

# ARIZONA DRIVER

THE ENTHUSIAST'S GUIDE TO LIFE BEHIND THE WHEEL

VOLUME 7 NUMBER 3  
MAY-JUNE 2008

## SL AMG

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EVO MOTORSPORT AND CORNELIS HOLLANDER CARBON CONCEPT JEWELRY  
RUSSO AND STEELE - BARRETT-JACKSON - FLORIDA RESULTS  
DOS VOLVOS: C70 HARDTOP CONVERTIBLE AND XC70 CROSSOVER  
DOS KIAs: SPECTRA5 AND RIO5 HATCHBACKS  
RINSPEED SQUABA AMPHIBIOUS CONCEPT  
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THE ENTHUSIAST'S GUIDE TO LIFE BEHIND THE WHEEL

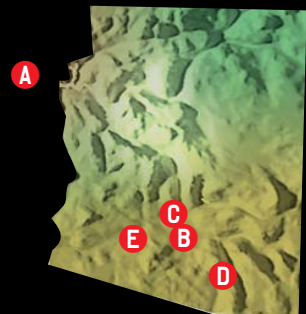


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**COVER:**  
2009 SL63 AMG roadster. Photo courtesy Mercedes-Benz.



This month has certainly been full of all the right stuff. We've been to quite a variety of events, have driven quite a few new vehicles, and have traveled a bit in the course of it all. The vehicles largely came in sets. By happenstance, we've driven two different Volvos, each with its own way of broadening its usage and appeal; we've driven two Kias, each with similar functionality and economy. And our cover story included flying to Los Angeles to be among the first in the world invited to test drive the new four-car fleet of Mercedes-Benz SL and SL AMG roadsters, from Santa Monica to Palm Springs with nothing but scenic routes along the way. We also bring you the fully amphibious (and open-cockpit) Rinspeed sQuba, which we haven't piloted, but who wouldn't, given the chance.

Events have included the Copperstate 1000 kickoff, Bike Week, an event with Evolution MotorSports and Cornelis Hollander Designs, Inc. during Scottsdale ArtWalk, featuring automotive-inspired jewelry (this issue), a major Volvo safety initiative event in preparation for the government and insurance industry, at their Phoenix proving grounds, NHRA Test & Tune at Firebird International Raceway (next issue) and more. We also bring results from Barrett-Jackson's sixth and Russo and Steele's first-ever auctions in Florida. Chrysler sent its wunderkind VP of design, Ralph Gilles, to introduce the new Dodge Ram pickups (and the new Dodge Journey) to us, which is presented herein. And our intrepid stringer H.R. Driver brings you info on how you can put the pedal to the metal without buying your own

race car, in the Great American Stockcar Series.

And for a great road trip, and week or weekend, check out Tucson, whose many outdoor activities are featured here. Enjoy the ride.



Joe Sage  
Publisher/ Executive Editor

# ARIZONA DRIVER

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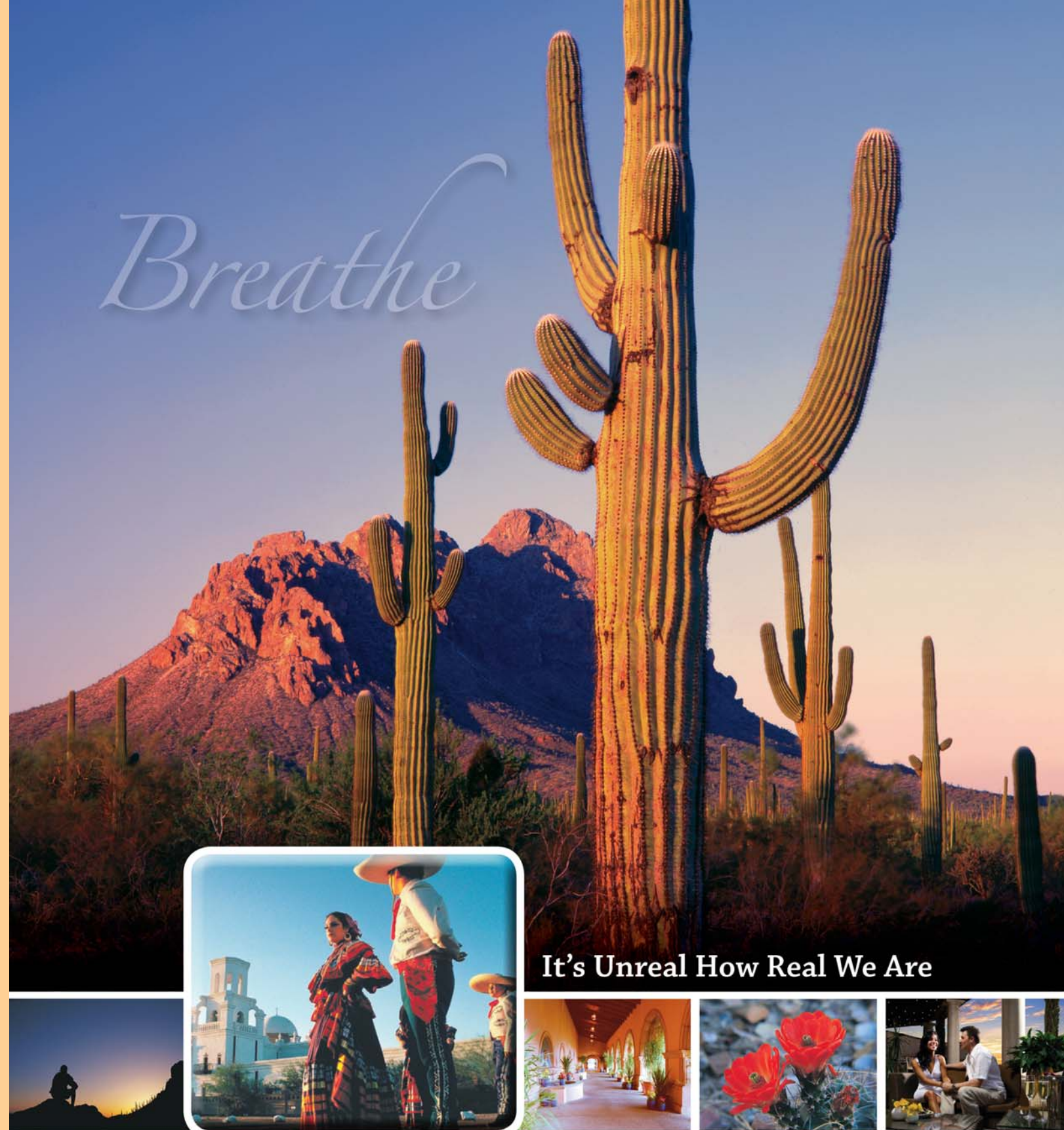
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## THE NEW BMW 1 SERIES CONVERTIBLE

The new BMW 1 Series is intended to follow the tradition of the iconic BMW 2002 sport sedan. The essence of driving purity—a responsive six-cylinder engine in a rear-drive chassis for balanced, sporty dynamics—is at the heart of this compact four-seat convertible. The 128i Convertible, which joins the new 1 Series Coupe (on sale in spring 2008), will be powered by BMW's 3.0-liter, 230-horsepower inline six-cylinder engine generating 200 lb-ft of torque. Like its fixed-roof stablemate, the 128i Convertible features Valvetronic valvetrain management and aluminum/magnesium cylinder block construction—core elements of BMW's EfficientDynamics. The 135i Convertible, on sale later in 2008, features BMW's twin-turbocharged 3.0-liter inline six-cylinder engine producing 300 horsepower and 300 lb-ft of torque from as low as 1,400 rpm. With its direct piezo gasoline injectors, twin low-mass turbochargers and air-to-air intercooler, optimum performance and economy is achieved with no loss in engine response, with acceleration from 0-62 mph claimed as 5.6 seconds and top speed electronically limited to 155 mph. Both engines feature on-demand engine coolant pumps for improved fuel economy and increased efficiency. For photos, videos and even to schedule a test drive, visit [www.bmwusa.com](http://www.bmwusa.com). ▼



BMW 1 Series Convertible



Saab 9-4X concept

You could say Saab has been doing crossovers for decades, what with the aeronautical presence in their earlier cars. Now they're going mainstream.

### SAAB DOES A CROSSOVER

▲ Saab displayed its version of a crossover at the recent Detroit auto show in the form of the four-seat 9-4X BioPower. With design inspired by the Saab Aero X, the concept is powered by a 245 hp 2.0-liter turbocharged four-cylinder engine. The same engine running on E85 Ethanol increases to 300 hp with an equivalent increase in torque and lower carbon dioxide emissions than on gasoline. The 4WD system uses a central placed differential to direct power to both axles, and the rear axle has intelligent differential that directs torque to the wheel that needs it most. The 9-4X is based on the same Theta platform used for the European Cadillac BRX sport-utility. Concept highlights included a panorama glass roof, 21-inch wheels and a ski equipment storage system developed jointly with mountain sports specialists Salomon. Unofficial reports say the 9-4X BioPower will go into production this year in GM's Mexico plant for US sales followed by sales Europe a few months later.

### TOYOTA TO TRY A SPORT CROSSOVER

Chrysler Pacifica, Mercedes-Benz R-Class and Ford Freestyle, have never reached

sales projections, but Toyota thinks they can be successful in the that market segment with a similar product called the Venza. Based on the Camry platform the Venza will share many of the best selling sedan's components, including the 3.5-liter V-6 engine (or a 2.7-liter four-cylinder) with a six-speed automatic transmission. The front-wheel drive Venza will also be available in an all-wheel-drive version. Like the Camry, the Venza seats five, with no available third row. Toyota planned the Venza cargo capacity to be large enough to fit a 42-inch flat screen TV, case of Costco toilet tissue or a mountain bike.

### DASH EXPRESS: NEXT GEN NAVIGATION

A Silicon Valley startup called Dash Navigation in Mountain View, Calif. has already made the GPS navigation system you bought for Christmas obsolete. The Dash navigation system doesn't depend on data bases that may be a year or two old, rather their system updates wirelessly through the Internet and in the process adds a multitude of new features. For example, the Dash "learns" how long a driver normally takes to go to a certain destination. When it recognizes that it is

taking much longer than normal it assumes there is traffic congestion so it offers up to three alternate routes based on data gathered anonymously from other Dash devices. The information is based on traffic flow rather than incidents. The two-way connectivity allows you to search for almost anything, anywhere using a Yahoo® local search. Address can also be sent to your device from any computer by highlighting the address on your internet browser or Microsoft Outlook. Dash Express goes on sale early in 2008 for \$599 plus a \$12.99 monthly service contract. For more information go to [www.dash.net](http://www.dash.net).

### MORE DETAILS ON TATA

As details of the \$2,500 Tata emerge, other automakers are taking notes on how the Indian company was able to develop the inexpensive four-door, five-seat car. The stylish Tata Nano is 23-inches shorter than the Honda Fit. Dozens of suppliers were challenged to cut costs in unconventional ways to help develop the Tata. They came up with scaled back features like one wiper blade,

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## VOLVO JOINS THE CROSSOVER PARADE

Volvo pulled the wraps off its first crossover vehicle at the recent Geneva Motor Show. The XC60 moulds distinctive Volvo DNA into a four-door-coupe styling with all the utility of an SUV. Volvo officials claim that the stylish XC60 is the safest Volvo ever. The XC60 has a new City Safety system that helps the driver avoid or reduce the effects of low-speed impacts that are common in city traffic. If the car is about to run into the vehicle in front and the driver does not react, the car automatically applies the brakes. The XC launches in Europe this fall and in the US during the first quarter of 2009. The only US drivetrain is a turbocharged T6 rated at 281 horsepower with all-wheel drive. ▼



Volvo XC60



Jeep Renegade concept

Is there an outlet out here? Jeep® has produced many stunning concept vehicles, and this one excites both visual and technological sensibilities.

no radio and instrument panel with only speedometer, odometer, and gas gauge. It rides on 12-inch, three-bolt wheels and the two-cylinder rear-mounted engine has a single balance shaft instead of one per cylinder. Weighing only 1,278 pounds, the base Nano needs less equipment to operate. It will also be available in higher priced full-featured models. Plans call for the Nano to go on sale in India, later this year, and the company is considering export to Africa, Southeast Asia, Latin America and Europe. Tata will not pass US emission and safety standards and will not be sold in the United States.

### [WWW.MYCADILLACSTORY.COM](http://WWW.MYCADILLACSTORY.COM)

Cadillac has put together a fascinating collection of videos clips, audio recording, written stories and photos about people and their Cadillacs. Of course, they seeded the project with some very interesting celebrity stories from people like talk show host Jay Leno, actor William H. Macy, singer Bob Dylan, singer Joan Jett and many others. The website has a place for you to not only enjoy the personal stories, but also tell your own. It's not filled with ads for new

Cadillacs, just stories. See it at [www.mycadillacstory.com](http://www.mycadillacstory.com).

### JEEP'S RENEGADE CONCEPT

▲ Looking like a cross between a dune buggy and a Jeep®, the two-seater Renegade concept shown at the North American International Auto Show in Detroit in January, represents one of the most fun-to-drive and fuel efficient at the show. Powered by an electric motor system, the Renegade batteries are recharged by a household outlet, regenerative braking, or the 1.5-liter, three-cylinder Bluetec diesel engine for a range of about 400 miles. The back-to-basics design features a cut-down windshield, roll bar and interior that can be hosed out. It's four-wheel drive and is topless, but can be configured with various roof options. Designed for mountain forests, hills, sand dunes or cities, the Renegade body is constructed of molded composites and the interior is environmentally friendly soy-based foam.

### BUICK LUCERNE SUPER

When was the last time you heard a Buick referred to as a "driver's car"? That is what Buick is calling their new Lucerne

Super. Powered by a 292-hp 4.6-liter V-8 engine, Buick's full-size entry-luxury sedan has a long list of standard content along with safety, performance and powertrain enhancements. Riding on GM's Magnetic Ride Control technology, the suspension is calibrated to give more driver control and performance while reducing body roll and head toss in cornering and lane changes. For \$39,395, including a \$765 destination charge, the Super standard equipment includes heated and cooled front seats, heated windshield washer fluid, remote start, ultrasonic rear parking assist, rain-sensing wipers and XM radio. The luxurious interior has a real walnut steering wheel and Harman Kardon audio. Side Blind Zone and Lane Departure warning systems are available options.

### ISUZU CALLS IT QUITS IN US

Isuzu has set January 31, 2009 as its last day to sell light vehicles in the US market. In 1992 and 1993, the Isuzu Rodeo was the best selling import SUV in the market, but sales has fallen from a peak of 103,937 in 1999 down to only 7,098 in

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## CTS-V – FASTEST PRODUCTION V-8 SEDAN

Apparently, Cadillac has its sights set on being the fastest 8-cylinder production sedan in the world as it uncages the 2009 CTS-V. Building on the award winning elements of the 2008 CTS, the “V” is powered by a 550-hp, 6.2-liter supercharged V-8 with a choice of six-speed manual or a six-speed Hydra-Matic transmission. Riding on GM’s advanced 2-mode magnetic ride control, which is one of the world’s fastest reacting suspension systems; the performance was tuned on Germany’s famed Nürburgring racecourse. The brakes are massive six-piston Brembo in the front and four-piston in the rear. Recaro racing seats are available in the front along with some of the most luxurious interior amenities available on any car. Cadillac says the all-new Cadillac CTS-V is “A red, white, and blue punch in the face to the category of performance luxury.” Plans call for the CTS-V to launch in the fourth quarter of 2008. Performance numbers and pricing has yet to be announced. ▼



Cadillac CTS-V



2009 Dodge Ram Laramie

Chrysler cowboys herd the new Ram pickups on the mean streets of Detroit in January. We were there, and it was cold. See our full feature, page 30.

2007.

The two models Isuzu is currently selling in the US include the five-seat Ascender, a rebadged version of the Chevrolet TrailBlazer, and the i-Series pickup, which is derived from the mid-size GMC Canyon and Chevrolet Colorado pickups. Isuzu currently has 201 dealerships in the US and plans to buy out the franchises by paying them \$1,000 for every new vehicle they sold on average for the past four years. The dealers can also remain as Isuzu service dealers and honor Isuzu warranty work. There are likely to be some good deals on the remaining Isuzu products.

### THE DODGE RAM MAKEOVER

▲ Dodge planners had the tough task of remaking the big Ram pickup for 2009 in the face of major new offerings for the competitors, but they succeeded in civilizing the tough full size pickup. The aggressive design was maintained with a new “grille forward” look borrowed from the Dodge Charger sedan and then went on to add a plethora of new class-leading features like optional heated and ventilated seats, heated rear seats and a heated steering wheel. The crew cab

comes with a flexible 8.6-cubic foot lockable storage area called RamBox that is built into the pickup bed walls plus under floor storage bins similar to those on the Dodge minivans. The 4.7-liter V-8 was boosted to 310-hp with two-sparkplugs per cylinder and the ability to burn E85 Ethanol. The optional 5.7-liter Hemi V-8 engine is boosted to 380-hp while improving fuel economy and estimated four percent. The interiors are upgraded and feature new controls and soft-touch materials. They go on sale in Fall 2008. In 2010, a light Cummins diesel engine will be offered.

### FORD SIMPLIFIES SHOPPING CHOICES

Ford plans to cut the number of available equipment combinations on 2009 models by more than 50 percent, according to dealers who were briefed on the plan. They say CEO Alan Mulally’s plan is to offer more standard features on the cars with fewer options to make the ordering process easier and allowing the dealers to maintain smaller inventories. The first vehicle to get the changes will be the Lincoln MKS that goes on sale this summer. It will have three option packages and six stand-alone options.

That will reduce the combinations to about 300, as opposed to the 50,000 combinations offered recently on the discontinued Lincoln LS.

### INDIAN AUTOMAKER IN US FOR 2009

A couple of years ago Indian automaker, Mahindra, said it would sell two vehicles in the US market by 2008. It’s now 2008 and the world’s 32nd largest automaker is now saying they will offer three trucks in the US by March 2009. Plans call for a light two-door pickup, four-door pickup and an SUV all powered by four-cylinder diesel engines with six-speed transmissions. Within five years, they say they will add a second pickup and SUV along with a crossover. They claim to have commitments for 288 dealers currently and expect to have 300 by launch.

### BUY A ZR1—GO TO DRIVING SCHOOL?

As we might expect, the General Motors legal department is having nightmares over the upcoming Chevrolet Corvette ZR1. As the fastest car GM has ever built, they are concerned about the potential liabilities of the 620-hp, sports car that

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will have a top speed of over 200 mph and a 0 to 60 mph acceleration time of about 3.3 seconds. As a hedge against potential litigation, the legal department wants each owner to attend a driving school. Quoted in Automotive News, Chevrolet General Manager, Ed Peper, said "We don't think we can mandate it (driving school), but we certainly want to offer it when they buy the vehicle, to get that training."

### MAZDA FAVORS HYDROGEN ROTARY

While most automakers are pursuing hydrogen powered fuel cell technology to cut emissions and the need for gasoline, Mazda favors using hydrogen in its rotary engine. According to Mazda, their application allows drivers to switch between gasoline and pressurized hydrogen fuel. According to Mazda the rotary engines last longer than fuel cell membranes, they are not as sensitive to cold weather and they are more reliable. The rotary engines are also significantly cheaper to build than fuel cells, which use as much as 20 times the platinum. The down side of hydrogen fuel is the same as with fuel cells - generating hydrogen is energy intensive and fueling stations are rare. Mazda plans to lease prototypes of hydrogen powered Premacy minivans for testing starting in 2009.

### MITSUBISHI REMODELS GALANT

It has been five years since Mitsubishi introduced the last new mid-size Galant sedan and the 2009 version arrives just as sales have suffered a big decline. The 2009 version has new front and rear sheet metal including a new fascia, hood and rear end along with restyled headlights and taillights. A new Sport Edition trim will use a 160-hp EX four-cylinder engine and a Sport V-6 will have a 230-hp engine. The sporty Ralliart returns with a 258-hp V-6 engine. Base prices of the base Galant ES start at \$21,749 and go as high as \$29,624 for the Ralliart. All prices including shipping.

### FINALLY-CHEVY CROSSOVER

Nearly two years after General Motors started into the large crossover business with the Saturn Outlook and GMC Acadia followed a year later by the Buick Enclave, Chevrolet gets its own version

for 2009. The Chevrolet Traverse takes strong styling cues from the highly acclaimed Chevy Malibu, especially in the front end. The Traverse has three rows of adult-size seating along with class-leading cargo space. Powered by a direct-injection 3.6-liter V-6 engine with a six-speed automatic transmission it's available either in front-wheel drive or all-wheel drive configurations. Three high-content trim levels will be offered with a long list of available options. Production starts during the third quarter of 2008.

### GMC DENALI XT HYBRID CONCEPT

One of the more interesting concepts debuting at the Chicago Auto Show was the GMC Denali XT Hybrid. Combining features from a sport truck and sport utility with the fuel saving features of a hybrid, the rear-wheel drive XT has a squat muscular design with four doors and a 55-inch long cargo bed without the normal pickup suspension protrusions. It's powered by a 4.9-liter E85 Ethanol capable version of GM's V-8 along with GM's two-more hybrid propulsion system. The engine is rated at 326 horsepower and fuel economy is expected to be about 50 percent more than comparable small pickup trucks running on gasoline. The XT concept seats four with a higher seating positions and it also employs a height adjustable suspension. The XT was designed by GM's Holden in Australia. There was no indication that the XT would be built in this form, but we'll see elements used in future GMC vehicles if it's not built.

### YES! ANOTHER FAST, LIGHT ROADSTER

Debuting at the Chicago Auto Show, German specialty automaker Funk & Will AG is planning to bring its Yes! Roadster to the US by June. The Yes! is powered by a 3.2-liter Audi V-6 engine rated at 255-hp or a turbocharged 3.2-liter V-6 rated at 355-hp. A performance option boosts the turbo engine horsepower to 415. The company claims the Turbo will be capable of 0 to 62 mph times of 3.9 seconds and a top speed of 175-mph. An available modified turbo option drops the 0 to 62 mph time to 3.4 seconds. The natural aspired base model does 0 to 60 mph in 4.8 seconds. Prices start at

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**THE DAILY NEWS**

Last Cruise Nite of the season brings crowd for classic car nostalgia (Santa Paula Times)

# '08 GOODGUYS

Rod & Custom Association

## EVENT SCHEDULE

### MAY/JUNE

May 30 & 31, June 1 - Loveland, CO

★ 11<sup>th</sup> DUPONT COLORADO NATIONALS

The Ranch, Larimer Co. Fairgrounds. Rods, Customs, Classics, Muscle Cars & Trucks thru '72. Vendors, Swap Meet & Car Corral.

May 31 & June 1 - Pleasanton, CA

★ 15<sup>th</sup> SUMMER GET-TOGETHER  
Fairgrounds - Pleasanton. All years American Powered Cars & Trucks. Vendors, Swap Meet & Car Corral.

June 6, 7 & 8 - Indianapolis, IN

★ 20<sup>th</sup> HOT ROD NATIONALS  
O'Reilly Raceway Park @ Indianapolis. Rods, Customs, Classics & Race Cars thru '72. Drags, Show 'n Shine, Vendors, Swap Meet & Car Corral.

June 13, 14 & 15 - Atlanta, GA

★ 2<sup>nd</sup> NAPA SOUTHERN NATIONALS  
Atlanta Motor Speedway. Rods, Customs, Classics, Muscle Cars & Trucks thru '72. Vendors, Swap Meet & Car Corral.

June 27, 28 & 29 - Nashville, TN

★ 3<sup>rd</sup> NASHVILLE NATIONALS  
LP Field, Tennessee Titan Stadium. Rods, Customs, Classics, Muscle Cars & Trucks thru '72. Vendors, Swap Meet & Car Corral.

### JULY

July 4, 5 & 6 - Des Moines, IA

★ 17<sup>th</sup> 3M HEARTLAND NATIONALS  
Iowa State Fairgrounds. Rods, Customs, Classics, Muscle Cars & Trucks thru '72. Vendors, Swap Meet & Car Corral.

July 11, 12 & 13 - Columbus, OH THE BIG ONE!

★ 11<sup>th</sup> GOODGUYS PPG NATIONALS  
Ohio Expo Center. Rods, Customs, Classics, Muscle Cars & Trucks thru '72. Friday Nite Drags, Vendors, Swap Meet & Car Corral.

July 25, 26 & 27 - Puyallup, WA

★ 21<sup>st</sup> PACIFIC NORTHWEST NATIONALS  
Puyallup Fair & Events Center. Rods, Customs & Classics thru '72. Friday Nite Drags, Show 'n Shine & Vendors.

### AUGUST

August 15, 16 & 17 - Spokane, WA

★ 7<sup>th</sup> GREAT NORTHWEST NATIONALS  
Spokane Fair & Expo Center. Rods, Customs, Classics, Muscle Cars & Trucks thru '72. Vendors, Swap Meet & Car Corral.

August 15, 16 & 17 - Madison, WI

★ 19<sup>th</sup> GREAT LAKES NATIONALS  
Willow Island @ the Alliant Energy Center. Rods, Customs, Classics, Muscle Cars & Trucks thru '72. Vendors, Swap Meet & Car Corral.

August 22, 23 & 24 - Pleasanton, CA

★ 22<sup>nd</sup> WEST COAST NATIONALS  
Fairgrounds - Pleasanton. Rods, Customs & Classics thru '57. Vendors, Swap Meet & Car Corral.

August 29, 30 & 31 - Kansas City, KS

★ 7<sup>th</sup> MID-WESTERN NATIONALS  
Kansas Speedway. Rods, Customs, Classics, Muscle Cars & Trucks thru '72. Vendors, Swap Meet & Car Corral.

### SEPTEMBER

September 5, 6 & 7 - Norwalk, OH

★ 7<sup>th</sup> BLUE SUEDE CRUISE NEW EVENT!  
Summit Motorsports Park. Rods, Customs, Classics & Race Cars thru '72. Drags, Show 'n Shine, Vendors, Swap Meet & Car Corral.

September 12, 13 & 14 - Rhinebeck, NY

★ 17<sup>th</sup> EAST COAST NATIONALS  
Dutchess County Fairgrounds. Rods, Customs, Classics, Muscle Cars & Trucks thru '72. Vendors, Swap Meet & Car Corral.

September 19, 20 & 21 - Joliet, IL

★ 2<sup>nd</sup> PEAK CHICAGOLAND NATIONALS  
Chicagoland Speedway. Rods, Customs, Classics, Muscle Cars & Trucks thru '72. Vendors, Swap Meet & Car Corral.

September 26, 27 & 28 - Pocono, PA

★ 4<sup>th</sup> GREAT AMERICAN NEW LOCATION & DATE NATIONALS  
Pocono Raceway. Rods, Customs, Classics, Muscle Cars & Trucks thru '72. Vendors, Swap Meet & Car Corral.

### OCTOBER

October 3, 4 & 5 - Ft. Worth, TX

★ 16<sup>th</sup> LONE STAR NATIONALS  
Texas Motor Speedway. Rods, Customs, Classics, Muscle Cars & Trucks thru '72. Vendors, Swap Meet & Car Corral.

October 17, 18 & 19 - Bowling Green, KY

★ 1<sup>st</sup> NOSTALGIA NATIONALS NEW EVENT!  
Beech Bend Raceway Park. Rods, Customs, Classics & Race Cars thru '72. Drags, Show 'n Shine, Vendors, Swap Meet & Car Corral.

October 24, 25 & 26 - Charlotte, NC

★ 15<sup>th</sup> SOUTHEASTERN NATIONALS  
Lowe's Motor Speedway. Rods, Customs, Classics, Muscle Cars & Trucks thru '72. Vendors, Swap Meet & Car Corral.

### NOVEMBER

November 8 & 9 - Pleasanton, CA

★ 19<sup>th</sup> AUTUMN GET-TOGETHER  
Fairgrounds - Pleasanton. All years American Powered Cars & Trucks. Vendors, Swap Meet & Car Corral.

November 14, 15 & 16 - Scottsdale, AZ

★ 11<sup>th</sup> SOUTHWEST NATIONALS  
WestWorld of Scottsdale. Rods, Customs, Classics, Muscle Cars & Trucks thru '72. Vendors, Swap Meet & Car Corral.



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2009 Ford F-150



Ford F-Series is always so good, you don't want them messing with it. But somehow, the next one is always better still. Here's their latest home run.

\$77,995 for the 3.2 and \$97,995 for the turbo. More than \$40,000 in options are available. Funk & Will expects to sell 50 cars annually. More info is available on the Internet at [yesroadster.com](http://yesroadster.com).

### FORD F-150 ALL NEW FOR 2009

▲ America's top selling vehicle, the Ford F-150 pickup, gets a complete redesign for 2009 with an evolutionary design change making it even more rugged looking. Prototypes were put through 4.5 million miles of real world and laboratory torture testing during development to maintain the trucks 'Built Ford Tough' theme. The new Ford comes in three cab styles, four box options, seven unique trim levels and 35 configurations to give buyers a custom-made vehicle. The new frame is strong and lighter and the cabin is significantly quieter. Drivetrain choices include two V-8 engines with a six-speed automatic transmission and a smaller V-8 with a four-speed automatic transmission replaces the previous V-6. The interior has more than 30 storage areas including a new flow-through

console large enough to hold at least two lap top computers. Available 'smart features' include an in-dash computer, Ford Sync™ communications and entertainment system with Sirius Travel Link™ with real-time traffic, coast-to-coast weather conditions and fuel pricing for 120,000 gas stations.

### MOST ECONOMICAL LUXURY SEDAN

Mercedes-Benz has achieved a crucial breakthrough in battery technology and will implement it next year in the S400 BlueHybrid. Daimler has integrated the lithium-ion battery into the vehicle's climate control system to keep the battery at an optimal system temperature between 59 and 95 degrees Fahrenheit. Held at that temperature range the small batteries provide maximum performance and longer life as compared to conventional nickel metal hydride batteries. In the development process, Mercedes has registered 25 patents on the technology. The 299 horsepower gasoline engine of the S400 hybrid achieves 30 mpg with very low

emissions, 0 to 60 mph acceleration time of 7.3 seconds and a top speed of 155 mph. A planned diesel hybrid, the S300, is expected to get even better fuel economy.

### FORD'S SMALL EURO DELIVERY VAN

Ford is hoping its small European-engineered Transit Connect will meet the same success that the larger Dodge Sprinter van has received in the US market. At about 180 inches long, the Transit is about the same size as a Ford Focus five-door. The tall van is equipped with six doors — conventional front doors, sliding doors on both sides and side-opening rear cargo doors. The Transit can be customized for a wide variety of configurations in the 143 cubic foot cargo area accommodating loads up to 6.5 feet in length and 4.7 ft. wide. Ford Transit will be available in select North American markets by mid 2009. ■

Auto News Update is compiled from a variety of industry sources for *Arizona Driver Magazine* by **BILL & BARBARA SCHAFFER** of *Auto Digest*.

★ = National Events

Goodguys Schedule as of 10/23/07. All dates subject to change.





1. What is Ford's new luxury F-150 truck model called?
  - a. King Ranch II
  - b. Super Chief
  - c. Platinum
  - d. Limited
2. How many Lamborghini dealers are there in the United States?
  - a. 20 dealers
  - b. 30 dealers
  - c. 50 dealers
  - d. 70 dealers
3. What percentage of vehicles sold in the US in 2007 were flex-fuel models or use another fuel like E85 Ethanol?
  - a. 4 percent
  - b. 6 percent
  - c. 8 percent
  - d. 10 percent
4. How many Smart car dealerships are there in the US?
  - a. 34 dealerships
  - b. 68 dealerships
  - c. 136 dealerships
  - d. 272 dealerships
5. Which auto company had the highest retention rate (customers who bought again from the same company) in 2007?
  - a. BMW
  - b. General Motors
  - c. Honda
  - d. Toyota
6. How much more does steel weigh than an equivalent part made of carbon fiber?
  - a. steel weighs twice as much
  - b. steel weighs four times
  - c. steel weighs seven times as much
  - d. steel weighs ten times as much
7. How much weight is saved on the upcoming Corvette ZR1 by building the roof, hood, front spoiler, front fenders, side rocker panels and rear spoiler out of carbon fiber instead of composites?
  - a. 15 pounds
  - b. 35 pounds
  - c. 60 pounds
  - d. 95 pounds

8. Which North American vehicle assembly plant built the most vehicles in 2007?
  - a. Toyota: Georgetown, Ky
  - b. GM: Oshawa, Ontario
  - c. Honda: Marysville, Ohio
  - d. NUMMI: Fremont, Calif.
9. How much carbon dioxide gas is created from the refining and burning, in a car engine, of one gallon of gasoline?
  - a. 6 lbs of CO<sub>2</sub>
  - b. 18 lbs of CO<sub>2</sub>
  - c. 31 lbs of CO<sub>2</sub>
  - d. 43 lbs of CO<sub>2</sub>
10. How many Ford Explorers have been sold since first introduced 18 years ago?
  - a. 2.5 million
  - b. 4.5 million
  - c. 6.5 million
  - d. 8.5 million
11. Which company has the largest share of the full-size pickup market for 2007?
  - a. Ford
  - b. General Motors
  - c. Toyota
  - d. Chrysler
12. What car had the starring role as KITT in the two-hour movie special on NBC in February 2008 called "Knight Rider"?
  - a. Chevy Camaro prototype
  - b. Dodge Charger prototype
  - c. Ford Mustang Shelby GT500
  - d. Pontiac Trans Am
13. How much did the first 2009 Corvette ZR1 sell for at Barrett-Jackson 2008?
  - a. \$500,000
  - b. \$750,000
  - c. \$1 million
  - d. \$1.25 million
14. What car did Will Smith drive on empty streets of NYC in the movie *I am Legend*?
  - a. Chevrolet Corvette
  - b. Ford Mustang Shelby GT500
  - c. Dodge Viper
  - d. Dodge Challenger
15. How many manufacturers unveiled a new diesel-powered production or concept vehicle at the recent Detroit auto show?
  - a. 5 mfrs
  - b. 9 mfrs
  - c. 13 mfrs
  - d. 17 mfrs
16. Who, selling in the US, had the largest increase in return for its investors in 2007?
  - a. Suzuki
  - b. Daimler AG
  - c. Porsche
  - d. Volkswagen
17. How many Ford dealerships were dropped in 2007?
  - a. 121 dealers
  - b. 214 dealers
  - c. 333 dealers
  - d. 401 dealers
18. How much did compact car sales change in the US in 2007?
  - a. down 1.3%
  - b. up 2.4%
  - c. up 3.9%
  - d. up 5.5%

19. Which small car had the largest increase in sales for January 2008 versus 2007?
  - a. Toyota Yaris
  - b. Chevrolet Aveo
  - c. Honda Fit
  - d. Kia Rio
20. Who did a controversial TV commercial showing people destroying their vehicles so they could buy a new one at this manufacturer's 2007-closeout sale?
  - a. Chevrolet
  - b. Nissan
  - c. Toyota
  - d. Dodge
21. What type of vehicles will be sold by Chamco Automotive?
  - a. A small car built in Mexico
  - b. Chinese-built trucks and SUVs
  - c. An electric car from Canada
  - d. Small diesel-powered European cars
22. What company designed and built Honda's first SUV, the Passport?
  - a. Honda
  - b. Suzuki
  - c. General Motors
  - d. Isuzu
23. What was the most researched car on the top rated [Edmunds.com](http://Edmunds.com) for 2007?
  - a. Honda Civic
  - b. Toyota Camry
  - c. Honda Accord
  - d. BMW 3 Series
24. How many consecutive record breaking sales years has Honda had as of 2007?
  - a. 3 years
  - b. 6 years
  - c. 9 years
  - d. 12 years
25. How much did domestic makers spend per vehicle on incentives during 2007?
  - a. \$988
  - b. \$1,479
  - c. \$2,551
  - d. \$3,208
26. How were minivan sales in 2007?
  - a. up 2.1%
  - b. down 6.5%
  - c. down 12.0%
  - d. down 18.3%
27. Which of the following Mercedes-Benz models is not offered in an AMG version?
  - a. R-Class and GL-Class
  - b. R-Class and C-Class
  - c. R-Class and ML-Class
  - d. R-Class and G-Class
28. Which brand sold the most certified pre-owned vehicles in 2007?
  - a. Ford
  - b. Honda
  - c. Toyota
  - d. Chevrolet
29. What percentage of new car buyers in 2007 owed more on their trade-in vehicle than the vehicle was worth?
  - a. 5.7 percent
  - b. 16.1 percent
  - c. 25.6 percent
  - d. 32.0 percent

ANSWERS ON NEXT PAGE >>



Piloti Spyder SV  
Black/Ecosse Blue/Race Yellow

What's the difference between a driving shoe and a regular shoe?

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the pedals. And Piloti's patented Roll Control™ heel not only helps with precise pedal application, it also centers and stabilizes your heels while walking.

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>ANSWERS (quiz on previous page)



1. Answer: c. The next generation top luxury F-150 is the Platinum. It includes retractable running boards plus heated and cooled seats. Ford says Platinum is a step up from the current top-of-the-line King Ranch model.
2. Answer: b. There are currently 30 Lamborghini dealerships in the US. In 2007, they sold a total 900 cars.
3. Answer: b. According to the Power Information Network, 6 percent of the new vehicles sold in the US in 2007 were flex-fuel vehicles capable of burning a second fuel, like E85 Ethanol in addition to gasoline.
4. Answer: b. Of the 500 US dealers that applied to be Smart dealership, 68 were picked to sell the mini car in 31 states. Six additional dealerships are planned by the end of 2008.
5. Answer: d. Toyota (Toyota, Lexus and Scion) had a 68.9 percent customer retention rate for 2007. GM 64.7 percent. Honda 63.3 percent. BMW 56.9 percent.

6. Answer: d. According to Tom Wallace, vehicle line executive for the new Chevrolet Corvette, "Carbon is one-fifth the weight of a composite, which is half the weight of steel." That makes carbon fiber 1/10th the weight of steel.
7. Answer: b. According to Chevrolet Corvette engineers, they saved 35 pounds over the regular Corvette by building the roof, hood, front spoiler, front fenders, side rocker panels and rear spoiler out of carbon fiber instead of a composite.
8. Answer: a. For the first time in eight years the Toyota plant in Georgetown, Ky., surpassed GM's Oshawa, Ontario plant building 514,382 vehicles compared to the 470,016 built by the GM plant. Honda 458,843. NUMMI (GM-Toyota) 407,881.
9. Answer: d. According to the EPA Office of Transportation and Air Quality, 24 pounds of carbon dioxide are released by the refining of one gallon of gasoline and another 19 pounds of carbon dioxide are emitted by burning one gallon of gasoline in a car engine. Combined the one gallon of gas has produced 43 pounds of carbon dioxide.
10. Answer: c. Ford has sold more than 6.5 million Explorers since it started building the SUV 18 years ago.
11. Answer: b. Individually Ford F Series has the largest share (32.3 percent) of the full-size pickup market for 2007, but as a company, General Motors was tops with 9.7 percent for GMC and 28.0 percent for Chevrolet (38.6 percent combined). Chrysler's Dodge Ram 16.8 percent. Toyota Tundra 9.2 percent. The smallest share was Nissan with 3.1 percent.
12. Answer: c. The part of KITT, the car that talks in the TV movie "Knight Rider," was played by a Ford Mustang Shelby GT500. In the original TV series, the car was a Pontiac Trans Am.

13. Answer: c. The first 2009 Chevrolet Corvette sold for \$1 million at the 2008 Barrett-Jackson Auction. Winning bidder, collector David Ressler, takes delivery at the National Corvette Museum and receives a three-day driving experience at the Bondurant School, with Corvette Racing's Ron Fellows as a special instructor. Jay Leno also donated tickets to the *Tonight Show*, plus a tour of his personal car collection.
14. Answer: b. Will Smith was driving around the empty streets of New York City in the recent movie, *I Am Legend*, in a red Ford Mustang Shelby GT500.
15. Answer: c. 13 manufacturers unveiled at least one new diesel-powered vehicle at the recent Detroit auto show: Audi, BMW, Chrysler, General Motors, Honda, Kia, Land Rover, Mercedes-Benz, Mitsubishi, Saturn, Subaru, Toyota and Volkswagen.
16. Answer: d. Volkswagen more than doubled investor's money in 2007 with a 104.9 percent gain in shareholder return. Porsche 61.8 percent. Daimler AG 55.7 percent. Suzuki 23.7 percent. On average, the global automakers had a 1.3 percent gain for 2007.
17. Answer: b. Ford trimmed 214 dealerships in 2007, bringing their total to 4,056. In 2006, they cut 126 dealers.
18. Answer: b. According to [Edmunds.com](http://Edmunds.com) compact sales increased 2.4 percent in 2007 from the previous year. Surprisingly, SUV sales increased by 5.8 percent, despite gasoline prices hovering around \$3 per gallon.
19. Answer: c. The Honda Fit has a 120.0 percent increase in sales over January 2007. Kia Rio 66.8 percent. Chevrolet Aveo 40.2 percent. Toyota Yaris 30.6 percent. Yaris had the largest sales in January 2008: 7,666.
20. Answer: c. Toyota did a TV commercial showing people pushing cars off the roof of a parking garage, rolling a boulder off a cliff onto a car, dropping a steel beam on a car and other destruction so they could buy a new car at the Toyota end-of-2007 clearance. The ad upset two groups that fight insurance fraud and it has since been discontinued.
21. Answer: b. Chamco is short for China American Cooperative Automotive Inc. They plan to start selling Chinese-made pickups and SUVs starting in 2009.
22. Answer: d. The first Honda SUV, the Passport, was designed and built by Isuzu. It was first sold in 1994.
23. Answer: a. According to the [Edmunds.com](http://Edmunds.com) website, the Honda Civic was the most researched car for 2007, followed in order by the Honda Accord, Toyota Camry and BMW 3 Series. BMW was the only non-Japanese vehicle on the list. The Honda CR-V was most researched among the minivans, SUVs and trucks.
24. Answer: d. With record sales for the 12th consecutive year, Honda sold 1,371,438 vehicles in 2007.
25. Answer: d. Domestic automakers spent an average \$3,208 per vehicle on incentives in 2007, down from \$3,254 the previous year.
26. Answer: d. Total minivan sales dropped 18.3 percent in 2007 to only 807,053, compared to 987,817 in 2006.
27. Answer: a. The only two Mercedes-Benz models not offered with an AMG performance variant are the R-Class sport wagon and the GL-Class larger SUV.
28. Answer: d. Chevrolet sold the largest number of certified pre-owned vehicles in 2007: 299,444. Toyota 271,627. Honda 203,903. Ford 134,521.
29. Answer: c. 25.6 percent of the customers, who traded in used vehicles in 2007, owed more on their vehicle than it was worth (also referred to as being "upside down" in their loan).

The Car Smarts quiz includes news and trivia from industry sources, trade journals and consumer magazines compiled for *Arizona Driver Magazine* by **BILL & BARBARA SCHAFFER** of *Auto Digest*.

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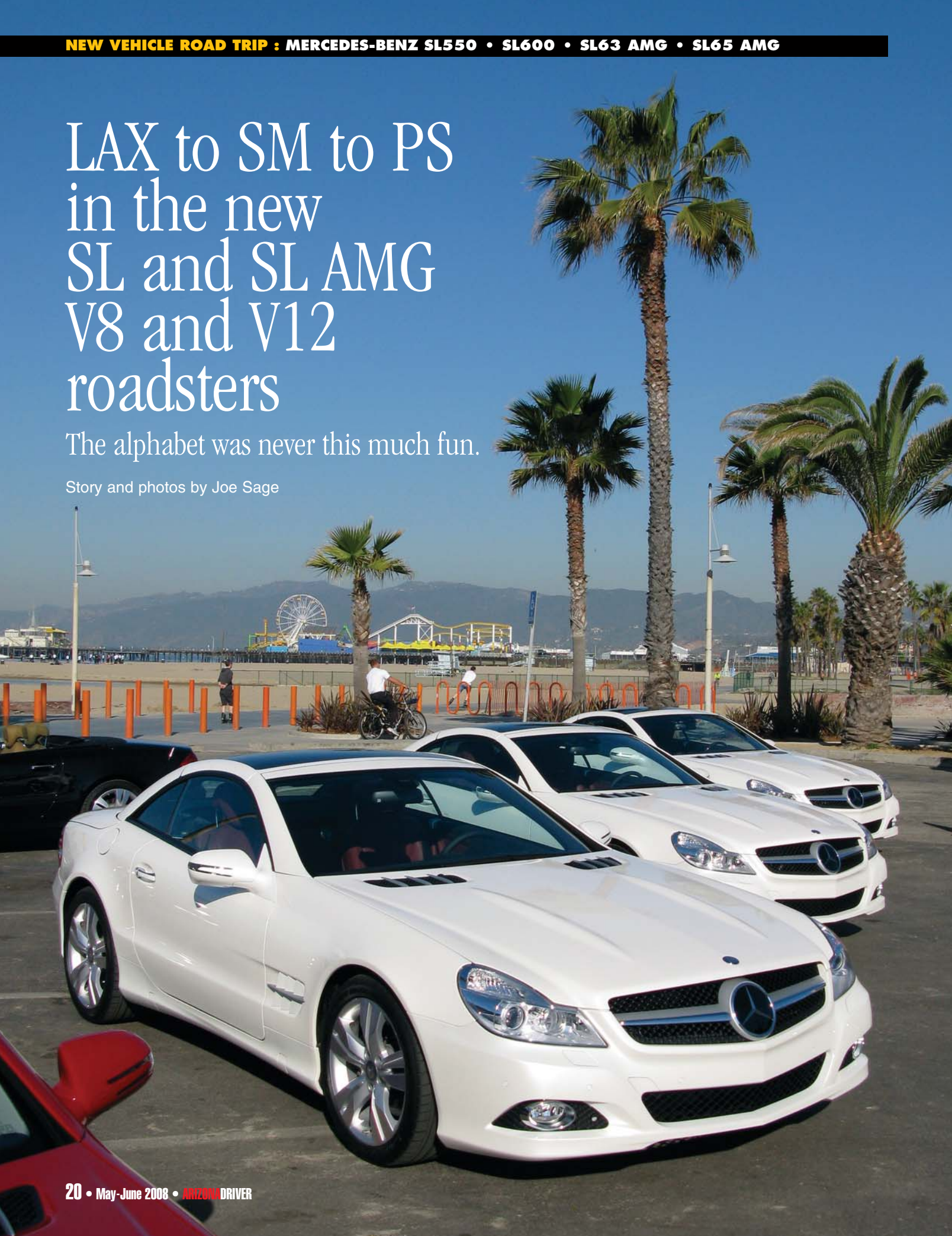
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\*Warranty is a limited powertrain warranty. For details, see retailer or go to [kia.com](http://kia.com). †Based on comparison of 2008 models. \*\*2008 EPA fuel economy estimates 24 mpg/city and 32 mpg/hwy with automatic transmission for EX model. Actual mileage may vary. ‡Government star ratings are part of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's New Car Assessment Program (safercar.gov). Model tested with standard side impact airbags (SABs). †MSRP for LX model is \$13,520, including \$625 freight, excluding taxes, title, license, options and retailer charges. SX model shown costs more. Actual prices set by retailer.

# LAX to SM to PS in the new SL and SL AMG V8 and V12 roadsters

The alphabet was never this much fun.

Story and photos by Joe Sage



Before a race, it's common to walk the track first, to familiarize drivers with the course. For the SL tour, Mercedes-Benz and AMG installed a complete room for journalists to study the route on a floor map, while reviewing giant-screen videos and receiving printed route books, along with presentations by project engineers.

The convertible hardtop necessarily gobbles up some trunk space, but leaves a fair amount, and a separator ensures convenient access and extra protection.

Our drive started in the streets of greater LA, heading through the Hollywood Hills to the spectacular winding two-lane highways of the San Gabriel Mountains.

First we'll clarify the lineup in fundamental form. The SL550 has a 382-hp 5.5-liter V8. The SL600 has a 510-hp V12 (also about 5.5-liter, though actually 5513cc against the SL550's 5461cc; and why is it called a 600? well, they rounded up). Their powertrains are basically unchanged for 2009, but they receive a significant facelift and a few other new features. The performance folks at AMG have worked way more than their usual magic to bring you the SL63 AMG, with a new naturally aspirated 518-hp 6.3-liter V8 and other breakthrough technologies (it's called 6.3-liter and "63" despite actual displacement of 6208cc for heritage and full-Mercedes-lineup continuity reasons that could escape many). And the SL65 AMG ups the ante with a 604-hp twin turbo 6.0-liter V12.

#### TAKING IT TO THE STREETS

We were fortunate enough to be invited to the US launch of the 2009 SL lineup, more than a month before its press embargo was to be lifted, along with the engineering staffs of both Mercedes-Benz and AMG, as well as TV, print and online press from Europe, Asia and the US. Mercedes decided the best place for the launch would be near Hollywood, as that's where the original 300SL "gullwing" was launched in the 1950s.

Not a bad choice, either, as it afforded us a combination of urban, urbane, mountain, resort and desert driving that put the cars through their paces in fine style and brought us most of the way back to the Arizona line. We flew to LAX and were chauffeured to an oceanfront hotel in Santa Monica for orientation (and a chance to load a flash card with music from the company's online library for use on our road test, as they are very proud of the cars' audio systems). The SL550 and SL600 were ready to go in the morning, and the SL63 AMG and SL65 AMG awaited us in Palm Springs.

We started with the SL550, figuring the best move for the second half of the day would be "up," to the SL600. Applying a combination of the first night's orientation, including a full-suite floor map of the route, plus a detailed route book, plus the SL's navigation system, the first miles through metro Los Angeles' streets were clear enough to let us enjoy the operation of the retractable hardtop, the music of the SL's V-8, the scenery and aura of Hollywood, imagining then versus now, and even in car-culture Hollywood, plenty of admiring glances at the SL.

We spent very little time on area freeways, heading from the surface streets of the city straight to the San Gabriel Mountains and a challenging drive through the twisties and significant altitude changes, till we emerged near Palmdale, in California's military desert. Time to really open it up. Long straightaways combined with graded turns and Union Pacific grade crossings (where

KEEP RIGHT >>





The morning of the first day took the SL fleet through its original 1954 launch site of West Hollywood (also significant because Hollywood has the highest density of SL ownership in the US), through the Hollywood Hills, over the mountains to the valley near Palmdale, and across the open desert to Silverwood Lake State Recreation Area for lunch and a vehicle change.

The SL550, outside and in. Note the Airscarf headrest heating fans' vents.

A gourmet lunch break at Silverwood Lake Park included a comprehensive presentation of every generation of SL ever produced, as well as technologies applied during the breed's history and many brand new SL features.

After lunch, we changed from the SL550 to the SL600 and drove high into the San Bernardino National Forest (passing through the aftermath of 2007's massive forest fires), then down to I-10 and into Palm Springs.

we could guess our SL just might outperform the mighty diesels).

As we passed on into the foothills of the San Bernardino Mountains, we changed the suspension settings to Sport. We would never change back. These settings reduce body roll, quicken shifts and plant the car solidly on the road through the most demanding curves. Our co-driver, Camilo Alfaro of [autoproyecto.com](http://autoproyecto.com) (linked at our website) attached a video camera to the car at this point, and it was time to hit those curves even harder. Despite being an over-two-ton car with an automatic transmission, the base SL, when set to Sport, was lacking nothing in performance.

**MIDDAY, MUSEUM, MEDIA, MORE POWER**

By midday, we'd easily arrived in time for lunch at Silverwood Lake State Recreation Area, where Mercedes had performed another amazing stunt: they'd created a complete museum in the park, near water's edge, including an elaborate covered and partially enclosed structure on a fully graded site, which of course was returned to pristine park conditions after the event. Here they displayed an example of every generation of SL ever made, along with engines, transmission, cutaway safety zones and a wealth of text and charts explaining the SL's heritage in great detail. On hand again were engineers and designers from Mercedes and AMG.

Camilo joined Kimatni Rawlins of [automotiverhythms.com](http://automotiverhythms.com) (also linked at our website) as they produced a video segment on the cars, first in English and then Spanish. Then, per our original plan, we changed to the SL600 for the balance of the day.

The SL550 features a seven-speed automatic transmission that improves acceleration and enhances fuel efficiency, while gear

changes are barely noticeable, especially in the higher gears. The seven-speed shortens 0-to-60 mph time and allows significantly quicker acceleration for highway passing. Using seven gears allows individual gears to be spaced closer together while providing a larger overall spread between the lowest and highest gear. The V12-powered SL600 uses a modified five-speed automatic transmission. The SL600, with its V12, also weighs 4429 pounds, against 4220 for the SL550. Nonetheless, the SL600 claims a 0-to-60 time of just 4.4 seconds, compared to 5.3 seconds for the SL550. Cool tech advantage: SL550. Raw performance advantage: SL600. Refined performance advantage: a complex series of trade-offs. Tie-breaker? That depends on your budget. SL pricing for 2009 is still a carefully guarded secret as we go to press, but 2008 base prices were about \$96k for the





The whole fleet of SL and SL AMG models was together in Palm Springs. For this last leg, we had to choose, so we went with the totally new SL63 AMG.

There were two AMG routes, one longer and one a bit shorter. Those of us with earlier flights took the truncated loop, but what a loop it was. Suffice it to say it's close enough to Arizona to warrant a trip over there sometime, with your wheels.

SL550 and about \$134k for the SL600.

As long as we're on the subject, last year's AMG models ran about \$130k and \$188k. As you can see, the upper SL and the lower SL AMG overlap slightly, creating a far more complex set of trade-offs.

#### FULL SL LINEUP ENHANCEMENTS

The 2009 SL features new styling, with fenders that incorporate totally restyled headlamps and modified gill-type air outlets behind the front wheels. A redesigned hood with twin power domes and a wider, single-bar grille emphasize width and make a visual connection to the famous 1954 300SL. Side mirrors are larger and have built-in turn signals. At the rear, the SL has a new air diffuser in the bumper and trapezoidal exhaust tips that again emphasize its width and hint at the car's power.

The cockpit features a new three-spoke steering wheel and restyled instrument cluster with red tach and speedo needles that swing to max then back to zero when the ignition is turned on.

The 2009 SL roadster is available with Airscarf, an innovative feature that can extend the top-down season into cooler months—a heating system built into both seats' headrests, acting as what Mercedes calls an invisible scarf around the head and neck, at the touch of a button.

The standard COMAND system with 6.5-inch screen includes GPS navigation with a new multimedia interface and a 4GB hard drive, as well as integrated six-disc CD-DVD player and a Music Register for about 1,000 MP3 tracks. It's easy to connect an iPod, USB stick, memory card and other devices. Tracks display on the COMAND screen, as well as a smaller display in the center of the instrument cluster, and can also be selected by using buttons on the multi-function steering wheel. Bluetooth-enabled cell phones will work hands-free—even with your phone in a pocket or purse. Audio is automatically muted for calls in or out, and callers are heard over the audio system, and phone lists show on the COMAND system.

The SL's retractable hardtop can be fully opened or closed in just 16 seconds, transforming the car from a quiet, weather-tight coupe to a top-down, open-air convertible. Operation is controlled by a switch on the center console. Even with the top down, the SL offers 7.2 cubic feet of trunk space; with the top up, the trunk holds 10.2 cubic feet.

Since an open car can leave occupants vulnerable in a rollover, Mercedes engineers have created the world's first automatic roll bar. The padded, leather-covered bar pops up and locks in a third of a second if sensors detect an impending rollover. The driver can also raise and lower the bar by a switch on the console.

Stopping power for the SL is provided by large, four-wheel disc brakes enhanced with four-channel ABS anti-lock control. The SL550 is equipped with vented 13.8-inch front and solid 12.6-inch rear discs. Matched to its power and speed capability, the SL600 comes with even larger 14.2-inch vented rotors up front and 13.0-inch vented rotors at the rear, while the SL65 AMG boasts vented discs that are another 1.2 inches in diameter.

#### SUNDOWN, SUPPER, SLEEP, SATURDAY AND AN SL AMG

Those brakes brought us to a stop in Palm Springs on Friday evening, where we dined and stayed at one of the most classic hotels in town. In fact, we're told there are only a couple of hotels there; most of the action is in Rancho Mirage and Palm Desert. Of course, we 'Zonies all know Palm Springs best—the one with the In'n'Out Burger exit en route to LA (more significant when it was the closest one to Phoenix).

On Saturday morning, we had a choice between the two AMG models: the SL63 and the SL65. Sound about the same? They're not. Go with the bigger one? We already learned on the 550/600 drive that the V-12 offers great power, but more weight and a heavier nose. But that's only the tip of the iceberg in comparing the two AMG offerings. With the amazing new technologies we'd learned about in the SL63, that's the one we chose.

#### THE AMG TOUR DE FORCE

Perhaps the sportiest SL roadster ever, the new SL63 AMG is powered by a 6.3-liter, all-AMG V8 engine that's coupled to a newly developed MCT transmission. With an innovative start-up clutch replacing a conventional torque converter, a seven-speed multi-clutch technology (MCT) transmission combines the direct connection of a manual gearbox with the lightning-quick automatic gear shifts of a Formula 1 race car. The seven-speed MCT with AMG Speedshift is an all-new design, available only in the new SL63 AMG. With low rotational mass, its start-up clutch helps the transmission respond instantly and dynamically with no slip.

Fitted with four drive modes: C (Comfort), S (Sport), S+ (Sport plus) and M (Manual), the transmission provides customized shift control and does so with no interruption of power. In Comfort mode, shifts coupled with "soft" accelerator response are set up for smooth power transfer. In Sport, upshifts and downshifts take place at higher engine speed, and shifts are around 20 percent faster than in C mode. Switching to S+ cuts another 20 percent off shift times, while the sportiest mode, Manual, reduces shift times by another 10 percent—a total reduction of 50 percent. In M, shifts take just 100 milliseconds. We had a shorter drive in the AMG, just a few hours, so we didn't both get intimate with all four settings, but we'd guess the farther we went away from C and toward M, the happier we'd be.

The SL63 AMG is powered by an AMG 6.3-liter V8 engine that features four valves per cylinder, variable valve timing, bucket tappets (rather than rocker arms) and a variable intake manifold. Sharing no parts with Mercedes-Benz V8 engines, the 6.3-liter engine was a completely autonomous development at AMG. Built almost completely from high-strength silicon-aluminum alloy, the cylinder bores make use of a twin-wire-arc-sprayed (TWAS) coating, a process that results in very low friction and running surfaces that are twice as hard as conventional cast-iron cylinders.

The engine block boasts an especially rigid bedplate acting as the overall support of the main bearings, cast-in steel reinforcements and a sturdy closed-deck layout in the cylinder head area. The high-flow intake and exhaust ports form a vertical straight line, helping the 6.3 engine rev freely to more than 7,000 rpm, yet the highly flexible AMG engine still produces nearly 90 percent of its peak torque at just 2,000 rpm.

A finely balanced crankshaft with six counterweights spins in five main bearings. Counterweights feature heavy metal plugs—

usually found only in racing engines—so they can be significantly smaller, increasing power by reducing rotational inertia and oil drag. Each forged connecting rod is precisely "cracked" by a laser beam, with an irregular fracture contributing to strength when the two halves are clamped around the crankshaft. Connecting rods and lightweight pistons are matched for extremely close weight tolerances that contribute to smooth running at high speeds. Small nozzles in the engine block spray cooling oil onto the underside of each piston crown.

Twin overhead cams open 32 valves via bucket-type followers. Instead of rocker arms, the cam lobes sweep across the flat top of the followers, directly on top of the valve stems. This space-saving design provides a very stiff valve train for large valve openings and dependable high-speed operation, for maximum horsepower and torque. A hydraulic lifter automatically maintains valve clearance, for long service intervals and low costs.

Variable intake and exhaust valve timing maximizes efficiency and torque over a wide RPM range. Valve timing can be automatically adjusted within a range of 40 degrees using electrohydraulic vane-type adjusters on each camshaft.

#### STYLIN'

The SL63 comes with a noticeably different AMG hood, a front apron with a pronounced wedge shape, larger cooling air intakes, and a black grille. Bi-xenon headlights with black surrounds and large round fog lights ringed in chrome and set to the side emphasize the vehicle's width. Hot engine air exits through fender outlets and from "gills" behind the front wheels. Trim panels finished in matte silver with "6.3 AMG" lettering catch the eye, as do new outside mirrors with arrow-shaped LED turn indicators.

SL63 AMG body styling also includes deeper AMG side sill panels, a beefy rear apron with a large black air diffuser, two pairs of chrome tailpipes and a functional AMG rear lip spoiler.

Finished in nappa leather and genuine carbon fiber, the interior features AMG sport seats, an AMG three-spoke steering wheel and a sport instrument cluster with red tach and speedo needles that swing to the max and back when the ignition is turned on.

An optional Performance Package is available for the SL63 AMG, with larger brakes, 19" wheels and larger tires, enhanced suspension and a smaller AMG sport steering wheel with a flattened underside and silver-aluminum shift paddles.

#### DRIVE ALL FOUR, BUY ONE OF EACH

So this is where we answer the which-of-four-models question to the mutual satisfaction of most of the automotive writers and TV people on this event: once you get into the financial stratum of the SL600, go for the SL63 AMG. There are enough advantages in the smaller engine and lighter weight to, well, weigh against the V-12. But there are enough advantages in the AMG setup to weigh against the base models, if indeed you are in that price range. If you're not in that price range, you can get all the style and plenty of performance from the SL550. If you need the balls-to-the-wall model—and you know who you are!—then only the V12 SL65 AMG will do. That leaves the SL600. Clearly, if V12 balance, panache and bragging rights suit your tastes, but you want to save \$50k or more, this is your car. Budget aside, we'd go for the SL63 AMG. We think. But then again, recreating this test drive might give us one more chance to make absolutely sure. ■



# Body Candy

## Performance-inspired jewelry to get your motor running

By Nick Calderone  
 Photos: Randall Bohl Photography  
[www.randallbohl.com](http://www.randallbohl.com)

Going fast and looking good create a tightly wound marriage of two viscerally pleasing things. Speed and aesthetics. Any high velocity exotic worth its Heidi Klum good looks can back up its overtly sexy claims with the ability to turn Goodyears to smoke in 3 seconds flat. But is it the looks or the performance that makes an F430 or a Carrera GT, for example, lustful? What if you could take some of the sexy bits of an exotic luxo-racer and wear them? Would it make you feel and look racier?

Cornelis Hollander began to ponder that question and was fascinated by the idea of transforming the streamlined looks of modern sports cars into a piece of jewelry. Mr. Hollander gained his inspiration from his hobby—racing motorcycles and high performance cars. Hollander's hands are tuned to the delicate nature of crafting and designing innovative jewelry. Born in the Netherlands, he honed his skills with jewels in England and South Africa before parking himself in Old Town Scottsdale in 1984. His success in the crowded Scottsdale arts district is evident simply by considering his longevity in that fickle and ever-evolving neighborhood. Now, his well-established line of jewels is distributed all over the world, and everything continues to be made right in Scottsdale.

On an April evening, the gallery is filled with the friendly chatter of bling lovers and clinking wine glasses. The front doors of Hollander's store are flung wide and flanked by three smiling beauties welcoming the night's art walkers. Scottsdale hosts a stroll through its arts district every Thursday of the month, and Hollander's gallery ebbs and flows with shoppers and gawkers anxious to see his latest creations.

Hollander's windows sparkle with endless variations of body candy from his years of tinkering, but this evening art lovers are drawn in by gems much less delicate than gold and diamonds.

Three glinting examples of street jewelry flex in front of Hollander's store, stopping passersby and making them think "wouldn't you like to look as good as that?" The attention getters are all from Stuttgart... a few of Porsche's finest renditions of sex appeal and speed.

A 996 and 997 dressed in sleek silver look fast standing still. The third is a Carrera GT, inked from targa top to rims in menacing black. The cars are courtesy of Evolution Motorsports, a Tempe-based performance shop that specializes in taking the world's hottest rides

and turning them into insanely tuned luxury exotics. The three cars attracting eyes tonight are like screaming banshees in wolves' clothing. These are fast cars to begin with, but the GT, for example, has had about \$50 thousand worth of upgrades, which lets this half-million-dollar speedster run the famed Texas mile at a record-breaking 185mph.

The skeleton of the GT is a framework of stiff carbon fiber. When woven, baked and polished to a sheen, the basic black element takes on a beauty of form and function few manmade fibers have ever achieved. That's one of the exotic car elements that intrigued Hollander. He was inspired, he says unconsciously, by some of the splendor of sports cars. The idea of automotive-influenced jewels came to him years ago, but only recently did he drop the hammer on the idea. In three months, he and his small staff of six created an entire line of race inspired jewelry.

The Carbon Concept line comprises an assortment of fifty different pieces, from rings and cuff links to pendants and bracelets. Each is made of sterling silver and all incorporate black diamonds and carbon fiber. Slipping on one of Hollander's new rings feels like putting your favorite car in your pocket. The ring's main structure combines smooth curves with sharp angles. Holes pierce the shank of many of the rings, giving them a lightweight, race-inspired look much like a vented rotor or a classic GT steering wheel. The black diamonds punctuating the silver are reminiscent of lug nuts, and the carbon fiber centerpiece looks like a racecar's unpainted hood or deck lid. Several pieces are dual gender, and the prices are relatively modest, beginning around \$400.

If you're the kind of car nut who kisses your wheels good night, or just a fan of all things fast and sleek, these modestly priced jewels will help keep the smell of your last burn out and the rumble of your exhaust fresh in your mind.

For more information:  
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 480-941-1136  
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 1625 E. Weber Drive  
 Tempe AZ 85281  
 480-317-9911 ■



Product photos courtesy Diamond Graphics, Inc. - Los Angeles

Front door girls photo courtesy Cornelis Hollander Designs, Inc.

## Audi R8 and S5 star in "Iron Man" from Marvel Studios and Paramount Pictures

Robert Downey Jr. stars as Tony Stark, the title character in "Iron Man." His superpowers come from highly versatile and indestructible high-tech armor he developed himself. Tony Stark is smart, successful and uncompromising. Naturally he puts his extraordinary capabilities to work for the good of mankind—in the form of Iron Man, his superhero alter ego. No other comic book hero has such extensive knowledge of technology or of the opportunities offered by innovation and cutting-edge ideas.

But when he is without his suit, the technically-adept billionaire relies on the Audi R8. "The R8 is the perfect car for Tony Stark," "Iron Man" director Jon Favreau said. "It's a technological masterpiece. Plus it's fast, safe and sure to be noticed." The leading lady, Oscar® winner Gwyneth Paltrow (Virginia "Pepper" Potts), drives an Audi S5 in the film. ■



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# Dodge scores a bull's-eye with the 2009 Ram pickup

By H.R. Driver  
Photos: Randall Bohl Photography  
[www.randallbohl.com](http://www.randallbohl.com)

Ralph Gilles  
Vice President—  
Jeep®/Truck, Advance Interior  
and Component Design  
Chrysler LLC

**W**e were not surprised when Dodge offered to give us a sneak preview of their new 2009 Ram pickup. Phoenix is the fourth largest pickup truck market in America. However, we were very pleasantly surprised at the lengths to which Dodge has gone to insure that the new Ram will be the most advanced, versatile and innovative full-sized pickup in the market. And best of all, we received a detailed presentation from the mastermind of the vehicle, Ralph Gilles, Vice President—Jeep®/Truck, Advance Interior and Component Design for Chrysler LLC.

From its Charger-inspired front grille to the built-in spoiler on its tailgate, the new Dodge Ram is the most sleek and aerodynamic pickup on the road. The tight tolerances between the fascia and front bumper are reminiscent of the miniscule slits you find on a NASCAR racing machine. Gilles was shooting for a crisp, aerodynamic design, and he scored a bull's-eye with the new Ram pickup.

### Evolution Of The Dodge Ram Pickup

When Dodge unveiled their previous all-new Ram pickup in 2005, they stunned the competition. Along with its powerful 345 horsepower Hemi V-8, the Ram also featured the industry's first fully-boxed frame. Dodge's box frame was stronger and more torsionally rigid than conventional "C" channel frames. Consequently, the Ram pickup could haul and tow more than its competitors. For the first time, Dodge became a major player in the pickup market.

However, Ford, Chevrolet and Toyota have all introduced new full-sized pickups since then. Each surpassed the Ram in various areas. The Ford F-150 featured a fully-boxed frame and outboard rear shocks, which offered a more comfortable ride. The Toyota Tundra's new V-8 engine power bested the aging Ram Hemi V-8 by some 35 horses. Chevrolet improved the Silverado's aerodynamics and offered a multi-displacement V-8 engine which beat the old Hemi V-8's fuel economy.

Fortunately for Dodge, they have done their homework. The new Ram has raised the bar with its new multi-displacement Hemi VVT (Variable Valve Timing) V-8 engine. The new Hemi not only possesses 35 more horses, but it also delivers an estimated 4% better MPG. The Hemi Ram's performance? How about 0-60 in 6.1 seconds!

Dodge has also trumped the competition with their "first-in-class" multilink rear coil suspension system. While other half-ton pickups still use leaf springs at the rear, the new Ram 1500 features all-coil springs which provides better ride and handling.

"Won't the rear coil springs restrict the Ram 1500's towing capability?" you ask. Evidently not: the new Ram half-ton can tow up to 9,100 pounds. In fact, with its standard four-wheel ABS brakes, Electronic Stability Program and Trailer Sway Control, the new Ram 1500 will tow your trailer more surely and safely than its leaf-spring predecessor.

The new Ram also boasts best-in-class aerodynamics. The benefits of the Ram's low .419 Cd (drag coefficient) translates to better gas mileage and a quieter cabin. With a highly upgraded interior and a large crew cab option, the Ram also offers creature comforts which are second to none. Want examples? Heated and cooled seats, a floor-mounted ice box which holds ten 12-ounce drinks, a first-in-class live Sirius backseat TV and a first-in-class surround sound system are just a few of the Ram's new goodies.

### Will 2009 Be "The Year of the Ram"?

Yes, the improvements to the new Ram pickup are ample to move the Ram to the head of the class in 2009, but are they sufficient to keep the Ram on top in the future? Dodge's product planners and designers must have asked themselves this question, because their answer was to raise the bar even higher for the competition. Dodge has added some innovative and useful features which should keep

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the Ram in front for years to come.

Dodge's new Ram Box system, easy-lift tail gate, standard dual exhaust system and quad-seal doors are some examples that Dodge seriously intends to move ahead and stay ahead of the competition for a long time to come.

#### Innovative Dodge Ram Features

The new Ram Box is our personal favorite. Years ago, automotive designer Mark Stehenger and his design partner shared renderings of this design concept with us. Here is the basic idea: The area above the rear fender and between the interior pickup bed wall is totally unused. Why not utilize this space by installing lockable storage boxes?

The new Ram is the first pickup to use this storage system in a production vehicle. On each side of the pickup box, there is a lockable bin with 4.3 cubic feet of storage space. Each Ram Box can hold power tools, valuable components, a set of golf clubs or even ten cases of 12-ounce drinks on ice! For work and recreational usage, this option alone will put the new Ram one giant step ahead of the competition.

The easy-lift tailgate is something which Ford, Chevrolet, Nissan and Toyota have had for several years. While not unique, it allows owners to raise and lower the tailgate with just one hand. The old Ram tailgate was only easy-lift for professional athletes on steroids.

Part of the aerodynamic package of the new Ram is the use of quad-sealed doors. Quietness is a synergistic process. Tight body tolerances plus redundant door seals both contribute to the interior quietness of the vehicle, as does a rigid frame. The new Ram has four door seals, which isolate passengers from exterior wind and road noises. A nice touch.

Designer Ralph Gilles is responsible for the Ram's forward tilting, Charger-styled grille and the tidy packaging of the Ram's new dual exhaust system. Minor styling details? Not really. Styling attracts car buyers to the showrooms. Without cutting edge styling, consumers would not even give the new Ram pickup a second look. Incidentally, Gilles is also the man who designed the Chrysler 300, the automobile which put Chrysler back into the luxury car game with Lincoln and Cadillac.

Pickup load-locking systems are also not new. However, the previous Ram pickup did not have them. The new Ram allows owners to add an infinite number of accessories to suit their individual needs—bike racks, motorcycle tie-downs and more. The new Ram pickup can accommodate each consumer's special needs far better than the previous Ram truck.

"Garageability" is a huge issue for consumers. You might be surprised at how many consumers have purchased new pickups only to find that their new truck did not fit into their garage. The new Dodge Ram pickup will fit into virtually any standard-sized garage. Kudos to Dodge's product development team for making a line of pickup trucks which actually fits into the average garage. And yes, the new Ram 1500 does have a bed extender system for those rare times when you do actually need a longer box.

#### 2010 Will Be "The Year Of The Ram Diesel"

If you need the best possible fuel economy from your next half-ton pickup, you may wish to wait until 2010 when the Ram 1500 will be available with the new, compact Cummins turbo diesel engine. While diesel fuel is currently a little more expensive than gasoline, this should change as American oil refineries complete their transition to low-sulfur diesel production by 2010. Even if diesel prices remain a bit higher than gasoline, the superb mileage of the diesel will more than offset the extra few cents per gallon.

As a side note, if you have not driven a new-generation turbo diesel vehicle, then you are in for a big surprise. Today's turbo diesel engines are smooth, quiet, powerful and environmentally clean. The new turbo-diesel-powered pickups from the Detroit Three are on par with their gasoline counterparts in terms of performance and quietness. However, turbo diesels are vastly superior to gasoline engines when it comes to towing capabilities.

In Europe, over 50% of all vehicles on the road are diesel powered. At seven or eight dollars per gallon over there, diesels are viewed as a necessity rather than a luxury option as in Audi, BMW or Mercedes-Benz automobiles. At the rate at which fuel prices are escalating in America, can we be that far behind the Europeans in making the switch to clean diesels?

#### Conclusion

In the near term, it is difficult to envision any pickup truck which will incorporate all of the useful standard and optional features which the 2009 Ram pickup offers. By 2010, it is even more difficult to imagine another pickup which will offer all of the Ram's advanced features plus the benefits of a new compact, clean turbo diesel engine.

The choice is yours. You can acquire a new 2009 Ram pickup this fall or wait for the new Cummins turbo diesel Ram in 2010. Either way, you will have the most advanced half-ton pickup on the road. Besides, isn't it better to be ahead of the curve than behind it? ■

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Whether your teen has never been behind the wheel, has driving experience or has their driver's license, DrivingMBA is the only driving school with a driver training program to meet their specific needs. Don't let your teen get their driver training through trial and error. The errors are costly. They not only cost you in insurance rate increases, vehicle damage, but the most significant cost, the loss of life. Whether it is you, your teen, friends or family, even someone you don't know, a car collision can change lives forever. Make sure your teen is prepared to handle all types of driving situations.

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# TUCSON & SOUTHERN ARIZONA OUTDOOR ADVENTURE

Tucson's mild climate and ample sunshine make the Old Pueblo an ideal location for year-round outdoor adventures. A wide range of activities await locals and visitors alike, from hiking and mountain biking in the five mountain ranges surrounding the city, to scaling rock walls in a spectacular cactus-studded canyon. Travelers can take in the unique Sonoran Desert landscape from atop a trusty steed, or safely buckled into a rock-crawling Hummer. Not surprisingly Tucson was recently named one of the United States' top "Bicycle Friendly" communities, boasting miles and miles of bike lanes and paths in and around the city. Whether you can cram it all in to one weekend, or you have to keep coming back for more, Tucson and the surrounding Sonoran Desert landscape is a beautiful host for anybody seeking a little outdoor adventure.

## HIKING

Tucson is surrounded by five mountain ranges—the Santa Catalinas and Tortolitas to the north; the Rincons to the east; the Santa Ritas to the south; and the Tucson Mountains to the west. All feature a wide variety of hiking trails for a variety of skill levels. Ranging in intensity from nearly flat strolls through the cacti, to steep scrambles up forest trails, Tucson's hiking opportunities have something for just about everyone. Take a day-long hike or a quick meander on one of the hundreds of trails in and around the Old Pueblo. Sabino Canyon—cutting into the Santa Catalinas north of the city is a very popular hiking spot. Take on the rugged Seven Falls trail, a three-hour trek that crisscrosses over Sabino Creek and ends near natural pools of water (most months of the year). Less avid trekkers can take a relaxing stroll along the paved Sabino Canyon Trail, or take a tram along the wide, scenic path for a small fee.

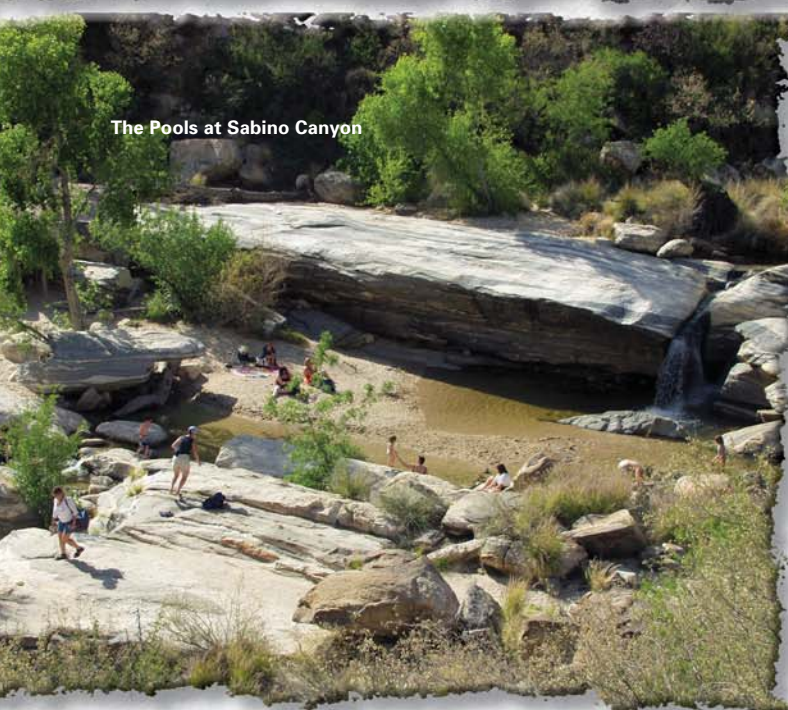
## BIKING

Boasting more than more than 500 miles of metro bikeways, Tucson was recently named the third-best cycling city in the country by *Bicycling* magazine. For mountain biking enthusiasts, the surrounding mountain ranges provide a near-endless assortment of challenges in both desert and mountain climates. The Rincon Mountains to the east feature a range of trails for bikers of differing skills. Intermediate riders can hit the fun, fast Chiva Falls trail, with

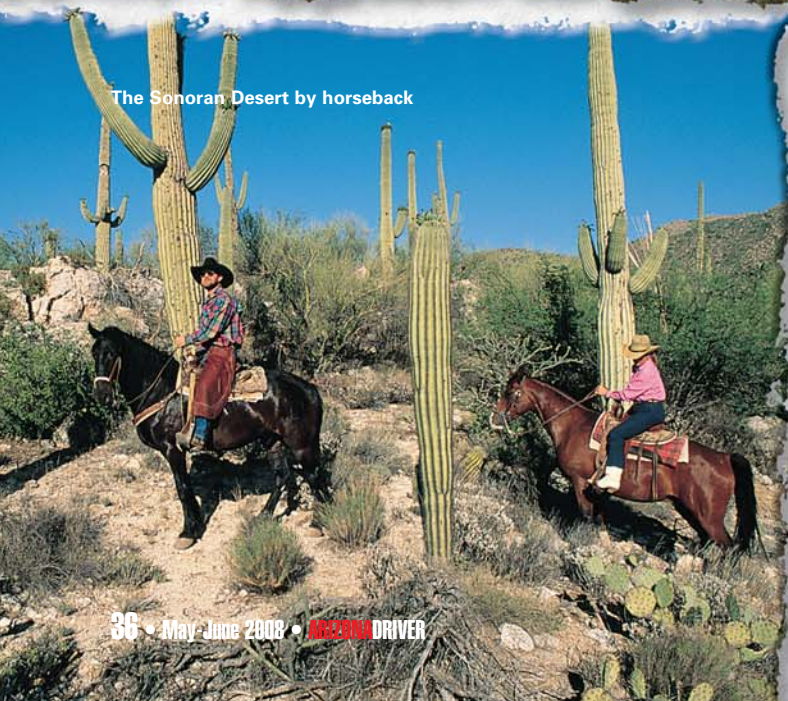
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Biking down Mt. Lemmon Highway



The Pools at Sabino Canyon



The Sonoran Desert by horseback

short, steep climbs and descents through rolling hills. Seasoned bikers can enjoy the challenging 14.6-mile La Mesa del Oso (Bear Mesa) trail, which takes visitors on a steep, open-desert excursion with loose, rocky climbs and downhill. Competitive road biking aficionados can also come to Tucson to watch or take part in El Tour de Tucson, a 110-mile road bike race that attracts more than 5,500 participants each year. The largest "perimeter" cycling event in the country, El Tour de Tucson has events for all riding levels, with courses ranging from 31 miles to the 110-miler.

### ROCK CLIMBING

Tucson's sunny, dry climate – combined with its easy access to thousands of both traditional and sport climbs – makes this Southern Arizona city a climber's paradise! The steep, craggy canyon walls from bottom to top of Mt. Lemmon have something for every climber, from beginners to seasoned, wall-crawling veterans. Climbers can also head west of Tucson to scenic Gates Pass in the Tucson Mountains for some gravity-defying thrills at the end of a climbing rope. The experts at local indoor rock gym Rocks & Ropes teach climbing skills and venture outside the walls of the gym on guided outdoor climbing trips. For a daily fee that includes transportation to and from climbing areas in the Coronado National Forest, Rocks and Ropes' certified instructors take adventurers on a variety of climbing experiences on Mt. Lemmon, including bouldering, top-roping, lead climbing, and multi-pitch routes.

### HORSEBACK RIDING

The Sonoran desert scenery around Tucson reminds visitors of the sights that must have greeted the cowboys of the Old West. From the majestic, unspoiled fields of saguaro cactus to the dense, cool pines of the mountain ranges circling the Old Pueblo, Tucson truly is pioneer country. Just north of downtown, visitors can saddle up at Pusch Ridge Stables in the beautiful Catalina State Park for an early breakfast trail ride, an overnight ride into the mountains, or a sunset dinner ride through rolling foothills. Or, for would-be cowboys and -girls on a shorter timetable, head out on "Tenderfoot," "Saddle Bum," or "Westward Ho Sunset" rides, which last between one and two hours.

### JEEP, HUMMER AND ATV TOURS

Travelers who wish to experience the natural beauty of Tucson's mountainous deserts without breaking much of a sweat can rest easy on a fun, relaxing vehicular tour via Jeep, Hummer or ATV. Black Diamond HUMMER Tours of Tucson boasts quiet, off-road, luxurious HUMMER H2s that let passengers see the splendors of the desert in comfortable style. Guests can tour the beauty of the Sonoran Desert in fully enclosed, air-conditioned comfort, with each vehicle limited to just five passengers. Enjoy the smooth ride of the HUMMER H2 on a scenic tour over easy dirt roads through unique saguaro cacti, or the experience the excitement of being in a Black Diamond HUMMER H2 up on three wheels crawling over rocks.

For more information on Tucson and Southern Arizona outdoor adventures, please visit the Metropolitan Tucson Convention & Visitors Bureau online at [www.VisitTucson.org](http://www.VisitTucson.org) (click on "Things To Do" and "Outdoor Adventure"), or call the Tucson Visitor Information line at 1-800-638-8350. ■

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## PRODUCT WATCH

# Headlight & Plastic Restoration Made Easy.

By Pete Williams

Look around and one can see that sunlight and heat are not good for plastics. Our once clear Headlights, and plastic windows have become yellow and hazy. Not only does it look bad, it becomes a safety issue.

In response to consumer requests to develop a fast, easy-to-use method for restoring headlight lenses and plastic, Flitz International has introduced the "Flitz Headlight & Plastic Restoration Kit."

"Keeping your headlights clean and clear is very important" says Ulrich Jentzsch, President of Flitz International. "Dim headlights and tail lights can cause serious problems when driving at night. And, if you can't see or be seen -- well, its just not safe."

### Why Good Headlights Go Bad

Most cars and trucks produced since the early 1990's have polycarbonate/acrylic lenses.

The problem with these plastics is that over time the effects of UV rays, weather, and road debris will cause them to yellow, haze or cloud over.

Not only does the headlight look poor in appearance, it loses its most important function - its ability to illuminate. When this happens, one has two choices. Repair or replace. Repair can often be a complicated, messy, time-consuming process. Replacement can be expensive.

"Customers were telling us that the headlight restoration kits on the market today are expensive and require complicated, multi-step procedures to get the job done" added Jentzsch. "We thought the process should be easy and quick. Our kit allows people a proven,

do-it-yourself option for restoring clarity and performance to plastic, saving them hundreds and even thousands of dollars."

The new kit introduced by Flitz is affordably priced (around \$49.00), and claims an easy-to-use 1-step process that is non-toxic. Product literature says that "In a matter of minutes, the Flitz Headlight & Plastic Restoration Kit will remove the hazy, yellow, opaque appearance with like-new results." According to the company, the average time to complete the restoration of a head or tail light is 10 minutes or less.

To be sure I put Flitz to the test. My wife's car, a 1997 Ford Mustang. A classic case of faded, hazy headlight lenses. Well guess what? The Flitz kit was easy to use—and, it actually worked. WOW!

Key components of the kit include Flitz's flagship paste product and their patented BuffBall. The BuffBall fits any standard 3/8-inch drill or air tool and will buff at speeds up to 2,500 rpm. It is also washable and reusable. The kit also contains handy, instructios to help you do the job right.

The company told me that "In addition to restoring headlamps to like-new condition, this same kit can also be used to restore clarity to plastic light bars, bug shields, plastic car and truck windows, plastic airplane windows, motorcycle windshields, and boat windows. One kit, many uses."

The product can be purchased from Flitz online at [www.flitz.com/HRclear.html](http://www.flitz.com/HRclear.html). Or by phone at (262) 534-5898.

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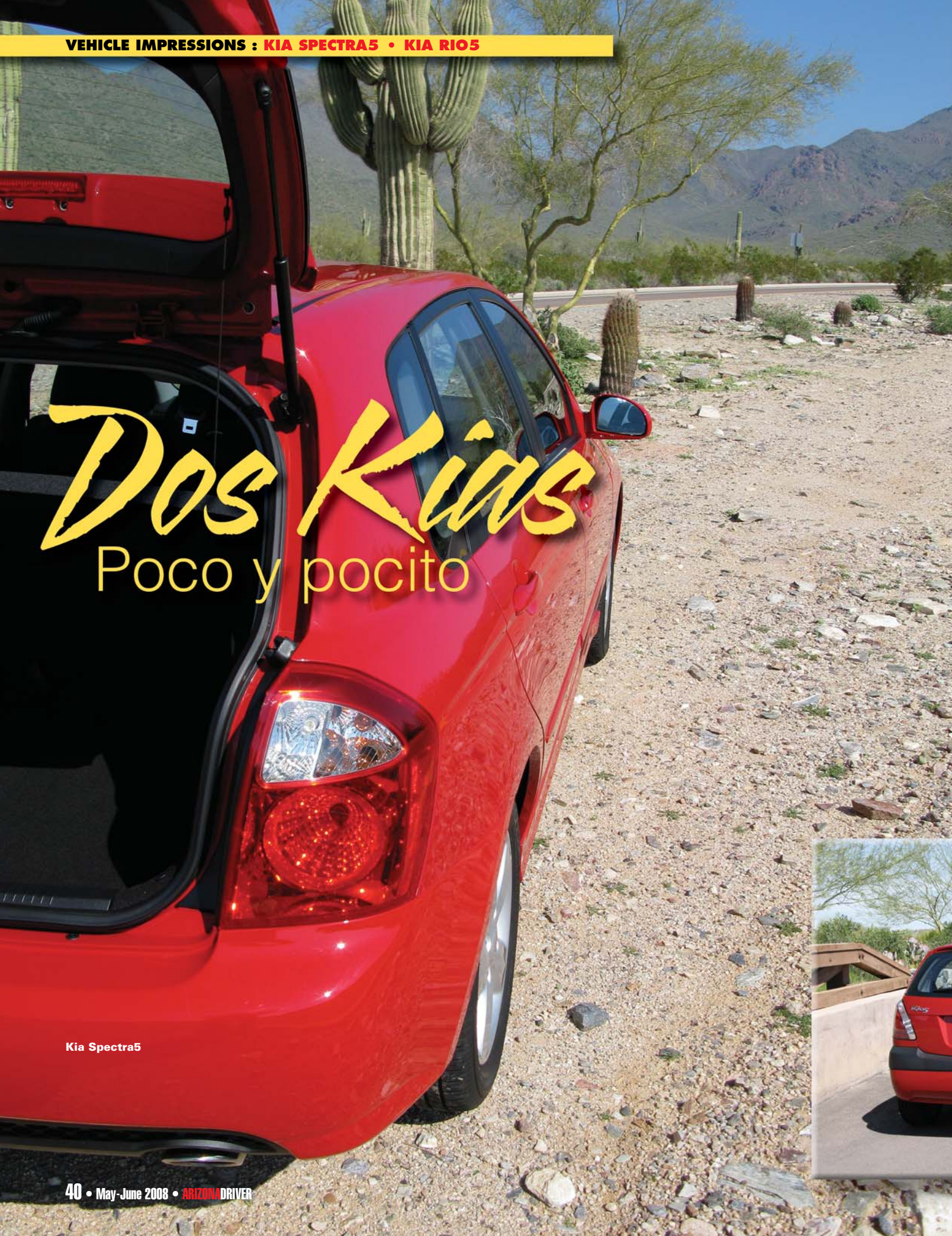


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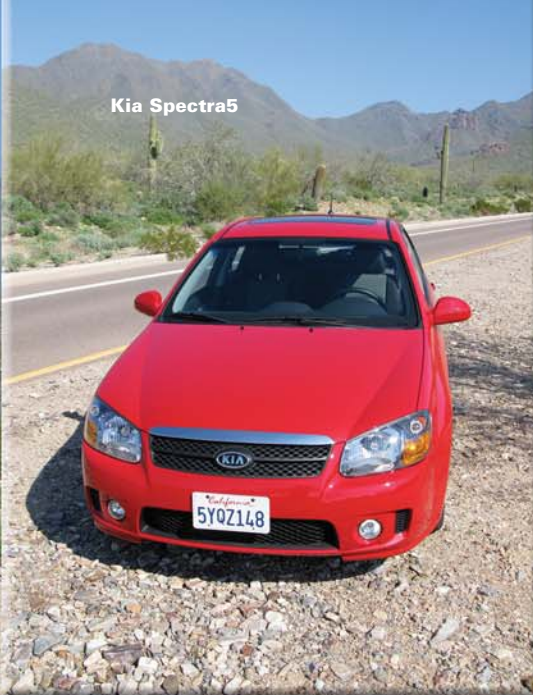
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# Dos Kias

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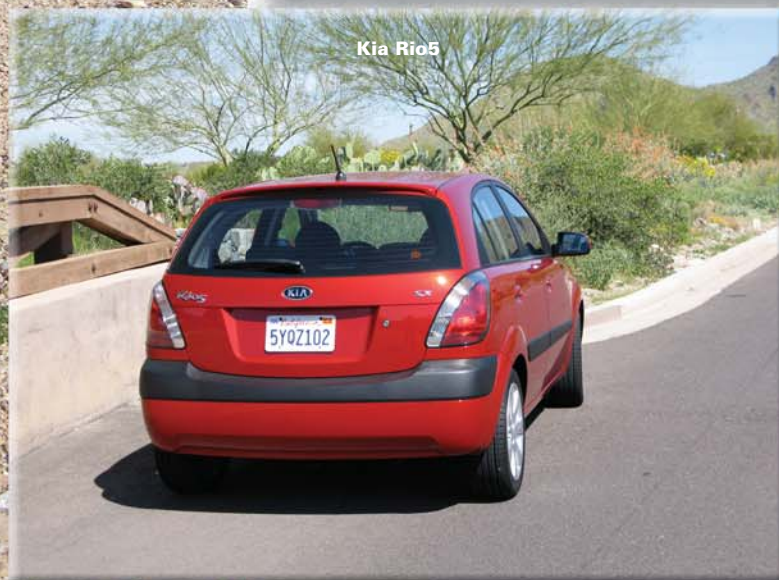
Kia Spectra5



Kia Spectra5



Kia Rio5



Kia Rio5

Economy in a vehicle comes in at least three basic forms: purchase price, fuel economy and a combination of reliability, maintenance and service costs.

With any Kia, service and reliability are well covered by their universal 10-year 100,000-mile warranty.

The Kia Rio starts at \$11,515, and our test Rio5 stickered at \$15,615. The Kia Spectra starts at \$13,520, and our test Spectra5 stickered at \$18,020, so both are on the affordable side, by a margin.

And fuel economy is in the 30-and-up range, highway (and city, too, for the Rio5). At close to \$4/gallon, gas prices have caught everyone's attention. If you can trade in your 15mpg ride for a 30mpg new car, you're effectively changing your gas price back to \$2/gallon overnight. (Conversely, if you trade your 24mpg car for a 12mpg heavy-weight, you are effectively suddenly paying \$8/gallon overnight.)

Saving at the pump has traditionally meant two things to most people: lower quality or smaller size. Many people will agree that it's almost impossible to buy a low-quality car anymore, and we refer you again to the confidence expressed by Kia's generous warranty plan. Smaller size is a preferred choice to some, a compromise to others, and a never-ever (so far) to yet others. Small size also sometimes means a 3-door or 5-door hatchback, and whereas the utility of this layout is great, hatchbacks have traditionally not sold well in the US. This is starting to change, not just due to fuel prices, but also due to the positive reception afforded to such vehicles as the MINI, Audi A3, VW GTI and others.

This is almost a Goldilocks comparison, except there is no Papa Bear in this set. We received a Kia Spectra5 5-door hatchback and a Kia Rio5 5-door hatchback just a couple of weeks apart, so it's pretty much impossible to think about one without thinking about the other. But in many ways, though one is officially midsize, they strike us as two options toward the same solution—smallish and economical to buy, to own and to operate.

You get plenty of bang for your buck with either. The Rio SX has standard alloy wheels, body-color rear spoiler and available front fog lights outside, and a decent audio system and power everything inside. Rio comes standard with class-leading safety features, including six airbags, impact-absorbing steering column, front and rear crumple zones and side-impact door beams.

And the Spectra's standard features include class-leading interior space, an AM/FM/CD audio system with six speakers and an auxiliary MP3 inputs. Its 2.0-liter engine puts out 138 hp—more than competitors like Toyota Corolla. Spectra has earned a five-star crash safety rating in NHTSA frontal driver and passenger crash tests.

So how do you pick one? Well, you could go to [www.kiamatch.com](http://www.kiamatch.com), enter some of your personal and fun preferences, and the site will tell you which model they think you belong in (though it could be something else from their lineup). Complete specs and pricing are available at the site, too. Or you can just go try them both on for size. Our impression, receiving the Spectra5 first, was that it's a fairly small car, anyway, so we waited with anticipation to see how the even smaller Rio5 would compare. We wish we'd had them both at the same time, as all in all we found they both filled the bill fairly equally. You may find more important differences, depending on your family size, your personal legroom and headroom needs (we're over six feet tall and had no problem with either) or your general response to the individual feature sets.

Beyond that, we came back to one thought. No, it's not a Goldilocks comparison. It's more like buying a laptop computer. If you want it to be more like your office desktop, you'll go as big as you can. If you think portability is most important, you'll but a notebook. The positioning of these two equally likeable small cars relative to each other and relative to your prior experiences and new expectations struck as as being a very similar drill. ■



# Russo and Steele Florida Reports Strong Inaugural Sales With All Reserve Format



**R**usso and Steele Collector Automobile Auctions, based in Arizona and now operating auctions in Scottsdale AZ, Monterey CA and for the first time also Hollywood FL, specializes in European sports cars, American muscle cars, hot rods and customs. For their inaugural Florida event, they officially announced that their auction format would change to an All Reserve sale. In a reserve auction, an unknown minimum price is held by the seller, and a vehicle will not sell until bids reach at least this amount, as tracked and announced by the auctioneer.

The All Reserve platform is not universal within the collector automobile auction world. In fact, many auctions still push for a No Reserve entry, in which a sale will happen at any price. However, Russo and Steele believes their decision will ultimately enhance the quality of events and ensure lasting relationships within the hobby and client base. In today's market, they feel the ability to have a measure of control over the final sales price will result in the highest caliber and quality of consignment inventory.

Drew Alcazar, co-owner and CEO of Russo and Steele, says, "a No Reserve sale frequently ends up with negative results because no auction house can guarantee having the 'right' two bidders on any block all the time. To risk compromising the integrity of our sale with sellers being forced into 'buy-back' scenarios with usurious fees or compel them to 'protect' their car with phantom bids is simply too much of a liability."

Russo and Steele reported a strong first event sales total for their Hollywood, Florida auction in March, at \$5.2 million dollars. Initial sales percentage estimates were between 42-43%, with strong post-sale activity not yet tallied at press time.

The Florida 2008 event was held in over 50,000 square feet of tents at the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino. This auction event was Russo and Steele's first auction event held as an All Reserve format.

"We had a tremendous amount of sales in our post-sale at this event. This is atypical for a first event, since many of our new clients are getting familiar with Russo and Steele's auction style. Our Florida event was definitely a success for an inaugural program, and we look forward to building on the many new relationships built in Florida," said Alcazar. ■



# Record Crowd Shows Strength of Hobby at 6th Annual Barrett-Jackson Florida Event



A record 67,900 people attended the 6th Annual Barrett-Jackson Collector Car Event in West Palm Beach, Florida, from March 26-30, 2008, surpassing last year by 5 percent. 509 vehicles, from premium American muscle cars to European classics, sold at No Reserve for a total of \$23,301,250. Overall, values held steady for vehicles sold, as SPEED captured 19 hours of high-definition coverage.

"Even with questions about the economy, (we had) solid prices across the board," said Steve Davis, Barrett-Jackson President. "Every vehicle sells for a fair price (at auction), where the marketplace determines the real value of a collector car."

"We had one of the most exciting, amazing days in our history at Palm Beach on Saturday," added Craig Jackson, Chairman/CEO of Barrett-Jackson. "The energy in the room was unbelievable as an impressive run of cars repeatedly fetched over \$100,000. And during this excitement, some people were driving Corvettes and Mustangs on our test track. At the Ford display, individuals were drag racing to win a new V6 Mustang from South Florida dealers. And many came just to see all of the fantastic vehicles at this amazing show."

New bidders bought 44 percent of the cars and were responsible for 39 percent of the sales, significant increases from last year. Sales of automobilia were \$289,120, a 21 percent increase. Additional increases from last year include a 180 percent boost in total Internet sales and a 12 percent increase in total sales to foreign buyers.

"While MOPARS were very hot in early 2007, GM and Fords grew in value this year to make the market more balanced," says Davis. "Shelbys remained strong, and other rare muscle cars commanded high values as well. Another trend (is that cars) are not typically flipped between auctions, as buyers keep and drive them."

Eighteen vehicles were sold to benefit charities; these included an Escalade and seven other vehicles from *The Sopranos*, the *Project American Heroes* 1957 Chevy Bel Air, a 2008 ROUSH P-51 Mustang, a Saleen Mustang prototype, a custom Ford F-150, two KITT Ford Shelby GT500KR style Mustangs, a 2008 Saturn Sky and an Eliminator Daytona boat. Over \$1 million was raised for charities, with \$300,000 from the KITT Mustangs benefitting Ford's Salute to Education program. ■





**H**ave you ever had the fantasy of racing a NASCAR stock car on a banked oval or road race circuit? If so, here is the way to follow your dream, and it is an absolute GASS! The Great American Stockcar Series (GASS) is a new racing series which puts you behind the wheel of a 400-plus horsepower V-8 stockcar with none of the usual problems associated with race car ownership, logistics and race car maintenance.

Chris Evans, a veteran stockcar builder and race driver, currently has a fleet of 14 rent-a-ride stockcars and he has 13 more under construction. The race cars are similar to NASCAR Southwest Tour series cars, but they are fitted with two racing seats so a profes-

sional race driving instructor can ride with you. The cars are prepared identically and they race amongst themselves on oval tracks. However, on road race circuits, racing with the NASA organization, you also get to run with Porsches and Corvettes.

Evans' crack team of mechanics, fabricators and driving instructors do it all for you. They prepare the race cars and transport them to the track. Once there, the crew tunes the chassis, maintains the cars and helps you get up to speed. All you need to do is reserve the car, cut the check, then "arrive and drive."

At different tracks under NASA and NASCAR sanction, the GASS machines will run on either an oval track or a road race circuit. This season, Evans' three

18-wheel NASCAR haulers will be at such celebrated road race circuits as Phoenix International Raceway, Portland International Raceway, Infineon Raceway in Sonoma and the new Miller Motorsports Park in Utah. If you prefer oval tracks, the GASS cars will run this year at Iowa Speedway and Roseberg Speedway in Oregon.

**A day with the GASS guys at PIR**

Upon arriving in the pits at Phoenix International Raceway, it was easy to find Chris Evans' impressive operation. Three giant NASCAR haulers support the Great American Stockcar Series. The first rig has a state-of-the-art shop, a luxurious drivers' lounge and a rooftop observation deck. The second hauler



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# Racing Stockcars is a GASS!

Story and photos by H.R. Driver







has auto transport rails and an inside service hoist. The third rig is all business, with double-decked rails capable of hauling a half dozen race cars plus spare parts and tools.

The rows of pristine GASS race cars were the next thing to catch our attention—a dozen race cars with dual racing seats, massive internal roll cages and on-board fire systems. Upon closer examination, each car also sported massive 6-piston Willwood front brake calipers and 4-piston rears. The GASS cars are fast, but they also must slow down in a instant. Each car is also fitted with NASCAR-style 4-speed Jerico transmission and the driver's choice of either Goodyear or Hoosier slicks. Yes, these cars are the real deal.

Perhaps the most impressive thing about Chris Evans' operation, however, was his six-man pit crew. When a GASS race car was towed into the pits with right-front crash damage, the crew descended upon the machine like a swarm of purposeful killer bees. In less than an hour, the crew repaired the bent fender, replaced a broken brake rotor and a tie rod. The car was mended, realigned and sent out for qualifying.

Later, we listened to a conversation between Spencer Sharp (NASA FFR West Series Champion and one of Evans' professional driving instructors), as he explained the proper braking technique and racing line through a corner. During practice, Sharp rode with, led and followed many of the GASS series drivers. Obviously, the GASS organization has thought of everything, including providing their own pro instructors for their clients. Ross Thompson, TransAm and GrandAm series star, is Evans' other pro instructor.

Of course, extensive personal driver tutoring is a tad extra, but well worth it. Do you want to learn how to cut through traffic like a knife through hot butter? You need to learn this from a pro. Do you want to learn how to diagnose the racing line at every new track you go to? You should learn this from a professional as well.

**Who competes in GASS?**

While GASS has several young "development drivers" in their series, most of the clients are successful businessmen

over the age of 40. Yes, you can begin racing cars after 40 and be quite successful. Actor Paul Newman proved this many times over as he won countless national road races during his 25-year racing career. The personality traits which made P.L. Newman successful in racing were his phenomenal focus and his coachability.

Jeff Smith would be considered one of the young guns of the GASS racing series—fast, smooth and talented. Gary Bennett, Vice President of Barrett-Jackson Auctions, would be more representative of the competitive group of 40-plus drivers who compete in the Great American Stockcar Series. Successful businessmen often become good race drivers because of their competitiveness, attention to detail and ability to focus.

During the GASS race at PIR, Jeff Smith qualified first in the GASS group and won his class. Robert Gritten finished second and Gary Bockman earned the final step on the podium. Kevin Culver finished fourth.

However, racing is not always about winning. What we found refreshing about racing in the GASS series is that regardless of their age differences, all of the drivers seemed to get along and enjoy the racing experience. After the race, each had a story to share. This is largely because within each race there are many individual battles for position.

However, there were other reasons why the GASS drivers enjoyed the race so much. They did not have to prepare the race cars, to transport them or wrench on them at the track. Evans' crew did all of this for the drivers. This let the drivers focus on racing.

**How much does it cost to run?**

Racing is not inexpensive, but racing a GASS stockcar is a good value. Especially when you consider that you do not need to purchase a race car, to prepare it, to buy a race transporter or the fuel needed to get it to and from the race track. Moreover, in the GASS series, you never need to turn a wrench. As a former pro driver, we really like this.

Chris Evans charges \$2,000 per race day or \$6,000 for a typical 3-day race



# SUMMER SPECTACULAR

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weekend. Pricey? Not really. Not when you consider what it would cost to run your own used or vintage NASCAR Cup series machine.

Consider the following scenario: You buy an ex-Mark Martin NASCAR rolling chassis (no engine) at a Scottsdale classic car auction for \$26,000. A good deal, right? You pay the commission and shipping to your home, and you are now into the car for about \$30,000.

You park your ex-Mark Martin race car in the garage in your wife's Lexus parking spot (hey, you can't park your Corvette Z06 outside, can you?!). Assuming your wife has not yet filed for divorce, you still have a motorless race car in your garage.

Next, you buy a strong rebuilt NASCAR engine for \$40,000, have it installed and dynoed for another \$5,000. Now you are in your race car \$75,000. Still not too bad when you consider your race car was actually raced by Mark Martin at Infineon and Watkins Glen. How many race cars like this could there be? Trust me, you really don't want to know.

You are lucky because a friend has a dually you can borrow. Unfortunately, you need to buy a used 24-foot enclosed trailer to haul your race car, tools and spares. Cha-ching! Another \$5,000. Now you are in the entire package \$80K...before you hit the track.

Since you've never raced on a real race track, you decide to take your collectable NASCAR Cup Car to NASA HPDE track day (practice day). Unfortunately, since you have never raced before, you don't know how to match the revs of your engine with your rear wheels when you downshift. The result is: a) You spin the car, b) You tag the wall, c) You blow the motor due to over-revving, or d) The worse case scenario, "all of the above." Not to worry, another \$25,000 and you are ready to do it all again.

Bottom line, even if you have a historic NASCAR Cup Car in your garage, you are better off renting a race car from Chris Evans. The GASS race cars have disposable fiberglass body panels, which are cheap to replace. The NASCAR Cup Cars have steel bodies which are far more expensive to repair. The 400 HP GASS engines are designed for longevity and economical repair. NASCAR Cup engines are price and last one fourth as long as a GASS series engine. Most importantly, the GASS series has professional driving instructors who can teach you how to drive a race car properly in the first place.

**First things first**

If you are just beginning to race, it is better to rent than to buy a race car. It is better to make mistakes in an inexpensive race car rather than in an expensive one. It is better to have someone who really knows what they are doing wrench on your race car than you. It is better to have a professional teach you how to race drive than to learn by trial and error.

If you want to race sports cars or formula cars, go to Bob Bondurant's racing school first. If you want to race NASCAR cars or historic NASCAR cars, call Chris Evans and reserve one of his GASS race cars. Evans can be contacted via e-mail at [chrisevans@evansmetalfab.com](mailto:chrisevans@evansmetalfab.com), or call him at 503-228-0194.

Driving a fast race car in a fun, competitive series is an absolute gas! Why not begin your racing venture with a group of professionals who can make it even more enjoyable? ■

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1957 Corvette, two tops, 283-270 hp, (2x4's), 3 speed, 52,764 actual miles. Cascade Green paint. Body-off restoration. Documented.



1959 Corvette, two tops, 283-270 hp, (2x4's), 4 speed, numbers match. Triple Black. Body-on restored. 3.55 rear, Wonderbar radio, dual fours, off road exhaust.



1962 Corvette, 327-340 hp, 4 speed, 26,492 actual miles. Honduras Maroon paint. Show condition. From the Reggie Jackson collection (Mr. October).



1962 Corvette Retro (C5). CRC carbon fiber panels on 2000 body, chassis, and suspension. Sebring Silver with Red interior! Dynamic show car.



1963 Corvette Grand Sport Replica, tube frame, LT-1 engine, 6 speed tranny, ZR-1 suspension. Dana rear, XM digital satellite multimedia system. Custom forged aluminum wheels. Integrated roll bar.



1965 Corvette, two tops, 327-375 hp, (fuelie), 4 speed. Rally Red with Red interior. Body-off restored. NCRS Top Flight. Power brakes, windows, teakwood wheel, telescopic, 3.70 posi, off road exhaust, Kelsey wheels, and gold stripe tires.



1966 Corvette Coupe, 427-425 hp, 4 speed, 27,725 actual miles. Tuxedo Black with Bright Blue/White interior. Super rare correct color. M-21, 4.11 posi, F-41. Documented.



1966 Corvette Convertible, 427-425 hp, 4 speed. Nassau Blue with Black interior. Body-on restored. NCRS Top Flight certified! Factory side exhaust, telescopic, headrests, transistorized ignition. M-21, 4.11 posi, K.O. wheels, goldstripe tires. Documented.



1967 Corvette Coupe, 427-435 hp, 4 speed, 21,623 actual miles. Rally Red with Red interior. Multiple NCRS Top Flight, Bloomington Gold, and Triple Crown. Factory side exhaust, M-21, 4.11 posi, F-41. Tank sticker, window sticker, and awards.



1967 Corvette Coupe, 427-435 hp, 4 speed. Tuxedo black with Red interior. Super rare and real color. NCRS certified (2006). Factory side exhaust. B.O. wheels, red stripe tires. Tank sticker, owner history.



1967 Corvette Convertible, 427-435 hp, 4 speed, 48,615 actual miles. Silver Pearl. Body-off restored. NCRS Top Flight, Bloomington Gold certified. 4.11 posi, F-41 suspension. Well documented.



1969 Corvette T-Top, 427-435 hp, 4 speed, 12,593 actual miles. Tuxedo Black with Black interior. NO HIT car with the original interior. Heavy duty clutch, power steering, brakes, M-21, 4.11 posi, F-41 suspension. Documented.



1969 Corvette Convertible, 400 hp, two tops, two owner car with 10,000 actual miles. White paint with Saddle interior. Documented. Original, unrestored, and excellent.



1969 Corvette Convertible, L-88, 4 speed re-creation (tribute). Lemans Blue with Bright Blue interior. Body-on restored. Super fast!



1970 Corvette Coupe, LT-1 (350-370 hp), 4 speed with 147 actual miles. Monza Red paint. Leather, shoulder harness, 4:11 heavy duty posi. NCRS Top Flight certified. Documented.

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# Comfort, control and style... Why driving shoes matter.

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These shoes feature sleek tread patterns that give you the proper feel you need for heel-and-toe downshifts. Tidy sole sides prevent shoes from snagging on the pedals, and specially-formed heel supports keep your feet properly positioned for acceleration and braking. Plus, they look great and provide hours of walking comfort.

AutoSport says its own employees are split between these two: some prefer Piloti shoes, which combine an athletic look with the precise feel of a professional racing shoe. Others prefer the top-quality leather construction and "business casual" styling of H.S. Trask. But they're all impressed with the in-car control and in-office comfort these shoes provide.

## Piloti Driving Shoes from AutoSport

From the Mulsumme Straight to the Pacific Coast Highway, Piloti Driving Shoes are known for the comfort and control they give you behind the wheel. Piloti's patented Roll Control heel technology makes these shoes a comfortable on the tarmac as they are behind the wheel.

The **Spyder SV** has a low-cut design and a super-fast toggle lacing system (regular laces are included, too). Choose from four styles Suede uppers except White/Black, which is smooth leather.

The **Prototipo** moves the mid-sole inside the shoe for a sleeker look. With premium suede uppers and a special reinforcement on the right shoe for proper heel-and-toe downshifting. Five styles to choose from.

The innovative design of the **Stradale CL** features premium leathers and suedes, with a wide-set lacing system that provides comfort for a variety of foot types. Four styles to choose from.

## H.S. Trask Driving Shoes from AutoSport

No matter where your travels take you, you'll arrive in comfort and style with these leather driving shoes from H.S. Trask.

The sleek **Driving Moc II** offers the comfort of a traditional driving moc, but in a dressier style. In Light Brown, Cordovan and Black.

The lace-up **Guide** gives you casual comfort at the wheel and style in the office. In Brown or Loden Green

Both feature a specially-designed sole that grips your car's pedals, and a wrap-around heel pad to prevent scuffs. Cushioned heel and forefoot areas add walking comfort, while moisture-wicking upper linings and "airport friendly" shanks make them perfect for everyday wear. And if you use custom orthotics, you'll love the removable footbeds. ■



Piloti  
Spyder  
SV



Piloti  
Prototipo



Piloti  
Stradale CL



H.S. Trask  
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923-638-7888 Visitor Info Recorded Message

**Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument**  
10 Organ Pipe Drive • Ajo AZ 85321-9626  
520-387-6849 Visitor Information

**Petrified Forest National Park**  
PO Box 2217 • Petrified Forest Natl Park AZ 86028  
928-524-66228 Visitor Information

**Saguaro National Park**  
3693 South Old Spanish Trail  
520-733-5153 Visitor Info Rincon Mtn District

**Wupatki National Monument**  
Flagstaff Area National Monuments  
6400 N. Hwy 89 • Flagstaff AZ 86004  
928-679-2365 Visitor Information  
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#### PARKS AND OUTDOORS

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HCR 2, Box 6500 • Willcox AZ 85643  
520-824-3560

**Lake Havasu State Park**  
699 London Bridge Dr. • Lake Havasu AZ 86403  
928-855-2784

#### TOURISM - LODGING - EVENTS

**Travel Sites To Be Seen**  
sedona.net • thecanyon.com • flagstaff.com  
prescott.com • scottsdale-phoenix.net

**Metropolitan Tucson Convention & Visitors Bureau**  
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1-800-638-8350 • 520-624-1817 • visittucson.org

**Greater PHX Convention & Visitors Bureau**  
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#### TOURISM - ATTRACTIONS - EVENTS

**Las Vegas Tourism Bureau**  
6120 W. Tropicana Ave. • Las Vegas NV  
www.lasvegastourism.com

#### AUTOMOTIVE

**Imperial Palace Auto Collections**  
Imperial Palace • Las Vegas NV  
702-794-3174 • imperialpalace.com/auto.html

**National Automobile Museum**  
Harrah Collection • 10 Lake Street South • Reno  
775-333-9300 • www.automuseum.org

### California

#### NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**National Park Service - California**  
http://www.nps.gov/state/ca

#### TOURISM - ATTRACTIONS - EVENTS

**Disneyland**  
Anaheim • 714-781-4565 • www.disneyland.com

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**Petersen Automotive Museum**  
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303 East Alameda • Santa Fe NM 87501  
505-984-21221 • www.innonthealameda.com

### Utah

#### NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**National Park Service - Utah**  
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#### PARKS AND OUTDOORS

**San Juan County Tourism**  
117 S. Main Street • Monticello UT 84535  
800-574-4386 • www.southeastutah.org

**Southern Utah Scenic Tours**  
PO Box 1113 • Cedar City UT 84720  
888-404-8687 • www.utahscenic tours.com

#### RESORTS AND LODGING

**Desert Rose Inn & Cabins**  
701 W. Highway 191 • Bluff UT 84512  
888-475-7673 • www.DesertRoseInn.com

### Colorado

#### TOURISM - ATTRACTIONS - EVENTS

**Colorado Activity Centers, Inc.**  
PO Box 129 • Frisco CO 80443  
800-777-8642 • www.coloradoinfo.com

#### AUTOMOTIVE

**Shelby American Collection**  
5020 Chaparral Court • Boulder CO 80308  
303-516-9565 • .shelbyamericancollection.org

### Mexico

#### RESORTS AND LODGING

**Puerto Peñasco Mexico Online**  
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Blvd. Diaz Ordaz s/n  
Edificio Plaza Patria Nivel 3  
CP 22400 Tijuana BC • (66) 81-9492

**Chihuahua State Tourism Office**  
Calle Libertad No. 1300  
Edificio Agustin Melgar, 1er Piso  
CP 31000 Chihuahua, Chihuahua • (14) 29-3421

**Sinaloa State Tourism Office**  
Av. Camarón Sabalo esq. Tiburon  
Edificio Banrural 4 Piso  
CP 82100 Mazatlán, Sinaloa • (69) 16-5160

**Sonora State Tourism Office**  
Centro de Gobierno  
Edificio Estatal Norte 3er Nivel  
Comonfort y Paseo Río -  
CP 83280 Hermosillo, Sonora • (62) 17-0076

### Of national interest

#### AUTOMOTIVE

**Henry Ford Museum & Greenfield Village**  
20900 Oakwood Blvd. • Dearborn MI 48124  
www.hfmgv.com • 313-271-1620

**Imperial Palace Auto Collections** (see Nev.)


**Motorcycle Hall of Fame Museum**  
Pickerington OH 43147  
www.motorcyclemuseum.org • 614-856-2222

**National Automobile Museum** (see Nev.)

**National Corvette Museum**  
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Dos Volvos, número uno...  
C70: any weather, top up or top down

# Volvo's "buy one get one free" C70

By Barbara and Bill Schaffer • photos by Arizona Driver Magazine

Unless you are one of those diehard "I'm going with the top down, no matter what" kind of drivers, a convertible is a wonderful solution for those months when the conditions are just perfect. Not too hot, not too cold and of course not wet.

You may prefer to drive in climate-controlled comfort with no wind in your hair or outside noise to interfere with your singing. But maybe not always. Just as new crossovers are appealing to double uses, the new Volvo C70 is like having a racy-looking coupe and a sexy convertible both—but needing just one parking spot in the garage.

In the same time it takes to hawk new cell service in a 30-second television spot, the Volvo C70 can do a complete makeover from sweptback coupe to beautiful open-top convertible. It's just like getting a makeover on the Oprah program, but it only requires pushing one button. The process is like watching one of the Rube Goldberg machines where a simple action leads to another action and another and another. In an oversimplification, the C70 trunk opens from



the front, the top lifts up and folds into three pieces and tucks neatly into the trunk and the tonneau cover drops into place over it.

Volvo and the Italian Pininfarina design studio collaborated during the design process, starting with a strong coupe design. Once that was established, they translated that design into a convertible. The resulting shapes are classic new-generation Volvo, with a wide profile, athletic stance and trademark strong shoulders.

Like classic Scandinavian furniture, the interior is clean and innovative. Surfaces are uncluttered and feature natural materials. The center console looks like a single piece of stainless steel, shaped like a ski jump. On the surface are the climate and audio controls topped with a digital display, while at the bottom the steel surrounds the shifter.

The previous generation C70 was indeed two actual cars—one coupe and one convertible. We liked both cars, but the convertible had too much body twist and cowl shake on rough roads. The new two-in-one version has virtually none of that twist and shake.

Combined with this stiff body structure, a fully independent suspension produces a perfect adult-style ride. It's slightly stiff, to give the driver accurate feedback and responsive handling, yet soft enough not to beat up the passengers.

The adult styling continues into the seating. Volvo has some of the best seats in the business, and the C70 is no exception. Even the rear seats are designed for adults, not just small children. Rear seat access is made easier by a standard driver's side fast-acting, electrically-operated seat scooter that quickly pushes the seat forward by pushing a button on the seat backrest. The same system is an option on the passenger side.

Looking at the C70 specs, we thought the T5 (227hp) turbocharged five-cylinder engine might be a little underpowered for a 3,627-pound car, but were pleasantly surprised by the performance. Zero to 60 acceleration is estimated to be 7.0 seconds and the top speed is 149 mph. We recorded a respectable speed of 75 mph in our casual acceleration test, which we run from where we pull onto the highway for about one-eighth mile.

Fuel economy is listed at 18 mpg for city driving and 26 or 27 mpg (automatic/manual) on the highway. We averaged 23.5 mpg.

The easiest way to describe the C70's safety attributes is to say it's a Volvo, but we have to mention some of the revolutionary features. To start with, it has all the traditional airbags, side impact protection, active head restraints, stability control and dozens of other features. Then, in Volvo's typical safety-obsessed way, they created the first door-mounted side curtain airbag system. The Rollover Protection System (ROPS) includes two small roll bars that literally explode into position, whether the top is up



or down, to provide extra protection for the occupants. ROPS also deploys in the event of a rear crash, to help protect occupants from flying debris.

All four seating positions are provided with a small compartment that locks when the doors are locked. It's a great place to store valuables when the car is left in public with the top down. The system allows certain compartments to be locked with the key from the glove compartment when leaving the car with a parking attendant.

The car has a generous 12.8 cubic feet of cargo space with the top up, which is enough for about four medium sizes bags. With the top down, 6.8 cubic feet is taken up by the folded roof. There's a partition identifying where the roof will go when it's down. Loading the trunk with the roof down is made easier by pushing a control button that raises the entire roof mechanism up by nearly 8 inches for easier access.

We are always looking for a bargain, and the Volvo C70 is a great one. How often can you buy two exciting cars for the price of one? The Volvo C70 is classically looking and fun to drive, top up or topless. They have also handled one of our frequent convertible objections: a lack of rear visibility, especially when backing out of a parking space. The top-up "B" pillar is slim and gives the driver a good rear view.

We like how well the car handles and performs. There's no torque steering during hard acceleration, and the handling feels as good as most rear-wheel drive cars. The C70 "is" two big winners in our book. ■



## STANDARD EQUIPMENT

Dynamic Stability Traction Control; Rollover Protection; Haverdal Flextech seats with leather insert panels; Electronic climate control; Trip computer; Power windows; Keyless entry; Tilt and telescoping wheel; Dust and pollen filter; AM/FM stereo with 6-disc in-dash CD changer.

**Base Price:** .....\$39,240  
**Options:** 18-Inch Mirzam alloy wheels..\$750  
**Total Options** .....\$750  
Freight.....\$745  
**Price as Tested** .....\$40,735

## DIMENSIONS

EPA Size .....Sub Compact  
Weight .....3,772 lb.  
Wheelbase .....103.9 in.  
Length.....180.4 in.  
Width.....71.7 in.  
Height .....55.1 in.  
Fuel Capacity .....15.9 gal.  
Cargo Capacity .....12.8 cu. ft.

## MECHANICAL

Engine.....2.5L DOHC In-line 5-cyl. turbo  
Horsepower .....218@5000  
Torque .....236@1500  
Transmission .....6-spd. man.  
Drive .....Front wheel  
Brakes.....Disc ABS  
Tires .....235/40R18

## PERFORMANCE

0 to 60 mph .....7.6 sec.  
Top speed .....124 mph  
Our 1/8 mile speed.....75 mph  
EPA rating.....man 18/27 - auto 18/26 mpg  
Our actual fuel econ .....23.5 mpg



## OUR DRIVE

We admit we weren't expecting to be overwhelmed by this car, but we were quite pleasantly surprised. We just as readily admit we found this car extremely desirable and would happily keep one in our own personal fleet. The controls are clear and complete. Driver and passenger comfort are excellent, and even the rear seat is reasonable for this layout (though back seats are inherently rough on passengers when a four-seater has the top down). When we learned the Volvo's five-cylinder turbo was putting out 227hp, we realized we had a fairly hot car on our hands—in today's world of cars with over 300, 400, even 500hp, that may not sound like much, but it exactly matches that of the 5-cylinder turbo S-series Audi performance sedans of the 1990s, which were great performers.

The photo below shows the hood release. Reaching under the dash, we found this hard to locate easily—or you could say safely. When we got on our knees to find it, we were surprised to see sharp edges, unfinished surfaces and even an electronics box, all exposed enough to knock out some controls or cut a hand, if clumsy.

We drove our test car the week leading up to our Mercedes/AMG SL test drives, in time to not be jaded by all their power. (And we recognize the SLs cost two, three, even four times as much as this Volvo.) We also were exposed to the Audi A4 cabriolet in that same time period, and whereas it has much going for it, it doesn't have the special magic of a folding hardtop. We'd rather the Volvo had rear-wheel drive (which the SL has) or all-wheel drive (which is available on the Audi cabriolets with quattro all-wheel drive; otherwise they're front-drivers, too). But the Volvo's combination of price, performance, features and its very neat two-cars-in-one coupe/convertible trick is hard to beat. We'd buy one. ■



Dos Volvos, número dos...  
XC70: any weather, any road, wet or dry

# Volvo kicks the XC70 up a notch

By Barbara and Bill Schaffer • photos by Arizona Driver Magazine

We often play a game, trying to match people with their cars. It's fun when leaving a store behind someone. As they walk down the row of cars, we scan ahead trying to guess which car they are driving. Or if we're driving, before we overtake another car, we imagine who the driver might be: a soccer mom, retired gentleman, young kid with his hat on backward. It's interesting to see how close we come.

Car manufacturers play this game, big time. They talk to individuals, interview families, drive with them and do anything they can to try to find out what kind of car consumers will want. Then they try to design their cars to match people with certain demographics.

The Volvo's target buyer for the 2008 XC70 is age 35-50, 55 percent female, with no children yet or else an empty nester. They estimate a household income of \$100,000 to \$148,000. Now, we'll be watching every XC70 we pass, to see if the driver fits Volvo's target demographics.

We have to admit that during almost 20 years we've writ-

ten about cars, a couple of our most memorable drives have been in the Volvo XC70 Cross Country. It would be hard not to appreciate the XC70 that we drove from Anchorage, Alaska, to Prudhoe Bay in two days in December. With temperatures down to 35 below and ice-packed roads, the XC70 was amazing. On another occasion, we drove an XC70 for 400 miles up the Baja Peninsula, traversing the desert terrain on donkey trails, climbing over rocks and through deep sand. Again, the luxurious XC70 made the drive comfortably and safely.

Redesigned and reengineered for its second generation, the XC70 Cross Country's styling has been tweaked to give it a more sophisticated look, but without changing the unique lines. The inside takes on a clean contemporary Scandinavian look, as the dash sweeps across the front of the cockpit like a piece of art. We especially like Volvo's trademark center console stack that extends away from the dash out onto the console. In addition to looking good, all the controls are intuitive and have a quality feel.

The second generation XC70 shares major components and systems with Volvo's flagship S80 sedan. This new platform allowed engineers to use a more powerful six-cylinder engine to replace the previous five-cylinder, and to refine ride and handling characteristics.

The Volvo wagon is now powered by a 3.2-liter, 235-hp in-line naturally aspirated six-cylinder engine. The engine is equipped with an advanced valve mechanism Volvo calls Cam Profile Switching (CPS) along with the Variable Intake System (VIS). Volvo XC70 project director Thomas Ahlborg says, "The I-6 satisfies both performance-oriented customers, as well as those who prioritize driving comfort and fuel economy."

The six-speed "Geartronic" automatic allows a driver to leave the transmission in drive for normal operations or to shift manually if desired. Standard all-wheel drive with Instant Traction™ moves power to the wheels with the best grip. An added feature of the redesigned XC70 is Hill Descent Control, which uses the vehicle brakes and engine torque to crawl down a steep slope in total control.

The XC70 accelerates from 0 to 60 mph in a respectable 8.1 seconds and has a top track speed limited to 130 mph. EPA fuel economy estimates are 15 mpg for city driving and 22 mpg on the highway. Our average for a week was 19.5 mpg.

Volvo may be marketing the XC70 to people without children, but the fact is, this is one of the best cars to keep children safe. In addition to stability control, whiplash protection, tire pressure monitor and dozens of other safety features, the XC70 has a new optional height-adjustable integrated child

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booster seat cushion. This is the world's first application of the system that allows the rear seat cushion to be raised, based on a child's height, to a level where the seatbelts and the side curtain airbags can best protect a child.

Volvo offers a couple of other innovative safety features. The Blind Spot Information System (BLIS) warns the driver when a vehicle moves into that blind spot on either side of the car. Another world's-first feature is the Personal Car Communicator key fob that allows the driver to check from anywhere whether the car was locked, plus it can also warn the driver if someone is hiding in the car as he/she approaches it.

Early in the year, Volvo announced a new Collision Avoidance Package (CAP) for the WX70, V70 and S80 models. The \$1,695 CAP includes adaptive cruise control, collision warning with auto braking, distance alert, driver alert control, lane departure warning. This system is as good as they get for helping drivers avoid a collision due to distractions.

Only one very well equipped trim level is available for the XC70, with price starting at \$37,520. A long list of available options allow shoppers to customize their XC70 with GPS navigation, rear seat entertainment system, the Collision Avoidance Package, premium audio system and several other luxury and convenience features. With all the available options, the price of the XC70 can go as high as \$53,000.

Driving the XC70 on local roads may not be as exciting as driving in the middle of nowhere, but we always enjoy this car. It will do nearly anything an SUV can, but with more comfort, security and ease of access and operation.

Last October, the North West Automotive Press Association members picked the Volvo XC70 as the SUV of the Year from 28 qualifying SUV-style vehicles. ■

#### STANDARD EQUIPMENT

Dynamic Stability and traction control; electric parking brake; tire pressure monitoring; central locking and keyless entry; Hill Descent Control; heated mirrors; cruise control and driver's seat; power windows; tilt/telescoping wheel.

**Base Price:** ..... \$36,775

**Options:** Metallic paint \$475; Dynaudio® package (12 premium speakers, Dolby Logic II Surround Sound, rear seat headphone jacks and controls, Sirius Satellite Radio) \$1,650; premium package (power moonroof, leather seating surfaces, HomeLink, etc.) \$2,995; climate package and child booster seats (heated front seats, headlamp cleaning, heated windshield washer nozzles, Rainsense wipers, integrated two-stage child booster seats with adaptive seatbelt and power child locks) \$875; 17-Inch Sargas alloy wheels \$550.

**Total Options** ..... \$6,545

Freight ..... \$745

**Price as Tested** ..... \$44,065

#### DIMENSIONS

EPA Size ..... SUV  
Weight ..... 4,092 lb.  
Wheelbase ..... 110.8 in.  
Length ..... 190.5 in.  
Width ..... 73.3 in.  
Height ..... 63.1 in.  
Fuel Capacity ..... 18.5 gal.  
Cargo Capacity ..... 33.3 to 72.1 cu. ft.

#### MECHANICAL

Engine ..... 3.2L DOHC In-line 6-Cyl.  
Horsepower ..... 235@6200  
Torque ..... 236@3200  
Transmission ..... 6-speed automatic  
Drive ..... AWD  
Brakes ..... Disc ABS  
Tires ..... 235/55R17

#### PERFORMANCE

0 to 60 mph ..... 8.1 sec.  
Top speed ..... 130 mph  
EPA economy rating ..... 15/22 mpg  
Our tested fuel economy ..... 19.5 mpg

### OUR DRIVE

We took this car out as soon as we received it. Controls were clear and intuitive, though we had to think twice, or thrice, about the shaftless key, which though it provides keyless entry, doesn't provide keyless start, although it has the appearance of such a key, and an engine start/stop button on the dash would seem to indicate that's the setup. Instead, you take the whole plastic chunk and shove it in a hole on the dash, wondering which way is up (doesn't seem to matter). And then you push the button to start (and the same one to shut the engine off, while also pushing the key to force its rebound and freedom. We backed over a very gently graded curb and noted a soft and floaty ride, but we'd just exited a sport coupe with a fairly harsh ride.

The first thing we did was to decide we'd go back for our cameras, then and there, and we're happy to report this car has such a tight turning circle (despite its all-wheel-drive steering geometry), we dismissed our prior mildly negative thoughts.

On a style note, we weren't nuts about the accented orifices on the dash, or their matching trim around lower lights on the front and rear bumpers. And the rear taillights, though not conceptually new, look in this iteration as though they'd been created with red flagging tape as an afterthought. We'd either draw less attention to all of these shapes or work harder on dressing them up.

We had all good weather for our time with the XC70, so we didn't experience all-wheel traction on wet, but on mild dirt/gravel, it makes the transition and holds its path as well as any road-intended all-wheel-driver. In all, with large cargo area, clever additional gear stowage, a comfortable all-conditions ride, great instruments and respectable power, all at a competitive price, we'd find this a keeper. ■



River photo courtesy Volvo Cars of North America

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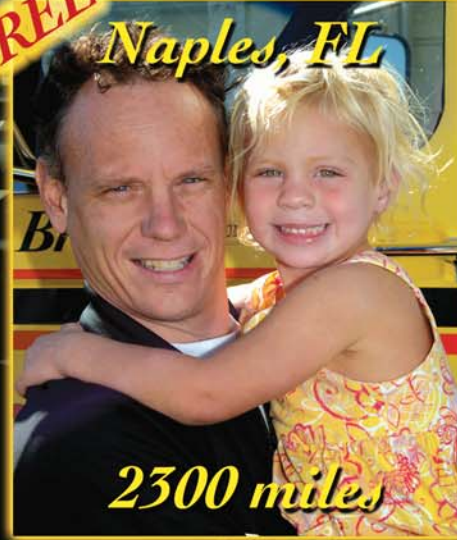
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# Let's get wet!

**RINSPEED'S ZERO-EMISSION WORLD DEBUT  
AT THE GENEVA MOTOR SHOW—  
A GREEN "FISH" WITH Q-FACTOR**

This could be just the ticket for a hot summer day out at Saguaro Lake. Thirty years after the movie thriller "The Spy Who Loved Me" hit the silver screen, sQuba is the first car that can actually "fly" underwater.

If the situation got too hot for 007 he'd go underground—or underwater, as demonstrated by Roger Moore in the 1977 James Bond movie, when he dove below the waves in a sleek vehicle that moments before seemed to be an ordinary car. The only catch: the scene never really took place; it was an animation.

With the sQuba, the world's first real submersible car, the movie trick now becomes reality. Rinspeed boss Frank M. Rinderknecht is known for extraordinary automotive creations. The acknowledged James Bond enthusiast and Swiss automobile visionary kept revisiting this scene in his mind over and over: "For three decades I have tried to imagine how it might be possible to build a car that can fly under water. Now we have made this dream come true."

And it is this submerged stable flight at a depth of 10 meters that sets the sQuba apart from military vehicles. While the latter can go underwater, they are limited to driving slowly over the submerged ground. Rinderknecht: "It is undoubtedly not an easy task to make a car watertight and pressure resistant enough to be

maneuverable under water. The real challenge, however, was to create a submersible car that moves like a fish in water."

It also had to be a sports car. The original was converted by Swiss engineering specialist Esoro. First, the combustion engine was removed and replaced by several electric motors. Three are located in the rear, with one providing propulsion on land, the other two driving the screws for underwater motoring. These are supplemented by two powerful Seabob jet drives in the front, which "breathe" through special rotating louvers. The rotating outlet jets were designed to be extremely light yet twist-resistant, using high-tech carbon nano tubes.

KEEP RIGHT >>

## TECHNICAL DATA

### MEASUREMENTS

Length .....	3'785 mm
Width .....	1'940 mm
Height .....	1'117 mm
Wheelbase .....	2'300 mm
Track front .....	1'470 mm
Track rear .....	1'520 mm
Ground clearance .....	130 mm
Empty weight .....	approx. 920kg

### PERFORMANCE

Top speed .....	> 120 km/h
Acceleration 0-80 km/h .....	7.1 sec
Water speed .....	> 6 km/h
Under water speed .....	> 3 km/h
Dive depth .....	10 m

### ENGINES

Street .....	Electric
Power output .....	max. 54 kW
Wat .....	4'500 /min
Torque .....	160 NM at 1'500 /min
Water—stern propellers .....	Electric
Power output .....	2 x 800 W
Diving—bow jet drives .....	Electric
Power output .....	2 x 3.6 kW Rotinor
Batteries .....	Lithium-Ion
Voltage .....	6 x 48 Volt

### PROPULSION

Power train .....	Rear wheel drive
Gearbox .....	R - N - F

### SUSPENSION

Chassis .....	Steel
Body panels .....	Carbon Nano Tubes
Seating capacity .....	2
Front suspension .....	Double wishbone
Rear suspension .....	Double wishbone
Dampers/springs .....	KW automotive
Steering .....	Rack & pinion

### TIRES

Front tires .....	Pirelli P Zero 205/40 R17
Front wheels .....	AEZ 7.5 x 17"
Rear tires .....	Pirelli P Zero 225/40 R18
Rear wheels .....	AEZ 8 x 18"

### MISCELLANEOUS

Air supply .....	1x 15 liter + 1x 18 liter ScubaPro
Laser scanner .....	lbeo
Lubricants .....	Motorex
All data without guarantee .	





You drive the sQuba into the water and it floats—that is, until you crack the door to let the water in. Immediately, the car starts on its way to the underwater world. The occupants' breathing air comes from an integrated scuba tank. "For safety reasons we have built the vehicle as an open car so that the occupants can get out quickly in an emergency," says Rinderknecht. "With an enclosed cabin, opening the door might be impossible." But safety wasn't the only reason for choosing an open-top design: with an enclosed volume of just two cubic meters of air the vehicle weight would have to increase by a full two tons to counteract the unwanted buoyancy, giving the sQuba the land mobility of a turtle. Without occupants the sQuba surfaces automatically. It is even capable of autonomous driving on land, thanks to a sophisticated laser sensor system—without any help from the driver or passenger.

The sQuba is a zero-emission car. Power is supplied by rechargeable lithium-ion batteries. The Swiss are world pioneers in hydropower—the sQubas' filling station is the water reservoir. It is no surprise that the vehicle features powerful yet energy-saving LED lighting technology. Even the Motorex lubricants used in the 'sQuba' are biodegradable. For the Rinspeed boss that is a meticulousness stemming from conviction: "The sQuba lets me be one with the elements and lets me immerse myself in a new and fascinating world... It is our duty to protect this world in which we are guests, to the best of our ability," says Rinderknecht.

For shore leave the sQuba relies on a stainless coil-over suspension from KW automotive and large Pirelli tires mounted on custom-made forged light-weight wheels from AEZ with 17- and 18-inch diameters. But the sQuba is really at home in the water. There is an innovative salt-water resistant interior with genuine mother-of-pearl trim and diamond-plated non-slip inlays, normally used in high-tech abrasives. The high-tech VDO instrument cluster and controls create a futuristic ambiance and allow controlling all vehicle functions even while submerged.

For the ninth time in Rinspeed development, Swiss engineering company Esoro was hired to serve as general contractor for the entire project, responsible for project management, implementation of new

technologies, engineering, rendering, design and manufacture of the Rinspeed sQuba. Esoro has been a contract developer of concept vehicles, components and products for 17 years, with a primary focus on lightweight construction and mobility. Esoro develops fiber-reinforced components from initial conception through pre-production samples.

Motorex specialists put together a very special lubricant plan, with all the lubricants and greases in use rapidly biodegradable. A goal from the beginning was to minimize pollution in every aspect, especially in the water.

Seabob makes the world's fastest diving and water scooter, which powers through the water with 10 gears and up to 7 hp. Its maximum speed is up to 22 km/h on the surface and 16 km/h under water. Seabob draws its power from 14 lithium-ion accumulators. Their internationally patented electric jet-stream system makes a water vehicle which is entirely silent and emission-free in its performance, the basis for a 100% environmentally friendly claim. Seabob is manufactured by Cayago AG in Stuttgart, Germany.

The underwater world, with its fascinating light and interplay of colors, was the inspirations for the sQuba's interior design. The color palette takes its cue from the dazzling color of the Yellow Tail Snapper; its iridescent silver and its bright yellow contrast with the deep blue of the sea. Knitted fabric has been designed with a silver/yellow fish scale texture; the padding has been finely quilted and has a distinctive herringbone pattern. A diamond-coated non-slip surface in silver/yellow—with a "sushi roll" on the edges for additional grip—has been used on the pedals, combining safety with a mysterious shimmer.

One of the most attractive, luxurious materials the sea has to offer has been used for the door linings, steering wheel and gear knob: mother-of-pearl. Veneered like a fish scale the elegant organic material on the gear knob corresponds to the pearly fibred yarn, also manufactured using the "tweaving" process, which discreetly shimmers under the textile coverings and on the display. Pure luxury for any vehicle.

It took the highly skilled development team just six months to realize the entire sQuba concept car project. ■



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# THE INSIDE TRACK: BRIEFS & RUMORS



Hummer HX concept

■ **Hummer** had the Jeep Wrangler in its sights as they introduced the HX concept in Detroit in January. The open-air two-door off-road vehicle is shorter than the H3 and features doors, fender flares and roof panels that can be quickly removed to convert it from a closed to open vehicle. The four-wheel drive is powered by a 3.6-liter V-6 flex-fuel engine rated at 304-hp with a six-speed automatic transmission. The HX is 81 inches wide and 72-inches high, with 20-inch wheels. Production plans have yet to be announced.

■ **Cadillac** unveiled the CTS Coupe concept in Detroit this winter. The striking two-door has a sharply sloping rear roofline and taller trunk line that the sedan with taillights emulating classic Cadillac tailfins. No production date was announced.



Cadillac CTS Coupe concept

■ **BMW** is openly talking about starting or buying a fourth automotive brand to appeal to shoppers looking for more “green” or ecologically friendly cars than the companies existing BMW performance brand, ultra luxury Rolls-Royce brand or the eccentric MINI.

■ The same turbocharged four-cylinder engine being

used in the RDX crossover is expected to power the upcoming **Acura** TSX sedan when it debuts this year. The following year the TSX is expected to get Honda's first US diesel engine.

■ **Mercedes-Benz** has a large S-Class diesel hybrid in the works for 2010. The S 400 BlueHYBRID will be powered by a Bluetec V-6 diesel with a 20-horsepower electric motor. Together, Mercedes claims it will have “the performance of a V-8 with the fuel economy of a four-cylinder.” The system produces 265-hp and 465 lb.ft. of torque and a 0 to 60 mph time of 7.2 seconds.



Mercedes-Benz S 400 BlueHYBRID

Combined fuel economy for the big sedan is near 40 mpg for highway driving. At rollout, Mercedes says the S 400 diesel-hybrid will be emission compliant in all 50 states.

■ The New York City **Taxi and Limousine** Commission will be shopping for a new generation of taxicabs soon, replacing the entire existing fleet of 13,000 yellow cabs, which are mostly Ford Crown Victoria Sedans. The Fords Crown Vics have been the workhorse of the fleet since the Chevrolet Caprice was discontinued in 1996 and the last Checker Cab was put out of service in 1999.

■ The V-6 engine in the second generation **Honda** Pilot that goes on sale this spring is designed with a new engine management system that operates in six-, four- and three-cylinder modes to save fuel. The current Pilot engine operates in six-cylinder and

three-cylinder modes only. The new Pilot is more powerful, roomier and safer than the current model, according to John Mendel, executive vice president of American Honda.

■ **Audi** is showing the next step for its brilliant R8 sports car with a V-12 diesel engine. The R8 V12 TDI debuted in Detroit in January with a version of the same powerful and quiet engine that won last year's Le Mans 24-hour race. For the R8 installation, AutoWeek magazine is speculating the V-12 to produce about 500 hp and 738-lb.ft. of torque. Initial speculation was the R8 might get the V-10 engine in its cousin the Lamborghini Gallardo. Both Audi and Lamborghini are owned by Volkswagen.

■ With its bold split-waterfall grille design, the MKS will become the new flagship **Lincoln** of Ford's luxury brand. Sharing the same platform as the Ford Taurus/Mercury Sable and Volvo S80, the MKS will be offered in front- and all-wheel drive configurations. The Standard engine is a 270-hp 3.7-liter V-6, with Ford's first application of a turbocharged direct injection version of the same engine arriving about a year later.

■ **Ford** plans to offer a Sport version of the Edge crossover this fall. The 2009 Edge Sport will have standard 20-inch wheels (and optional 22-inchers) with body colored aerodynamic side skirts to improve aerodynamics. The interior will



Ford Edge Sport

have distinctive leather and suede-like upholstery.

■ **Lexus** is rumored to be working on a compact SUV to compete with the BMW X3, Infiniti EX35, Acura RDX and others due out from Mercedes and Audi. In typical fashion, company officials will not confirm the smaller vehicle, which would likely be developed from the Toyota RAV4 platform.



Hyundai Genesis

■ The aggressive looking **Dodge** Demon sports car is likely to be switched from rear- to front-wheel drive. The Demon is going to be switched to a Chery Automobile (a Chinese automaker) platform as part of a “wider cooperation between the companies to create small hatchbacks and sedans for the Chrysler and Dodge brands.” The change will allow them to use a new low emission, direct injection engine currently in development.

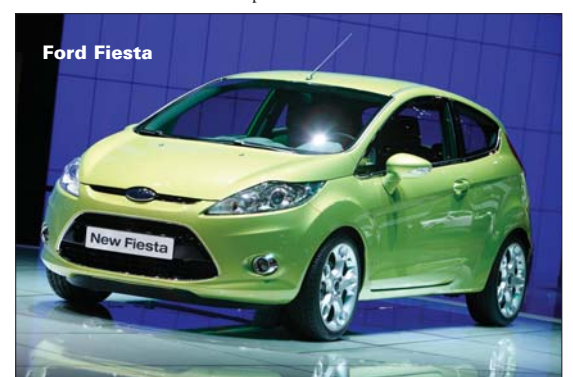


Dodge Demon concept

■ **Subaru** debuted the first four-cylinder horizontally opposed diesel engine at the Geneva motor show. The 2.0-liter turbocharged H4 engine produces 148-hp and 258-lb.ft. of torque and is perfectly balanced to eliminate vibrations. Developed initially for the European market, it could arrive in the

US as early as 2009. When the Subaru diesel arrives in the US, a more powerful version is expected in order to meet US driver performance requirements and the US preference for an automatic transmission.

■ **Hyundai** picked an elegant grill without a logo to front its new rear-wheel drive Genesis sedan. Hyundai



Ford Fiesta

benchmarked the BMW 5 Series, Mercedes-Benz E-Class and Lexus GS when designing the four-door. The top engine is a new 368-hp, 4.6-liter aluminum V-8. Hyundai officials say the first models will not have cylinder deactivation, but say the V-8 was designed to accept the fuel-saving technology as well as a supercharger.

■ Watch for **General Motors** (and other manufacturers) to cut the displacement of some engines and add turbochargers. Starting next year, GM will use a turbocharged 1.4-liter four-cylinder engine, possibly in the Chevy Cobalt and Saturn Astra.

■ **Ford** has introduced the production version of its Fiesta global small car in Geneva. Developed from the Verve concept shown at Frankfurt, Guangzhou and Detroit auto shows, the sleek Fiesta will arrive in European showrooms in the fall of 2008 in both three- and five-door models. Expect the Fiesta to arrive in

North America in 2010 as a sedan, maybe followed by a three-door hatchback.

■ **Nissan** and **Chrysler** are discussing joint research on new technology and vehicles in weak areas, but not equity exchanges. For example, Chrysler needs help with small cars, while Nissan could use help with trucks. ■

Briefs & Rumors is a summary of auto news from industry sources, trade journals and consumer magazines compiled for *Arizona Driver Magazine* by **BILL & BARBARA SCHAFFER** of *Auto Digest*.

# CORVETTE MUSEUM



**C**ongratulations to Ken and Jan Almer of Oro Valley, who are the winners of the National Corvette Museum's "Build Your Own" Corvette Coupe/Convertible raffle drawing. They already owned a 2002 Magnetic Red Corvette convertible, but had never been to the Museum, in Bowling Green, Kentucky, until they took delivery of their prize in February. Ken was familiar with the factory delivery program, as several members of his club, Sonoran Desert Corvettes of Tucson, have taken delivery that way. The visit was great, but the weather was bad in the Midwest in February, so they had the car shipped back to Arizona.

This is not their first Corvette, of course, not by a long shot. This is Corvette number six, though it's their first brand new one. They'd had a couple of '65s some thirty years ago, two '96 LT-4s, and most recently the 2002 Magnetic Red convertible. That one, however, was sold to make room for their new prize (and to pay the taxes on it). They've had big gaps between them at times, but have always had a Corvette since 2000.

Ken's first car was a great one: The Great One, in fact, a 1966 GTO convertible, red over black with a black top. As with many of us, he wishes he still had that one. From there, he's been through a couple of '57 Chevy convertibles, a '61 Chevy big-block bubbletop (which he also, understandably, wishes he still had), and a run of daily drivers, for a total of 45 cars including the newest Corvette.

Ken and Jan are just back from a drive in

California, but they didn't take the Corvette—too many risks on the roads there. So far, they've driven it to Phoenix and back, not on the open road. Last year, they did a road trip to the Grand Canyon, Zion National Park and New Mexico. As we go to press, they're planning a road trip to Sedona in the new Corvette, and soon they'll return to Zion ("just gorgeous with the top down, in the canyon country of Utah"), as well as one to Yellowstone and another back to Taos, NM.

His daily driver now is a Hyundai Tucson, which he finds really well-designed and well-priced, but wishes had more power in the mountains. Some altitude, headwind and the a/c running, and he misses the Corvette.

Ken and Jan say they've never won anything before, but thought they would take a chance on this raffle, and they are very glad they did. NCM has ongoing raffles; for information, visit [www.corvettemuseum.com](http://www.corvettemuseum.com) ■



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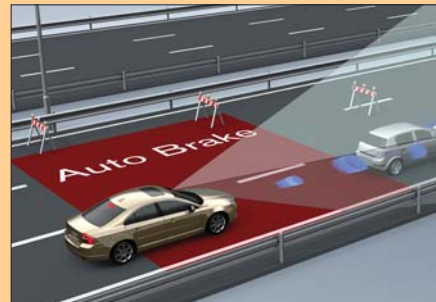
# UPCOMING FEATURES

## NHRA Test & Tune at Firebird International Raceway



The pros spend a weekend testing at Firebird. It's open to the public, and all tickets are pit passes. This is the most relaxed racing experience you'll ever have: low-key sensory overload.

## Volvo zero fatality zero injury initiative is launched in Phoenix

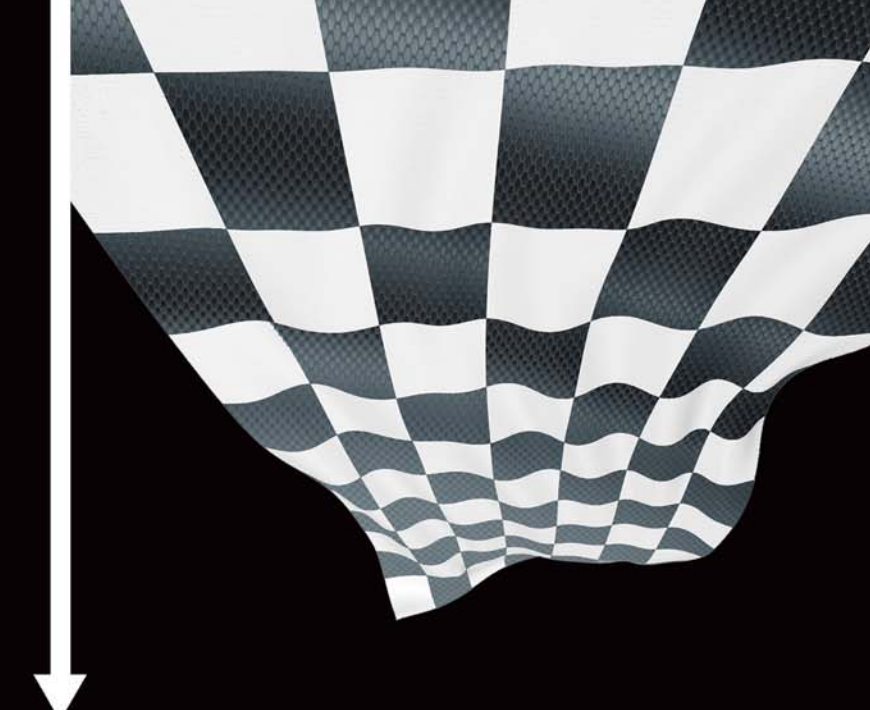


Volvo has a vision to produce vehicles by 2020 in which no one will be killed or injured. We visit them in Phoenix for their final run readying for government and insurance groups.

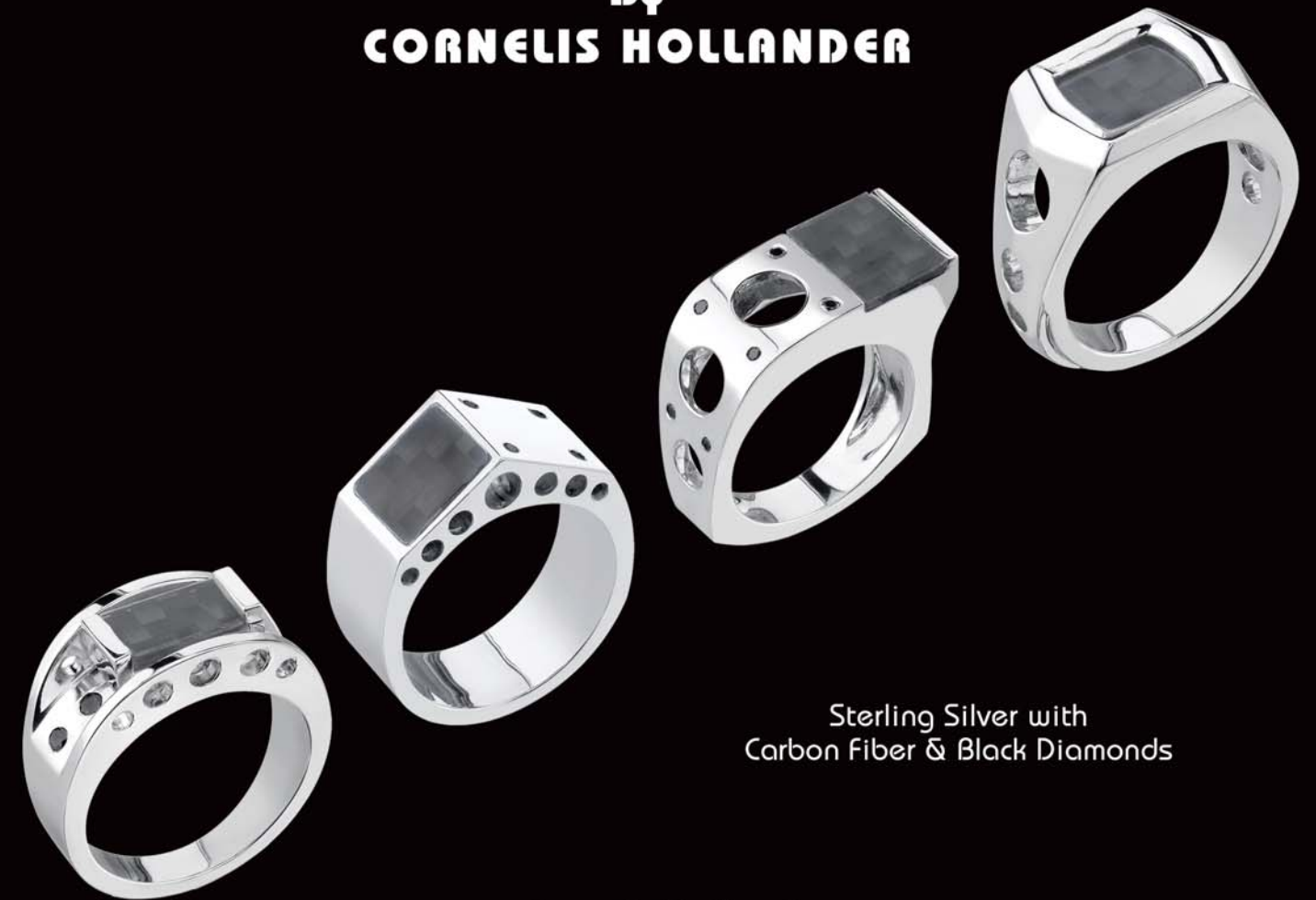
## Red Bull Air Race



We're off to San Diego, where Arizonan Kirby Chambliss will compete in the Red Bull Air Race World Series. Here, he flies out of Casa Grande with the San Diego Padres' Kevin Kouzmanoff.



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