



*Thunderbird Sports Roadster*

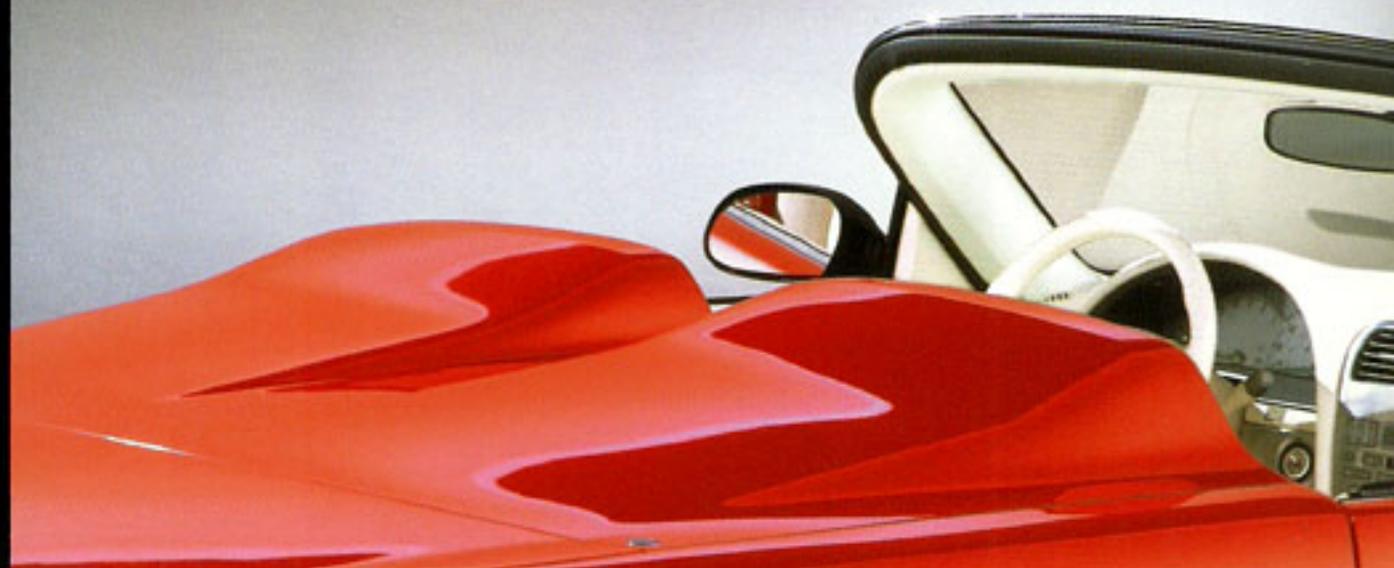
*Ford Motor Company*



*Thunderbird*







## FORD UNVEILS AN AMERICAN BEAUTY IN THUNDERBIRD SPORTS ROADSTER CONCEPT



As the 2002 Thunderbird arrives on the scene, Ford is adding to the drama with a new concept – the Thunderbird Sports Roadster – to pique the interest of auto show-goers.

The Thunderbird Sports Roadster concept is a modern automotive portrayal of an era rich in American culture and spirit. The concept's design was inspired by the 1962 Ford Thunderbird Sports Roadster and echoes design cues reminiscent of the "Bullet Birds" of the Sixties.

"Thunderbird is one of the most time-honored icons in automotive history," says J Mays, Ford vice president of Design.

"There's a strong emotional connection to the early Thunderbirds. The new Thunderbird concept has rekindled those emotions."

This ongoing emotional connection inspired Ford designers to create yet another Thunderbird derivative that emphasizes excitement and freedom. Thunderbird is a celebration of automotive heritage, and the Sports Roadster concept represents fresh ideas and the versatility of a great nameplate.

The new Sports Roadster concept is another step in the evolution of the modern Thunderbird.

The tonneau completely covered the rear seats and raised the deck of the car to meet flush with the tops of the front bucket seats.



## AN IMAGINATIVE PAST



Through the course of its original four decades on the market, Thunderbird design moved from sporty two-seat roadsters to large, luxury four-door sedans and just about everything in between. The

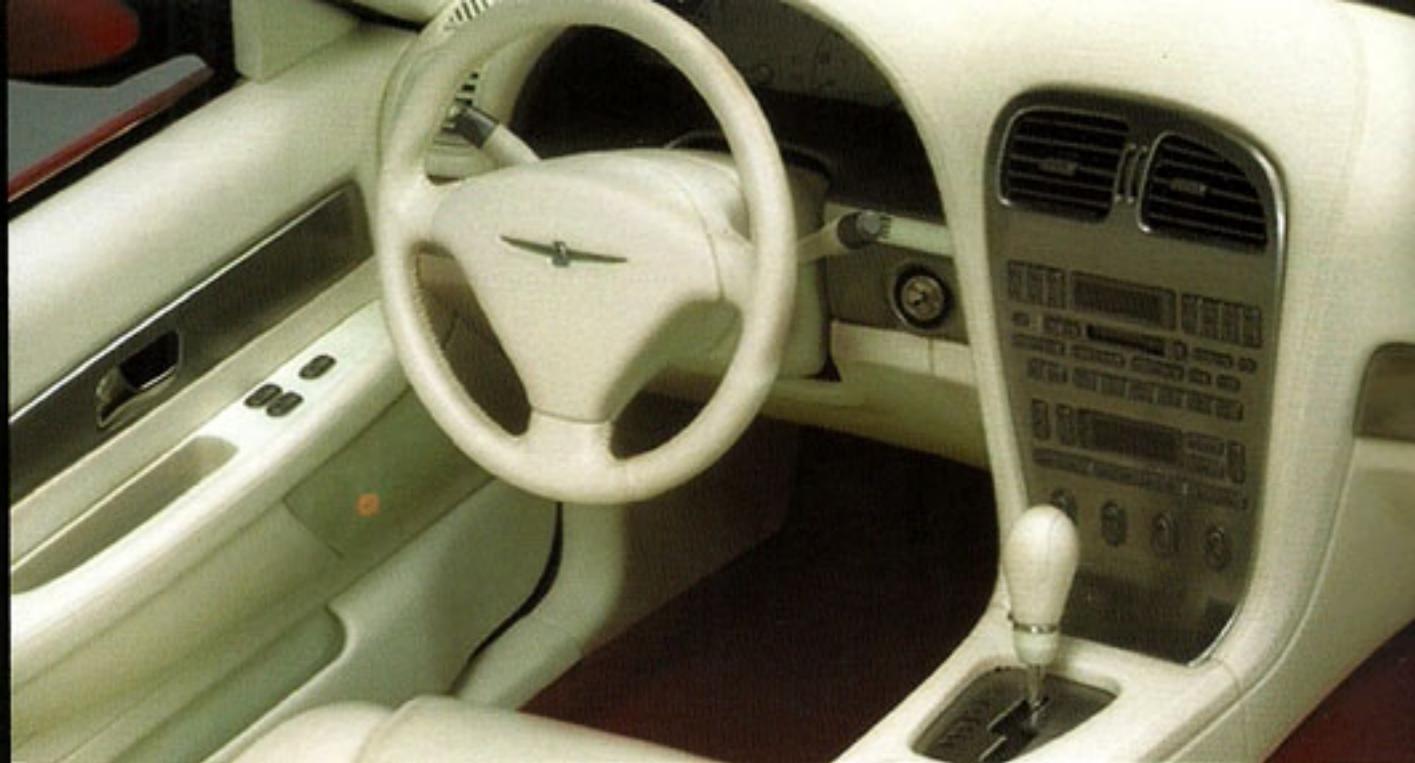
late '50s Thunderbirds were practical, workaday people haulers displaying dramatic styling with slab sides and flat fascias adorned with chrome. They served their purpose in providing Ford with a full-sized, near luxury family sedan marketed to the masses. While the originals stirred enthusiasts' passions, the replacements were a marketplace hit when the company needed a volume

seller. Even today, those "Square Birds" have a loyal following of collectors with an appreciation of their unique design flair.

The Thunderbirds of the early 1960s were a radical departure from the Square Birds. Inspired by a decade that was rapidly moving forward, the projectile looking cars were dubbed "Bullet Birds" and also were referred to as "Rocket Birds." The cars personified a futuristic image with a smooth aerodynamic appearance and a design that featured full-length body sculpturing.

In 1962, the big news for Thunderbird enthusiasts was the Sports Roadster, which featured a large, fiberglass tonneau cover that

Metal appliqués on the instrument panel and interior door panels sport a brushed aluminum appearance and aluminum finished buttons.



changed the convertible 'Bird from a four-place to a two-place car. The tonneau completely covered the rear seats and raised the deck of the car to meet flush with the tops of the front bucket seats.

A smooth, aerodynamic fit was accomplished by seat backs that recessed into the tonneau. The effect gave the car a sporty, but laid-back look that set it apart from all others in the prestige car niche.

The Sports Roadster was offered once again in 1963 with the addition of a sculptured body side feature line, a slightly revised grille, restyled taillights, new side trim and wheel covers.

True aficionados spotted the more subtle cues borrowed from the cars of the 1960s.



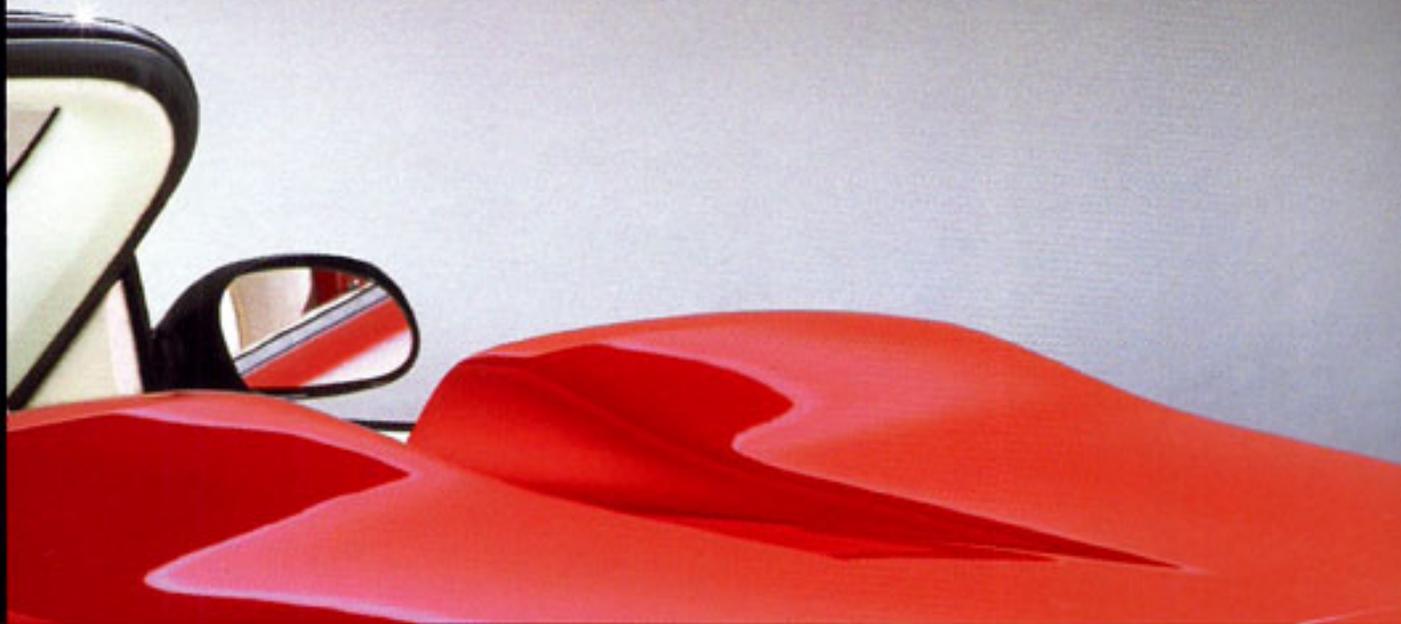
## A MODERN FUTURE



In 1999, Ford unveiled the Thunderbird concept, calling it a modern interpretation of a classic design. Yet, while most heralded the concept for paying homage to the original 1955 through 1957

cars, true aficionados spotted the more subtle cues borrowed from the cars of the 1960s, including the long deck and round tail lamps.

The tonneau cover "waterfalls" between the seats into a relaxed interior environment that features "ceramic" white leather fluted bucket seats.



## THUNDERBIRD SPORTS ROADSTER CONCEPT



The Thunderbird Sports Roadster concept is a more outward interpretation of the 1962 and 1963 designs. The car reflects the flamboyant '60s finished in vivid red enamel with a white leather interior. The concept features

a sloped rear deck with a molded fiberglass tonneau cover and integrated, white leather-covered headrests embossed with the trademark Thunderbird logo. Chrome-finished fasteners secure the tonneau to the roadster.

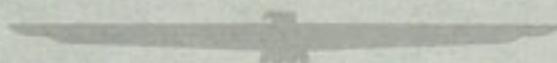
The tonneau cover "waterfalls" between the seats into a relaxed interior environment that features "ceramic" white leather fluted bucket seats. The instrument panel, pillars, scuff plates and interior door trim panels are leather wrapped and feature unique stitching by Draxlmaier.

The driver's cockpit area features a leather wrapped three-spoke steering wheel, shifter knob, hand brake and armrest. The cluster appliqué houses turquoise pointers mounted on metal hubs.

Metal appliqués on the instrument panel and interior door panels sport a brushed aluminum appearance and aluminum-finished buttons.

An integrated chrome hood scoop and large rounded headlamps enhance the vehicle's sleek look. The chrome finished egg-crate design grille also complements the concept's heritage design. The chrome accent theme is carried to the 18-inch chrome plated wheels fitted with low-profile black sidewall tires.

The Thunderbird Sports Roadster concept epitomizes the romance of relaxed, laid back open air driving in a true American beauty.



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