

Audi fuels Race 2

Bigger, better and more action-packed—the sequel to Bollywood blockbuster Race raises the stakes. The Team of Audi joins *Race 2* for the race to the finish.

By Gerd Blank (copy)

Actor Saif Ali Khan poses with the Audi A8 during the filming of Race 2.

“Three cameras film simultaneously so that a scene can be shot from three different angles.”

Saif Ali Khan



It's a mild, sunny day—but the weather is totally at odds with what is about to happen in a secluded street in Istanbul. Suddenly, the roar of an engine breaks through the silence. The pitch increases briefly as the driver changes gear. Brakes howl, tires screech and the car completes a perfect about-face before coming to a standstill in exactly the right spot. A voice in the background calls, “Cut.” The duo directing the new Bollywood blockbuster *Race 2* is satisfied with the scene. For John Abraham, this spin in his customized Audi R8 was one of the most difficult scenes in the movie. “I had to pull up exactly in front of the cameraman. Because I was driving an Audi, I could just follow my instincts.”

Adrenaline-pumping action and fast cars—with this formula, *Race* earned roughly a billion rupees at the box office, making it one of the most successful Indian films of 2008. You'll be hard pressed to find anyone on the subcontinent who hasn't seen the first installment of the high-octane thriller. Part one has set pulses racing and now the sequel has upped the ante with a bigger, fast-paced movie. *Race 2* is the first film in 2013 to break the one crore mark in box office earnings. That's also why Saif Ali Khan didn't hesitate in accepting the lead again. A premiere for the 42 year-old: This is the first time in his long career that the superstar is appearing in the sequel to one of his films. >>



John Abraham (left) duking it out in the ring.

Lead Actors Saif and John shoot for the climax scene.



Saif Ali Khan is the perfectly toned embodiment of Ranveer Singh. Although the reprise of his role comes four years after first playing Singh, Khan says it doesn't feel that way at all. "It's almost as if I drove off camera on one side of the screen and have come straight back in the other side," but he adds, "Even members of the audience who didn't see Race will still enjoy it."

The movie exudes pure opulence. Which is why it was only natural that the two directors, brothers Abbas and Mustan Burmawalla, chose to shoot in some of the most beautiful locations on the planet. True to the style of the storyline, the crew shot some of the scenes set in Turkey in one of the world's most sumptuous hotels, Mardan Palace in Antalya—it's the kind of breathtaking place that makes you rather envious of the actors.

But Saif Ali Khan has little time to enjoy the spectacular setting. "My day begins at eight in the morning with a workout. After a quick breakfast, I go straight to makeup and spend two hours gettingw prepped for the day's scenes. Shooting goes on until five in the evening, then I head back to the gym to train for the next day." His co-star John Abraham jokes, "Fitness levels on this film are probably the highest ever." And that's no accident, for in the action sequences the directors require the actors to push their bodies to the limit. "I injured my back in one of the fight scenes," grins Abraham.



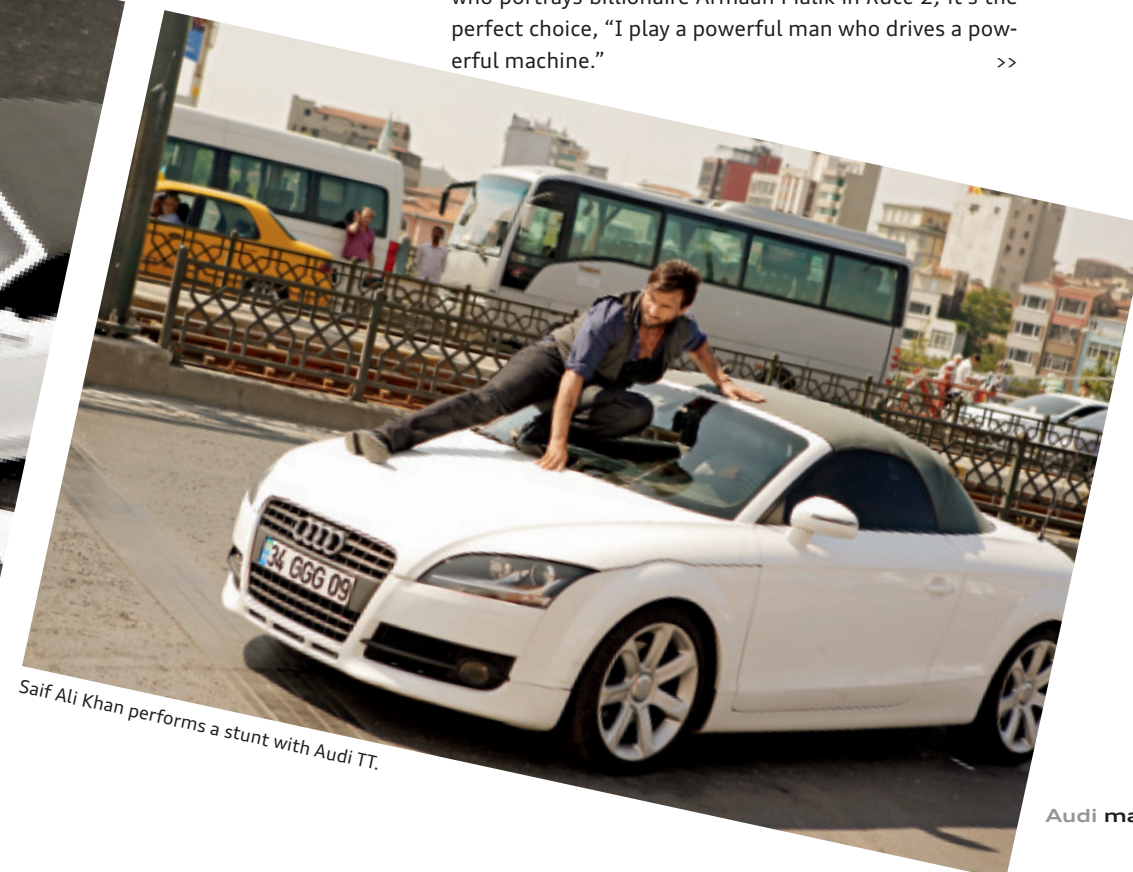
John Abraham's character Armaan Malik has a taste for luxury and drives an Audi A8.



"There are six leads in Race 2—and the seventh is definitely Audi." Deepika Padukone

The chemistry between Saif Ali Khan and Deepika Padukone works well.

Luckily, the leads have solid support in front of the camera—each star drives an Audi. "We selected cars that reflected the characters' personalities," explain directors Abbas and Mustan. "Saif Ali Khan drives a luxury sedan, the Audi A8, Deepika Padukone is seen in a white Audi TT, Anil Kapoor has an Audi Q7 and John takes the wheel of an Audi R8 sports car." For John Abraham, who portrays billionaire Armaan Malik in *Race 2*, it's the perfect choice, "I play a powerful man who drives a powerful machine." >>



Saif Ali Khan performs a stunt with Audi TT.



It's successful teamwork. Which is just the way Michael Perschke, head of Audi India, sees it, too. "Winners identify with winning brands. That's why Audi is such a great fit with *Race 2*. Being involved right from the script development stage, we were able to seamlessly integrate the Audi brand into the film in the course of the creative process." Most of the stars are already Audi fans. Deepika Padukone, who personally owns an Audi Q7, says "There are six leads in *Race 2*—and the seventh is definitely Audi."

Her favorite scene is the closing one. "We all get into our cars and drive off. You see a beautiful shot of the Audi models. That's the highlight of the film for me." In contrast, John Abraham is more enthralled with the equipment in his Audi R8, which was even treated to a custom paint job especially for the movie. "Thanks to the safety features in the Audi R8, you could probably walk away from a crash with another vehicle completely unscathed. And I bet it's the only car that has a parachute under the seat," says Abraham, who roars off with a broad grin.

And it's not just the actors who get to have fun. "While the first film was adult fare, *Race 2* can be enjoyed by the whole family. It's an action thriller that works at all levels. I'm sure that audiences will love it," enthuses Saif Ali Khan. And he proves to be right on the money: The sequel is even more successful than the first film. The heady cocktail of action, luxury, a great soundtrack and fast cars is a hit with moviegoers. No doubt the next installment of the franchise won't take four more years to reach the silver screen. And one thing's for sure, Saif Ali Khan won't need asking twice to step up as the lead once more. //

Race 2

Ranveer Singh (Saif Ali Khan) pursues his lover's murderers to exotic locations. A final showdown with the Indian mafia takes place in Turkey. Other cast members in the action-packed thriller include John Abraham, Anil Kapoor, Deepika Padukone, Jacqueline Fernandez and Ameesha Patel.

Audi in the movie

Whether it's the Audi R8 Spyder or Audi TT luxury sports cars, the ruggedly powerful Audi Q7 or the elegant and timeless Audi A8 L, all of the stars drive an Audi in *Race 2*.

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To find out more about the appearances of Audi in TV series and movies, go to www.audi.in.

Audi tv

The trailer for *Race 2* can be viewed on Audi's youtube chanel www.youtube.com/AudiofIndia.

Photos: Tips Industries

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