



Micra and motorsport: what is new Nissan hatchback's surprising link to world-class racing?

- Tyre development team includes ex-F1 driver Stefano Modena
- The Italian racer calls the new Micra... "a very agile car that gives the driver great confidence"
- Specially developed Bridgestone tyres offer optimum combination of grip, handling and braking performance
- Nissan Micra a shortlisted finalist for European Car of the Year 2017
- Watch Stefano Modena test drive the new Nissan Micra here <https://youtu.be/jmgBjCqVBis>

Stefano Modena competed in more than 80 Formula One Grands Prix, and in 1989 famously stood on the Monaco podium with legends Ayton Senna and Alain Prost. So what does a man who is comfortable at 300 km/h drive after he has finished racing? Perhaps surprisingly, the answer is the all-new Nissan Micra.

The new supermini's agile handling and secure driving feel is due in part to its Bridgestone tyres, which have been developed with the help of the ex-F1 racer.

The Italian driver finally hung up his race overalls in the year 2000 and joined Bridgestone as a full-time product development driver three years later. He is part of the tyre-testing team which worked with Nissan to achieve the performance required from the new Micra.

Together they set about finding the optimum combination of grip, braking performance, weight, fuel economy and handling.

Stefano commented: "Nissan has been very demanding of Bridgestone for this new Micra, which is a great thing because it means it had very clear goals for the dynamic performance of the car. We really worked very hard to fulfil its requirements, and I believe we have."

He competed in F1 from 1987-92, driving for the highly respected Brabham, Tyrrel and Jordan teams. As well as his third place at Monaco, the highlight of Stefano's career was a second place finish in the 1991 Canadian Grand Prix behind Nelson Piquet. A successful stint in various European touring car championships followed.

Stefano continued: "I first drove the new Micra more than a year ago and I was very surprised because it reminded me of a go-kart – very precise steering, very stable. That was only a prototype, now it's even better. It's a very agile car that gives the driver great confidence."

Working in conjunction with the team from Nissan's Technical Centre Europe (NTCE) in the UK and Spain, and the engineers from Bridgestone's Technical Centre Europe, thousands of kilometres of testing were done at Bridgestone's European Proving Ground near Aprilia, Italy.

The result is a compact hatchback which is positioned right at the core of the B-segment. The all-new Micra is agile and exciting to drive, with a trio of quiet and responsive engines providing the perfect balance of comfort and performance for the driver.

The efforts of Stefano, Bridgestone and the Nissan development teams have already been recognised, as the Nissan Micra is a shortlisted finalist for European Car of the Year 2017.

The Micra is available with 16-inch and 17-inch wheels, both of which are included in the car's extensive personalisation program. This allows customers to select from a wide range of optional extras for the exterior and interior of the Micra.

Kazuyuki Yamaguchi, Chief Vehicle Engineer for the new Nissan Micra, commented: "Having someone like Stefano Modena involved has been fantastic, helping us to deliver an exciting and confident drive on the new Micra. His knowledge, experience and feedback has been invaluable in creating a car that sets new standards for B-segment hatchbacks."

The new Micra is available to order now through Nissan retailers.

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Notes for editors

Tyres from Michelin and Continental are also fitted to the new Nissan Micra in some markets on some trim levels. The performance targets for all tyres are identical.

Jeigu turite klausimų, kreipkitės kontaktais nurodytais žemiau:

Yarrow Richard

Tel+44 (0)7966 507759

richard.yarrow@nissan.co.uk

McLennan Steve

Steve.McLennan@nissan.co.uk

<https://newsroom.nissan-europe.com/lt>