

Magnificent Mazda MX-5 RF headed for Mzansi

By  Ané Theron

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The Mazda MX-5, also known as the Miata overseas, is Mazda's greatest success story, and the best-selling roadster of all time. Not only is it gorgeous to behold, bucket loads of fun to drive, and basically the most enjoyment you can have without a top; it is also highly acclaimed, having won over 280 automotive awards worldwide. The MX-5 is 2016's World Car of the Year, and won the title of World Car Design of the Year as well.

I had the pleasure of testing the MX-5 a few months ago (read my review called '[Mazda MX-5 is medicine for the mid-life](#)'). But the big news is that Mazda has just started producing what I think will eventually outsell the soft-top roadster, namely the devastatingly handsome MX-5 RF, or Retractable Fastback.



The RF features a hard, three-piece power retractable roof, that leaves the rear buttressed section in place once fully opened. In other words, the front and middle roof sections are stowed together with the back window glass in the space behind the seats. As a result, luggage volume, at 130 litres, is the same as that of the 'regular' MX-5. The fully automatic system will enable the roof to open and close at speeds of just under 10 km/h. You have to watch the video to witness the harmony.

Production started 4 October at their Ujina plant near Hiroshima, with models bound for the European and North American markets, where sales will start early 2017.

The MX-5 is around 40 kg heavier than the soft-top version, and therefore power steering and suspension had to be tweaked for optimum ride and handling. Concerted efforts were made to reduce noise, vibration and harshness levels. The metallic paint is also new and RF-specific. By using three coats of the 'Machine Grey Paint', an ultra shiny and 'truly metallic look' was made possible.



South Africans can start their financial planning so long, because the magnificent MX-5 RF will hitting our shores in the first half of 2017.

ABOUT ANÉ THERON

Ané Theron started her career in motoring journalism at Rapport, and moved over to City Press after a few years, before settling into a full time career at AutoTrader SA. She's at her happiest driving along twisty coastal roads, or crawling across rugged terrain in a beefy 4x4, or driving through the desolate Karoo. And taking photos along the way, of course.

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