**KIA BRINGS FOUR HAND-BUILT CONCEPTS TO SEMA TO GIVE A GLIMPSE INTO THE FUTURE OF ‘THE AUTONOMOUS LIFE’**

*Brand Re-imagines Four Models – Niro, Sedona, Sorento and Soul – as Self-Driving Machines*

* Each Kia custom-built vehicle explores active and diverse lifestyles ranging from sports to entertainment to business travel
* Telluride full-size SUV concept makes first appearance at SEMA

**LAS VEGAS, November 1, 2016** – Kia Motors America (KMA) today unveiled four all-new customized vehicles at the opening day of the 2016 Specialty Equipment Market Association (SEMA) Show. Envisioning a future when vehicles will not only drive autonomously but be tailor-built to our lifestyles, each concept sparks the imagination of what could be just around the corner.  Also making its SEMA debut is the Telluride full-size hybrid SUV concept that was first unveiled early this year at the North American International Auto Show.

“Over the course of our 22 years in the U.S. market, we’ve watched with pride as our vehicles have helped people live their active and diverse lifestyles,” said Michael Sprague, chief operating officer and executive vice president, KMA.  “This year’s SEMA show gives us the opportunity to ponder what the future of living the autonomous life may one-day resemble.”

A total of five custom vehicles are showcased in Kia’s booth at SEMA, each eschewing what we normally ask of our day-to-day vehicular needs to blaze a thought-provoking trail of imagination and fun.

**Niro Triathlon[[1]](#endnote-1)**

Any elite athlete will admit it’s a long, lonely road to the top and triathletes know that better than anyone else. All-night runs, bike rides across remote country and swims through dark waters make training for a triathlon a truly isolating experience. Kia’s autonomous Niro Triathlon offers refuge in a cabin designed to relax and recharge while also providing top-notch training and safety equipment.

-more-

Custom built by the master craftsmen at LGE-CTS Motorsports, the 2017 Niro hybrid has been transformed into a true crossover-utility lifestyle vehicle. Removal of the roof from the D-pillars back creates a small bed and allows for the custom bike rack, tool box and tablet computer mount. The Felt IA 2 road-racing bike can be easily removed or locked in place for repairs or transport. The ONEU safety laser bike lane light mounted to the rear illuminates a laser LED road behind the vehicle and the athlete can easily monitor speed, time and distance covered via the tablet while the Niro autonomously keeps pace. The tablet can also be attached inside the vehicle for entertainment or performance analysis while the Niro effortlessly drives the athlete home or to the next competition. Riding on a 2-inch lowered suspension, the Niro Triathlete is shod with 265/35R-18 Dunlop Direzza sport tires and lightweight 18-inch Method Rally Race wheels.

Removal of the passenger-side B-pillar facilitates easy entry into a cabin designed for comfort and efficiency. The back door has been modified to open on a rear-pivot hinge while the front door has been redesigned to open wider than a stock Niro, allowing the doors to open a full 90 degrees. With no reason to drive, the athlete is cosseted in an ultra-comfortable Human Touch zero gravity ergonomic reclining chair. Numerous custom cabinets hold essential supplies, attire and parts, and a portable shower allows for a quick post-race clean-up.

**School of Rock Sedona1**

One of the most intriguing aspects of the autonomous life is the safety aspects associated with removing the possibility of human error when behind the wheel. This is especially true when children are involved and Kia imagines a world when vehicles will someday autonomously transport our young ones to accommodate their busy lives.

Partnering with School of Rock, the leader in performance-based music education, Kia turned over a Sedona minivan to LGE-CTS, set a creative session with all the concerned parties and the School of Rock Sedona gig van was born. This rolling recording studio features everything aspiring musicians crave: a studio, a place to chill and a completely hands-free way of transporting the band to the next gig. The stunning hand-painted School of Rock imagery hides the strong bones of the IIHS Top Safety Pick+ and NHTSA 5-Star rated Sedona so parents can be assured their kids will make it to the show safely and with more than 180 locations, School of Rock plans to hit the road in style to perform at various shows with their talented musicians.

-more-

Significant enhancements to the Sedona include the removal of the driver-side B-pillar, steering assembly and gear selector. This makes room for a digital mixing board and dual flat-screen monitors to record tracks. Front-mounted near-field speakers pump out the tunes and when a track is being laid down, the RECORDING light mounted to the roof illuminates. Vocalists will appreciate the boom mic that hangs from the ceiling. Sound-studio-quality acoustic foam panels line the interior to reduce exterior noise during an intense recording session. Should the band decide to host an impromptu roadside show, the Sedona’s lift gate flips open to reveal an imposing stack of amps. There is also storage on the roof for guitars, bass guitars and a myriad other instruments. Fun and comfortable custom bean bags allow the band members to relax or jam in style.

Layered on a base of candy red are contrasting white tan and black accents. The School of Rock logos and music-inspired icons are hand painted. While no modifications were made to the suspension, the School of Rock Sedona rides on flat-black painted 20-inch Vossen VFS-6 wheels that are wrapped in aggressive Toyo Proxes 255/45R-20 tires.

**Sorento Ski Gondola1**

Taking the idea of a sport-utility vehicle to new heights – literally and figuratively – this custom Kia Sorento was built by LUX Motorwerks to tackle snow and ice as it gets you and your fellow skiers up to the top of the mountain for another run. The luxurious and self-driving Sorento Ski Gondola is all about climbing to higher ground in style, comfort and warmth.

Dominator Rubber Tracks powdercoated orange make this gondola a go-anywhere cold-weather machine. A custom metal roof rack supplies ample storage for skis and poles while the cargo area provides abundant space for boots, bags and other gear, all easily accessible thanks to the removal of the B pillar and the rear doors being converted to suicide-style doors. Up front, the Sorento’s headlights were painted black, silver and orange and LED light bars were installed for increased visibility in all conditions.

The Sorento Ski Gondola’s interior has been upgraded with custom door panels, dash and center console, which houses a personalized tablet. The interior has also been given a reboot of black and orange leather to compliment the orange and PPG Silver Metallic paint of the Sorento’s exterior. Throughout the interior the floor was given a durable waterproof Line-X treatment to protect against the ice and snow that may find its way inside.

-more-

**Soul First Class1**

The Soul First Class is an upscale inter-city chariot that lets business travelers work and relax as they journey to out-of-town meetings and destinations. This self-driving custom-built creation from LUX Motorwerks – with its rear-facing seats, absence of steering wheel and wide array of luxury enhancements – is about optimizing work and rest amid the hectic schedule in one’s professional life.

Eliminating the need for a driver, the Soul First Class has a revamped front dash which now houses two rear-facing front seats. The Soul’s passengers are then greeted by a 40-inch Samsung LED TV connected to a Mac mini computer system and premium audio speakers throughout. A custom motorized center console reveals two tablets, which control this futuristic Kia. To match the first-class electronic system is first-class comfort with white and gray leather with diamond stitching throughout the cabin, and modern gray wood flooring to match.

The Soul’s exterior brings about the same level of luxury as the interior with PPG Lux Blue paint and modified upper and lower grilles with LED lighting. The 19-inch Rotiform Monoblock CCV wheels bring a modern vibe to the car’s exterior and round out the complete autonomous vehicle inspired overhaul.

**Telluride Concept**

Glimpsing a future that is grounded in reality but not bound by the present, the Telluride, a striking three-row, seven-passenger, luxury hybrid SUV concept features a modern and upright shape, muscular stance, and state-of-the-art technology to care for its occupants.  Purely conceptual, the Kia Telluride is based on an existing platform and reveals the brand’s interest in potentially offering a premium SUV positioned above the current hot-selling Sorento.

-more-

Telluride’s front doors and rear-hinged back doors swing open 90 degrees in opposing directions, creating an expansive and inviting portal into the panoramic interior space and revealing a technological showcase.  Four beautiful black-leather captain’s seats appear to float within the spacious cabin in front of a folded third-row bench.  The large cabin allows the middle seats to recline nearly flat and include large fold-away footrests for sublime comfort.  All four seats include a series of precise diamond-cut openings in the seatback, each embedded with Smart Sensors to capture a passenger’s vital health information.  Once obtained, these vitals are displayed on the interior door panel screens, which then systematically synchronize with a Light Emitted Rejuvenation (LER) system.  The LER system utilizes a massive, wing-shaped LED panel mounted beneath the oversized sunroof that displays a pattern of therapeutic light to treat desynchronosis (jetlag) and improve the passengers’ energy levels.

Telluride’s interior and exterior were penned at the brand’s California-based studio, Kia Design Center America (KDCA).  Finished in Dark Pyrite green paint, the tall stance is amplified by the overall size of the vehicle.  At 70.9-inches tall, 79.1-inches wide and 196.9-inches long, Telluride is 4.4-inches taller, 4.7-inches wider, and a sizable 9.5-inches longer than the current Sorento.  Underpinning the Telluride is a modified Sorento chassis with a wheelbase stretched 11.9 inches to 121.3 inches, giving Telluride a dominating presence.  It’s modern and muscular appearance is accentuated by flared fenders stretching around massive 22-inch five-spoke wheels wrapped in Hankook® Ventus ST 275/45R22 tires.  Telluride’s front fascia incorporates a much larger version of Kia’s signature tiger-nose grille, and its menacing face brings an attitude all its own with recessed quad-LED headlamps, pronounced horizontal LED indicator lights, and an aggressive polished-metal skid plate below the bumper.  In the rear, thin vertical taillights align with the modern design language of the SUV, while consistent styling cues across the front and rear door handles, hood scoops and dual exhaust tips enhance the vehicle’s solid appearance.

-more-

**About Kia Motors America**

Kia Motors America (KMA) is the marketing and distribution arm of Kia Motors Corporation based in Seoul, South Korea KMA proudly serves as the "Official Automotive Partner" of the NBA and LPGA and set an all-time annual sales record in 2015, surpassing the 600,000 unit mark for the first time in company history. Kia offers a complete line of vehicles in the U.S., including the rear-drive K900[[2]](#endnote-2) flagship sedan, Cadenza premium sedan, Sorento CUV, Soul urban passenger vehicle, Soul Electric Vehicle[[3]](#endnote-3), Sportage compact CUV, Optima midsize sedan, Optima Hybrid, the Forte compact sedan, Forte5 and Forte Koup, Rio and Rio 5-door subcompacts and the Sedona minivan, through a network of more than 765 dealers across the United States. Kia’s North American manufacturing operations include plants in West Point, Georgia\*, and the municipality of Pesqueria in the state of Nuevo Leon, Mexico.

Information about KMA and its full vehicle line-up is available at [www.kia.com](http://www.kia.com). For media information, including photography, visit [www.kiamedia.com](http://www.kiamedia.com).  To receive custom email notifications for press releases the moment they are published, subscribe at [www.kiamedia.com/us/en/newsalert](http://www.kiamedia.com/us/en/newsalert).

**\* The Sorento and Optima GDI (EX, SX & Limited and certain LX Trims only) are assembled in the United States from U.S. and globally sourced parts.**

# # #

1. Custom vehicles built specifically for SEMA show. Not available for sale. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. K900 available in select trims and in select markets with limited availability. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Soul EV in select markets with limited availability. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)