

CURVY ROADS WITH BILL BY PRESIDENT BILL WILLIS

I want to wish everyone a Happy and Healthy New Year. Circle your calendar and plan on signing up for the Pittsburgh International Auto Show on February 17-20, 2012. Please e-mail me at bwillis@westpennmiataclub.com with the time you will be able to attend. The following time slots are available (two people per time slot).

- Friday, February 17, 2012: 11:00 AM - 2:00 PM, 2:00 PM - 5:00 PM, 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM
- Sunday, February 19, 2012: 2:00 PM - 6:00 PM
- Monday, February 20, 2012: 2:00 PM - 6:00 PM

Interesting Article from Edmunds: What's New for 2012

The 2012 Mazda MX-5 Miata now features stability and traction control as standard on all models.

Introduction: The 2012 Mazda Miata shows you don't need to invest in a high-dollar sports car to enjoy spirited performance. When the Miata debuted more than 20 years ago, it quickly established itself as a driver's car that was affordable to buy and inexpensive to own. The little roadster is now in its third generation, and it remains as appealing as it was back when it was first launched. One of the Miata's hallmarks is its steering, which excels at being communicative and responsive to input. Handling is a joy; the car's sharp reflexes and composed demeanor in turns make sinuous canyon roads a very special treat. Add to the mix an engine that loves to rev and what you get is a recipe for visceral driving excitement. It's also easy to live with, from a soft top that's easy to operate to a ride that's comfortable enough for daily commuting. This small sports car's only significant downside is a trunk that's too small to provide meaningful utility. In the end, if smiles per mile is your primary metric, the MX-5 Miata is the undisputed leader of the pack. Decades after its initial appearance, it continues to deliver performance thrills at a price that's attainable for the common man.

Body Styles: In Sport trim, standard features include 16-inch cast-aluminum wheels, a vinyl convertible top with a glass rear window, air-conditioning, cloth seats, a six-speaker sound system with a CD/MP3 player and an

auxiliary audio jack, a height-adjustable driver seat, a leather-wrapped steering wheel and power windows and mirrors. The Touring model adds 17-inch alloy wheels, a shock tower brace for the front suspension, foglights, cruise control, power door locks, keyless entry, an auto-dimming rearview mirror, a trip computer, a six-CD changer, steering-wheel-mounted audio controls and a leather-wrapped shift knob. The Grand Touring steps up with the choice of a black or beige cloth top, automatic climate control, leather upholstery, heated seats, a seven-speaker Bose audio system and silver interior accents. The PRHT models are identically equipped. Most options are grouped in packages. Sport models can be equipped with the Convenience package that includes most of the Touring upgrades (this package is standard in Miata Sport models with automatic transmissions). Touring and Grand Touring models can enhance the Miata's already nimble handling with the Suspension package, which includes a sport-tuned suspension with Bilstein shocks and a limited-slip differential (only available with a manual transmission). The Grand Touring qualifies for the Premium package that features keyless ignition/entry, xenon headlights, Bluetooth and satellite radio. An Appearance package adds a unique front spoiler and extended rocker sills.

Powertrains: The 2012 Mazda Miata is powered by 2.0-liter inline-4 engine that produces 167 horsepower (158 with the automatic transmission) and 140 pound-feet of torque. Sport models come standard with a five-speed manual transmission, while Touring and Grand Touring models come with a six-speed manual transmission. All models have the option of a six-speed automatic with shift paddles on the steering wheel. In Edmunds testing, a Miata with a five-speed manual transmission sprinted from a standstill to 60 mph in a reasonably quick 6.9 seconds. Fuel economy is about average, with an EPA-estimated 22 mpg city/28 mpg highway and 24 mpg in combined driving for the five-speed manual.

Safety: Antilock disc brakes and side airbags are standard, along with stability and traction control. In Edmunds braking tests, various Miata models turned in stopping distances from 60 mph between 110 and 116 feet, which are very respectable numbers for a sports car.

Zoom, zoom zoom!





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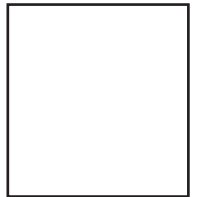
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