

# RX-8

## Prescription for Boredom!



AFTER AN EIGHT-YEAR HIATUS, Mazda has rekindled its rotary-engine design in the 2004 RX-8. This long-awaited addition to the rotary family is the latest generation in a long (and fast) sports car heritage.

### ■ What does the RX stand for?

RX stands for “Rotary Experimental.” Mazda coined the term in the early '60s when it began to develop an engine that was smaller, quieter and more efficient than a traditional piston-driven engine. The RX rotary engine has a rotor that orbits around a fixed gear, which does the same work as pistons with much less effort. And thanks to a few modifications to this new-and-improved rotary engine, the RX-8 is 20 percent more fuel efficient.

### ■ I need a car that has enough “giddyup” to impress my friends, but enough room to hold more than just one of them.

Then the RX-8 is right up your alley, pardner. The new four-door design (yes, a sporty four door – who

would've thought?) takes the same performance of its RX-7 predecessor and doubles the seating capacity. Thanks to rear-hinged “suicide”-style doors, the RX-8's back seat can comfortably fit two of your drooling comrades. And with 247 horses under the hood, make sure they bring a towel.

### ■ I'm in! How can I locate others who share my newfound passion for the RX-8?

The Internet, of course. A Web site – [www.rx8forum.com](http://www.rx8forum.com) – was created by Mazda fanatics to share their enthusiasm about the car. This is definitely not your father's “Rotary” club.

### ■ The last time Mazda produced an RX was 1995. Is anyone even going to recognize my new RX-8?

They will if they've been to the movies recently. A special edition version of the car was featured in the box-office hit, *X2: X-Men United*.

### ■ I can't afford a car that's been in a movie.

I don't know what sort of shape your

finances are in, but I can tell you that the six-speed production model comes in at under \$27,000 – a very reasonable price for a car that compares favorably with other four-seaters, such as the \$38,000 Infiniti G35 Coupe. It's also a deal considering its ancestry – Mazda rotary achieved worldwide fame by winning the 1991 24-Hours of Le Mans.

### ■ How long is the engine going to last? I don't want to get stranded six months from now.

Lucky for you, Mazda's rotary design is extremely durable. Past RX engines have been known to go upward of 150,000 miles before needing repairs. Fortunately, the low-maintenance engine means you can worry about other things: like how to turn the local business loop into a Le Mans course of your own. 🏎️

*Writer/intern Andrew Sroufe is a student at Ohio University. His professors wish Mazda would design him to be quieter and more efficient.*