

2004 SVT MUSTANG COBRA PAINTS THE BIG APPLE MYSTICHROME™

[2003 New York Auto Show](#)

- Mystichrome color-shifting paint changes from green through blue and purple to black
- Mystichrome color-shifting leather interior an industry first
- Limited run of 1,000 SVT Mustang Cobra coupes and convertibles for 2004 model year

NEW YORK, April 16 – Ford’s Special Vehicle Team (SVT) today unveiled the 2004 SVT Mustang Cobra Mystichrome package – with color-shifting paint that changes from green to blue to purple to black – at the 2003 New York Auto Show. The package also features the industry's first production application of color-shifting leather interior trim.

The 2004 SVT Mustang Cobra Mystichrome features an advanced formula of color-shifting paint, first offered in 1996 on the SVT Mustang Cobra with Mystic paint. The original formula changed from black to purple to root-beer brown.

“Customers loved the original SVT Mustang Cobra with Mystic paint,” says Tom Scarpello, sales and marketing manager for Ford SVT. “Even today, Mystic cars are still some of the most popular—and most collectible—special editions in SVT's 10-year history. We expect the new Mystichrome package, with more vibrant colors and one-of-a-kind color-shifting interior trim, to be even more popular with SVT Mustang Cobra enthusiasts.”

Color-Shift Technology

The Special Vehicle Team worked with Alan Eggly, Ford's color and trim director for North America, to develop the Mystichrome paint and leather. Both the exterior and interior treatments utilize ChromaFlair® light interference pigments, from Flex Products, Inc. in Santa Rosa, California. These tiny particles (each an average size of 17 microns) are comprised of five layers of colorless film. Combined, these layers produce shimmering, vibrant colors.



The microscopic layers act like a tiny prism: White light is reflected off the core layer, and then split by outer layers into visible colors. As the viewing angle changes, so does the visible color. The color produced is controlled by precise variances—measured in atoms—in the prismatic layers: The thinnest ChromaFlair pigment shifts from gold through silver and into light blue; The thickest pigment shifts from silver through green, and into purplish blue.

Exterior Paint

ChromaFlair pigments were first used for an automotive application on the 1996 Ford SVT Mustang Cobra with Mystic paint. “It was truly ground-breaking,” says Eggly. “No other manufacturer had used color-shifting paint on a production car before. But, just as the handling and acceleration have dramatically improved since 1996 on the SVT Mustang Cobra, so has color-shifting technology. For 2004, we were able to take Mystic paint and put it on steroids.”

Eggly challenged DuPont to create a new color-shifting paint with visual performance to match the visceral performance of the 390-horsepower SVT Mustang Cobra. To that end, DuPont staff chemists started with Green/Purple ChromaFlair pigments that shift from bright green through a range of blues, and then into purple. The DuPont chemists blended that with traditional black and green pigments for visual balance and deep, rich colors. As a finishing touch, they added a pinch of aluminum flakes to enhance bright, metallic sparkle.

The resulting color shift is described by the DuPont chemists as, “a bright, metallic topaz that transitions to cobalt blue, then to royal



purple, and finally into a deep onyx black.”

“The bright, iridescent colors reminded me of chromed exhaust headers blued by intense heat,” says Eggly. Thus, he dubbed the new color “Mystichrome.”



Because ChromaFlair pigments are stirred into a water or solvent base like any paint additive, the paint does not require special handling. As such, Mystichrome paint will be applied at the Dearborn Assembly Plant, using the same process of other factory colors. In addition, Mystichrome passes the same rigorous durability tests of any factory paint. Also, the dramatic color shifts actually hide paint applied during body repair.

Interior Trim

Satisfied with the exterior hue, Eggly and the Ford Special Vehicle Team turned their attention to the interior. “The interior needed something special to complement the stunning exterior,” says Eggly. “We considered spraying hard parts, like the center stack or door handles, with Mystichrome paint. Then I recalled a Ford supplier, Garden State Tanning (GST), had developed leather colored with ChromaFlair pigments.”

Garden State had remarkable success substituting ChromaFlair for traditional leather pigments. To match the Mystichrome exterior paint, GST starts with leather hides tanned with a black dye. The same blue/green ChromaFlair pigment used in the exterior paint, are mixed with leather-softening oils, and then sprayed onto the surface. Finally, a clear protective layer is applied to seal in the color.

The result is another automotive precedent—the first color-shifting leather trim used by an OEM. Mystichrome leather, which mimics the color shift of the exterior paint, is used for the front and rear seat inserts, as well as sections of the steering wheel wrap.

Again, the only change in the production process is the pigment. Mystichrome leather has the same supple feel and grain as the surrounding Midnight Black leather surfaces.

Also, the Mystichrome leather passes the same wear and color-retention tests of traditional leather used by Ford Motor Company.

For Eggly, it's the most compelling special-edition SVT Mustang Cobra yet. “The paint and interior trim perfectly complement the dramatic style and explosive performance of the SVT Mustang Cobra,” he says. “The Mystichrome package would not be appropriate for any other car, as the explosive colors are tied to the emotion and passion found in the SVT Mustang Cobra.”

“SVT Mustang Cobra owners are incredibly passionate about their car, and particularly with special editions,” says Scarpello. “SVT has cultivated that enthusiasm by offering more than the customer expects, from the 1993, 1995, and 2000 SVT Mustang Cobra R models to the '96 SVT Mustang Cobra in Mystic to the 2003 10th Anniversary SVT Mustang Cobra. The 2004 Mystichrome package, with vibrant color and the industry's first color-shifting leather, is no exception.”

Availability

For the 2004 model year, only 1,000 SVT Mustang Cobra models, in either coupe or convertible body styles, will be offered with the Mystichrome Appearance Package. The package also includes chrome wheels as standard equipment.