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FIRST GLANCE

A Crossover for Maturing Boomers



Phot

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Toyota

The Toyota FT-SX concept.

By **NICK KURCZEWSKI**

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Introduced on Monday: Toyota FT-SX design study

What's the point? Add this one to the long list of crossover vehicles here in Detroit, a class best described by what they are not - not sedans or S.U.V.'s, and trying very hard not to be minivans or station wagons. Toyota executives describe the FT-SX as a "reward vehicle" for empty nesters.

Is it real? The FT-SX is purely a concept vehicle, but some of its styling touches may show up in a future Toyota Highlander.

The company line: "The FT-SX concept is lower and wider than an S.U.V., yet taller, more comfortable and

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more versatile than a sedan" - Kevin Hunter, vice president, design and studio activities at Caltex, Toyota's California design studio

The view from here: Toyota's concept crossover breaks little new ground in the increasingly crowded market for these do-all vehicles, though the chubby styling and horizontal-bar grill are something of a departure for staid Toyota. Aside from a clever split-opening rear hatchback, the FT-SX is as sensible as a new pair of Buster Browns.

What makes it tick? Toyota refers to the engine only as a "powerful" V-6.

How much? How soon? No production plans are scheduled for the FT-SX.

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