features not traditionally included on a small car.

The 2012 Fiat 500 and 500c Pop models have a U.S. MSRP of $15,500 and $19,500, respectively, while the Fiat 500 Abarth has a MSRP of $22,000 (excluding destination).

About 2013 Dodge Dart

The new Dodge Dart hits the mark with a modern, unmistakable Dodge design which features great exterior proportions and unmistakable Dodge cues like the “racetrack” taillamps and signature front grille. The exterior not only looks good, but delivers world-class aerodynamic performance along with an agile, fun-to-drive experience on the road. The Dart is the first Chrysler Group vehicle built on Fiat Group architecture; it’s based off of the award-winning Alfa Romeo Giulietta.

Interior comfort and style are on target for drivers and passengers with a modern blend of precision craftsmanship, exciting bursts of color and more interior roominess than some mid-size sedans. The new Dodge Dart offers drivers thousands of ways to personalize their car with 12 exterior colors, 14 interior color and trim combinations, three fuel-efficient engines, three transmissions, seven wheel choices and six trim levels. The all-new 2013 Dodge Dart offers the interior room of some mid-size sedans, class-leading safety, state-of-the-art technology and unmistakable style starting at a U.S. MSRP of just $15,995 (excluding destination).

About the 2012 Jeep Patriot

As the best-priced SUV in America and with segment-leading 4x4 capability, the Jeep Patriot combines the packaging and interior flexibility of an SUV with the performance, handling, fuel economy and price of a compact car. Many standard safety features, such as all-row side-curtain air bags and electronic stability control (ESC), add to Jeep Patriot’s tremendous value. The Jeep Patriot has a starting U.S. MSRP of $15,995.

The 2012 Jeep Patriot offers an array of clever features consumers will appreciate whether commuting to work, exploring new trails or out-of-the-way places or driving in challenging weather condition. A Uconnect® media center with iPod interface, SiriusXM Satellite Radio, navigation with SiriusXM Travel Link, power sun roof, a premium audio system with nine Boston Acoustic speakers, articulating liftgate speakers, illuminated cup holders and fold-flat rear seats are some of the available cool features that make the 2012 Jeep Patriot the perfect compact SUV, enabling drivers and passengers to enjoy any adventure.

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