



Kia Motors America, Inc. | Alex Fedorak  
111 Peters Canyon Road | 949.468.4813  
Irvine, CA 92606  
Kiamedia.com

**KIA DEBUTS 2009 OPTIMA AT NEW YORK INTERNATIONAL AUTO SHOW**

***Midsized Sedan Receives Refreshed Styling, New Engine***

- Redesigned exterior and interior establishes Kia's distinctive, aggressive new look
- New engine packs powerful punch without sacrificing fuel economy

**NEW YORK, March 20, 2008** – Kia Motors America (KMA) today globally unveiled the 2009 Optima midsize sedan at the New York International Auto Show. On sale in early fall, the refreshed Optima offers a completely modified exterior, which offers a more aggressive, dynamic style than previous models, and is outfitted with a new engine that provides more power and better fuel economy. For 2009, Optima also is larger than its predecessors, which complements its distinctive new styling and separates itself from other vehicles in the growing midsize segment.

“Optima is in a strong position to change the way consumers think about midsize sedan offerings,” said Tom Loveless, vice president, sales of KMA. “Already known for its exemplary quality, safety and value, Optima’s sleek new redesign provides consumers with a sporty, fuel-efficient choice and showcases Kia’s commitment to providing the best all-around vehicle package.”

**Exterior Excitement**

The 2009 Optima is presented with new front, side and rear styling cues, which build upon Kia’s philosophy of creating dynamic vehicles that evoke passion. The fog lamps and lower front grille have been enlarged and the headlamps narrowed to create an aggressively sharper look. Wider side garnishes add sportiness while the acute front lines continue toward the back, ending on a distinctly edged trunk lid. To complete the redesigned rear fascia, taillights are narrowed to enhance Optima’s sleeker cosmetic appearance.

Also, new for 2009 is the addition of the sporty SX trim, which complements the handsomely-equipped, value-priced LX and luxury-oriented EX trims. Already available with Kia's Rio, Rio5, Spectra and Spectra5 models, the SX line provides another dimension for Optima buyers looking for a sportier midsize. Along with a sport-tuned suspension, SX upgrades include: a black-bezeled front grille and headlamps, LED outside-mirror turning signals, fog lights and hyper-silver-finished 17-inch wheels. EX and LX V6 models are equipped with 16-inch alloy wheels, and are fitted with Goodyear tires.

The 2009 Optima's overall length also increased, extending nearly two inches in the front and one inch in the rear, to an overall length of roughly 189 inches. The larger proportions enhance the exterior styling for a lower, leaner, more powerful stance. All other dimensions, including wheelbase, remain unchanged.

### **Efficient, Powerful Engine**

Available in two powerplants – a 2.4-liter four-cylinder or a 2.7-liter V6 engine – and two five-speed transmissions (manual with LX four-cylinder model only), the 2009 Optima introduces a new engine under its hood. When redesigned as a 2006.5 model, the peppy four-cylinder engine delivered 161 horsepower, a 15-percent increase from the previous generation. For 2009, a more powerful 2.4-liter engine takes its place, producing an additional 13 horsepower. Optima's four-cylinder output increases to 175 horsepower and 169 lb-ft of torque. The available 2.7-liter V6 engine remains a carryover but output has increased to 190 horsepower and 184 lb-ft of torque. The V6 is mated to a five-speed, gated automatic transmission. All automatics feature Sportmatic™ clutchless shifting.

The introductions of Dual Continuously Variable Valve Timing (CVVT) and a Variable Intake System (VIS) further enhance Optima's new under-the-hood excitement. These added systems improve the vehicle's fuel economy without sacrificing power.

Built on a unibody frame, the front-wheel-drive Optima utilizes independent front and rear suspension systems. MacPherson struts are used in the front with a multi-link layout in the rear and are joined with coil springs and anti-roll bars (standard equipment on all models) to engage drivers with responsive handling and provide utmost comfort whether the road is smooth or less than ideal.

### **Interior Refinement**

The style makeover continues into the Optima's cabin with expanded electronics melded with refreshed fascia patterns and color schemes. Based on a new platform, the standard audio system features MP3 compatibility, a USB port and SIRIUS satellite radio capability in addition to an auxiliary jack, which was added to 2008 models. An optional in-dash navigation system also is an Optima first.

The rest of the center fascia and floor console receive minor tuning for even more intuitive operation whereas the new barrel-type instrument cluster design adopts a sporty red illumination. Optima continues to offer two seat trims in gray or beige color schemes – cloth (LX), leather (EX) – with black leather trim on SX models, which also features aluminum trim, metal sport pedals and a Supervision meter cluster.

Amidst the host of additional options, Optima still offers an array of standard features. The LX is equipped with air conditioning, power windows and door locks, an AM/FM/CD audio system with six speakers, cloth seat and door trim, a six-way adjustable driver's seat and four-way adjustable front passenger seat as well as 60/40-split folding rear seats. EX models upgrade to a leather-wrapped steering wheel with tilt and telescopic functions, leather seat and door trim, leather-wrapped shift knob, automatic temperature control, an auto-dimming rearview mirror featuring Homelink<sup>®</sup> and an eight-way power adjustable driver's seat. Convenience and Premium Packages offer further content upgrades, including a power sunroof and an Infinity<sup>®</sup> audio system.

### **Safety-Minded**

As with the rest of the Kia line-up, the 2009 Optima is equipped with many safety features as standard equipment. This includes six airbags (dual advanced front and front-seat mounted side as well as full-length side curtain), front active headrests, side-impact door beams, height-adjustable front seatbelts with pre-tensioners and force limiters, three-point seatbelts for all seating positions, Lower Anchors and Tethers for Children (LATCH) and a Tire Pressure Monitoring System (TPMS). The Electronic Stability Control Package adds Electronic Stability Control (ESC), a Traction Control System (TCS), brake assist and four-wheel anti-lock brakes.

### **Competitive Warranty**

The 2009 Optima is covered by Kia's comprehensive warranty program, which offers unprecedented consumer protection. Included in this program are a 10-year/100,000-mile limited powertrain warranty, a five-year/60,000-mile limited basic warranty and a five-year/100,000-mile anti-perforation warranty. A five-year/60,000-mile roadside assistance plan also is part of the comprehensive vehicle coverage.

### **About Kia Motors America**

Kia Motors America (KMA) is the sales, marketing and distribution arm of Kia Motors Corporation based in Seoul, South Korea. KMA offers a complete line of vehicles through more than 640 dealers throughout the United States. For 2007, KMA recorded its 14<sup>th</sup> consecutive year of record U.S. sales. Kia Motors subscribes to a philosophy of building high value, high quality, safe and dynamic vehicles. Kia Motors prides itself on producing vehicles that are exciting and enabling and evoke the Kia tagline "The Power to Surprise."

Kia Motors America is the "Official Automotive Partner of the NBA." Information about Kia Motors America and its full vehicle line-up is available at its Web site – [www.kia.com](http://www.kia.com). For media information, including photography, visit [www.kiamedia.com](http://www.kiamedia.com).

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