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Wednesday, August 31, 2005



Strut, LLC

Strut's Monterey Collection for the Cadillac XLR includes upper and lower front grille inserts as well as a rear deck badge.

Soup it up
'Jewelry' helps grilles stand out

For a few thousand dollars, drivers can add a stainless-steel, custom look to their wheels.

By Larry Edsall / Special to The Detroit News

Ever wonder what the Dodge Magnum might look like without its crosshair grille? You don't have to guess. Strut LLC, the Corona, Calif.-based maker of "jewelry collections for your car," has introduced its handcrafted, triple-chromed stainless-steel grille for the aggressively styled Dodge wagon.

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Since jewelry often is offered as a "collection," Strut's Atlanta Collection for the Magnum includes the woven, crimped mesh front grille with Strut badging, as well as a lower air intake grille and a chromed Strut insignia for the rear hatch, all for \$3,700.

Strut previously offered collections for BMW's 7 Series, the Range Rover, Hummer H2, Cadillac Escalade, Chrysler 300C and Lincoln Navigator.

Strut also offers a Monterey Collection for the Cadillac XLR, the ultra-luxury, high-performance, retractable-hardtop roadster that shares much of its underpinnings with the Chevrolet Corvette, but adds such Cadillac exclusives as a Northstar V8 engine. Priced at \$5,000, the Monterey

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Collection includes upper- and lower-front grilles as well as a Strut "shield" for the trunk lid.

This fall, Strut will unveil its collections for the new Dodge Charger.

Strut emerged from a company that used to make billet aluminum automotive grilles that sold for around \$100. That company was purchased by a high-end, home-audio speaker company that switched its automotive aftermarket business from aluminum to stainless steel and hired Sergio Luna, a graduate of the famed Art Center College of Design, to create this automotive jewelry.

For those who want a more custom look, Strut will design personalized vehicle badges -- for \$1,000 or more.

Visit the company's Web site at www.strutwear.com, or call (951) 371-9220. Strut's exclusive Detroit area sales and installation location is Detroit Custom Concepts of Sterling Heights. The shop's Web site is www.detroitcustomconcepts.com, or call (586) 978-9455.

Larry Edsall is a Phoenix-based freelance writer. You can reach him at (602) 300-4518 or ledsall@cox.net.

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