

The wellness centre for cars

- Located in the paint workshops of the SEAT factory in Martorell, this exclusive 'spa' has everything from a thermal circuit to pressure jet booths
- Each car is pampered by 1,100 workers and 200 robots for 6 hours
- 9 immersion pools prep the bodywork and protect it from corrosion
- The chassis is pressure sprayed with 2.5 kg of paint
- A scanner and over 50,500 photos guarantee the surface quality

Martorell, 28/04/2020. Wellness centre, cubicles with pressure jets, sauna and all sorts of treatments... It has every service typically found in the most exclusive spa resorts. The only difference is that this one is for cars and is located in the 2B, 4 and 5 workshops at the SEAT factory in Martorell (Barcelona). Every car body undergoes a beauty ritual in the paint area for 6 hours to ensure the best colour outcome before taking to the road.

A thermal circuit in the workshop. The ritual begins in the immersion pools, a facility covering more than 51,500 m² and with 314 workers and 32 robots at the service of each car. Here they are immersion washed nine times, alternating with another five sprinkler rinses, and sealants are applied. **“This is how we protect the bodywork from corrosion and eliminate the risk of water infiltration and even noise, by using soundproofing sprays”**, explains Javier Pérez, the head of Paints at SEAT.

Like in a Finnish sauna. All of the treatments applied to the cars, both in the immersion baths and in the other areas of this unique spa, are followed by drying and setting processes. That's why the ovens are key, and there are six throughout the entire painting phase. **“Each stage requires a temperature of between 45 and 180 degrees, and lasts between 30 and 35 minutes”**, points out Javier.

The colour ritual. And now the car is ready to enter workshop 5: 119,500 m², 587 workers and 175 robots dedicated solely and exclusively to beautifying the bodywork. The first thing is to choose a shade from a broad colour palette. **“Colours are becoming more sophisticated and customisation is a definite trend”** says Jordi Font, of SEAT's Color&Trim department. The Arona, for example, has more than 68 possible combinations, and the new Leon has a hard time deciding between such exclusive shades as Magnetic Grey, Desire or Emotion Red, Nevada White, Mystery Blue or Midnight Black.

Paint therapy. Whereas in other spas the power of pressurised water jets is used as a therapy, here they are used to paint. Specifically, two and a half kilos per car. It is sprayed in booths that are rigorously equipped for this purpose, with a ventilation system that prevents even the tiniest speck of dust from entering, and at a temperature of between 21 and 25 degrees. 84 robots do all the spraying. They apply a total of seven layers, each as thin as a hair but at the same time as hard as a rock. **“We aim to achieve an excellent visual appearance that is also very durable over time”**, concludes Javier.

Chromotherapy against impurities. This is the last of the treatments, the one that verifies that all the others delivered flawless results. Under a red light, the vehicle slides through a scanner where no fewer than 50,568 photos are taken in 43 seconds by 28 cameras that capture 42 images per second. All to check the bodywork to within a millimetre and make sure there are no flaws or imperfections. After their visit to the wellness centre for cars, they are ready to go on the road and show off their true colours.

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), exports 81% of its vehicles, and is present in more than 75 countries. In 2019, SEAT sold 574.100 cars, the highest figure in its 70-year history, posted a profit after tax of 346 million euros and a record turnover of more than 11 billion euros.

In 2019, SEAT allocated 1.259 billion euros to accelerate its investment programme, mainly for the development of new electrified models. In addition, and as part of its commitment to decarbonisation, it invested 27 million euros in sustainable initiatives and is working on an ambitious environmental strategy, called Move to Zero, which aims to make Martorell a zero-carbon footprint plant by 2030.

SEAT employs over 15,000 professionals and has three production centres – Barcelona, El Prat de Llobregat and Martorell, where it manufactures the highly successful Ibiza, Arona and Leon. Additionally, the company produces the Ateca in the Czech Republic, the Tarraco in Germany, the Alhambra in Portugal and the Mii electric, SEAT's first 100% electric car, in Slovakia.

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