

WILL Vi

"Madame, your carriage awaits."

*Jun Yasumatsu,
Project Manager*



Meant to Move You

Targeted at young women in their 20s and early 30s, Will Vi is a 4-door compact runabout designed for getting around, shopping, or just hanging out with friends. With its distinctive, pared-down styling that combines a modern feel with several nostalgic features, the Will Vi is above all a vehicle for personal relaxation and enjoyment.

WILL

Planting the Seed

In 1997, Hiroshi Okuda, at that time the president of Toyota Motor Corporation, established a venture start-up within the Toyota organization specifically to develop and market new vehicle concepts aimed at the Japanese youth market. This firm within a firm has taken a radically different approach. In addition to developing its own sales and distribution channels separate from the Toyota dealer network, the Virtual Venture Company (VVC), as it is called, has teamed up with several other major Japanese manufacturers to create a new, consumer lifestyle concept, called "WILL."

A New Departure

In August 1999, Toyota and four other major Japanese manufacturers—all from different sectors of industry—announced that they were cooperating on a joint consumer lifestyle marketing project in Japan. Designed to generate radically fresh ideas and develop novel sales, marketing and distribution methods, this project is centered around the new WILL concept. Under this concept, each manufacturer will develop and market a series of products, the common theme being that they should all resonate with modern Japanese youth consumer lifestyles. In specific terms, products should appeal to the young spirit with its love of fun and desire for the real thing. VVC has developed the WILL Vi based on this philosophy.

A Design that Shouts "Me!"

The WILL Vi is an example of VVC's insistence on creating a vehicle feel in line with the WILL concept. Once the results of the consumer design testing had established which steering wheels, external designs, internal fittings, and alternative color schemes potential users preferred, no compromises were made on the quality.

By focusing on the owner and exuding a strong sense of stylish individuality, the WILL Vi is designed to appeal to those who are confident about who they are and what they like. Compact, yet spacious enough inside to accommodate up to five people, its interior has been designed as a place where you can relax on your own, or with friends.

Simplicity is Beauty

The vehicle's design was guided by a "Simplicity is Beauty" philosophy, and designers and engineers were adhered closely to this model in their approach. Rather than create a large number of possible variations and options, they set out determinedly to make the WiLL Vi a single unisex package, by applying the principle of keeping what was good and eliminating anything extraneous from the design. "Everything a driver would want is already standard," explains Mr. Yasumatsu. "The beauty of the vehicle is in its simplicity." In fact, the vehicle's simplicity preempts superfluity; the only available options are for the audio system or the roof-type—conventional hardtop or canvas convertible.

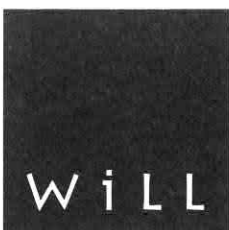
Playing the Angles

Several elements stand out within the overall body design. First, compared with the smooth monofrom bodies of most modern vehicles, the WiLL Vi is a three-dimensional wonder. It almost looks like it has been teleported in from a past age when cars were a group of molded plates bolted together. Formed by the piecing together of several planes to create expressive angles, the vehicle's exterior has a solid, relief-like feel. The most striking aspect of the exterior design is the rear passenger door, which forms an acute angle with the roof. The wrap-around rear doors, hidden C-pillar and distinctive cut-in effect created by this design are what give the vehicle its appearance of a carriage.

The carriage motif extends to the four corners of the vehicle as well. The wheels, placed as close to the vehicle's corners as possible, combined with the prominent blister fenders, emphasize the vehicle's stability and create an aura of solidity.

Hitting a Funky Groove

To add yet another dimension to the exterior's distinct planes, sets of parallel grooves were embossed on the side panels, front hood and trunk top. The hubcaps, steering wheel and instrument panel continue the motif, adding to the vehicle's overall funkiness.



WILL Vi

While indisputably funky, the WILL Vi still manages to embrace the ideals of symmetry and simplicity throughout. The vehicle's front face and rear face, for example, are nearly identical. The interior is purposely plain and symmetrical. This sparseness is also somewhat reminiscent of vehicles at the turn of the century. The natty, externally-hinged trunk, for example, subtly compliments the vehicle's simple, retro feel.

Hangin' Out on the Sofa

The emphasis in the interior design of the WILL Vi was very much on choosing materials that would be reassuring to the touch. Overall, the designers sought to create a calming, friendly, graceful atmosphere for the interior that anybody riding in the car would find instantly relaxing. The interior coloring reflects this design philosophy completely; various earth tones help to create a comfortable, natural space.

Much like you would never place furniture wall-to-wall in your home, the designers of WILL Vi wanted to balance the vehicle's "furniture" (its instrument panel, seats, trim, and so forth) with its "walls" (the interior chassis). For this reason, rather than feeling encapsulated by a conventional interior, occupants feel as if they are hanging out in their home—or maybe even as if wearing a favorite sweatshirt.

A New Canvas of Opportunities

The optional canvas roof is designed to appeal to those with a love of freedom and old-style, simple technology. Manually operated, it folds up and back, then ties down when open. The space above the car thus created is expansive, substantially enhancing the sense of personal freedom. Parked under a clear night sky with the roof open and the seat back, the WILL Vi offers you a refreshingly different perspective, whether you're an astronomer or a romantic.

W i L L V i

A Zippy Powertrain

The WiLL Vi's engine is as innovative a powertrain as the vehicle itself. The all-aluminum cylinder block and plastic intake manifold keep the weight down. A VVT-i system has been fitted to the valve intake to increase fuel economy. In addition, a number of other features, such as an offset crankshaft, have been added to boost fuel economy. An aluminum oil pan with improved sealing characteristics reduces noise and vibration, making the ride more pleasant.

The WiLL Vi boasts one of the world's lightest automatic transmissions. Operated by a column-shift gear lever, it delivers a quick response and a smooth transition throughout the gears, ensuring an eminently pleasurable driving experience.

