

Manish in Top Gear

Team DNA

Fashion designer Manish Arora dresses up the trusty Ambassador like it's never been done before

Manish Arora, the fashion guru, recently chose the bulbous Ambassador car which has been the official VIP car in India for decades, a family car and a cab as well, to give it a whole new twist representing Indian kitsch and pop culture for Discovery Travel & Living's new show 'Adventures of the Ladies Tailor'.

Manish who also owned the Amby considers it as his muse and has also used it as a motif on various garments he's designed. His fascination with the Ambassador car led him to revamp it to make it a symbol of India.

Hindustan Motors provided the latest top-of-the-line model of the Ambassador for the "Manishification". On the outside, for the painting design, Manish planned on having two themes, a cool under water theme and another with a colourful montage of women representing typical kitsch culture. The images for the kitsch theme were taken off the artwork found on fire cracker boxes and were handpainted.

The original interiors were stripped completely with door panels, roof carpet, seat covers and the dashboard. Everything was customized. The dashboard was re-made with straight lines which allowed for it to be crystallized easily using Swarovski crystals.

With a retro look for the interiors, handpicked fabric in loud colours and varied materials such as sequins and rexene for the car's door panels, boot and curtains, things began to take shape. The roof glittered in a gold engrained fabric with the ceiling in stripes of pink and gold.

All four doors got orange curtains and the back window got pink embroidery curtains. All the door panels were done up in a different coloured Leatherite. God lights in different shapes were pasted at the rear. Even the boot got a makeover in a red cartoon print with red lights. Contrasting with the blue neon lights of the cabin, the red lights provided yet another shade to the already existing riot of colours.

Manish procured high quality leather from Pondicherry. The seat covers were done up in bright blue and pink leather. Two blue neon lights installed as cabin lights produced a lounge-like feel. Two gold coloured, red finned mini fans were also fitted inside. The steering wheel was made of 'wheel of colour' using different leather patches as was the gearstick. A customized front emblem that reads 'Life is Beautiful,' Manish's mantra in life was also created.

The car got new body additions such as special wheel humps and headlights caps. Plastic fixtures such as door handles and sun roof casing were painted gold. A modified central console with antique speedometer, fuel meter, temperature meter, central locking switch & power window switches was created.