

Visit to SEAT

Just like ‘Charlie in the SEAT factory’

- / A British boy who is a devoted SEAT fan fulfils his dream of visiting the company’s headquarters in Martorell
- / Designers, engineers and several employees are impressed with the level of understanding of each model by a 7-year-old child

Martorell, 17/06/2016. - **“Just like Charlie in the SEAT factory”**. This is how Jasper’s mother describes her 7-year-old son’s experience while on his dream visit to the SEAT headquarters in Martorell to witness first-hand how the cars that fascinate him so much are designed and manufactured.

Ever since he realised that his family’s car was a SEAT, Jasper has dedicated himself to poring over the brochures of each model, and despite his tender age, finding out everything he can about the features, performance and technology of the brand’s entire range. In light of his fascination, his mother Karen Cowan decided to reach out to SEAT to arrange a visit to a company showroom near their home in England.

But to her great surprise she received a call from SEAT to invite them to visit the company’s headquarters in Martorell, outside Barcelona. **“We couldn’t believe it!”** admits Karen, who is still overwhelmed. And that is how the Cowan family set out on a trip to Barcelona and the Martorell factory became a treasure box for Jasper.

A team of designers are waiting for the youngster and his family at the main entrance of the Design Centre. Jasper runs over to greet them and asks **“Were you the people who created the Alhambra and Leon models?”** Once inside, Tony Gallardo, one of the designers, explains the process they follow to create a car. Jasper pauses in front of a life-size clay model of a vehicle: **“Why is it made out of this material?”** he asks in surprise as he runs his hands over it. **“This way we know the real dimensions and can make any necessary modifications to it”**, says Tony.

On the other side of the Technical Centre, in the Bodyshop, Jasper watches in amazement as over 2,000 robots assemble a line of cars. **“Jasper, look how that robot turns!”** exclaims Karen. **“Wow, this is incredible!”** says Jasper as he stares wide-eyed at all the technology



surrounding him. **“I’m pleasantly surprised by the level of the questions he’s asking us”**, admits Javier Rivera, who is responsible for the Bodyshop.

“This makes me believe that the world is becoming a more friendly place, and a more educated and welcoming place for people with visible and invisible difficulties”, says Karen. As if he had just come out of an amusement park, or as his mother said, the famous chocolate factory made popular by the Tim Burton film, Jasper is quick to admit **“I’ll never, ever forget this day in my whole life”**.

SEAT is the only company that designs, develops, manufactures and markets cars in Spain. A member of the Volkswagen Group, the multinational has its headquarters in Martorell (Barcelona), exporting more than 80% of its vehicles, and is present in over 75 countries. In 2015, SEAT’s turnover amounted to over 8.3 billion euros, the highest in its history, and the company achieved worldwide sales of more than 400,000 units for the first time since 2007.

SEAT Group employs more than 14,000 professionals at its three production centres – Barcelona, El Prat de Llobregat and Martorell, where it manufactures the highly successful Ibiza and Leon. Additionally, the company produces the Ateca and the Toledo in the Czech Republic, the Alhambra in Portugal and the Mii in Slovakia.

The multinational has a Technical Centre, which operates as a knowledge hub that brings together 1,000 engineers who are focussed on developing innovation for Spain’s largest industrial investor in R&D. SEAT already features the latest connectivity technology in its vehicle range and is currently engaged in the company’s global digitisation process to promote the mobility of the future.

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