

Buick Lights Up Your Life in Auto's Interior

DETROIT – Ambient interior lighting, which uses discreet LED light guides to accent interior design cues and set a mood in a vehicle's cabin, is increasingly popular. Buick's LaCrosse luxury sedan introduced the technology to its segment in 2009.

Every 2013 Buick features discreet Ice Blue lighting to set a comforting cabin mood, GM officials say. In vehicles like the Verano luxury sedan and the Regal luxury sport sedan, lighting comes from hidden sources in the vehicle headliner.

In the LaCrosse and the redesigned 2013 Enclave luxury crossover SUV, the lighting is more dramatic with a soft line of light illuminating the sculpted edge of the wraparound dash.

Like the Enclave's Nuance leather upholstery, which is similar to materials used for high-end

home furniture, Buick ambient lighting finds its inspiration from home interior design.

"If you look in a modern, high-end home at night, the major light sources like TVs are complemented by soft, evenly distributed interior lighting," said Chris Fusco, interior experience manager for Buick Design.

"Likewise, we're creating a warm, inviting driving experience at Buick by tying the bright output of gauges and our IntelliLink connectivity touchscreens together with soft, Ice Blue lighting spilling out from hidden sources.

"As in-car displays grow in number and detail, the harmonizing role of ambient lighting will grow more important," said Fusco. "Large display screens really stand out in a cabin, especially at

night, so adding additional light sources creates a balanced, more luxurious cabin."

Buick's execution of ambient lighting enhances the sense of interior spaciousness. LaCrosse and Enclave customers say they want, and it also draws attention to the cabin's sculpted surfaces.

An added benefit of ambient lighting is that it makes cupholders and other features more visible at night, potentially reducing the time a driver's eyes are off the road.

According to Harris Interactive's AutoTECHCAST survey, blue is the most appealing ambient lighting color by a large margin – 73 percent favorable versus 41 percent favorable for amber, the second-most desirable color. The same survey indicates that the center console, instrument

panel and cupholders are the top three preferred locations for lighting.

"Buick's signature blue hue specifically has a calming effect thanks to its lower color saturation, which we feel is more comforting to the eyes," said Fusco.

Buick's cabin lighting relies on a combination of design and engineering, GM says.

Once the LED guides are integrated within the lines of the interior, precise lines must be cut for the light to shine through while adhering to the tight build quality required of a luxury vehicle.

Aiming the light strips and programming the right level of luminosity provides a soft flow of light that appears suddenly and slowly fades into the night.

Ambient lighting will play a key



Every Buick 2013 model now features "Ice Blue" interior lighting

role in Buick's design signature in coming years as engineers develop new LED possibilities with new materials and methods.

Today, it's part of an extensive technology suite for LaCrosse, which offers standard eAssist fuel efficiency technology and IntelliLink voice-activated connectivity.

The 2013 Enclave arrives in dealers this fall with standard ambient lighting, the industry's first front center air bag system, and IntelliLink.

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