

## NAIAS 2014 - Audi Allroad Shooting Brake Concept

This Audi Allroad Shooting Brake concept car from NAIAS 2014 is the perfect car for Wagon Wednesday.

Audi solidifies its place as my favorite German brand with cool concept cars like this. It's striking, it's functional as a wagon/hatchback, and the Allroad Shooting Brake is also incredibly efficient. According to the press release provided at NAIAS, the hybrid drivetrain produces 300 kW of power. That's 402 horsepower, just so we're clear here. Not only that but it also returns 1.9 l/100km - or 123 miles per gallon US.



Shooting brakes aren't especially common here in the United States. It's interesting that Audi chose to debut this car here in Detroit, because historically, wagons haven't been very popular here. That's unfortunate, because this car is beautiful.

The angular Audi nose is striking. The headlights look aggressive and muscular without being off-putting. From the side, the Allroad Shooting Brake is athletic and exciting. It shares an unmistakable lineage with the rest of the Audi lineup, but the new headlights add to its aggressiveness. Audi says that they were going for a design language that signified "concentrated energy." I'd say they succeeded.

The body of the Allroad Shooting Brake is made of advanced materials. The skin is composed of aluminum and CFRP - carbon fiber reinforced polymer. These materials help reduce weight, and thereby increase fuel efficiency. You don't have to drive something as bland as a Prius to get decent gas mileage, if Audi's concept is any indication for their future product lineup. Even the wheels are made of CFRP, which helps to eliminate unsprung weight. Total vehicle weight comes in at 3,527 pounds.



Despite its beauty, the powertrain - which was alluded to earlier - is the most intriguing part of the Allroad Shooting Brake. Its hybrid drive system with electric motors produces approximately 480 lb-ft. of torque, which helps propel the car from 0-60 mph in just 4.6 seconds. Just a few years ago, those were Corvette numbers. Now they're coming to wagons (shooting brakes, technically) near you. Thanks to its staggering fuel economy, the Allroad Shooting Brake has a driving range of 509 miles. If you're keeping score, the 123 mpg rating means that the gas tank holds approximately four gallons.

The Allroad Shooting Brake has an interesting drive layout, too. If you'll notice on the nose of the car, you can see Audi's "quattro" trademark just at the bottom of the grille opening. That signifies AWD in Audi world, but this is no standard all-wheel drive. There are two electric motors on this car in addition to its 2.0 liter gasoline unit. The one works the same way that a traditional hybrid would, powering the front wheels.



A second electric motor is mounted to the rear axle. At low speeds it supplies power to the rear wheels to aid in its rapid acceleration. However, if the car's computer deems it necessary or beneficial, the second electric motor can come on and make the car into an electrically powered all-wheel drive system. Thus, the Allroad Shooting Brake is essentially an eTrain quattro.



The batteries linked to this electric hybrid system can store 8.8 kWh of energy. That's enough for a 50km (~31 mile) range of all-electric driving when driving in EV mode. If the driver selects Hybrid mode, the rear electric motor still powers its wheels, and often the front motor functions as an engine-driven generator to continue producing power for the rear motor. In Sport mode, though, all of the propulsion modes in the Allroad Shooting Brake concentrate on putting power down to the pavement.

So what do you think? Would you drive it? I sure would. It's gorgeous, it's efficient, and it's fast. Sure, the two door shooting brake form factor might not be as functional as a standard 4-door wagon, but sometimes one must sacrifice for one's art. I want it.