

ARIZONA DRIVER

THE ENTHUSIAST'S GUIDE TO LIFE BEHIND THE WHEEL

VOLUME 18 NUMBER 5
SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2019

The art of
Lucretia Torva

VEHICLES • EQUIPMENT • TECHNOLOGY • PEOPLE • EVENTS • DESTINATIONS • ATTRACTIONS





ARIZONA DRIVER

THE ENTHUSIAST'S GUIDE TO LIFE BEHIND THE WHEEL

news & features September-October 2019

New Vehicle Launch Drive	2020 Lamborghini Huracán EVO Spyder ^A.....10 Take the proven formula of the Huracán EVO, drop the top, and this wild yet very refined bull adds a new dimension to your driving experience very effectively. By Dave Stall
A Week With	2019 Mercedes-AMG G63 .....14 Mercedes-Benz has dominated the beast segment for decades with the G-Class. Give it the AMG treatment, and there are no limits. By Joe Sage
Overlanding	East-West Australia Jeep Expedition 2019 ^B.....16 An intrepid team of four-wheel explorers, led by many of the originals, tackles a challenging coast-to-coast Australia off-road route on the 50th anniversary of the original expedition.
A Week With	2019 Acura ILX Tech A-Spec .....21 Entry-level luxury sounds like an oxymoron, but this is how it works.
A Week With	2019 Kia Niro EV EX Premium .....23 Kia's clever genre-busting utility goes full EV.
Fine Artist	Lucretia Torva .....24 Phoenix fine artist Lucretia Torva is known for a great many specialties—extremely lifelike people, chrome, glass, larger-than-life mural work, elements of reality-enhancing surrealism at times—all of which come into play in her automotive artwork. Ever innovating, there's always a lot more to see. By Joe Sage
A Week With	2019 Infiniti Q50 Red Sport 400 RWD .....33 The compact performance sedan category seems to always keep an eye peeled for any potential "killer" of longtime dominators. This is one to check out, although it's much too nice to be a killer.
Road Trip	Valle de Guadalupe Wine, Food & Music Festival ^C .....35 This mid-September event on the south side of the Mexican border is a great excuse to try out an intriguing road trip: in about the same distance as a familiar dash to San Diego, and probably less time for lack of that Southern California traffic, you can be at a beautiful Baja California winery for food, wine and live music.
Vehicle Brand Event	FCA "What's New 2020" ^D .....36 Each year, we visit Fiat Chrysler's top secret Chelsea Proving Grounds in the woods of Michigan and try out all of the coming year's secrets in one very busy day—on roads, tracks, dirt trails, dragstrips, autocross courses and towing courses. Yep, a classic "kids in a candy store" scenario. It's all kept secret for a couple of months, but now that's over and we can tell all. By Joe Sage
A Week With	2020 Toyota Corolla Hybrid LE Sedan .....41 It may seem surprising that hybrid pioneer and reigning champ Toyota hadn't made a Corolla Hybrid until now, a surprise in itself to many, and the pleasant surprises just continue from there.
A Week With	2019 Chrysler Pacifica Hybrid Limited43 Simply called "Hybrid," this beast of many tricks is actually a PHEV—Plug-In Hybrid EV—adding one more big trick to its bag.

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COVER: Featured inside is fine artist Lucretia Torva, known for her paintings and mural work, a master on many levels including people, chrome and glass—and chrome and glass come to life on our cover shot, a 48x24 oil painting on canvas, titled *Fin Win*, of the famous 1959 Cadillac's taillights. "One of the things that attracts me to '30s-to-'50s cars is the look of rockets and space ships, looking to the optimistic future. I purposely chose this angle for the 'rocket' look," she says.



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START YOUR ENGINES : FROM THE PUBLISHER

We used to regularly read *Alaska* magazine and, having lived there briefly at one point, we'd always glance at the little map on their table of contents, to see whether our neck of the woods was represented. This was the inspiration for our little map of Arizona on our own table of contents page, but, somewhat ironically, it often has its dots outside the map, as we head far afield to bring you the latest—in this issue, for example, covering **Dave Stall's** Lamborghini Huracán EVO Spyder drive in Southern California, **Chris Collard** and crew's off-road crossing of Australia, an automotive industry event in Michigan and a not-far-off-our-grid event road trip suggestion dipping into Mexico. The bulk of the issue—weekly vehicle drives ranging from EV to off-road AMG beast—roams the region within Arizona, just without map specificity.

Fully rooted in Arizona, we bring you a profile on **Lucretia Torva**, a fine artist long on our radar for her automotive work—she is a master of light and surface, skills lending themselves well to the chrome, glass and luscious paints of classics and muscle machines—with a look at her broader stable of work, including desert surrealism, a rapidly growing body of mural work, international sister cities efforts, and the intersection of all of the above. Like us, you will probably be inspired to fill more wall space.

Our prior issue strongly reflected a current trend in the vehicle market toward trucks and SUVs. While those are represented here, too—notably as we drive the entire FCA 2020 lineup at Chelsea Proving Grounds in Michigan, not to mention the aforementioned AMG beast and Australian Jeep expedition—fate has brought us a broad cross-section of the state of not-trucks-not-SUVs, ranging from that Lambo Spyder to a couple of solid performance sedans, to a healthy cross-section of the increasingly integrated trend toward electrified powertrains, from Toyota's first-ever (surprisingly enough) Corolla Hybrid, to the hot-selling, highly awarded Chrysler Pacifica Hybrid, to Kia's newest Niro iteration, a full EV.

Enjoy the ride!

Joe Sage - Publisher/ Executive Editor

ARIZONA DRIVER

MAGAZINE



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- SAMASouthern Automotive Media Association
- TAWATexas Auto Writers Association
- WAJWestern Automotive Journalists

- ACMLeMay—America's Car Museum
- Sturgis.....Sturgis Motorcycle Museum & Hall of Fame
- USFRA ...Utah Salt Flats Racing Association
- USMA.....United States Motorsports Association

PUBLISHED BIMONTHLY BY ADZONE ARIZONA LLC

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ARIZONA DRIVER MAGAZINE

PO Box 13387, Scottsdale AZ 85267
Advertising: 480-948-0200



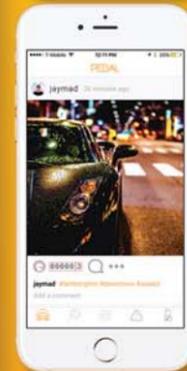
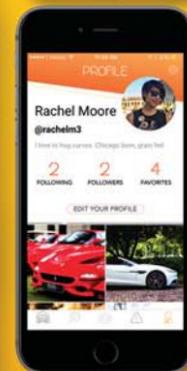
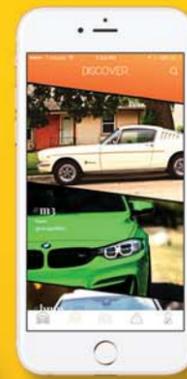
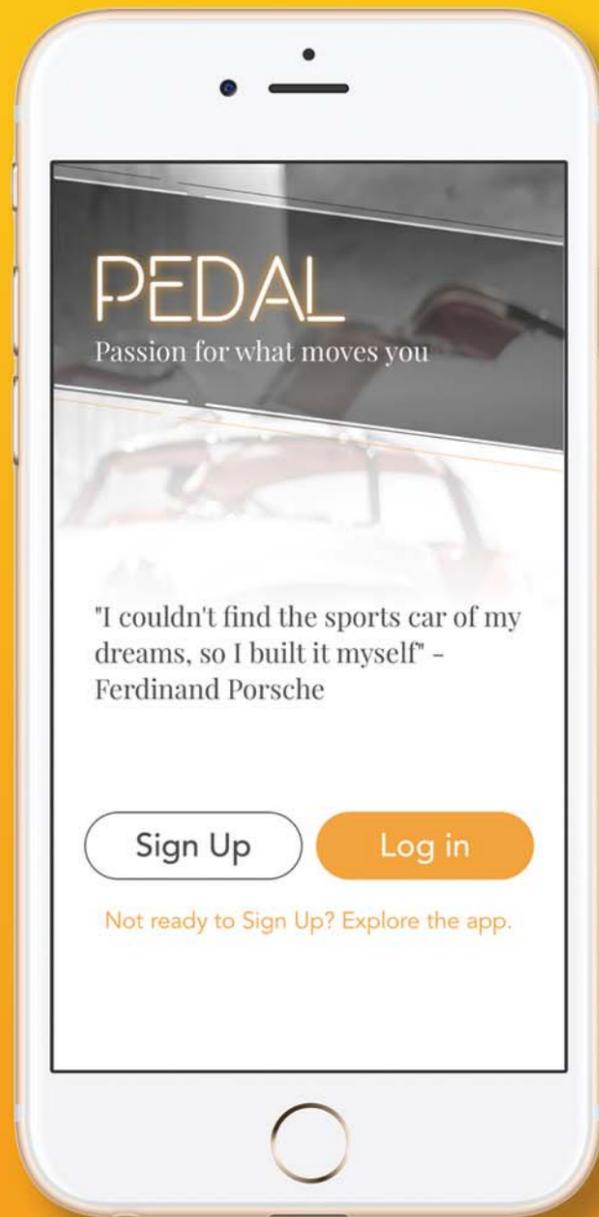
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AUTOMOTIVE NEWS UPDATE



Ford GT Mk II track-only limited edition

▼ The Ford GT Mk II, co-developed by **Ford Performance** and **Multimatic**, is a track-only limited edition with a 700-hp 3.5-liter EcoBoost engine and other modified engineering. Based on Ford's successful FIA World Endurance Championship and IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship campaigns with the Ford GT race car, the new GT Mk II is engineered independent of race series rules, regulations and limitations. "It's the closest GT owners can get to the Le Mans-winning performance and exhilarating feeling of crossing the finish line in the Ford GT race car," says Ford chief product development and purchasing officer Hau Thai-Tang. "The true off-the-hook performance capability of the GT hasn't yet been fully showcased," says Multimatic chief technical officer, Larry Holt. "The road car is obviously limited by the many global homologation requirements that it must comply with, and the race car suffers from the restriction of the dreaded Balance of Performance, resulting in it being 150 horsepower down to the road car. The Mk II answers the regularly asked question of how would the car perform with all the limitations lifted: the answer is spectacularly." Built in Markham, Ontario, the Ford GT Mk II is focused around aerodynamic and engine improvements and shares key features with both the street-legal GT supercar as well as the GT race car. Many of its components have been track-proven in the world's most challenging endurance racing events. The large dual-element rear

wing exceeds what the Ford GT race car offers in terms of downforce. An all-new front racing splitter and diffuser have been incorporated along with new fender louvers and dive planes, which help balance out the extra rear downforce, generating over 400 percent more downforce than the Ford GT while fixed aerodynamic elements along with its race-proven suspension and Michelin Pilot Sport racing tires enable the car to pull more than 2Gs



ABT Sportsline Odyssey 21 Extreme E E-SUV

of lateral grip. GT Mk II is also lighter and more agile. The street car's adjustable ride height and drive modes have been removed, providing a weight savings of over 200 pounds, while 5-way adjustable DSSV shock absorbers work with a lowered and fixed ride height to improve handling and keep the Mk II as aerodynamically efficient as possible. The Ford GT Mk II features the 3.5-liter EcoBoost engine that

powers both the Ford GT race car and the road car but since the Mk II is not limited by any racing sanctioning body it is able to generate 200 horsepower more than the race car, making the Mk II the most powerful version of the Ford GT. The GT Mk II is a limited edition of just 45 vehicles, with a starting price of \$1.2 million

▼ **Extreme E** has unveiled a prototype of the Odyssey 21 E-SUV to be run by German tuning company **ABT Sportsline**, a champion across disciplines at the highest levels of motorsports over seven decades including Formula E, in the radical new Extreme E electric SUV off-road racing series starting in 2021. ABT Sportsline, like all other entrants, will take delivery of one of 12 Extreme E E-SUVs in March 2020, ready to test, develop their own powertrain, and create select areas of bodywork (such as engine cover, front and rear bumpers, side skirt and lights), in a bid to gain a competitive advantage. ABT Sportsline was one of the first teams to commit to Formula E back in 2013. The ABT team will race across Extreme E's five formidable envi-

ronments, already damaged by climate change or severely affected by human interference, with group testing to take place midway through next year. The teams will board Extreme E's unique floating paddock—RMS St. Helena—ahead of the January 2021 opening race. To learn more, visit www.Extreme-E.com and follow @ExtremeELive on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

▼ **Radical Sportscars** blurs the lines between road and race performance with its new flagship street-legal (at least in the UK so far) sports car, the Rapture, designed to



Radical Sportscars Rapture

bring performance to the street by building on the British marque's extensive experience in top-level motorsports engineering and design. The Rapture's main selling point and primary mission are "to deliver an emotive driving experience like no other across both road and race track." Driven both by demand from its existing customer base and the potential to expand its market, the Rapture is built in accordance with the UK's Individual Vehicle Approval framework to ensure its road-legal nature. It is also intended for European markets from launch, with homologation for worldwide markets to follow. The Rapture will also be a timely boost for British industry—solely built, engineered and designed at the company's Peterborough (Cambridgeshire) production facility. The Rapture follows Radical's ethos of generating extreme performance via lightweight construction combined with aerodynamic efficiency, instead of relying solely on headline-chasing power and top speed figures, with a lightweight spaceframe chassis, FIA-compliant safety cell and crash structure, and high-downforce composite bodywork complete with bi-plane rear wing and double-tunnel diffuser. At the heart of the Rapture is a 2261cc Ford EcoBoost turbocharged engine, reworked by Radical Performance Engines with an all-new turbo architecture and air induction system. The unit produces 350 hp and 320 lb-ft of torque. Drive comes through a six-speed paddle-shift gearbox. Drawing on Radical's past

experience with both the road-going SR3 SL and RXC Coupe, Rapture features an enhanced version of the firm's proven Nik-link suspension, optimized for both road and track, complete with adjustable damp-

ers. Rapture's cockpit incorporates two molded racing seats with integral headrests and multi-point harnesses. Its sculpted dash has an LCD display with data-logging functions, as well as heat and a multi-function digital steering wheel. While the Rapture is a high-performance product, it is designed to be accessible to experienced drivers and novices alike, and each customer gets a tailored track school package to ensure getting the most out of the



Aston Martin DB4 GT Zagato Continuation and DBS GT Zagato

machine. Driver input required for peak performance is the same as it would be in the class-leading SR1 or SR3 sports prototypes, putting a Rapture driver firmly in the same league as Radical's global motorsports community. Radical has already received pre-orders for the Rapture from both France and Germany. Build slots are subject to availability, and first deliveries were to begin in August.

▼ **Aston Martin** has given another peek at their upcoming DBS GT Zagato model. Paired with the DB4 GT Zagato Continuation to complete the DBZ Centenary Collection, celebrating 100 years of iconic coachbuilder Zagato. Only 19 will be created, priced at £6m (\$7.5 million) for each pair. Taking Aston Martin's most potent series production car—the acclaimed DBS Superleggera—as its starting point, and inspired by the voluptuous shape of the original DB4 GT Zagato, Aston Martin and Zagato designers have worked to create a similarly evocative design language—"an unequivocal statement of luxury, exclusivity and purity." One example is the DBS GT Zagato's new "dynamic" grille, with 108 individual diamond-shaped fiber pieces that are flush with the car's handsome exterior when stationary, then flutter to life as each piece opens to allow the car's twin-turbo V12 to breathe. Another is the car's pure full length carbon fiber roofline—a single large piece of carbon fiber covering where the rear window would usually be placed. Aston Martin's design studio has utilized a camera-operated rear view central mirror to accommodate this, without compromise to practicality for the driver. "Form and function are constantly in battle with one another," says Aston Mar-

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▼ The **Alfa Romeo Tonale**, revealed at the Geneva Motor Show earlier this year, is already a multiple award winner. The premium brand's first compact plug-in hybrid



SUV concept forecasts a brand direction balancing heritage, styling direction, driver focus, the latest technology, advanced driving dynamics—and powertrain electrification. During Parco Valentino 2019, an open-air motor show in Turin, the concept won awards at Italy's *Auto & Design* magazine's prestigious international competition with categories for production cars, concept cars and brand design language, plus an overall award, taking home both the Concept Car and overall Car Design Award 2019 trophies. Then just days after wowing the crowd at the Goodwood Festival of Speed in the UK, the Tonale won the Readers' Choice Design Award 2019 at the influential *Auto Express Awards*, voted for by readers of that UK magazine. The energy switch to electric is the latest page in Alfa Romeo's 109-year history, expected to propel the brand into the future, with electrification applied in the service of sportiness, with Tonale's rear electric motor providing new technological solutions to maximize the pleasure of sporty driving. The concept's name comes from Tonale Pass, not far from Stelvio Pass in the Italian Alps, a breathtaking natural region famous for majestic peaks, waterfalls and snow year-round. The geographical connection between Stelvio Pass and Tonale Pass sets the stage for the evolution and continuity from Alfa Romeo Stelvio to Alfa Romeo Tonale. Having fun with several languages at once, the company calls it their "opera d'arte," or piece of art—otherwise expressed as **Alfa Romeo Tonale**.

▼ **AddArmor**, of Jackson, Wyoming—known for designing sophisticated mobile safe-rooms—has debuted the world's fastest armored car, a 202-mph B4-level safe

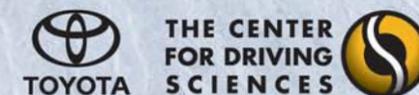
room on wheels, the \$205,000 APR RS7. With armored vehicles long seen as slower, heavy duty trucks, AddArmor showcases new developments in lightweight, combat-proven polycarbonate armor paneling, 10 times stronger than ballistic steel while weighing 60 percent less. Speed is critical to safety, and the total armoring weight of the APR RS7 is no more than 200 pounds, allowing exotic sports cars and even EVs to be armored without compromising acceleration, braking or range. The AddArmor RS7 also features an APR Plus Stage II system to boost its 4.0L twin-turbo engine to 760 hp and 800 lb-ft of torque, with a 0-to-60 mph time of 2.9 seconds. The RS7 is upfitted to European B4-level, though they offer vehicle protection up to B7-level that can stop armor-piercing rounds. The APR RS7 B4 package combines 360-degree front-seat polycarbonate body panels and



ballistic glass to limit weight and protect the primary occupants from prolonged attacks from blunt objects such as bats or cinder blocks. Ballistically, the B4 armor can stop a .44 Magnum round. The APR RS7 features Delta Force-tested hidden security countermeasures throughout, including a sonic sound cannon capable of 120 dB, electric-shock door handles equivalent to a high-powered taser gun, pepper spray dispensers, a front barrier ram that protects the car's radiator while allowing the car to drive through most ambush situations, a rear blinding light system using aircraft landing technology to temporarily blind assailants, a custom smokescreen system, and biometric gun racks for assault rifles and handguns hidden in the trunk. A 24/7 Global 911 satellite concierge service system monitors vehicle occupants via their cell phones and an array of beacons, and any sign of trouble automatically alerts a command center staffed by highly trained security staff with military and first-responder backgrounds, where situations are assessed and solutions dispatched in case of emergency—anywhere in the world. Other on-board tactical electronics include an overseas-compliant drone-denial frequency-jamming satellite communications system, installed alongside active mine/ex-

plosion detection, plus a state-of-the-art 360-degree night-vision camera system. The AddArmor APR RS7 also has an over-pressure gas detection unit with onboard gas masks and air tanks to supply filtered fresh breathing air. The RS7 runs on high-performance Pirelli P Zero Run Flat tires capable of driving 30 miles after sustaining multiple high-powered rifle shots. Visit AddArmor.com. ■

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OPEN TOP BULL ON THE LOOSE

BY DAVE STALL

In 1963, Ferruccio Lamborghini decided he could build a supercar and compete with the likes of Ferrari, Aston Martin and Jaguar, to name a few. A very important element of branding the company was a logo: it had to be the right logo! It had to be a logo that once you saw it, you knew exactly what supercar you were looking at.

The logo is shaped like a shield, filled with a black background and outlined in gold, with “Lamborghini” across the top—but why a bull in the center of the logo?

There are two reasons. The first one is that it is a representation of the founder, Ferruccio Lamborghini. Born on April 28, 1916, his zodiac sign is Taurus the bull.

The second reason is that the owner had a passion for bullfighting—he attended as many bullfights as he could—plus

he felt the bull represented him perfectly. There is a lot more history about the logo, but I want to discuss the EVO Spyder.

After driving the Lamborghini Huracán Performante at Thermal Raceway last year, then on the streets of San Diego (see our May/June 2018 issue), I didn’t think Lamborghini could make the Huracán any better. I was so wrong.

They removed the top! Not being a convertible guy, I was skeptical, but once behind the wheel that all changed. A bonus is that the top will come up or go down in 17 seconds and can be operated at up to 30 miles per hour.

The drivetrain is a holdover from the Performante, a 5.2-liter V10 producing 640 horsepower, backed by a 7-speed dual clutch automatic transmission, with solid paddle shifters mounted to the

steering column.

Add a sophisticated exhaust system, along with three driving modes. Strada (Street) is the base mode, very quiet, and auto-shift produces a very smooth experience. Click up once to Sport, your exhaust tone gets throaty, and the car can be shifted automatically or manually, your choice. Then my favorite mode, Corsa (track)—oh my, I have just woken the bull! The Lamborghini comes alive not only with exhaust tones, but performance as well. Upshifting, it growls; downshifting, it burps and pops not unlike an F1 car. Plus folks around you know you have arrived.

To keep the EVO in line, Lamborghini has developed LDVI (Lamborghini Integrated Vehicle Dynamics). This is the brains behind the EVO Spyder—depending on driver input, the Lamborghini reacts to give the driver the best performance available. LDVI can anticipate the wishes of the driver, shifting from underlying feedback logic to a feed-forward one—from reaction to anticipation.

The suspension is integrated with the whole car in mind, even giving the driver the ability to raise and lower the nose to

SPECIFICATIONS

CHASSIS	.....aluminum & carbon fiber hybrid
BODY SHELL	.....aluminum & composite skin, soft top
ENGINE	.....5.2L 90° V10 w contin var intake & exh cams
ENGINE MGMT	.....Bosch MED 17 Master Slave
COMPRESSION RATIO	.....12.7:1
COOLING SYSTEM	.....water and oil systems
LUBRICATION	.....dry sump
HP/TORQUE	.....640 hp / 442 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION	.....7-spd LDF dual-clutch, shift characteristics variable via ANIMA
DRIVETRAIN	.....AWD Haldex Gen V electronic w mechanical self-locking rear differential
ACCEL 0-TO-62 MPH (100km/h)	.....3.1 sec
ACCEL 0-TO-124 MPH (200km/h)	.....9.3 sec
TOP SPEED	.....202 mph
BRAKING 62-TO-0 MPH	.....105.6 ft
SUSPENSION	.....aluminum double-wishbone; steel springs, hydraulic dampers, MagneRide electromagnet damper control
STEERING	.....electromechanical power; Lamborghini Dynamic Steering (LDS) w variable ratio
BRAKES	.....hydraulic dual-circuit w vacuum brake servo unit; carbon ceramic discs, ventilated and cross-drilled: F: 380x38mm, 6-piston aluminum calipers; R: 356x32mm, 4-piston calipers;
ESC/ABS	.....electronic stability control & anti-lock brakes can be adjusted via ANIMA; ESC can be deactivated
WHEELS	.....F: 8.5Jx20"; R: 11Jx20"
TIRES	.....Pirelli P Zero: F: 245/30R20; R: 305/30R20
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	.....177.95 / 103.15 in
WIDTH	.....(excl mirrors) 76.1 in
HEIGHT46.46 in
TURNING CIRCLE35.76 ft
CARGO CAPACITY(100 liters) 3.53 cu.ft
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eliminate scraping coming into driveways or over speed bumps. Along with all the technology in the Lamborghini, you also get 4WD (all-wheel drive) and 4WS (four-wheel steering), which add to the intelligence of the car and the relationship between the driver and car. This system was flawless. U-turns are amazing.

The EVO's aerodynamics were designed for performance. The front splitter develops an airway under the car, and added flaps aid the overall load force as well, five times higher than the previous Huracán model. With an added rear spoiler, the aero keeps the Huracán planted to the road in cornering, braking and acceleration.

The steering system on the Lamborghini Huracán EVO Spyder is equipped with electronic power steering, which adapts to all your driving styles seamlessly.

The interior is as well done as the exterior, all with functionality and maximum performance and comfort. You get an 8.4-inch touchscreen—located on the lower portion of the center dash—that controls heat, AC and the entertainment system with the sweep of a finger or two (two fingers control volume of the sound system).

My last words are: this car is worth every penny! ■



PRICING AS DRIVEN

BASE PRICE \$287,400

INCL: longitudinal mid-rear mounted naturally aspirated 5.2L 90° V10, IDS (Iniezione Diretta Stratificata) fuel stratified coupled w multi-point injection, electronically controlled, continuously variable intake & exhaust valves timing, 4WD and 4WS with full-electronic management system, torque vectoring by brake on all wheels, hybrid chassis in aluminum & carbon fiber, front & rear double wishbone suspension, power vacuum brake system w ABS, carbon-ceramic brakes, electronic parking brake, ESC, Lamborghini Doppia Frizione (LDS) 7-spd dual clutch transmission, Lamborghini Piattaforma Inerziale (LPI) inertial platform, Lamborghini Dinamica Veicolo Integrata (LDVI), full-LED headlamps & tail lights, automatic climate, heated and electrically foldable external mirrors.

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LIFTING SYSTEM +	4000
RIMS AESIR 20" DIAMOND	3300
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EMBROIDERED LAMBORGHINI SHIELD ON HEADREST	1000
WINDSCREEN FRAME FINISH	400
FLOOR MATS W LEATHER PIPING	600
EVO-TRIM SPORTIVO ALCANTARA SEATS	4700
MULTIFUNCTIONAL STEERING WHEEL IN ALCANTARA	1000
CONTRAST STITCHING	900
OPTIONAL STITCHING	250
AMBIENT LIGHT PACKAGE	1100
AD PERSONAM INTERIOR	3780
SMARTPHONE INTERFACE & CONNECTED SERVICES	3600
FULLY ELECTRIC & HEATED SEATS	3200
GAS GUZZLER TAX	2100
DESTINATION CHARGE	3695
TOTAL	\$355,725



Incredible hunk.

Admittedly a bit of a showoff, this beast means business.

by Joe Sage

The Mercedes-Benz G-Class has always been a bit of a paradox wrapped inside an enigma, originally built for the military, but long popular at the country club. You wouldn't expect such a brick to be so showy and elegant—yet it is. And you might not expect something so showy and elegant to be so brawny and capable—yet it is. There's really only one way it can outdo itself, and that's with the Mercedes-AMG version driven here.

This marks the 40th year of the G-Class (né Gelandewagen). With AMG models first introduced at the 20-year mark, this also marks their 20th year.

G-Class is the longest-standing passenger vehicle series in Mercedes-Benz history.

Nobody had ever heard of an SUV in 1979. The marketplace included the first closed-body truck-framed 4WD vehicles from the Detroit Three and from farm implement manufacturers. A luxury version of such a vehicle—with the persona of a tank,

yet repurposed for graceful, safe family duty—was unprecedented.

Quickly adopted globally by police, fire, rescue and security services, the first G then gained wide popular exposure—and confirmation of its status as a secure cocoon—serving as the Popemobile.

If you're already looking at the \$124,500 Mercedes-Benz G 550, the jump to \$147,500 for an AMG G63—18.5 percent—provides a 38.7 percent boost in horsepower (577 hp vs 416). Despite its remarkable gain in road performance, the AMG's off-road specs are remarkably similar—approach angle reduced a few points, breakover by a couple (AMG's sexy side pipes perhaps being one factor), departure by only a fraction, with the same fording depth. The trade-offs are more than appropriate.

City and combined fuel mileage are the same in the AMG, just two points off for highway—and the last thing you'd be thinking about when you give it the gun on a mountain two-lane, where its sophisticated suspension belies its physical height.

We spent our week with the AMG G63 largely

within metro Phoenix, carrying four adults as often as not, in luxurious leather, brushed metal and massaging seat comfort, with ample rear legroom that even slightly exceeds the spacious front row.

We had taken it off-road at the NWAPA Outdoor Activity Vehicle of the Year competition a few weeks prior, tapping the full range of benefits of its locking front, center and rear differentials.

Would you buy a G-Class because you want the luxury style and fitment of a Mercedes-Benz but never quite know when you may have to go off-road? Or because you want a supremely capable off-roader but never know when you might have to pick up a corporate executive on the way home? We suspect many people gravitate to it because they specifically know they will indeed be doing both of those things regularly.

We similarly suspect buyers of the AMG G-Class equally allocate and/or blend their goals and purposes when adding its layers of style and performance.

Between its off-road capabilities and its aura



of personal success, the G-Class exudes a never-give-up persona. Whichever way you approach the formula, once you have your hands on a G-Class, you will likely never want to give it up. If something else catches your eye or serves some other purpose, you'll just need a bigger garage.

It is said that the Mercedes-Benz GL-Class, when new over ten years ago, had been intended as a unibody replacement for the G-Class. Instead, they continue to happily coexist. Rumors persist of the G's discontinuation (which might be a sure way to make existing ones worth two or three times as much overnight). We'd like to see the G-Class stick around for another 40 years or more. Not that many vehicles have such a niche all their own. ■

SPECIFICATIONS

FORMAT/BUILD ...	4-door, 5-passenger, body on frame
ENGINE	handcrafted AMG 4.0L biturbo V8
DRIVETRAIN	permanent 4WD (40:60)
HP/TORQUE	577 hp / 627 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION	AMG Speedshift TCT 9-spd auto
0-TO-60 MPH	(est) 4.4 sec
TOP SPEED	(elect lim) 137 mph
	(or w Driver's Pkg) 149 mph
SUSPENSION ...	F: indep dbl wishbone w longitudinal & transverse links, coils, shocks
	R: rigid axle w longitudinal & transverse links, coils, shocks
STEERING	rack & pinion electro-mech
BRAKES	F: 15.7 / R: 14.6
WHEELS / TIRES ...	std 9.5x20 / 275/50R20 (ours: 22")
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	191.9 / 113.8 in
GROUND CLEARANCE	(max load) 9.5 in
APPROACH/BKOVER/DEPART	27 / 21.7 / 29.6°
MAXIMUM TILT ANGLE	TBA
FORDING DEPTH	27.6 in
TURNING CIRCLE	TBA
HEADROOM (F/R)	41.9 / 40.5 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	TBA
CARGO CAPACITY	TBA
PAYLOAD / TOW CAPACITY	TBA
WEIGHT	5842 lb
FUEL CAPACITY	(w reserve) 26.4 gal
MPG	13/15/14 (city/hwy/comb)

INCL: Designo brown/black Nappa leather, walnut trim, AMG silver-painted brake calipers, Polar White paint, AMG Nappa leather performance steering wheel, AMG transmission, AMG Dynamic Select, AMG Ride Control sport suspension, AMG high-perf brakes, AMG perf exhaust, AWD, Camtronic cylinder deactivation, sequentially lockable differentials, low range gearbox, power tilt/slide sunroof, 12.3" widescreen display, Comand nav, Bluetooth, Burmester surround sound, 3-zone auto climate, heated seats front & rear, keyless start, multicolor ambient lighting, rain-sense wipers, split-fold 2nd row, Android/Apple, Mercedes me connect, LED lights.

BASE PRICE	\$147,500
EXCLUSIVE INTERIOR PKG: AMG Nappa diamond-quilt leather, Nappa leather dashboard, AMG headrest/floor mat badging, multicontour front massage seats, rapid heat/vent front seats	7200
AMG NIGHT PKG: side mirrors, spare wheel ring, bumper trim in Obsidian Black; outer protective trim strip w black inserts; black brush guard; tinted headlights, indicator lights, taillights	1800
AMG CARBON FIBER ENGINE COVER	1500
12.3" WIDESCREEN INSTRUMENT CLUSTER	850
22" FORGED AMG BLACK WHEELS	4450
DESTINATION CHARGE	995

TOTAL (based on prelim pkgs/pricing) ... **\$164,295**

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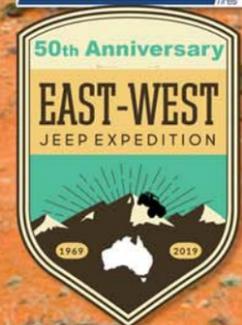
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SAND DUNES, CAMELS AND KANGAROOS

THE BF GOODRICH EAST-WEST JEEP EXPEDITION COMPLETES 50TH ANNIVERSARY COAST-TO-COAST CROSSING OF AUSTRALIA

Photos courtesy of Adventure Architects LLC



There are few topics that pique the adventurer's imagination as venturing into the planet's wild and remote locales. Throughout the epoch of time, human spirit has drawn these rugged individuals to the far corners of the earth in an attempt to sail, hike or drive to where others have yet to venture. This year marks the 50th anniversary of such an endeavor, a small group of Jeepers who pioneered a new path through Australia's Simpson Desert, the Seven Slot Line.

Sans services between the towns of Birdsville and Alice Springs, expedition leader Ian McDonald and his team back then had needed to be fully self-reliant during the 900-kilometer crossing. Carrying all fuel, food and water needed for the two-week passage, they succeeded in not only piloting their Jeeps through the sands of the Simpson, but also completed a full crossing of the continent from the Pacific Ocean to the Indian Ocean.

In July of this year, a small group of modern explorers departed Cape Byron in an attempt to follow McDonald's route from the easternmost to the westernmost points on the continent. The 2019 BFGoodrich East-West Australia Jeep Expedition was organized by Ben Davidson, publisher of *Jeep Action Magazine*, and led by American journalist Chris Collard. McDonald, along with original expedition member and filmmaker John Eggleston, both of whom are in their eighties, joined the team in Brisbane and would go as far as Alice Springs.

Driving five Jeeps ranging from a 1996 Wrangler TJ to a 2019 JL Overland, they made their way through Channel Country to Birdsville and on to an abandoned oil well known as Beachcomber. They then set a course due west toward Old Andado Station as McDonald's team had done five decades earlier. While most travelers to the Simpson follow the QAA and French Lines, well-established two-tracks, the Seven Slot Line had only been traversed once, and the winds of time had erased all traces. What lay ahead were more than 700 sand dunes and endless miles of thick spinifex to navigate.

Although this leg of the journey represented only 300 km of the multi-week expedition, working their way west at an average speed of 5 km/h, it took five days of dawn-to-dusk driving to complete. McDonald and Eggleston, who took 12 days to traverse [CONT'D]



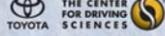
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the same section of desert in 1969, shared tales of the challenges during their crossing. Most notable was their equipment.

As Eggleston pulled a liter of milk from one of the Dometic 12-volt fridge/freezers, he said, "We didn't have cold food after the first few days. We had basic food, a good tool kit, and as much fuel as we could carry." His team utilized 55-gallon drums, while Davidson's group relied on auxiliary fuel cells from Long Range Automotive. McDonald used heavy steel sand ladders, but the new team made use of lightweight Maxtrax sand mats. Successful sand driving requires flotation, and the team's BFGoodrich KM3 mud-terrain radial tires were a significant upgrade from the bias ply tires of the '60s. One item of significant importance was a constant on both expeditions, and that was their choice of Warn recovery winches.

They arrived at the historic site of Old Andado Station near dusk on July 14th, where they enjoyed their final night in the Simpson before moving on to Alice Springs to restock sundries.

During the second leg of the journey, the team passed through Palm Valley and Finke Gorge National Park before traversing Boggy Hole Track to Uluru (Ayers Rock) and Kata Tjuta (The Olgas). Western Australia is home to some of the most isolated regions of the country, and there are few sealed roads. Turning west on the Great Central Highway, they spent evenings camped in dry creek beds under the Southern Cross, prepared the billy each morning on an open fire, and sourced fuel from Tjukayirla, the most remote roadhouse in the country.

When the Jeeps reached the rugged cliffs of Steep Point, the most westerly edge of the continent, they had travelled nearly 6,000 kilometers, more than half of which was on dirt tracks. It was a bittersweet moment. They had succeeded in their quest to follow McDonald's route across the Simpson Desert, but as is the case with any journey of exploration, it had come to an end. The team raise a dram of Scotch whiskey in honor of McDonald, Eggleston and the hearty souls of yesteryear who had planted the seed of inspiration and began planning their next great Jeeping adventure.

You can keep tabs on the crew's next adventure at www.sevenslotexpedition.com



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disarmingly simple BY JOE SAGE

Acura's ILX sedan sits in the oxymoronic category of entry luxury or entry sport. As its first cousin, it's hard not to look at the ILX as it relates to the Honda Civic. Styling is cleaner outside and bears an advanced industrial design spirit inside. At a 32.5 percent higher base price, ILX also has a 2.4L engine, 60 percent larger than Civic's 1.5L, though with just 27 percent more horses. The top Civic model hits \$27,400, putting our top ILX example here just 15 percent higher. There's also a Civic SI at \$24,300, with 205 hp and a six-speed manual. Beyond all this, apples and oranges get extensive. What's pertinent here is how the new Acura ILX compares with its predecessor, as model year 2019 represents a refresh on many levels.

The new model is immediately recognizable by

its grille—gone is the brushed-metal cowcatcher, one of many style directions forecast in Acura's Precision concept at the 2016 Detroit auto show.

Standard technology is increased, notably with a faster-responding two-screen center interface, as well as AcuraWatch active safety and driver assistance and Android/Apple integration.

All that, and the price this year was actually reduced by \$2200—almost 10 percent.

Options are kept simple, arranged by packages, and our has all three. To have the A-Spec package—which we'd find irresistible for its interior—you also have to buy either the Premium or Tech Package (ours has both). You could save a few bucks here, but probably lose something you wanted (we didn't find the upgraded audio system too impressive, but haven't heard the base unit).



We sometimes found the engine short on power (even shifted to S, which mostly provided acoustics confirming how hard it's trying). Surely they can eke some more horses out of a 2.4L. But it does achieve very decent fuel mileage for its degree of style, content and pep.

In our experience, Acura owners have an extreme level of loyalty. Whatever the

SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE	.....2.4L alum alloy 4-cyl drive-by-wire throttle
DRIVETRAIN	.....FWD
HP/TORQUE	.....201 hp / 180 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION	...8-spd DCT (dual clutch) w torque conv
SUSPENSION	.....F: MacPherson strut; R: multi-link
STEERING	.....elec power assist rack & pinion
BRAKES	.....F: 12.3 vented / R: 11.1 solid discs
WHEELS / TIRES	.....18x7.5 / 225/40 R18 hi-perf AS
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	.....182.2 / 105.1 in
HEADROOM (F/R)	.....38.0 / 35.9 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	.....42.3 / 34.0 in
CARGO CAPACITY	.....12.4 cu.ft
GROUND CLEARANCE	.....5.3 in
TURNING CIRCLE	.....36.8 ft
WEIGHT	.....3095 lb / with Prem, Tech, A-Spec 3148 lb
FUEL CAPACITY	.....13.2 gal
MPG	.....24/34/28 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE	.....\$25,900
PREMIUM PKG:	leather seats w piping & stitching, seat-mirror memory, power lumbar, Android/Apple, addtl premium tech & mobile connectivity, addtl driver assist.....1750
TECH PKG:	upgraded 3D nav w real time traffic & turn-by-turn, 10-sprk audio, dynamic guidelines for multi-view rear camera, AcuraLink connectivity.....1900
A-SPEC PKG:	18" shark grey wheels, LED fogs, gloss black accents, side underbody spoilers, piano black rear diffuser & decklid spoiler, Ultrasuede-trimmed red or ebony interior, A-Spec leather wheel, A-Spec sills, sport pedals, dash graphite/chrome trim & red illumination.....2000
DESTINATION CHARGE	.....995
TOTAL	.....\$32,545

magic mix that attracts them to the premium brand over cousin brand Honda, and over the competing derivative premium brands, it proves potent. ■



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Power play

BY JOE SAGE

The overall Kia crossover-SUV lineup has a lot of variety, including typical one-two-three-size models, plus the always-its-own-thing Soul and now, for the past couple of years, Kia Niro.

The original Kia Niro in 2017 was a hybrid only, thus it didn't bother saying so in its name. Niro's hybrid drivetrain delivers a kick well beyond its stated horsepower or clock times. Its ample volume sits atop well-developed suspension and body geometry that belie any bulk or front-drive characteristics, hugging the road through curves and parking like a compact. Now, PHEV (plug-in hybrid) and EV (pure electric) versions have been added.

The vehicle at hand is (a) the Kia Niro, with its style, performance and utility; and (b) a full EV.

Our first EV for review—eight long years ago—was so new, range so short and charging infrastructure so sparse, it was sent for just three days (and delivered on a flatbed truck). Now, EVs arrive under their own power and stay for a full week, as with most, and operations are fairly routine.

We have a couple of charging accounts and, bit by bit with our sporadic usage, are getting a handle on locations along our normal paths, which are maturing dramatically. We've even mapped out chargers for what-if road trips—San Diego, Utah, West Texas—most quite doable, though we've yet to do them. In the early days, most people would either use 120V home current, which everybody has but is slow, or 220V, which most everybody has and which takes one simple visit from an elec-

trician to install an EV charging base. Now, the committed EV owner (and is there any other kind?) will want a DC fast charging unit in their garage, as relying on the paid network can get pricey.

The hybrid Kia Niro starts at \$23,490 and runs across five trims up to \$32,250, all with the same 1.6L gasoline engine plus high-torque electric motor, for a combined 139 hp and 195 lb-ft of torque, with fuel mileage as high as 52/49/50 (c/h/c) in the slimmest trim to 46/40/43 in S Touring or Touring.

Niro PHEV, added in 2018, runs from \$28,500 to \$35,200 across three trims, has higher voltage and horsepower from its electric component yet the same system totals, with fuel mileage in the middle of the hybrid range, 48/44/46 across the board.

Niro EV, introduced later in 2018 as a 2019—the one driven here—has two trims: EX at \$38,500 or our EX Premium sample at \$44,000. Horsepower and torque (201/295) are considerably higher than either hybrid, while "energy efficiency" (MPGe) is, well, stated differently and—its own huge topic—is difficult, at best, to compare. For us, it was typically \$17-18 to load 120-130 miles of range, a cost on par with a 20-mpg vehicle.

The EV version provides the most zip but requires the most attention to logistics. The PHEV is a best-of-both-worlds solution if you have a bit more budget and a real intent to plug in when you can. The basic hybrid is a great solution for most.

Most reviewers don't have an installed charger, often making range a bigger topic than it needs to be. Many owners can rely on public chargers, topping off during work and errands, but most will definitely want their own fast-charge at home. ■

EX PREMIUM INCLUDES: power sunroof w sunshade, heated-ventilated leather front seats, power driver's seat w power lumbar, Harman Kardon premium audio w subwoofer, 8" touchscreen nav, wireless phone charging, console mood lighting, reverse park distance warning, LED interior lamps, LED taillamps, driver side seatback pocket, deluxe scuff plates.

SPECIFICATIONS

MOTOR	356V permanent magnet AC synchronous
BATTERY	64kWh lithium ion polymer (LPO) 356V 180 Ah; energy 180 kWh, power 170 kW
CHARGING	7.12 kW on-board charger (OBC); DC fast charge 80%: 50 kW 1 hr 15 min; 100 kW 1 hr; Level 1: 120v 59 hrs; Level 2: 9 hrs 35 min
DRIVETRAIN	FWD
HP/TORQUE	201 hp / 291 lb-ft (150 kW / 395 Nm)
TRANSMISSION	gear reduction unit
0-TO-62 / TOP SPEED	7.8 sec / 103.8 mph
SUSPENSION	twin-tube shocks; F: MacPherson type; R: multi-link
STEERING	motor-driven power steering
BRAKES	electric booster regen, motor polarity reversal: F: 12.0 solid / R: 11.8 solid braking distance 62-to-0 137 ft
WHEELS / TIRES	7.0Jx17 alloy / P215/55R17
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	172.2 / 106.3 in
GROUND CLEARANCE	6.1 in
TURNING CIRCLE	34.8 ft
APPROACH / DEPARTURE	16.6 / 29.0°
HEADROOM (F/R)	40.1 / 37.7 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	41.7 / 36.0 in
CARGO CAPACITY	18.5 / 53.0 cu.ft
TOW CAPACITY	not recommended
WEIGHT	4916 lb (battery 1008 lb)
ALL-ELECTRIC RANGE	239 miles
MPGe	123/102/112 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE	\$44,000
COLD WEATHER PKG 2.0:	battery heater, heat pump ...1080
DELETION PKG:	delete Homelink & ventilated seats ...1200
EX PREMIUM LAUNCH EDITION:	heated steering wheel, LED headlights, auto-dim mirror, fwd & rev park distance warning, cargo cover .....1000
OPTIONS:	cargo mat (95), carpeted floor mats (135), cargo net (50) .....280
DESTINATION CHARGE	995
TOTAL	\$47,155

KIA NIRO LINEUP (2019)	
Niro (hybrid).....	\$23,490
Niro Plug-In Hybrid.....	28,500
Niro EV (base EX trim).....	38,500





A relationship with the surface

BY JOE SAGE

With an MFA from the University of Illinois and studies in Paris with Sarah Lawrence College, Lucretia Torva is a classically trained and highly literate fine artist who is always creatively inclined—and also a bit of a motorhead.

AZD: Have you always been an artist, since you were, say, six months old?

Torva: “I’ve always been good at art, but it didn’t occur to me that I would actually be an ‘artist.’ I didn’t start in art in college. I had to declare a major, so after the first semester I just declared liberal arts and decided to major in art. It was the only thing I was really interested in.”

“I majored in painting. It was a very traditional program. You don’t paint for your first two years. You don’t touch a paintbrush for two years. You draw geometric forms, draw figures, take classes in 2D and 3D design. It used to drive some students nuts. ‘When are we gonna paint? when are we gonna paint?’ Well, you have to learn all that other stuff before you’d even bother painting. I run into so many artists who are missing something. They can’t handle perspective, they don’t draw very well, or they don’t understand what all the visual elements are.

“A lot of art majors also probably don’t think English is important. I’m literate, but I didn’t get it from college. Most colleges require two semesters or so of English, and I placed out of that. I had gotten a lot from my mother. She was highly literate and would make me read novels. Our MFA thesis is fundamentally an art show, but we had to do this perfunctory paper. When you think of a master’s, my daughter had to do 70 pages for hers. We had to do six. And a lot of people needed help with it. It’s embarrassing. You’re 22 years old and you can’t write six pages? ‘I’m an art major!’ they say. Good luck! So I’m glad I had a traditional art

(Left) *Fin Win*, 48x24, oil on canvas. (Right) *Silver Dream*, 36x48, oil on canvas; *Electric Desert*, 60x60, acrylic on canvas; *Fire Dog*, 36x24, acrylic on canvas.

education, because I don’t have any gaping holes.”

AZD: Did you go right into teaching?

Torva: “You can’t teach college without a master’s degree, so I got an MFA. I graduated in August and started applying for jobs, but it was a year before I got one. I rented a studio space once I graduated and kind of kept up with my painting. I did odd jobs and applied for things, and I had a teaching job by the next year.”

Lucretia taught art at Shepherd University in West Virginia for several years before arriving in Arizona.

Torva: “I’ve moved to Arizona twice. The first was in 1990, to Prescott, for my ex-husband’s career. Phoenix was having 122-degree temperatures, and I wondered what the hell I had moved to!”

In Prescott, Torva taught art at Yavapai College and for the Elderhostel program. Her husband’s work then took them to St Louis, but by 1997 they were back in Arizona, this time he in Prescott with the kids and she in the Valley, pursuing an animation class.

The University of Advancing Technology needed an art teacher, but it was out of her mainstream—mostly a multimedia type of school. Here she taught animation theory, storyboarding and, as a small school, a wide variety of tasks, even HTML coding and 3D animation programming. It didn’t pay well, but it was a job. She was thinking, “I thought you wanted to hire an art teacher,” but stuck it out for about 16 months.

Lucretia had stumbled upon an ad from Phoenix Art Group seeking to hire artists. “What? There’s a job for artists?” she thought. This seemed a breakthrough.

Closed now, PAG was a world-renowned creator of handmade art—that you could buy out of a catalog, i.e. “something that was repetitively made by hand.” Each year they would freshen up their designs, so their designers would create new things, and there was [CONT’D]



Torva
Lucretia Torva
photo by
Elena Thornton





Lucretia working on a mural at a Phoenix Festival of the Arts painting event; *Pulling Strings*, 24x36, oil on canvas; *Life on the Prairie*, 30x40, oil on canvas.

a production department, where each order was assigned to an artist to repeat it, from a sample in the catalog, with line items of what the designer is supposed to do for a specific order.

Torva: "I went and applied to be an artist, and I passed with flying colors. I'd exactly reproduce whatever they wanted me to reproduce. Boom. They offered me a job, so I quit teaching. I worked as a production artist for two weeks, then they put me in charge of quality control—the one who'd say, "Nope! Ya gotta redo it!" and make people cry. I worked there for almost two years.

"Actually, working at PAG was good at tips and tricks and weird things I wouldn't have thought of as a traditional painter.

"Then UAT offered me a better job, at a good salary. They had reason to: they wanted to start a master's degree program and had to have a certain

number of teachers who had terminal degrees, and my MFA, which takes longer than a master's, was a terminal degree even though it's not a PhD.

"I thought okay, cool, I'm not liking this other job, I've gone all this time without making paintings, I got a divorce and moved to a strange town ... so I went back to UAT and was there another 16 months or so. They did get approved for their master's program,



then wanted me to teach multimedia. I thought it would be ridiculous to teach something I don't have the professional background to teach. People were paying for a master's degree in this? I'm a painter. I can teach art history all day long. So I said I can't do it. I was offered four weeks' severance pay, said, "It's a deal!"—and that's when I became self-employed, in 2000."

AZD: So now you were finally free to pursue your own painting. Did you develop a specialty?

Torva: "Painting. I had had children and a husband and hadn't been very productive. I've always done a wide variety of paintings, because I get interested... 'Oh, look at that! oh, look at that fabric! oh, look at that person! gee! look at that!'"

"I had done some really weird surreal stuff in college. The images were really interesting, but my skill wasn't really good. More recently, I've started doing some more surreal things, because my technique's a lot better—now I can pull them off."

(See *Life on the Prairie*, at lower left.)

Torva: "You're looking out over a plain, could be Arizona, a flat place with some mountains in the distance, with a storm over part of it, and on this plain there are these hobby horses that are just sort of stuck in the ground. Some of them have a sheet pulled over them, and some don't. Then in the sky there's God or a man coming out of the cloud—so you don't know if he's there to help or to make things worse.

"I went through a water phase. And I did a couple of motorcycles in the mid-'90s—drawings, chrome stuff—and I really liked it.

"I contend that if someone knows how to draw, they can draw anything. So if someone says, 'Oh, I can't do thaaaaat...,' well then you can't draw. But I don't say so, because it would be impolite to say to another artist in the art community. Some stuff takes more concentration and thought, but literally if you can see light and dark and negative space and all, you should be able to draw.

"One of the reasons I like to do realism is I like to show people the world. Artists have a lot of jobs, but one of them is to present the world to people so they look at it more carefully and go 'Ohh! Look at that! I never looked at it that way! I didn't realize the world was so beautiful!' So it's my job to help open their eyes.

"People need a slap in the face a lot of times. I'm not the type of artist who wants to do a political slap in the face or social commentary. Some artists think, well, if you don't really disturb people, you're not doing your job. Maaaaan! I really want to enthrall them. I like to shake things up in the way of making something so nice-looking that people say, 'Ah! I feel better!'"

AZD: What was your first car?

Torva: "My first vehicle was a hand-me-down

Monopoly of Nature, 24x30, oil on canvas; *Chrome to the Bone*, 22x32, carbon pencil and Prismacolor on paper; *Old Schoolin'*, 36x48, oil on canvas.

from my parents, a '72 Fiat station wagon, while I was in college. They gave it to me and paid insurance. I had to pay for repairs and upkeep. Not long after getting it, the muffler failed, came off—but it sounded like some kind of badass race car! Then there came a recall, for rust. [This was in Central Illinois—ed.] I took it in to an authorized mechanic, and he wouldn't let me drive away with it! The wheel wells were so rusted, the axle could come loose any minute!

"Not long after that I got a VW Rabbit."

AZD: Any other favorites along the way?

Torva: "I have a soft spot for my '76-and-a-half (with fuel injection instead of carburetors) Datsun Z. That was a fun, good looking car. I got a bronze one and had it painted custom midnight blue. I took off the cheap chrome side strips, I had the handles and bumpers painted black. I even took off the logos and painted them black myself."

AZD: What do you drive now?

Torva: "I now drive a 2007 Dodge Magnum SRT, pumped up to about 470 horsepower! Whhhheeeeeee! I actually traded my art for it... cool deal, heh?"

AZD: Do you have a dream car?

Torva: "My dream car keeps changing. I now hope to have some futuristic cool electromagnetic hovering/flying vehicle. Until then, I love my Magnum—it's a muscle car and a wagon!"

AZD: When did you start doing your first car art?

Torva: "Before the crash I was doing okay at faux finishing and decorative painting, which of course meant real estate type work, with designers and stuff like that, which meant I wasn't doing much easel painting.

"I was killing it for three or four years. The faux thing and the Tuscan thing were really big, so I did a lot of things like making concrete columns look like marble or limestone. I got really good at that, which actually helped me learn some painting techniques. Then things started mysteriously slowing down about 2006, then nothing. And everything crashed in 2008, right?"

"I'm over- and underqualified for everything. It had been eight years since I'd worked at any job, so even though I'd be good as a hostess, they wouldn't hire me. So I worked driving for a town car service for about a year, which was perfect. Also sold a piece of art here and there. I worked full time solid for six months, then reached a point I was so trusted I could just call in to see if I was needed. The driving tapered off when I did my first car painting.

"I had kept those motorcycle drawings, and I really liked them—the chrome—but I also knew motorcyclists are very particular. I'd show them, and people would say, 'well, do you have some other particular kind of Harley?'"

"Plus people might like cars, but not be into motorcycles. It's just a very niche thing.

"I've owned a motorcycle, an '83 Honda Interceptor. This was a great bike. I just didn't keep it because I don't work on motorcycles. It was old enough that every time something happened to it, it was \$300. I had a great time, rode it all over the place. People thought I was crazy, but I really liked the motorcycle.

"Then something prompted me to do a car and a motorcycle together as a painting. I knew somebody who knew somebody who had a custom shop, and [CONT'D]





Cycle Power, created for Valley Bike to Work Month 2019, 16x20, acrylic on canvas; *98 Crew* (commission), 30x40, oil on canvas; *Holiday*, 36x48; oil on canvas.

they worked on mostly '30s-40s-50s cars and stuff like that. The guy I knew said you could hang something here. I thought, hmm, a car! I could do a motorcycle and a car together! So in 2009, I did a painting called *Old Schoolin'*, with a '53 Chevy, with lots of chrome on it, and a '49 Indian,



with the little plastic Indian head, a really good-looking older motorcycle. I made it yellow, so it stood out. and thought, 'Holy crap, I'm actually pretty good at this! This is really cool... I should do some more!' So I did another one. And another. They were 36x48 oils on stretched canvas.

"So I had started doing cars. I initially took cars I found online and changed them. I felt kind of bad because I usually like to work from my own photographs, but I didn't have any photographs of cars. Soon I went to a couple of car shows. I went to Goodguys and took a really nice picture of a red '57 Bel Air." (See *Holiday*, at lower left.)

"I thought, I'm really good at this car thing, but I really need to commit to it, like a business decision. So I thought, okay, I will do this for five years. This was in 2010, and by 2015 I'd gotten kind of tired of it and said I'm going to paint some other stuff.

"I knew I'd have to do a lot of this for it to possibly pan out. Initially, I ended up working with someone who helped promote the idea of using Route 66 as a hook, an 'envelope' to create the car paintings, because people relate to it. Not paintings of Route 66, specifically, just using it as a promotional thing, kind of a bag you could throw it into. I did it for the first couple of years, then split with that promoter in 2011 or 2012 and didn't really focus on Route 66. It can be kind of hoaky, too, so when she left, Route 66 kind of cooled. I've done a couple of Route 66 murals, kind of cute.

"Cars have a lot of really beautiful lines, colors, shiny stuff and elements to them that make them a great subject, in the same way some people fall in love with drawing a figure. A figure is full of shapes and tone and all that, but a car is, too... those lines and curvy things and little details. And I can make a great composition out of that!

"Abstraction is a very important part of what I do, and how the thing is composed. Having studied all that and taken 2D design, it's how a thing is designed that helps it be solid and convincing. So I look for shapes and color and contrast and all that, then I just make it realistic. Sometimes I centerize the composition depending what I'm doing, but sometimes they're at kind of a diagonal. Sometimes I do a device where I paint a partial frame on it, like *Old Schoolin'*, with its name in it and a chrome frame around that. But I just want people to look at the world more carefully and realize, 'Oh, I've never seen that before!'"

AZD: *Where do people find your work today? You're now doing a lot of mural work?*

Torva: "Murals were not so popular when I was in college. I wish they were. I love doing murals. One, they're challenging. And two, people see murals who wouldn't normally go to a gallery or museum. These are out in the community.

"I've done murals since 2000. Many are in peo-

Lucretia at Mecum Auctions during Monterey Car Week with the original 1936 Ford 2-Door Sedan with custom polished stainless steel body made for Ludlum Steel Corporation, immortalized in *Silver Dream*; BAMF Series, #4: *Split*, 36x80, acrylic on panel; *Deathproof Duck*, 7x10 ft mural, Oak Street Alley; a mural for a private home in north Scottsdale showing the client's Mercedes-Benz in Sedona.

ple's backyards, and I don't even get referrals from them. People say, oh yeah, I have tons of friends, and we have a ton of parties, you'll get so much business. I don't get doodly squat.

"Then in spring 2012, I was driving in downtown Phoenix and saw all these murals around and thought, why aren't my murals out here? That's what made me decide to get involved in the Phoenix art scene more.

"I just worked on a few in Tempe—a collection by three artists doing 12 portraits of deceased musical icons, each 8x10 feet, on stretched canvases over plywood panels, wrapped around a vacant store."

AZD: *And you just did a mural project in France?*

Torva: "Well, it was a car mural, so I guess it's relevant! I lived in Grenoble when I was little (my dad worked for Caterpillar). And I found out it's a sister city of Phoenix...cool! I joined the committee, and I suggested we really need a mural exchange, I go over there and someone comes here. Every year, they have a very reputable street art fest, and the only time they wanted me to come was then. I paid my own airfare, and they found a place for me to stay."

AZD: *Do they keep all these murals forever? or paint over them each year?*

Torva: "They're young at doing this, so they don't have any clear [CONT'D]"





Whitney, 9x10 ft mural, acrylic brush, Tempe Marketplace; Grand Canyon Reveal, 7x20 ft mural, acrylic, Willo neighborhood, Phoenix; Into the Wind, 9x15 ft mural, acrylic brush, spray background by Snek, Grenoble, France, sister city mural exchange; FinFest, 35x12 ft mural, with sky by Holo, Grenoble, France.

policy. Mine was graffitied...twice while I was painting it and once the day I left. They've moved out to the suburbs...they have plenty of walls to do this. When I went there, they had a place already picked out for me, the side of a garage parking deck. But a couple of days after I got there, the governing board of the business changed, and they decided they didn't want a mural. I was already there and the thing had already been set up, they'd even

primed it for me, then they decided they didn't want a mural. So they had to find another spot for me.

"But the whole idea was that they really liked the '50s American car thing, because who else is going to paint that? If an American is coming over, we should have her paint something American! It's just fins. Rear ends of finny cars, multiple finny cars—a '59 Cadillac, a '59 Impala, a '57 Chevy. I called it *FinFest*. They partnered me with a couple of artists from a local art/music/cultural group called Contratak. One did the sky, one did some leafy stuff on the side, then two car things at each end, so it ended up being this really long wall. They asked what colors I was going to use, then did something that looked okay, similar.

"Then I did a second mural, which wasn't planned, but I was there long enough. I did the hood ornament of a '40s Cadillac, a woman flying into the wind, and that turned out really well. So I did two murals in France, and both were automotive related, so it does come up. The hood ornament turned out really well. So it's interesting, both of my murals in France were automotive."

AZD: What might you have done here?

Torva: "One I did in the Willo neighborhood downtown was of a woman pulling back a tarp, and you can see the Grand Canyon, 7x20 feet."

AZD: Do you use brushes? rollers? spray?

Torva: "I use some roller sometimes, if it's big enough. I've sprayed a little bit, have done some skies with spray. I don't have training with spray, it'd be a learning curve, but there are several things about spray. One is you have to wear a mask—it's poisonous, I don't really like having to do that. The cleaning part of it is also really annoying. And third—I figured this out a couple of years ago 'cause I was feeling kind of bad, like "I should learn to spray"—I realized I have a relationship with the surface by pushing on it and touching it with the brush, and with spray I'm just like a passerby.



Beach Party, 11x36 ft acrylic mural, poolside at FOUND:RE Hotel, Phoenix; Superman, 4x8 ft mural, completed at the Arizona State Fair 2016; Best of Arizona ribbon for her 36x48 oil on canvas of a classic Shelby GT500 with a T Rex; *Monster Muscle* (not shown); in her current favorite place: high atop a lift, painting a mural.

"I use house paint, a brand of paint that the Philadelphia mural program recommends, called Novacolor. You can get gallons; I usually get quarts. It's very nice, very opaque but kind of liquid. Stuff coming out of a tube is sometimes too thick, you have to keep watering it down. This stuff comes out at a really great consistency."

AZD: What's next for you?

Torva: "I just recently developed a relationship with the fairgrounds, the Arizona State Fair, and they're looking for me to do a mural before the Fair opens. But they also want to have more murals, so they wanted me to help them as a coordinator who hires people to do these. I would paint some, but they have non-artists who are often uncomfortable with judging or organizing artists, and I'm helping with that.

"This is the third year they've had what they call street art artists, so every day they have a new artist paint a 4x8 panel on stage, like entertainment, and they hired me to schedule them this year—18 street artists in all.

"It's a paint-in-place art scene. So these 18 4x8 panels are displayed around the Fair. They've made little promotional cards out of the best ones. (Yeah, they did mine.) They're seeking better artists every year. The theory was that I'd invite some back from last year and also several who had inquired. I know most of them. It took me nine hours to schedule, but our hopes are that this year will be better than last year.

"I was actually surprised by some of the professionals I asked to paint at the Fair, and they said, 'I'd love to!' They get paid, and they have to finish the painting in those eight hours. A primed 4x8 plywood sheet on an easel is provided. You're on a stage, with your name on a sandwich board, and they have a sound system you can plug your music into. I have a waiting list now.

"I'm very interested in doing murals. Sometimes cars are involved, sometimes they aren't. If someone wants to commission other automotive art, yeah."

For more information:

Torva: "My website has several sections, so someone can go to the automotive section... murals, pre-2013 and 2013 to present... surrealism... people... still life... water... decorative painting. It's divided kind of by subject.

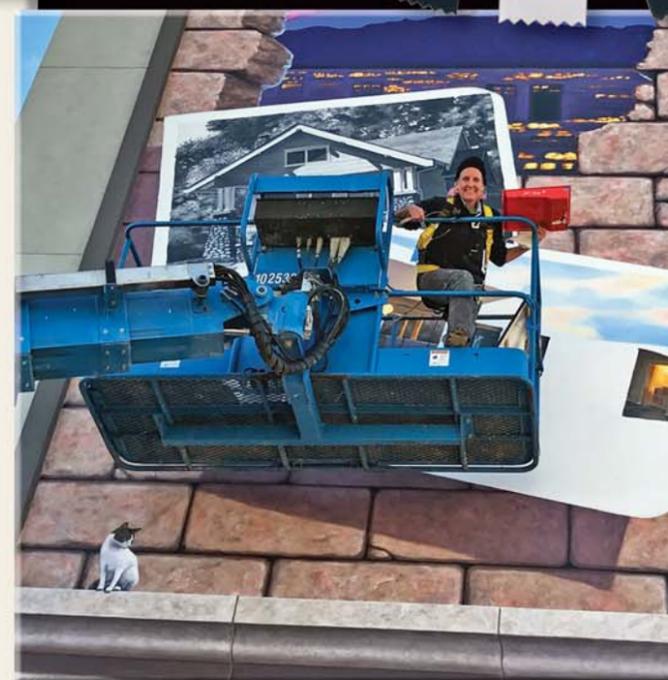
"I have extensive knowledge of visual art and its creation. All of my work is imbued with care and attention to detail. My art makes people say 'Wow!' and has even brought tears to my clients' eyes! My work not only entertains and delights people, it also becomes a family heirloom." ■

Lucretia Torva : Torva Fine Art

www.torvafineart.com : 480-251-3817 : torvafineart@gmail.com

DISCIPLINES: Fine arts: drawings, paintings - LARGE murals, the bigger the better! - Mural planning, budgeting, coordination—knowing how to do all of the work myself, as well as work on scaffolding and boom lifts.

SPECIALTIES: Custom commissions: motorcycles - landscapes - extremely life-like portraits - painting chrome and reflections that make people say "wow!" Whatever excites my clients!



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Upbeat killer

BY JOE SAGE

For about as long as we can remember, the automotive cognoscenti have regularly posited whether thus-and-such new sport sedan might be the elusive “3-killer.” That bar may not be as high as it used to be—competition has become broader, deeper and generally stiffer over the years—but that phrase still popped into our heads as we took delivery of this car. This high-powered, performance-sprung, powerfully braking, rear-drive Infiniti four-door could be just that machine.

But wait, what's this? The car arrived with a bundle of summertime goodies—sunscreen and such—with the prominent message, “Good vibes only.” Well, then, hmm. Maybe killing is in bad taste, so how about just some good ol’ friendly competition? We don’t have any particular beef with the 3



Series. But the concept makes a point—one that stuck with us for our full week with the car.

Infiniti Q50 is a wide lineup, from the 208-hp

rear-drive 2.0t at \$35,640, to the 400-hp AWD 3.0 twin-turbo Red Sport at \$53,350 (AWD is available on any model, at \$2000). Our sample is top-everything except AWD—but its rear-drive status is still a significant advantage in a performance car.

It's common for an up-badged car to have sporty style points, less common to deliver on performance. For looks, the Q50 Red Sport 400 has quilted leather seats, dark chrome interior highlights, aluminum-trim pedals, gloss black mirrors and red “S” badging. But it also has that twin-turbo powerplant, powerful sport brakes and a full range of safety and driver assist tech. It combines performance and style with staggered 19-inch wheels and tires (on RWD models) and red painted calipers.

All Q50 powertrains run through a seven-speed electronic automatic with dual transmission coolers and manual shift mode; Sport and Red Sport 400 add magnesium paddle shifters. Gear selection uses a lateral acceleration sensor to detect changes such as hills and turns. Sport mode provides more aggressive driving.

Four-wheel vented discs on the Sport and Red Sport 400 have upgraded rotors, and 4-piston front and 2-piston rear calipers. Wheels are staggered—19x9 front and 19.9.5 rear, with all-season run-flats (AWD models are 19x9 front and rear).

Is our good-vibe Q50 a killer? In price and power, the top “regular” 3 Series costs more and has less power. There's no M sedan, but an M coupe costs almost 40 percent more for just 25 more horses. Advantage: Q50, which also has the benefit of being less ubiquitous. High-powered, relatively light-

SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE	.....3.0L alum alloy 24v twin turbo V6
HP/TORQUE	.....400 hp / 350 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION	.....7-spd auto, sport mode, rev match
ALTERNATOR	.....170A
DRIVETRAIN	.....RWD
SUSPENSION	.....F: indep dbl wishbone w stblzr bar; R: multi-link indep w stblzr bar
STEERING	.....rack electronic power
BRAKES	.....F: 14.0x1.3 4-piston vented power assist; R: 13.8x-.8 2-piston vented power assist; .....foot operated parking brake
WHEELS	.....19x9.0 front / 19x9.5 rear alum alloy
TIRES	.....Dunlop F: P245/40R19 / F: P265/35R19
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	.....189.6 / 112.2 in
TURNING CIRCLE	.....(RWD) 36.7 ft
GROUND CLEARANCE	.....5.2 in
HEADROOM (F/R)	.....(w moonroof) 39.5 / 36.8 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	.....44.5 / 35.1 in
CARGO CAPACITY	.....13.5 cu.ft
WEIGHT	.....3840 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY	.....prem unl / 20.0 gal
MPG	.....20/26/22 (city/hwy/comb)

RED SPORT 400 INCLUDES: sport front fascia & rear bumper, leather seats w thigh extension & power lumbar, around-view monitor, alum accent pedals, rear sonar, magnesium paddle shifters and more.

BASE PRICE	.....\$51,350
DYNAMIC SUNSTONE RED	.....800
SENSORY PKG:	Bose 16-spr surround sound audio, power tilt-tele wheel, seat-mirror memory, advanced climate control, enhanced interior ambient lighting, auto-dim side mirrors w tilt.....2650
CARBON FIBER PKG:	decklid spoiler, side mirrors.....1520
WELCOME LIGHTING	.....465
ILLUMINATED KICK PLATES	.....485
CARGO PKG:	mat, net, hooks, first aid kit.....270
DESTINATION CHARGE	.....995
TOTAL	.....\$58,535

weight and rear-drive (or AWD)... reasonably spacious, well outfitted and fairly priced... the Q50 Red Sport 400 is red hot. We hated to see it go. ■



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Valle de Guadalupe Wine, Food & Music Festival



ROAD TRIP TO EXOTIC EVENT IN MEXICO IS ABOUT THE SAME DISTANCE AS A ROUTINE RUN TO SAN DIEGO / IN BAJA BY SUZANNE KOCH

Mexico's Valle de Guadalupe in Baja Norte is gaining popularity among vino-lovers for its unique and delicious wine scene. And with the return of the fourth Guadalupe Valley Wine, Food & Music Festival on September 14, there's no better time to visit the destination.

The festival will take place at Bodegas del Valle, located in a region where more than 90 percent of Mexican wine is produced. Guests can look forward to plenty of wine, in addition to mouthwatering cuisine from top chefs and tunes from an array of artists from all over the world.

WINE: Sip the very best of Mexican wines, including vino from local wineries and more. Each wine is hand-selected for its ability to perfectly pair with the cuisine from the participating chefs.

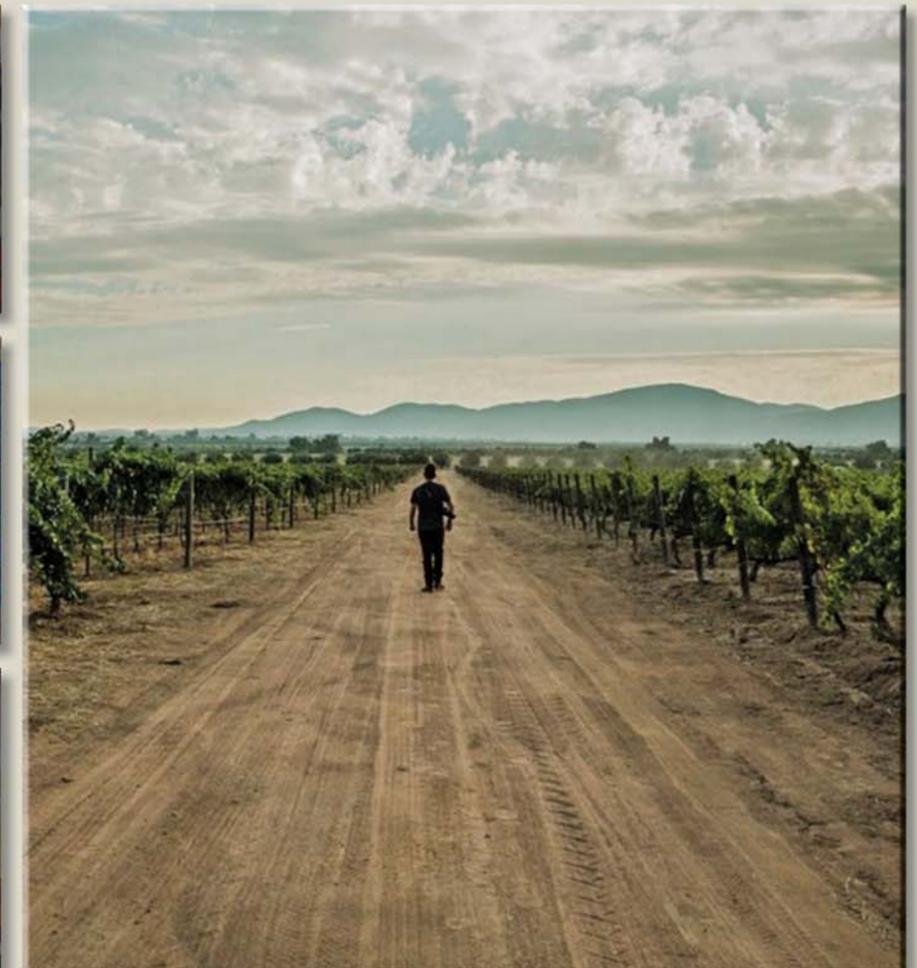
FOOD: Dive into farm-to-table eats from Michelin-starred Chef Drew Deckman, the man behind his namesake restaurant Deckman's en el Mogor. Enjoy tastes from Argentinian mastermind Chef Dante Ferrero who recently opened Dante in Mexico City, or try something innovative from Edo Kobayashi Group, known for introducing Japanese cuisine to Mexico City's culinary scene. Additional culinary highlights include Chef Marco Carboni of Mexico City's Satoria by Marco Carboni and Chef Luis Valle, native of Los Mochis.

MUSIC: The festival will be accompanied by beats from an array of artists including headliner UNKLE, a powerhouse in electronic music. Other acts include German quintet Thieves Like Us, London-based Kerala Dust, Matthew Dear, Iranian-

American Sharam Tayebi, Miami Horror, Dance Spirit, Santos y Zurdo, Django Django, Kalabrese, Alejandro Franco, Anabel Englund, Frikstailers, Arthur Baker and SimOnimo.

TICKETS: Festival tickets include food and are available through September 14. For more information or to purchase your event tickets online, visit guadalupevalleyfestival.com. ■

THE DRIVE: Anyone who has ever driven to greater LA to take the obligatory cruise from Long Beach to Ensenada, a trip that takes at least 12 hours or so of driving plus several days at sea—not that a few days at sea are not their own reward—has maybe glanced at the map and considered just driving there. This trip is even quicker. Valle de Guadalupe is about 25 miles northeast of Ensenada. The drive is about 360 miles (about six and a half hours) from Phoenix—roughly the same as the familiar drive to San Diego—turning south into Baja California at Mexicali or Tecate from I-8 on the California side, a one-way run of about 180 miles from Yuma to Valle de Guadalupe. —*Editor*



Doing it all, all at once

BY JOE SAGE

Each summer, Fiat Chrysler Automobiles (FCA) shows us their entire next year's lineup all at once, early in the product cycle, and we get to drive almost all of it. The event, "What's New," is held at FCA's top secret Chelsea Proving Grounds, in the deep woods among farmlands outside Chelsea, Michigan, about 20 or 30 minutes west of Ann Arbor, or an hour west of Detroit.

There's a good great going on there that we don't, deep inside development buildings and perhaps on some other tracks, but there's plenty that we do. We drive a lot, we learn a lot, and we even get to do another rare thing at any proving grounds—take photos. Then we are sworn to secrecy for a couple of months—but now we can tell you all.

Have you ever seen a clip of one of those old contests or game shows where you get to dash around a supermarket or big box store for maybe two minutes and grab everything you can for free? It's good to do some homework first, so you spend enough time in the more expensive aisles. This is a bit like that. We have maybe five active hours (carving out time for an in-tent new product reveal,

a sandwich, and time for shuttles among three overall event venues. In that time, we can drive everything FCA has coming up for the 2020 model year, plus a number of 2019 models still at hand. Unlike that game show, we can't plot our activity first, as the list is not revealed until we get there.

The event breaks down into three overall zones of activity. Durability and lateral load road courses are in our home base, which also includes static displays and tents for presentations and lunch. Lyman Trail, a shuttle ride away, is where FCA's off-road development takes place and we do our own off-roading. And a shuttle ride away in the other direction is an area comprising a very large oval (part of which we use as a dragstrip, another part for towing) and a paved area inside one end of that oval that's set up as an autocross course.

Pretty much every vehicle is available to us in the home base road course area. Another round of Jeeps and pickups are also staged at Lyman Trail. The third location has zero-to-60 specialists—additional Challengers, Chargers and Trackhawks—for its eighth-mile dragstrip; Alfa Romeo, Dodge,

Fiat and Jeep for autocross; and a range of the most highly tow-capable pickups and SUVs bearing the most challenging loads.

There's time to give everything a look and catch some one-on-one executive and engineer time, as we chose a string of favorites and newsmakers to drive in each locale.

Alfa Romeo / Maserati

Last year's "What's New" event took a new spin on things, with a full day devoted to Alfa Romeo and its newly tied-in Maserati cousin brand. This year, Alfa Romeo brought its **Giulia** Quadrifoglio sedan and **Stelvio** Quadrifoglio SUV as 2019 models. We're keeping an ear to the ground on 2020.

Chrysler

The automaker's original anchor brand continues to have one of the briefer lineups, but it's a solid one, and it adds a new badge for 2020. The new **300** sedan will be easy to spot if you get one of three new paint colors or if you opt for the new Red S package with Black Noise and Red badging, wheels and details. A Radar Red interior option is also available with the Red S trim. **Pacifica** and **Pacifica Hybrid** also add a Red S package, upgrades from panoramic sunroofs to Uconnect Theater to wheels and tech and will be available in

four trim levels (three for Pacifica Hybrid). Former lower-trim Pacifica badges (L and LX) move to the new Chrysler **Voyager** (along with LXi for rental fleets), cementing Pacifica as a premium badge. We spent a week with the Pacifica Hybrid back here in Arizona—see our feature also in this issue.

Dodge

Dodge is the broadest brand overall, with sedans, coupes, utilities and a minivan in the lineup (even if Jeep has more variety in utilities and Chrysler in minivans). **Charger** makes the biggest splash for 2020, with Widebody news. **Charger SRT Hellcat** goes all Widebody, standard, and **Charger Scat Pack**, slated to start below \$40,000, will now offer Widebody as an option. As these were exempted from the September embargo date, you can read all about them in our prior (July/August) issue. **Challenger**, basically an it's-perfect-don't-change-a-thing-mobile, adds a wide variety of wheels and new colors or 2020—now with twelve paints available over eight models, and as usual they are distinctive and often pleasingly over the top. **Dodge Durango** offers a bump in premium content on the popular R/T model, with optional availabilities including new Blacktop and Brass Monkey appearance packages; a premium interior with Dinamica suede headliner and hand-wrapped, accent-stitched instrument panel; and gloss black 20-inch wheels

KEEP RIGHT >>



as an additional add-on to the Blacktop package. As **Dodge Journey** shows signs of ever-increasing popularity, its lineup is actually simplified—to just two trims for 2020 (both with the same 172-hp 2.4L four-cylinder engine). The upper trim gains a standard sunroof, while many options are now moved into simplified bundles. Dodge's eternally popular minivan, the **Grand Caravan**, upgrades its midlevel SE Plus with Super Stow 'n Go second row bucket seats and in-floor storage now standard, while that trim plus top SXT offer upgraded finishes inside and out, including a Blacktop package as on Durango. We drove a good cross-section of Dodge entries on the handling and lateral courses, revisiting Charger and Challenger on the drag-strip for Launch Control and Line Lock runs, and the Challenger also on autocross, where it once again impresses us with its ability to feel as nimble as the small sports cars it ran with there.

Dodge Pursuit

Police vehicles remain very important to Dodge—and Dodge's offerings are very important to law enforcement, who have made **Charger Pursuit** the best-selling police cruiser. They also always capture the imagination of many of our colleagues, who can't resist being on the giving end of the sirens throughout the day. Charger Pursuit gets an eight-speed TorqueFlite transmission for 2020, in place of the old five-speed. **Durango Pursuit**, new a year ago (and revealed at the What's New event last year), is unchanged for 2020.

Fiat/Abarth

We gave the **Fiat 500 Abarth** a great run on the autocross course, once again proving its spunk and belying its front-drive basis. **Fiat 500** itself has had a great run, but it's coming to an end in the US—the **500** and electric **500e** will be discontinued

after the 2019 model, but available into 2020. The **Fiat 124 Spyder** (which we also autocrossed) and **500X** crossover (both with a few new options) and the five-passenger **500L** will remain.

Jeep®

The biggest news out of Jeep remains the new **Gladiator** mid-size pickup, which not only broadens and deepens the lineup, but takes it into a whole new category—though not for the first time, as Jeep has a rich pickup heritage. For in-depth info on the Gladiator, see our launch feature (May/June issue), our Moab concept feature (May/June) and our feature from the NWAPA Outdoor Activity Vehicle of the Year competition, where Gladiator won three out of seven awards, including the overall top trophy (July/August issue). Our Jeep driving focus at What's New was largely on Lyman Trail, the off-road development course. This area includes the roughest two-tracks, rock climbs, stairsteps, two-wheels-in-the-air articulation courses and water troughs every year—but after a day or two of intense rainfall, the trails outdid themselves this year. As did the Jeeps. As you would expect. We also drove a number of Jeep models on the paved handling courses. For 2020, Jeep **Renegade**, **Compass** and **Cherokee** all get more driver assist tech on more models, while Renegade also gets global telematics and an available audio upgrade; Compass gets a new red paint, available speaker upgrade and a Luxury Seat Group available on upper models; and Cherokee gets new paints and wheels, plus Alexa Skill available with upper Uconnect 8.4 systems. **Grand Cherokee** adds new available interiors, wheels, badge and trim accents, bi-xenon HID and LED lighting, and standard sunroof, varying by trim. The new-last-year **Jeep Wrangler** updates its engine lineup—2.0L and 3.6L gasoline engines

with engine stop-start (ESS) or eTorque mild hybrid tech, and arriving later a 3.0L EcoDiesel with ESS—and offers some lighting upgrades. See also Mopar, for a modified Gladiator Rubicon.

Ram / Ram Commercial

Ram 1500 pickups were all new last year (see our May/June 2018 issue). An overall trend continues of upgrading the trucks outside and in, with interiors offering enough options to create any combination of finishes, features, style and tech you want. While customization is fun, **Ram 1500** has a couple of special builds ready for you out of the box for 2020—such as Night Edition, available on Big Horn and Laramie trims, featuring a monochromatic finish, black badging and big black wheels (Big Horn 20-inch, Laramie 22); an all-American Big Horn "Built to Serve" model; and a Black Appearance Group for Rebel (which also has a new driver assist tech package). There's also a Ram 1500 Special Service model, with emphasis on towing, cargo and tasks. **Ram 2500-3500 Heavy Duty** pickups are all new this year (see March/April 2019), with the HDs following the 1500s lead on premium finishes, for 2020 offering a Ram Heavy Duty Night Edition (Big Horn and Laramie), also monochromatic with black badging, and with 20-inch black 20-inch wheels and black interior. Ram 3500 HD now tows up to 35,100 pounds. Technology gets a boost on Ram 3500-4500-5500 Chassis Cab trucks with the addition of lane keep assist, adaptive steering and—great for companies and fleets of any size—Ram telematics vehicle tracking. Body-color bumpers are also available. **Ram ProMaster** 1500-2500-3500 Class 2 commercial vans now offer a factory hitch good for towing 6800 pounds, and new 136-inch wheelbase 2500 and 3500 Cargo Van models. Smaller **Ram ProMaster City** vans are unchanged.

Mopar

The Mopar parts and accessories operation at FCA also creates customs. For 2020, they have brought us two new modified vehicles. The **Mopar-Modified Jeep Gladiator Rubicon** has a long list of Jeep Performance Parts upgrades including two-inch lift and 37-inch tires, cold air intake, powder-coated rock rails, a decked bed storage system, satin black grille and grille guards with LED light brackets, Katzkin leather seats and more. The **Mopar-Modified Ram 1500 Big Horn** also has two-inch lift, with 18-inch bead-lock-capable off-road wheels, body-length slip-resistant off-road running boards, cold-air intake, throaty cat-back exhaust, Katzkin leather and more. We drove the 1500 Laramie Night Edition and the ProMaster van on the handling courses, and 1500 Rebel and 2500 Power Wagon off-road.

You could easily make a week of it. A midday break dovetailed the Charger Widebody reveals with classic Michigan lunch in our event tent: sandwiches from Zingerman's Deli in Ann Arbor, along with Faygo pop and Vernor's Ginger Ale. The FCA lineup has remarkable brand identity across all badges, and they know how to preserve that while applying incremental changes or creating entirely new generations. Their evolutionary skills are so strong, it's almost easy, on a daily basis, to forget that the Ram 1500, Ram 2500 and 3500 HD, Jeep Wrangler and of course Gladiator are entirely new. Rumors always float around of something else on the horizon, but there were no further mentions at this event. We're not pushing for it—things are rock solid as is.

We did some overtime all-paved driving in the region in a 2019 Jeep Wrangler Rubicon 4x4 2.0L Turbo Two-Door for a couple of days (see our July/August issue), before heading back to Arizona. ■

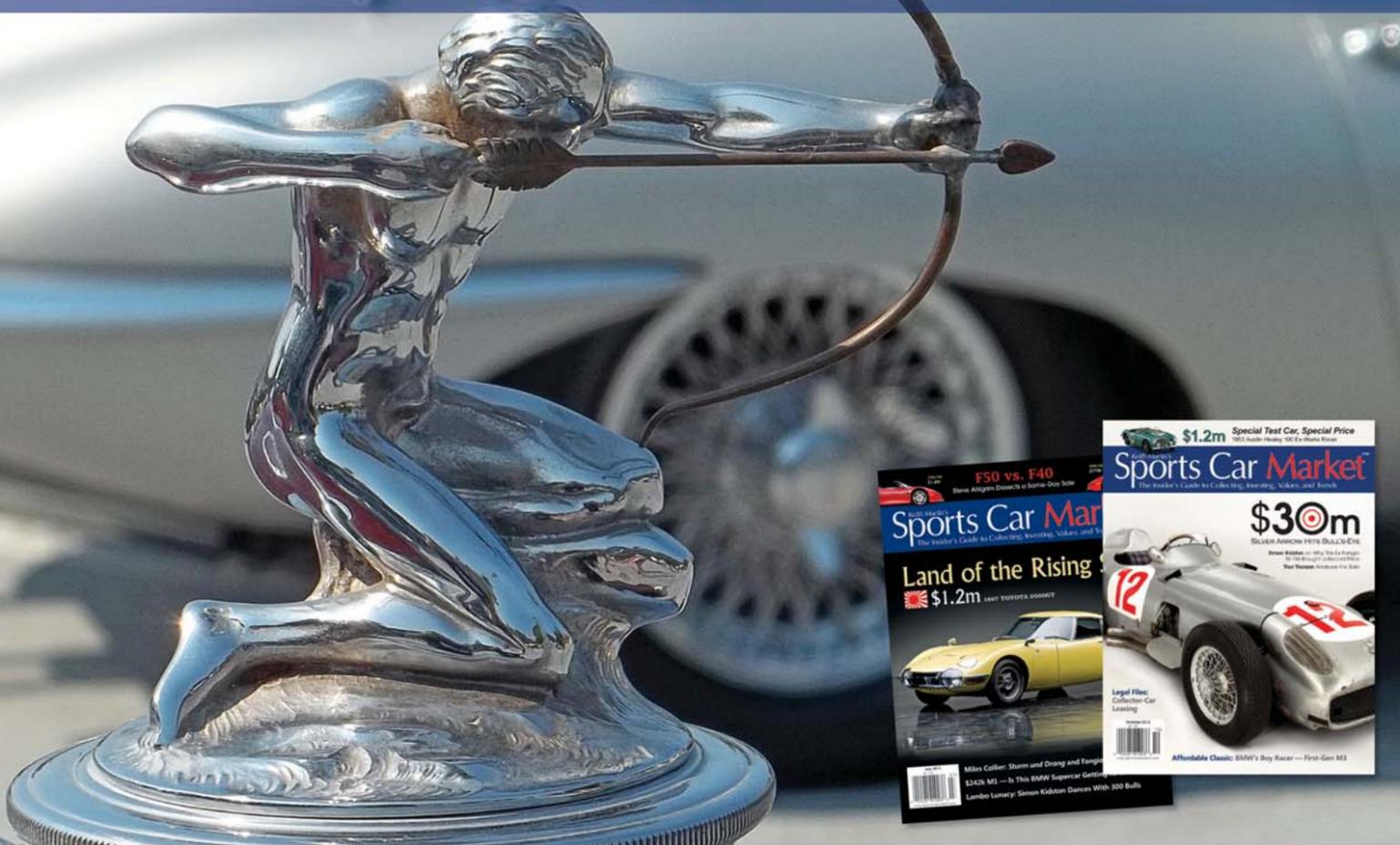


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A WEEK WITH : 2020 TOYOTA COROLLA HYBRID LE SEDAN

Full of surprises. BY JOE SAGE

As a Toyota Corolla, this car is as normal as you would expect, despite being a hybrid. As a Toyota hybrid, this car is more normal than some, by virtue of being a Corolla. If you've wanted the general experience of Toyota's well-known Prius hybrid lineup, but perhaps without its particular personality, then do we have the car for you.

The gen-twelve Corolla, introduced in 2018 as a 2019 model, has advanced considerably in style, features and content. First to arrive was the Hatchback in spring; the sedan was revealed in early November; then in late November, there was another surprise: the first-ever Corolla Hybrid. Layering surprise upon surprise, we almost had to do a double take to realize there had never been a Corolla Hybrid before. (One was introduced in Japan in 2013, but that's basically ignored in US marketing talk.)

We had moved from a 400-hp compact sedan two weeks prior, to a 201-hp compact sedan the week prior, to this, with 121 hp from its gasoline engine, so we didn't expect much performance. It also has a 71-hp electric motor, but the net system

output is still 121 horsepower. But timing is everything. An electric motor (one of two—both charging the battery, only one driving the wheels) provides punch from when you first step on the pedal, an underlay to the gasoline engine until that takes over completely. And it's that EV motor—delivering full torque from that same moment you step on the pedal—that gives the Corolla Hybrid its good kick in the pants.

We've met drivers who considered the car underpowered and others who felt it was quite lively. We fell into the second set. The car's 2850-lb weight, quite light in an era of airbags, side beams and rollover protections (not to mention bearing a hybrid battery), is surely a contributing factor. But mostly it's the timing of that electric motor torque.

Available (for now) only in a lower trim level, the Hybrid LE is not as showy as an upper-trim gasoline model (inset), but it can provide that powertrain magic and still beat those models' prices. You won't give any of that much of a second thought as you appreciate living with the Hybrid's biggest and

best trick—fuel mileage above 50 in all driving cycles (as EPA rated, though our results driving normally, which generally means aggressively, were in the 40s).

Meet a perfectly normal four-door sedan with stellar fuel mileage, now in a conventional package already popular with millions for its own reasons. ■



Corolla XSE sedan



SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE	1.8L 4-cyl alum DOHC 16v VVT-i
MOTORS	MG2: drive; MG1 & MG2: battery charging
BATTERY	Ni-MH w Hyper-Prime Nickel
GASOLINE ENGINE OUTPUT	121 hp / 105 lb-ft
ELECTRIC MOTORS OUTPUT	71 hp / 105 lb-ft
NET SYSTEM HORSEPOWER	121 hp
TRANS	electr controlled planetary type CVT transaxle
DRIVETRAIN	FWD
SUSPENSION	F: indep MacPherson strut, stblzr bar; R: multi-link, stblzr bar
STEERING	elec pwr assist rack & pinion
BRAKES	F: 10.8 vented / R: 10.2 solid
WHEELS / TIRES	15" alloy / P195/65R15 AS
LENGTH / WB	182.5 / 106.3 in
TURNING CIRCLE	35.6 ft
GROUND CLEARANCE	5.1 in
HEADROOM (F/R)	38.3 / 37.1 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	42.0 / 34.8 in
CARGO CAPACITY	13.1 cu ft
WEIGHT	2850 lb
FUEL CAPACITY	11.4 gal
MPG	53/52/52 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE	\$22,950
INCL: Safety Sense 2.0 (smart cruise, pre-collision w ped detect, lane depart w steering assist, lane trace assist, auto high beams, road sign assist), keyless entry/start, 1-touch pwr windows, black sport mesh grille, bi-LED headlights/DRLs, LED tails/brakes, color-keyed pwr heated side mirrors, fabric 6-way driver / 4-way psngr seat, 8" touchscreen, 6-spkr audio, Bluetooth, USB media & charge ports, Apple/Siri, 60/40 rear seat, 7" TFT info display, auto climate.	
OPTIONS: frameless Homelink mirror (175), alloy wheel locks (67), carpet mat pkg (249), body protection pkg (side moldings, rear bumper protector, door sill enhancements, 467), paint protection film (395)	1353
DESTINATION CHARGE	930
TOTAL	\$25,233

TOYOTA COROLLA LINEUP	2020	2019
TRANS	SEDAN	HATCHBACK
L.....CVT	\$19,500	
LE.....CVT	19,950	
SE.....CVT	21,950	\$21,240
.....6MT/iMT	22,650	20,140
Hybrid LE.....CVT	\$22,950	
XLE.....CVT	23,950	
XSE.....CVT	25,450	24,240
.....iMT		23,140

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A WEEK WITH : 2019 CHRYSLER PACIFICA HYBRID LIMITED

Behavioral science by Joe Sage

For those who have decided an SUV serves their needs, there are the proverbial million choices. For those who prefer a minivan (with sliding doors often the key differentiator), there are the same few there have been for years. Among those, the Chrysler Pacifica stands out, the newest iteration of the vehicle that started and defined the revolution 35 years ago. Within the Pacifica lineup, the Pacifica Hybrid stands out, for its smooth, well-developed powertrain and handling, remarkable fuel economy, and even the ability to drive in fully electric mode within certain parameters.

Chrysler made an interesting decision with the Pacifica Hybrid. It's actually a plug-in hybrid—a vehicle type that receives universal praise but challenges a bit with explanation—so they kept the name simple, just Pacifica Hybrid. This avoids confusion for more people than not, and they can then just mention the plug-in part as another of its neat tricks. This has clearly worked well, as sales have been strong since day one, as has the vehicle's talent for winning utility and family vehicle awards.

The combined powertrain enables you to always plug it in and drive more than 30 miles in pure EV mode, enough for some people's complete needs; or to drive with a full charge plus a tank of

gas for a range of more than 500 miles; or to never plug it in and just drive with the efficiency of a non-plug-in hybrid. The varied system gets one fuel mileage rating from the EPA: 82 MPGe, which itself underscores the benefits of this approach.

Two motors supplement the gasoline engine's power, for an effective 360 hp total, which is performance car territory, no surprise from the manufacturer that overall also delivers Chargers, Challengers, Trackhawks and other potent machines.

An eFlite Si-EVT (single input electrically variable transmission) combines a power inverter module with two electric motors—one a primary drive motor for the front wheels, while the other provides some drive assist and charges the batteries.

There are just two things that could push you to the all-gasoline Pacifica—its option of 8-passenger seating and its 3600-lb tow capacity (Pacifica Hybrid is 7-passenger-only and does not tow).

The Pacifica family is so well executed, it went virtually unchanged for 2019. Available as always are the long-hosed Stow 'n Vac built-in vacuum, Stow 'n Go seating and storage (with upgrades this year); and hands-free sliders and liftgate that work with the kick of a foot. The S Appearance Package on our top-trim Limited sample is new, as is an available 35th Anniversary package (finishes, wheels, 13-speaker Alpine audio for the Hybrid, and more), celebrating Chrysler's minivan revolution of 1984, a success story that remains unbroken. Act fast if you want that 35th Anniversary package, as 2020 models will be rolling in soon. Act fast, anyway—these are very popular. ■

SPECIFICATIONS

STRUCTURE	steel unibody w hinged front doors, aluminum-skinned sliding side doors, magnesium-structured aluminum-skinned rear liftgate w gas props
SEATING CAPACITY	seven (2/2/3)
ENGINE	3.6L Pentastar V6 eHybrid (Atkinson cycle)
TOTAL SYSTEM POWER	est 360 hp
DRIVETRAIN	transverse front engine, FWD
TRANSMISSION	eFlite electrically variable
MOTOR A	est 84 hp
MOTOR B	est 114 hp
BATTERY PACK	hi-voltage 96-cell Li-Ion, 16kWh, 360v
SUSPENSION	F: indep MacPherson strut, coils over gas shocks, stblzr bar w hydroformed steel perimeter cable; R: indep twist-blade w coils, twin-tube shocks w integrated rebound springs
STEERING	electric rack & pinion
BRAKES	4-whl pwr-assist antilock disc regen, vacuum assist; F: 13.0x1.1 vented, single-piston floating caliper; R: 13.0x0.47 solid, single-piston floating caliper
WHEELS / TIRES	18x7.5 cast alum / 125/65R17 AS
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	203.8 / 121.6 in
TURNING CIRCLE	39.7 ft
GROUND CLEARANCE	5.1 in
HEADROOM (F/2/3)	40.1 / 39.6 / 38.7 in
LEGROOM (F/2/3)	41.1 (seat travel 8.7) / 39.0 / 36.5 in
CARGO CAPACITY	32.3 / 87.5 / 140.5 cu.ft
WEIGHT	4987 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY	unl reg 87, or E0 to E15 / 16.5 gal
MPG (MPGe)	84 (comb city/hwy cycle)
BASE PRICE	\$45,545
INCL:	760w 20-spr Harman Kardon audio, Uconnect theater w wireless streaming, Blue-ray/DVD player, seatback video screens, dual HDMI ports, USB video port, 115v outlet, 3-channel video remote, 3-channel wireless headphones, hands-free power sliding side doors, hands-free power liftgate, heated-vented front seats, heated leather wheel, easy clean floor mats and more.
S APPEARANCE PKG:	Nappa leather bucket seats w "S" logo, 18x7.5 black noise painted wheels, black badging, black window moldings, black mirrors, black Stow'n Place roof rack, gloss black grille surround, "S" badge.....795
ADVANCED SAFETY PKG:	360° surround view cameras, full-speed forward collision warning plus, adaptive cruise w stop&go, lane depart warn plus, parallel & perpendicular park assist, ParkSense front-rear w stop, adv brake assist, rain-sense wipers, auto high beam.....995
TRI-PANE PANORAMIC SUNROOF	1795
DESTINATION CHARGE	1495
TOTAL	\$50,625



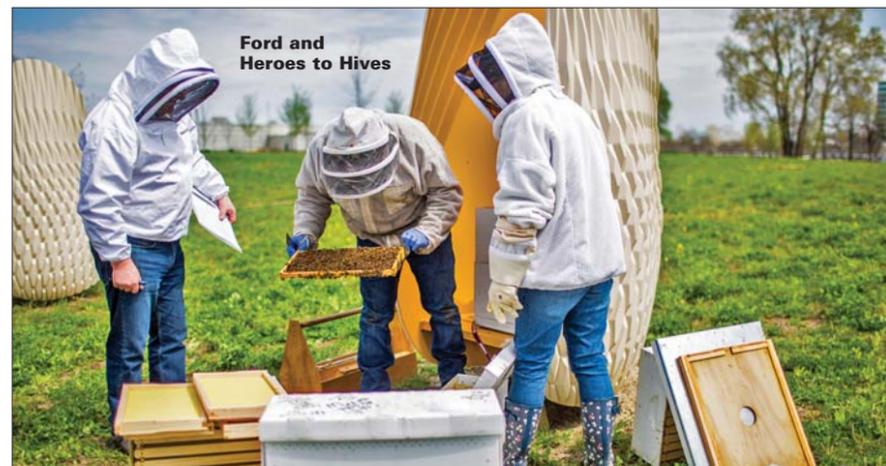
THE INSIDE TRACK: BRIEFS & RUMORS



Renee Brinkerhoff, Project 356

Colorado-based endurance rally racer **Renee Brinkerhoff** of Valkyrie Racing may have been one of only four women, in a field of more than 100 entrants, to participate in and complete the grueling 36-day Peking-to-Paris Motor Challenge 2019, but she was also the ONLY competitor to lead a separate charge through four countries that spread the word to stop human trafficking worldwide. Her Project 356 World Rally began in 2016, and since then, through her non-profit Valkyrie Gives, has been a platform to visually bring attention to the devastating world problem that keeps women and children at risk. During the 2019 Peking-to-Paris event, driving her vintage Porsche 356 coupe, Renee personally met with organizations and children in Mongolia and China to provide educational and financial support to positively impact the lives of women and children on a global scale. This past year alone, her organization has raised more than \$100,000 to benefit those in need. With her cause steadfastly a part of all she does, her 1956 Porsche 356A is the means to show the world the importance of her vision—and sponsors including Porsche Center Oslo, Sierra, Blackriver and LaLoma played a significant role. This year brought Renee and her navigator, Calvin Cooledge—an experienced rally competitor from Wales who has participated in more than 300 rally events—across varied terrain and swamp roads that covered more than 9,000 miles, eight time zones and 12 countries, includ-

ing China, Mongolia, Kazakhstan, Russia, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Germany, Belgium and finally France. Together, they braved fatigue, weather, mechanical issues and emotional stress, to endure this lifetime achievement. With fewer than 1,000 drivers to have ever run the Peking-to-Paris rally, it's become a bucket list item for many endurance racers who are willing to wait to apply, as the competition is run only every



Ford and Heroes to Hives

three years. The very first event was in 1907, with four of five teams completing the challenge, then went on hold for 90 years, until 1997, with 2019 being only the seventh time the event has been run and completed. Having finished the Peking-to-Paris event, Renee's goals extend to two more continents, allowing her access to meet and exceed her goals. Next up will be the East African Safari Classic,

beginning November 27 and lasting 10 days. Known as one of the most difficult events worldwide, due to tremendous dust, mud, heat and jungle roads throughout, the event has yet to have a vintage Porsche 356 participate.

When Adam Ingrao's military career ended, he struggled to acclimate back into civilian life, finally finding solace in an unexpected place—with honeybees. He has now teamed up with **Ford** to help more veterans find healing in the hive. In 2015, Ingrao started a therapeutic beekeeping program with five other veterans, which has evolved into **Heroes to Hives**, a nine-month program offered through Michigan State University Extension that seeks to address the financial and personal wellness of veterans via professional training and community development centered on beekeeping. Ingrao serves as agricultural entomologist educator and veteran liaison. Initially, the program did not have a presence in Southeast Michigan. Cormac Wright, Ford global energy systems project manager, learned of the need and knew

there had to be an opportunity with Ford, as he spearheads a Ford corporate-wide beekeeping program—a sustainability initiative supporting honeybee populations, the local ecosystem, gardening and farming communities—and Heroes to Hives aligns with these efforts. Ford Cherry Hill Farm in Ypsilanti is an 800-acre working farm producing corn, soybeans, wheat and hay. Once a testing site for Ford trac-

tors, it is now the location for Heroes to Hives, with five acres dedicated to the program. In addition to the hives, there will be pollinator-friendly plants to support the honeybees and other pollinators. Last



Eagle E-Type anniversary

year, a Ford designer created six special hive shells, more than seven feet tall, to house the corporate bee colonies inside a walking path extension north of Ford World Headquarters, where six colonies have an estimated total of a quarter million bees. Ford employee volunteer beekeepers manage the hives. After the winter, the colonies increased in size and the Ford bee population multiplied enough to warrant a controlled split, which allows bees to continue to multiply and prevents swarming. Ford harvested enough bees, about 25,000 in all, to start five new colonies at Cherry Hill Farm to help veterans as part of the Heroes to Hives program.

Jaguar E-Type specialist Eagle, whose own heritage has developed alongside that of arguably the most famous British sports car of all time, the Jaguar E-Type, celebrates three important milestones this year, the company is 35 years old; the model for which Eagle is most famous, the Eagle E-Type, is a quarter of a century; and the Eagle Speedster, first of the Special Editions, has been crafted for a decade. Eagle was born in 1984 to redefine the concept of restoration but also, in time, created its own legend by developing bespoke E-Types. The Eagle E-Type is infused with Eagle's unique obsession for detail, cleverly weaving modern upgrades into the fabric of original E-Types, each built to blend perfectly with its individual owner's vision. In the process of restoring, rebuilding and reliving the E-Type dream,

in fittingly British rural surroundings and combining tradition with sophisticated technology, the company has also gained and nurtured passionate and knowledgeable clients, whose aspirations are equal

to their expectations. Owners of commissioned Eagle E-types from all over the globe and other special guests were invited to a three-day fest of sunshine this summer at Goodwood, with a display from Eagle E-Types to Speedsters, Low Drag GTs and the latest variation, the Eagle Spyder GT.

Pre-series production of the ID.3 has begun, as core components for the new

the launch of production 16 years ago, the plant will chiefly produce electric drives for the modular electric drive matrix (MEB). All parts for the electric drive for Europe and North America are put together here, including parts from the plants in Salzgitter, Pozna and Hanover. Pre-series production has already started, and up to 500,000 units per year will be produced in the future. Kassel works closely with the Chinese plant in Tianjin, where the electric drive is produced in parallel for the Chinese market. Together, the two plants will produce up to 1.4 million electric drives each year from 2023 on, making VW Group Components one of the largest global manufacturers of EV drives. Load-bearing components and body parts are also produced in Kassel—parts of the extremely durable battery box frame, dampers, crossmembers and the tunnel. Platform parts from Kassel then head to Zwickau for assembly into the vehicle body. The Salzgitter plant specializes in rotors and stators, ultimately up to 2,000 per day, along with gasoline, diesel and CNG drives. Salzgitter has taken on key elements of end-to-end responsibility for battery processes: from development, to a pilot plant for production by the end of the year, to a pilot plant for battery recycling in 2020. The battery system for the ID.3,



EVs are developed and produced at a range of **Volkswagen** Group Components plants. The electric drive comes from Kassel; the Salzgitter plant supplies its colleagues in Hessen with rotors and stators; the Brunswick plant develops and produces the battery system; and further sites deliver castings and other parts. In addition to the dual clutch gearbox (DSG), for which Kassel has been known since

ultimately 2,000 units per day, will be manufactured in Brunswick—in a new hall the size of nine football fields, opening by the end of 2019—and delivered to vehicle production in Zwickau. Brunswick also manufactures running gear components and assembles front and rear axles, including welding groups and steering systems, but also drive shafts from the running gear production site in Wolfsburg. ■

UPCOMING FEATURES

2020 Toyota GR Supra



Big Willy Jeep mutant project



NWAPA Run to the Sun 2019 Oregon road comparo



Monterey and Pebble Beach 2019 highlights



Texas Truck Rodeo 2019



Waymo autonomous ridealong



Southwest Lifestyle Media Drive 2019



TerrainHopper USA (Tempe) off-road mobility vehicles



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- We've been selling these clocks for over 15 years; Never a Return, Never a Complaint, you have our word on it
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Shown: Vintage Iron Speed Shop Clock / SKU: 09-BKG-VI

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All-Steel Toolboxes

The Greasemonkeys have the feeling their full line of durable all-steel portable toolboxes with lift-out tray and a variety of the most cool car guy graphics (five styles now and more coming!) just may be too good to stash tools in—we may have to call them "deco-boxes"!

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- Nickel-plated steel latch and hinge for added security
- Full length lift-out tote tray
- Cool car guy quality color graphics
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Wrench-In-Hand Steel Tool Box / SKU: 10-BKG-WCL

Vintage Pickup Truck Steel Tool Box / SKU: 10-BKG-VT

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— Many thanks! Jackie B.

♥ I just had the most wonderful buying experience! I only hope my father asks for something from The Busted Knuckle Garage for Christmas so I can do business with such a wonderful company once more.
— Cheers! Michelle

♥ My husband just loves everything, especially me for getting him such cool stuff. I'd have to say we will be lifetime customers, oh ya!! Thank you, Greasemonkeys.
— Sincerely, Pam

♥ First, let me be the one thanking you! I honestly cannot remember such extraordinary customer service.
— Thanks again, "JR" Jean



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