

ARIZONA DRIVER

THE ENTHUSIAST'S GUIDE TO LIFE BEHIND THE WHEEL

VOLUME 10 NUMBER 4
JULY-AUGUST 2011

VEHICLE IMPRESSIONS

PORSCHE PANAMERA 4

ROAD TRIPS

COPPERSTATE 1000 ROAD RALLY

ROUTE 66 IN THE CAMARO SS CONVERTIBLE

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MOTORCYCLE

ARIZONA BIKE WEEK

EQUIPMENT AND TECH

AAA TOP ROAD TRIP PICKS

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ARIZONA DRIVER

THE ENTHUSIAST'S GUIDE TO LIFE BEHIND THE WHEEL

news & features July-August 2011

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SPECIAL EVENT	A Copperstate 100016 Joining dozens of priceless collectibles as they tour eastern and northern Arizona, but in a brand new Mustang GT, we contemplate what's changed and what remains the same. By Tim Sharp
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COVER: The four-door, all-wheel-drive Porsche Panamera 4.
Photo courtesy Porsche Cars North America, Inc.

Photo: Tim Sharp

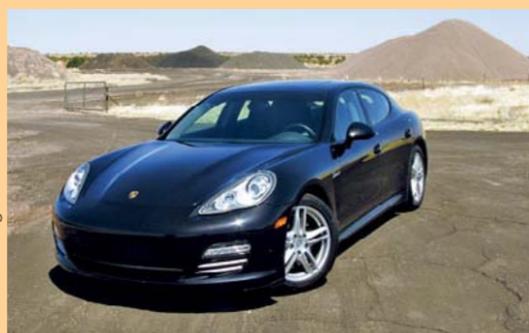
Photo: Joe Sage

Photo: Pebble Beach Concours

Photo: Larry Edsall

Photo: Joe Sage

Photo: Randall Bohl



Do you ever do the math when you're in traffic? It can cost as much as \$50 million a mile to build a modern 8-lane freeway. But on that road, take a look around. If there are three lanes on your side, what do you see, about a hundred cars in front and another hundred in the rearview mirror? If they're \$25,000 cars, that's a whopping \$5 million-worth of machinery. If half of them are \$75,000 cars, \$10 million. Then double it for the opposite lanes. And that's just at the moment. 100,000 cars may pass that point on an average day. It makes the cost of the highway seem well worthwhile.

In this issue, we drive two models of 2012 Mercedes-Benz CLS, including the AMG variant, as well as the Porsche Panamera 4 and the Camaro SS convertible. That's over \$300,000 right there, in just four cars (or three, depending how you look at it). You could get your hands on ten or fifteen \$20,000 to \$30,000 cars for that same budget, but would it be as much fun? It just might be. This issue presents eighteen vehicles chosen by AAA as top picks for a road trip, which total about \$470,000, including a Corvette and a Porsche. Numerology can be fun.

Priceless cars can be fun, too, and we present them here from the rare and almost untouchable (but roadworthy) vintage cars that run in the Copperstate 1000 Road Rally, to the compelling but in some cases not yet built wonders of a big international auto show, in this case the one in New York. As manufacturers scramble to adjust to shifting tastes in the marketplace, though, the concepts will likely be fine-tuned, manufactured, priced and available before long.



Come to think of it, from Route 66, to the Copperstate 1000, to Tucson's great summer climate at 2500 feet elevation, there are a lot of numbers in this issue, for a recreational read. We hope you stayed awake in math class.

Enjoy the ride.

Joe Sage - Publisher/ Executive Editor

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MAGAZINE

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PEBBLE BEACH AUCTIONS

SATURDAY . AUGUST 20
 SUNDAY . AUGUST 21
 PEBBLE BEACH . CALIFORNIA



FCA Platinum Award and Pebble Beach
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AAA "top picks for road trips" for all types of drivers who love the open road

AAA calculates that nine out of ten US travelers over Memorial Day Weekend took a road trip, rather than traveling by plane, train or another form of transportation. "Today's American road trips come in many different forms: family vacations, mancations, girlfriend getaways, romantic excursions and more," said John Nielsen, AAA National Director of Auto Repair, Buying Services and Consumer Information. "And the ideal vehicle for a road trip can come in as many different forms, depending on where you want the road to take you and who will be joining you for the ride." AAA Auto Buying experts have developed a list of top picks for road trips—taking into consideration interior comfort, cargo size, passenger room and comfort, fuel economy, safety, performance and handling, and other factors—in six categories at every price point. (We won't quibble with AAA's choices, but would of course make some different ones here and there.) Additional vehicle information and pricing can be found at AAA.com/AutoMakerand AAA.com/AutoBuying.

Small Cars

CHEVROLET CRUZE ECO

From the Cavalier to the Cobalt to the Cruze, each generation of compact Chevrolet vehicle has been an improvement from the previous, and the Cruze is no exception. AAA Auto Buying experts tested the "Eco" version with a six-speed manual transmission, which is the non-hybrid gasoline fuel economy leader in its size category. It also received a five-star overall rating in the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) more stringent new crash test program. AAA found the Cruze Eco to be a good value with impressive fuel economy, making it a smart pick for road trip lovers on a budget. For those looking to take more than two on their road trip, the Cruze lacks rear cup holders and a center armrest, and the rear seat may be cramped for tall passengers. The TrueCar national average selling price of the Chevrolet Cruze "Eco" is \$18,837, 1.8 percent (or \$338) less than the MSRP.

FORD FOCUS

A definite improvement over the previous version, the new 2012 Ford Focus drives very nicely with above average ride and handling. Fuel economy and engine performance also are very good and highway cruising is impressively quiet for the small car field, making it a top pick for road trips. As with other cars in the category, it's ideal for two travelers, as the backseat can be a bit cramped. The TrueCar national average selling price of the 2012 Ford Focus is \$16,896, 2.3 percent (or \$399) less than the MSRP.

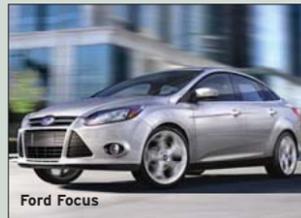
KIA SOUL

For those looking to express themselves a bit more while on the road, AAA Auto Buying experts like the funky looks of the Kia Soul and its practicality, as well. Reviewers found little to fault with the Soul, which offers a 10-year/100,000

mile warranty, 30-mpg fuel economy and is a Top Safety Pick from the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS). The Soul also received a five-star crash test rating from NHTSA. The TrueCar



Chevrolet Cruze



Ford Focus

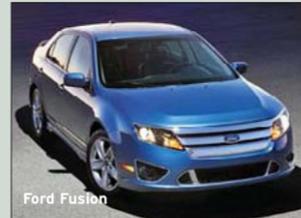


Kia Soul

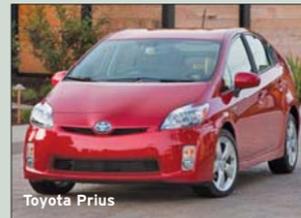
(or \$1,824) less than the MSRP.

TOYOTA PRIUS

The Toyota Prius is a road trip top pick because it's roomy, comfortable and eco-



Ford Fusion



Toyota Prius



Hyundai Sonata

national average selling price of the Kia Soul is \$16,759, 2.5 percent (or \$431) less than the MSRP.

Medium Cars

FORD FUSION

The Ford Fusion is a well-rounded vehicle. Its engine performance, ride and handling are all very good, and the hybrid version can produce exceptional fuel economy. As an added bonus, all-wheel drive is an option, which should make the car more appealing for those who enjoy wintertime road trips in certain parts of the country. The downside found by AAA Auto Buying experts is that the four-cylinder engine could be more refined. The TrueCar national average selling price of the Ford Fusion is \$18,821, currently selling for 8.8 percent

nomical. The hatchback design makes for exceptional flexibility, as well. The hybrid drivetrain sips fuel, and with careful driving, it can push fuel economy well past 50 mpg. However, for those who love engaging and sporty vehicles for their road trips, the Prius may not be the right choice. It's a secure and predictable ride, but not engaging to drive. The TrueCar national average selling price for the Toyota Prius is \$24,876, which is 2.5 percent (or \$596) above the MSRP. Increased demand due to higher gas prices and lowered supply of the Prius make it the only vehicle on AAA's list currently to be selling for more than its MSRP, according to TrueCar pricing information.

HYUNDAI SONATA

AAA Auto Buying experts found the

Hyundai Sonata to be an excellent performer from any perspective. The ride is comfortable and controlled, the handling is highly predictable and the four-cylinder engine delivers both good perform-



Toyota Camry



Dodge Charger



Infiniti G37

ance and good fuel economy. For those planning a road trip with taller passengers in the back seat, the swooping roof cuts into rear seat headroom as well as rear visibility. The TrueCar national average selling price for the Hyundai Sonata is \$20,572, 2.7 percent (or \$573) less than the MSRP.

Large Cars

TOYOTA CAMRY / AVALON

These cars share a platform and a V6 engine. The Camry also offers four-cylinder power, which should be sufficient for most drivers. The cabins are roomy, with the Avalon offering exceptional rear seat comfort, good for those taking multiple passengers on a road trip. Fuel economy with the V6 when on the open road is surprisingly good.

While both have solid handling, neither car is engaging to drive for travelers seeking a little extra from their driving experience. The TrueCar national average selling price for the Toyota Camry is \$20,668, 6.1 percent (or \$1,337) less than the MSRP.

CHRYSLER 300 / DODGE CHARGER

Much improved for 2011, the Chrysler 300 and Dodge Charger (built on the same platform) offer a surprising amount of room, a comfortable and well-controlled ride and good handling. Interior treatments are noticeably upgraded, as well. The new 3.6-liter V6 engine provides adequate power and reasonable fuel economy. However, AAA Auto Buying experts report rear visibility is still an issue, though forward visibility for overhead traffic lights has been improved from previous model years. The TrueCar national average selling price for the Dodge Charger is \$24,803, 5.4 percent (or \$1,417) less than the MSRP.

INFINITI G37

AAA Auto Buying Experts agree the Infiniti G37 is one of the most engaging driving experiences, with sharp handling and a powerful 328-horsepower V6. It also comes loaded with standard features and excellent safety ratings. For road trippers, the interior is a bit snug and the ride might be too firm for some, depending on their personal preference and road surface conditions. The TrueCar national average selling price of the Infiniti G37 is \$33,894, which is 7.6 percent (or \$2,801) less than the MSRP.

Minivans

HONDA ODYSSEY

The Honda Odyssey is big, but the driver does not have to put up with an unwieldy vehicle, as its handling is surprisingly good. As for space, this minivan can carry a large family with ease. Optional split-screen entertainment also can keep rear seat passengers entertained during long trips. The TrueCar national average selling price for the Honda Odyssey is \$30,777, three percent (or \$953) less than MSRP.

TOYOTA SIENNA

Big, comfortable and inviting, the Toyota Sienna has many features to put it on the "top picks for road trips" list. The ride is comfortable and quiet, while the V6 engine performs impressively. AAA

Auto Buying experts reported that the Sienna's handling is not the best in the class and the interior is not as polished as some road trip fans may prefer. The TrueCar national average selling price for the Toyota Sienna is \$24,209, 6.4 percent (or \$1,661) less than MSRP.

CHRYSLER TOWN & COUNTRY / DODGE GRAND CARAVAN

Much improved with a mid-cycle freshening, these vans come with a standard array of useful safety features including a backup camera plus cross traffic and blind spot alerts. The Stow 'n Go seats are unparalleled for convenience, and the ride and handling are quite good in the new model. The vans can be a great



Honda Odyssey



Toyota Sienna



Chrysler Town & Country

SUVs

DODGE DURANGO

The new platform for the Dodge Durango, which it shares with the Jeep Grand Cherokee, is very good. Its ride and handling are well above average, and the new 3.6-liter V6 is more than capable of delivering power when needed. Rear seat room is up to the challenge of handling six-foot passengers. The main drawback to the Durango is its below-class-average fuel economy. The TrueCar national

average selling price for the Dodge Durango is \$27,347, nine percent (or \$2,698) less than MSRP.

SUBARU FORESTER

Easy to drive, comfortable and budget-friendly (at least in its basic though still well-equipped trim levels), the Forester is ideal for longer trips. Its ride and handling are good, and the base engine performance is more than sufficient for family use. The only downside is that its fuel economy is average for the vehicle category. The TrueCar national average selling price for the Subaru Forester is \$21,513, 5.3 percent (or \$1,207) less than MSRP.



Dodge Durango



Subaru Forester



Toyota RAV4

TOYOTA RAV4

Good ride, good handling and good room make the Toyota RAV4 an excellent extended drive vehicle. The V6 is much more powerful than the four-cylinder motor, yet fuel economy seems not to suffer much with the upgrade. One downside noted by AAA Auto Buying experts is the location of the rear door hinge at the side, rather than the top, which can complicate access to the cargo area. The TrueCar national average selling price for the Toyota RAV4 is \$22,150, 4.9 percent (or \$1,135) less than MSRP.

Fun Cars

PORSCHE BOXSTER / CAYMAN

There are few cars that offer a better blend of handling and engine performance. The Porsche Boxster and Cayman

are not the fastest, but they are quick enough to be thoroughly entertaining on a road trip—especially those that might include some winding roads. As with most of the "fun" picks, there is only room for two, and the Porsches' split trunks limit packing options [or increase them—Ed.]. The TrueCar national average selling price for the Porsche Boxster is \$47,022, 4.1 percent (or \$2,028) less than MSRP.

CHEVROLET CORVETTE

Great handling and power are the highlights of the Chevrolet Corvette that can make it a fun car for a road trip. As with other sports cars, travelers will need to pack light and leave the kids at



Porsche Boxster



Chevrolet Corvette



Volkswagen GTI

home for road trips in this American classic. The TrueCar national average selling price for the Chevrolet Corvette is \$45,156, 9.7 percent (or \$4,839) less than the MSRP.

VOLKSWAGEN GTI

The Volkswagen GTI may be the best overall compromise in the "fun-to-drive" category. It is roomy enough to be practical, while the ride is surprisingly supple considering its handling. The interior is nicely designed and put together. While a good compromise of room and fun, the back seat is still a tight fit for adults if taking a longer road trip. The TrueCar national average selling price for the Volkswagen GTI is \$26,187, 5.3 percent (or \$1,478) less than MSRP. ■

CAMARO CELEBRATES 45TH ANNIVERSARY

Chevrolet is celebrating the 45th anniversary of the Camaro with the release of a Special Edition that features a new FE4 performance suspension package (for SS coupes) plus several interior and technology improvements. The 45th Anniversary model, along with every 2012 model Camaro, has a standard new 3.6-liter V6 engine (the LFX). Rated at 323 horsepower, this engine is up 11 horsepower from the existing V6, with no fuel economy penalty. The exterior signature of the 45th Anniversary Special Edition is its unique rally stripe, in red and silver, that contrasts its Carbon Flash Metallic paint. The package also includes new-design 20-inch wheels, standard rear spoiler, HID headlamps and jet black interior with leather-trimmed seats and 45th Anniversary logo. ▼

2012 Chevrolet Camaro
45th Anniversary
Special Edition



2012 Volvo S60 R-Design



CHEVY VOLT FOR SALE IN ARIZONA

As of mid-June, dealers in Arizona have begun taking orders for the Chevrolet Volt electric car, the world's first electric car with a range extender. Consumer delivery of the 2012 Volt are expected to begin before the end of this year. In addition, the 2012 model will have a lowered suggested retail price—nearly \$1,000 below the 2011 base model—starting at \$39,995 (or \$32,496 assuming a full federal tax credit of \$7,500, subject to the customer's eligibility). This price includes the \$850 destination freight charge but excludes tax, title and license fees. The 2011 model has only been available in limited parts of the country.

MORE POWER FOR VOLVO R-DESIGN

▲ Volvo is taking two high acclaimed models to the next step with significant improvements to the R-Design trims for 2012. The S60 and XC60 R-Design models will both be powered by Volvo's T6 engine, a turbocharged, inline six-cylinder that produces 325 horsepower and 354 lb-ft of torque. The standard T6 engine in both models produces 300 hp and 325 lb-ft. The chassis team got in the act by making further refinements to the already impressive handling. Visually the R-Design models have larger twin exhaust pipes, unique five-spoke 18-inch wheels,

trunk spoiler and dual xenon headlamps with Active Bending Lights. The S60 R-Design will be priced at \$42,275 and the XC60 R-Design will start at \$43,150 when they go on sale late this summer.

MORE ATTITUDE FOR DODGE AVENGER

Getting ready to rumble later this fall, as Dodge prepares to roll out the 2012 Dodge Avenger R/T. This new Detroit muscle car features the new best-in-class 283-hp V6 engine with six-speed trans-axle, stiffened suspension, center-mounted tachometer and performance-inspired interior. The new 2012 Dodge Avenger R/T model builds on improvements made to the 2011 model, giving midsize sedan customers an even better driving experience and an all-new Dodge attitude. The 2012 Dodge Avenger R/T model will start arriving in dealerships during the third quarter of 2011.

PANAMERA TAKEN TO THE NEXT LEVEL

Porsche pulled the wraps off the pinnacle of performance sedans, with the introduction of the new Panamera Turbo S. Powered by the latest iteration of the Porsche 4.8-liter V8, twin turbo engine the new S version is rated at 550 hp and 553 lb-ft of torque with an overboost function that can temporarily bump the torque to a peak rating of 590 lb-ft. The

current Panamera Turbo is rated at 500 hp and 516 lb-ft of torque. The new flagship sedan will accelerate from 0 to 60 mph in a mere 3.6 seconds and achieve a top track speed of 190 mph. Fuel consumption is expected to remain comparable to the Panamera Turbo that delivers an EPA estimated rating of 15 mpg city/23 mpg highway (18 mpg combined). The Turbo S has a base MSRP of \$174,175, including destination charge, and went on sale this spring.

CENTENNIAL EDITION CORVETTE

Chevrolet will be celebrating 100 years with a performance heritage Centennial Edition Corvette. The Centennial Edition package comes exclusively in Carbon Flash Metallic paint, with satin-black graphics and unique Centennial Satin Black wheels and red brake calipers. GM's fast acting adaptive ride control (Magnetic Selective Ride Control) is included on all Centennial Edition Corvette models. It also features special badges that signify Chevrolet's racing history. The exterior color scheme is reinforced inside the car with the ebony leather-wrapped instrument panel and doors, accented with red stitching on the steering wheel, seats, console and shifter. The seats, steering

KEEP RIGHT >>

2012 Volkswagen Beetle



wheel and shifter all have Microfiber suede accents. Pricing will be released prior to the start of availability. The special edition will be offered on all Corvette models—including Grand Sport, Z06 and ZR1—starting this summer.

BOLDER NEW-GENERATION BEETLE

▲ The 2012 Beetle is an automotive icon reinvented. Placing the original Beetle and the 21st century Beetle next to each other, it's clear that the lines of the rear sections are nearly identical, but the overall look is bolder and more dynamic. The Beetle also breaks free of the design geometry defined by three semi-circles (front wing, rear wing, domed roof above it). The 2012 Beetle is 71.2 inches wide (3.3 inches wider), 58.5 inches tall (.5 inches lower) and 168.4 inches long (6 inches longer). The development team also increased the car's track widths and wheelbase. All of this gives the Beetle a powerful appearance with muscular tension. The Beetle is sportier, offering both turbo-charged TDI® Clean Diesel and turbo-charged gasoline engines, in addition to dual exhaust, performance-handling packages, 19-inch wheels, sport seats and new, sleeker styling. Volkswagen will offer a panoramic roof, a range of audio options, including the Fender® Premium Audio System and a

customization program for the 2012 Beetle with a large number of personalization options.

AUDI A3 NOTCHBACK SEDAN

Audi is showing what the A3 notchback sedan might look like with a new four-door concept. It also happens to be a showpiece for the latest versions of the company's technologies including an improved MMI operating system, a new high-tech infotainment system and enhanced drivetrain. The Audi A3 is small—measuring 14.6 ft. long, 6 ft. wide and 4.6 ft. high—making it about the same size as the BMW 1 Series, Subaru Impreza or Volkswagen EOS. The A3 concept is powered by a 408-hp 2.5-liter five-cylinder direct-injection turbocharged engine with seven-speed double clutch transmission, shifted by wheel-mounted shift paddles. The engine drives the concept at a 0-to-62 mph time of 4.1 seconds, with a top speed limited to 155 mph. Fuel economy is projected at nearly 26 mpg. If approved, the A3 sedan could arrive in the US as early as 2012.

HYDROGEN STATIONS IN GERMANY

Car manufacturer Daimler and technology company The Linde Group are pressing ahead with the development of an infrastructure for hydrogen-powered fuel-cell

vehicles. Over the coming three years, the two companies plan to construct an additional 20 hydrogen fueling stations in Germany. They aim to ensure a supply of hydrogen produced purely from renewable resources for the steadily increasing number of fuel-cell vehicles on the road. The initiative links with existing H2 Mobility and Clean Energy Partnership infrastructure projects, which are being subsidized by the National Innovation Programme for hydrogen and fuel-cell technology (NIP). This places Germany at the international forefront of hydrogen infrastructure development.

VALVOLINE'S NEXTGEN™ MOTOR OIL

Valvoline introduced a new way for car owners to go green with their NextGen™ motor oil, made from a blend using 50 percent recycled oil. The oil provides 100 percent of normal Valvoline oil protection exceeding industry standard requirements, but with far less impact on the environment. NextGen motor oil was developed after years of research and is coupled with improvements in the oil refining process. Valvoline chemists now have the ability to pair the company's additive chemistry with recycled base oils that meet its exacting standards. The result

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2012 Mazda MINAGI concept



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NEW VOLKSWAGEN PLANT IN THE US

Volkswagen has opened a new plant in Chattanooga TN, where over 2,000 employees will produce up to 150,000 vehicles per year. The plant sets new standards in terms of sustainable, resource-efficient production. The plant includes a body shop, paint shop, assembly facility, technical testing center, an academy for initial and advanced training of employees and a supplier park housing eight third-party companies. Manufacturing depth for the new Passat produced here will be of the order of 85 per cent. Volkswagen invested about one billion dollars in the development of the facility, which will be among the world's most advanced and environmentally compatible automobile plants. The new plant is in line with the highest requirements of LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) standard, which lays down stringent provisions for the sustainable, environmentally compatible construction of buildings.

MAZDA CX-5 CROSSOVER ANNOUNCED

▲ Mazda announced it will add a new compact crossover SUV to its lineup for the 2012 model year. It will be called the CX-5 and it will fit at the bottom of the current naming scheme, which already includes the larger CX-7 and CX-9 models. The CX-5 is derived from the Mazda MINAGI concept shown at the Geneva Motor Show in March and the New York International Auto Show in April. The CX-5 will be the first production vehicle to incorporate Mazda's new design theme, "KODO—Soul of Motion," as originally debuted on the Mazda SHINARI concept car. It will also introduce the company's full range of breakthrough SKYACTIV technologies, including engines, transmissions, body and chassis. SKYACTIV is a blanket term for Mazda's innovative next-generation technologies being developed under the company's long-term vision for technology development and sustainable Zoom-Zoom.

HYUNDAI BLUE LINK™ TELEMATICS

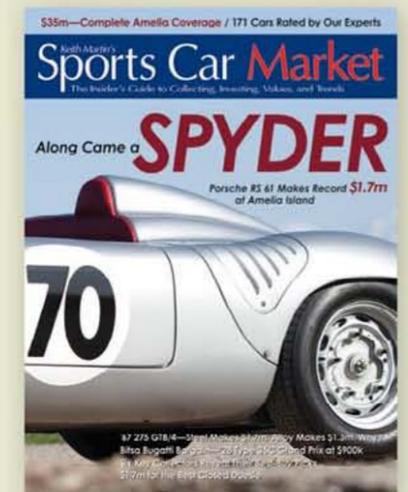
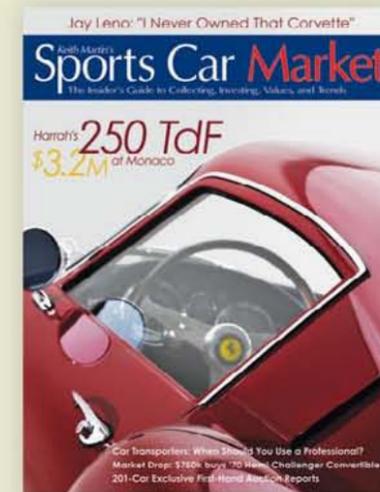
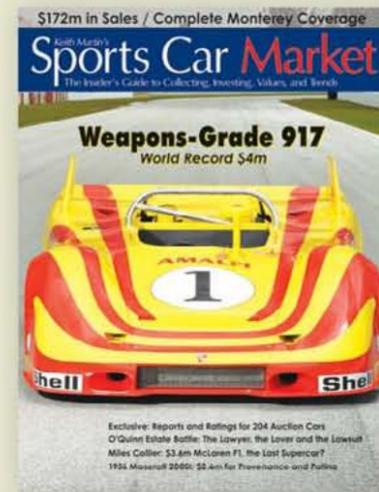
Hyundai is introducing Blue Link™, an all-new telematics platform that will offer more than 30 connectivity features on future Hyundai models. A variety of features will be available at launch, including such items as "Service Link" to help drivers schedule service at their Hyundai dealer, "Eco-Coach" to improve efficient

driving, restaurant ratings and remote door lock/unlock capabilities. Remote vehicle start will be added later, so a driver can start their Hyundai to warm up or cool down before driving. For watchful parents, Geo-Fence sends a notification if a driver has ventured outside prescribed borders or time constraints. And stolen vehicle slowdown can help police recover a stolen vehicle. Hyundai will offer three annual subscription packages: Assurance, Essentials, and Guidance. After a complimentary introductory period, customers have three pricing options based on length of service agreement. Blue Link was set to debut in mid-June on the 2012 Hyundai Sonata sedan.

AUDI A7 FOUR-DOOR COUPE DEBUTS

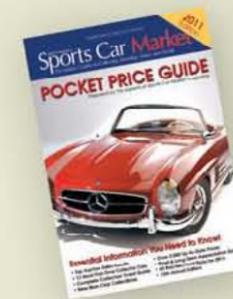
Audi is entering the sexy four-door coupe arena with the introduction of the all-new A7. It combines prestige, sportiness and functionality into a liftback coupe with seating for four. The coupe design attracts the eye, while lightweight aluminum-hybrid construction—aluminum body panels and steel frame—provides excellent handling, safety and fuel economy. The A7 is powered by a 310-hp supercharged 3.0-liter V6 engine attached to an eight-speed Tiptronic automatic transmis-

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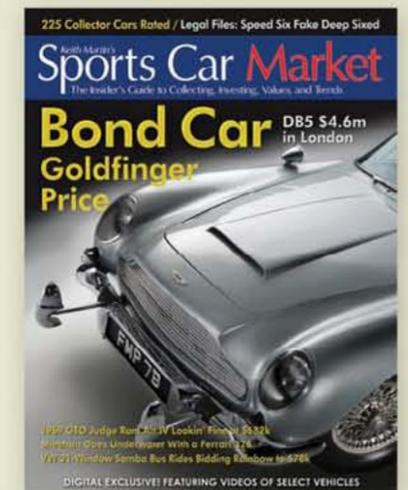
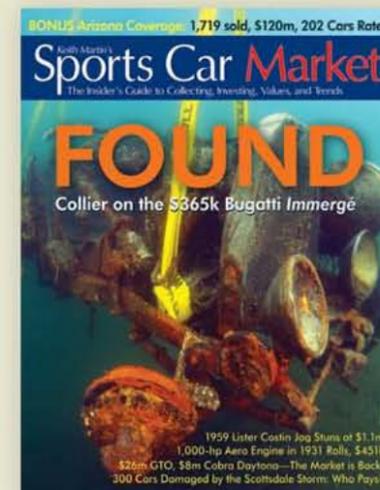
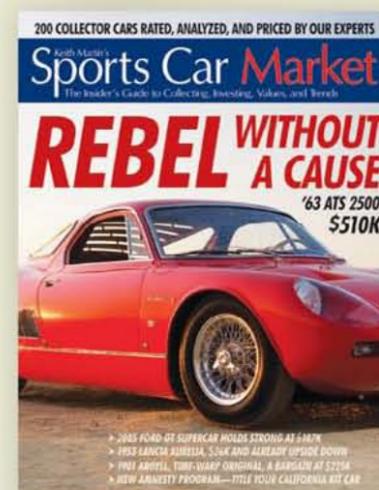
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Nissan NV200



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sion with standard quattro all-wheel drive. Fuel economy is rated at 18 mpg in the city and 28 mpg on the highway, according to the EPA. Zero-to-60 mph acceleration is 6.7 seconds, and the top speed is electronically limited to 152 mph. The A7 introduces an Audi-first available heads-up display with high-resolution full-color readout, plus innovative technologies introduced recently in the Audi A8 flagship, including available full LED headlights. The Audi A7 starts at \$60,125.

THE NEXT NYC TAXI WILL BE A NISSAN

▲ Nissan has clinched the contract to provide the NV200 van for the New York City taxis fleet. The exclusive arrangement, which was jointly announced in May by New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg and Nissan Americas Chairman Carlos Tavares calls for the Nissan van to go into service as the current fleet is replaced, starting late in 2013. The award comes after a rigorous selection process that occurred over more than two years. The competition built upon more than a century of taxi industry heritage to drive the design and creation of a purpose-built vehicle, tuned to the city's streets. The other two finalists included Ford Motor Company and Karsan, a Turkish vehicle manufacturer. The Nissan NV200 taxi, which is about the same size as a Ford Edge, is a modified

version of the compact commercial vehicle currently available in global markets including Japan, Europe and China.

CONTROLLING THE ELECTRONICS BOOM

About 80 percent of the value of a military jet lies in its circuitry, up from almost nothing a century ago. Civil airliners are about 50 percent electric and electronic, while the family car is around 30 percent. But ID TechEx of Cambridge UK says all these percentages are steadily rising. Aircraft has far more than the radar, communications and other instruments for the pilot: there is a sea of sensors, fuel controls and servo systems in engines, wings and elsewhere. And the family car adds much more than NAV, phone, proximity sensors and other electronics directly assisting the driver. An accelerometer controlling the air bags is just one example of an increasingly huge number of out-of-sight safety and other devices controlled by circuitry. Hybrid and pure electric vehicles accelerate the trend. While the battery pack can be up to 50 percent of the cost of an electric vehicle—land, water or airborne—less known is that this battery pack can have as little as 50 percent of its value lying in the cells. Lithium Balance is taking a new approach to these battery management systems (BMS), with electronic circuitry monitoring cell temperature, protecting the cells from

overload, storing and providing power surges with ultracapacitors, converting energy-harvesting and charger station inputs into appropriate DC currents and voltages, and managing shutdown on impact, fire, cell runaway or other issues.

MERCEDES-BENZ CLS IPAD APP

Going into a Mercedes-Benz dealership might be a slightly different experience than you've had in the past. There are still brochures, but now you'll find your salespeople armed with Apple iPads. Developed by All Things Media for MBUSA, the CLS-Class iPad app puts a new spin on traditional sales materials. Although the app has been developed as a tool for sales consultants, it can easily be used by consumers as well. A user-friendly interface includes virtual tours of the interior and exterior, an "Explore" section that allows you to customize your new 2012 CLS-Class, and videos that demonstrate technical innovations. Mercedes-Benz says that interacting with the app is the equivalent of walking into a showroom and kicking the tires: it literally allows sales consultants and informed customers to tailor the sales experience based on their interests. ■

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

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CLASSIC MUSCLE SHOWCASE IN MOTION

STORY BY TIM SHARP
PHOTOS BY TIM AND KRISTIN SHARP
AND JOE SAGE



Photo: Tim and Kristin Sharp

Each year, the Copperstate 1000 begins with a classic car show on the grass at Tempe Diablo Stadium. This year's field of some eighty rare vintage sports cars from Jaguar, Ferrari, Maserati, Porsche, Alfa Romeo, Shelby Cobra, Corvette, MG, Iso Rivolta, Aston Martin, De Tomaso, OSCA and Cisitalia.

While you can also see many of these rare machines at the Pebble Beach or Quail Lodge Concours during Monterey week in August, you will pay \$150-\$400 for admission. What does the Phoenix Art Museum Men's Arts Council (MAC) charge you to view these classic sports cars up close? Nothing—it is free to the public.

This is all part of the Men's Arts Council's plan to share these beautiful rolling sculptures with the state of Arizona and to expose them to future generations of car collectors. Evidently, MAC's plan is working, as we see more future collectors at the Tempe Field of Dreams each year. It is a wonderful way to inspire young collector enthusiasts. It is also a great way for adults to view the cars of their dreams.

The Men's Arts Council has had considerable help from the classic car owners themselves and corporate sponsors to make the Copperstate 1000 a success. This year's Bell Lexus Copperstate 1000 sponsors included AAA, the Arizona Department of Public Safety (DPS), Bell Lexus, U-Haul and others. Between the entrants' fees and corporate donations, the Copperstate 1000 raises funds for both the Phoenix Art Museum and the DPS 1090 Foundation to help families of fallen officers.

THE COPPERSTATE 1000 ROAD RALLY EXPERIENCE

From Tempe, the parade of exotic vintage machines traveled over 1,000 miles in four days. This year's Copperstate 1000 route ran through Superior, Miami, Globe, Greer, Edgar, Alpine, Morenci, Holbrook, Winslow, Strawberry, Sedona, Flagstaff, Payson, Happy Jack and Paradise Valley. Along the way, the residents of some of Arizona's most remote towns got to enjoy the beauty of these rare sports cars.

Lest you think that the owners of these old sports cars are all millionaires, think again. Many are working stiffies who save all year and use their vacation days to run the rally. Lest you think that the owners of rare vintage cars are fat cats who are chauffeured in their classic cars, seriously rethink that notion. These are genuine enthusiasts who love to drive their vintage sports cars through the snow in the White Mountains, brave the cold in their old roadsters and pay for the privilege of doing it.

Why would they do this and what is their reward? you might ask. It is a combination of things. The camaraderie of fellow enthusiasts. Listening to your sports car's engine as you run through the gears. The sensation of speed as the wind rushes past your head. The thumbs-up signs from locals as you drive through a small town. The scenic beauty of the Red Rocks of Sedona and the pines of the Arizona high country. The satisfaction you get when your old sports car finishes the Copperstate 1000 without so much as a spark plug change. It is all of these things and more.

RALLY SIGHTS AND SOUNDS

We settled into bucket seats of a Mustang GT we borrowed from Ford, and we checked out its retro dash. It sure looked like Ford's legendary 1970s GT muscle car, but would it run like one? No problem there. The GT's new 6-speed transmission and 412-horsepower quad-valve V8 put that issue to rest. This was the real deal, with an optional 19-inch tire and Brembo brake package for serious driving.

Of course, the NAV system, Sirius radio and backup camera were hardly retro. However, the NAV system might come in handy if we overshot the turnoff to our lunch stop at Happy Jack—which we did. It was not quite the same sensation as running back roads in a vintage Porsche Speedster, but the Mustang GT had excellent footing on the icy tarmac, and acceleration was nothing short of amazing.

Okay, so we did feel a little guilty that we were cozy inside the Mustang while the real Copperstate 1000 participants

Above: This 1956 Maserati 350 S belonging to Scott and Jody Rosen of N Salem NY is one of only three post-war racing Maserati Spyders built and the only surviving 350 S. Below: The Field of Dreams, at Tempe Diablo Stadium, brings a final shine to all the cars and a thrill to hundreds of spectators, before the rally hits the road.



Photo: Joe Sage

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Photo: Tim and Kristin Sharp



Photos: Joe Sage [4]

Above: This 1972 Ferrari 365 GTB/4 Daytona Spyder is owned by Andy Manganaro of Xenia OH. It was originally a coupe but was converted to convertible spec by Mike Sheehan in 1973. Below: Newt and Ginnia Withers of Anaheim CA await the starting flags at Tempe, in their 1966 Ferrari 275 GTB/C6 with 6-carb 3.3L V12.



Photo: Joe Sage

were freezing in their vintage race cars. However, the feeling soon passed when we reached the snow country.

Having scouted for some good photo locations on the way to Happy Jack, we sprinted through lunch in order to get back there before the Copperstate drivers passed. It was easy knowing when the classic sports cars were coming down the hill—their distinctive engine sounds gave them away. Vintage Jaguars have a mellow sound, like a precision clockworks. A Porsche 356 has a guttural, throaty sound. At speed, the old OSCA and Maserati race car engines sounded like a band of angry Italian washer women ripping up wet sheets. Yes, we loved this sound the best.

Occasionally, a vintage sports car burning a little castor oil in its gasoline passed by. You could not only see and hear the cars, but you could also smell the distinctive aroma of castor beans—similar to freshly brewed coffee, but even sweeter to a true vintage racing aficionado. It is the



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Above: Copperstate 1000 drivers stopped at Happy Jack Lodge, northeast of Payson, for lunch on the last day of the rally. Manganaro's Ferrari is joined by a rebodied 1932 Lincoln KB Boattail Speedster belonging to Dale Lillard of Phoenix, plus many more. Below: the author's ride for the day: a 412-hp manual Ford Mustang GT.



Photo: Tim and Kristin Sharp

smell of speed.

After the last vintage sports car passed, only the sound of the occasional Harley-Davidson or diesel truck caught our attention. With most cars, the tire noise was louder than their exhaust note. As the hybrids passed, there was virtually no noise at all. How boring. We had a passing thought: "Why is it that we are constantly being pushed into automobiles that have no soul? Cars are becoming appliances. Perhaps the era of performance cars is gone. Perhaps classic sports cars are the last vestiges of that dying era."

We packed our camera bag and climbed into the Mustang GT. As its engine came to life, we reconsidered: "No, the performance car is definitely not dead." After resetting the gauges, we tracked the Mustang's mileage back home. It got 26.5 mpg from Strawberry to Gold Canyon. That's not bad for a car with 412 horses. Now, if they would only offer the Mustang GT with a bi-fuel option, you could run it on \$2.26-a-gallon CNG. ■

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the four-door Porsche

the driver's door is still the most important

by Joe Sase

We've heard so many strong opinions about the Porsche Panamera, we figured we'd start with those. Is this the most beautiful car we've ever seen? No. Some love it, some dislike it; we're somewhat ambivalent. Is it the most beautiful car *you've* ever seen? Could be.

Is it the fastest car we've driven? No, but it's pretty fast (and you can get a Panamera up to 67 percent more powerful than our test vehicle). Is it the most spacious four-door? Again, you can get more so, but you can far more often get a lot less so. This is just fine. Is it comfortable for four? Oh, yes.

Is it technologically advanced? Yes, indeed. Our Panamera didn't have every feature you can order, but pretty much everything is available if you want it. Is lots of tech what you want in a Porsche? This sets the stage for an overall opinion of the car. It's not a two-seat sports car, nor is it intended to be. On a 911 or Boxster, if your prime directive is to hit the back roads and get lost for awhile, you may not even want nav. And you may not want killer audio, preferring the song of the engine. Less can be more. But on this slick urban and open 'bahn four-door? Sure. Tech is useful, it adds to the ambience, and it's certainly expected by the buyer.

Is it pricey? Compared to what? You can spend more on a Panamera than our example. Or you can spend a lot less on any number of four-doors, but you already know what you'd be missing. If you're proud of your brand, you're proud of the price.

All in all, do you want four doors and want a Porsche? That's a short list. If you mean four doors and a Porsche, but not an SUV, then here you go. And thus is born a product line expansion that indeed fills a particular niche—in fact, a *big* niche.

defining a niche

What can compare? Some put this in the category of four-door coupes, such as the Mercedes-Benz CLS or the new Audi A7. Those are (or will be) more common sights on the road, though, and may be somewhat diminished, as it were, by similarities to their more common siblings. The Porsche Panamera, in an already rarified lineup, may compare better within the range from Jaguar's sedans to the Aston Martin Rapide.

Base specifications for engine, power, drive and pricing for the Panamera lineup overall fall like this:

	ENGINE	HP	DRIVE	\$ BASE
Panamera	6cyl	300hp	rear	\$74,400
Panamera 4	6cyl	300hp	AWD	78,900
Panamera S	V8	400hp	rear	89,800
Panamera 4S	V8	400hp	AWD	94,700
Panamera Turbo	V8	500hp	AWD	135,300

Our Panamera 4 (base price: \$78,900) stickered at just \$86,690, with a pretty basic list of options. This puts it between a CLS and a CLS AMG (\$71,300 or \$94,900), but well above the A7 base (\$59,250). The base price of the Aston four-door is just north of \$200k. The lower-stratum Jaguar XF ranges from a base of \$52,500 to \$79,600 for the quickest XFR. The Jaguar XJ ranges from \$72,700 to \$113,200. Overall, pricing for the Panamera range is closest to the Jaguar XJ range. And the XJ also evokes somewhat of a four-door coupe basis to some, while being less common on the roads than the competing German brands.

You can see where this is heading. The often dueling goals of affordability and distinction create

a sweet spot for the right four-door car. If you're set on owning the Porsche badge, you have several options in the range of Mercedes' CLS lineup. (Sister company Audi has kept their offering in a different stratum.) If you want to skim the top end, you can max out your Panamera and still beat the Aston Martin Rapide price considerably (though you will be sharing the roads with more brethren than that). If, on the other hand, beating others' price means being *higher*, in your circles, the Panamera Turbo has bragging rights above the top Jaguar.

Aston Martin and Jaguar are also good comparatives because they're well known for sports cars and roadsters, which don't detract from the presence of sedans in their lineups, nor vice versa.

The comparisons can be enough to induce raving madness, but that's really just where the fun begins, when shopping in this range.

first impressions

We first saw the Porsche Panamera when several were flown in from Germany to Monterey to be displayed on the lawn during the Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance two years ago. There's no question this car was big news, and it made a big splash there. Did it blow us away and we had to have one? Not really. Was it interesting, compelling and leaving us wanting to give it a try and learn more? Sure. Our first impression was a complete walk-around on the lawn, but our second impression was a surprise: while parked in a sparse outlying lot at the San Jose airport, waiting for an arriving party's flight, something flashed by on our left, and we saw the Panamera in motion, three-quarter right rear view... and it looked great.

the right stuff

The V8 range starts with the Panamera S, boasting a 400-hp 4.8-liter engine and rear-wheel drive, with a 5.2-second 0-to-60 time. The Panamera 4S has the same engine, plus active all-wheel drive with traction management. Zero-to-60 time is 4.8 seconds. Both the S and AWD 4S models with V8 achieve 16/24 mpg. At the top of the lineup is the Panamera Turbo, which twin-turbocharges the 4.8L V8 to 500 hp and a 0-to-60 time of just 4 seconds—and this is with all-wheel drive and EPA figures of 15/23 mpg. No Panamera is subject to a gas guzzler tax. An optional Sport Chrono package with Launch Control can take 0.2 seconds off the acceleration time on any of the V8s—that's right, the Turbo can hit 60 in just 3.8 seconds.

For 2011, Porsche offers a newly-developed V6 powering the base Panamera and also our test all-wheel-drive Panamera 4. Coupled to the same seven-speed PDK double-clutch gearbox as the V8s (stated as the first such in a Gran Turismo), and also adding an Auto Start Stop function (shutting the engine down at stops), the V6 achieves 18/27 mpg city/highway (or 18/26 in the all-wheel-drive Panamera 4). The V6 also knocks 66 pounds off the car. Lightweight construction includes aluminum axles, doors, hood, front fenders and rear deck lid. Total weight of the base Panamera is just 3880 pounds, with a mere 132 pounds added for the AWD Panamera 4. All-wheel-drive models have a rear-wheel bias, for higher launch performance and more exciting cornering. A 90° structure in the V6 gives a lower center of gravity, and engine placement, back a bit, gives front-to-rear balance and handling on a par with the V8 models.

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The V6 engine has the same basic technologies as the V8: direct fuel injection, infinitely variable intake camshaft with variable valve lift (VariableCam Plus), on-demand oil pump, thermal-managed water cooling, variable intake manifold and integrated dry sump lubrication with two-stage oil extraction. An aluminum crankcase and cylinder heads, magnesium valve timing box and an extralight magnesium oil flow housing (on the rear-drive Panamera) all add to weight savings and fuel efficiency. Camshaft adjusters are aluminum, and aluminum bolts connect all magnesium components as well as the engine and transmission. The complete V6 engine with its PDK transmission weighs just 404 pounds.

The V6 Panameras can be quickly distinguished by matte black window surrounds, compared to chrome on the V8 models, as well as by single exhaust tips instead of duals, and black brake calipers behind 18-inch five-spoke wheels.

Hybrids will join the Panamera lineup in 2012.

Step in, look around

When it comes to black paint, our Panamera's Basalt Black Metallic is a beauty. As soon as you open the door and see the seats, steering wheel and five-gauge instrument binnacle, you know you're getting into a Porsche. Standard keyless start uses a switch in Porsche's trademark lefthand position. It's an interesting feeling to know you're getting in a sedan at the same time, and it turns out not to be incongruous at all. And that's the magic of the Panamera. Some details are familiar from the 911 and Boxster, and some are different, yet somehow they all combine to make you feel at home.

Relatively low-mounted sport seats promise the driver and front passenger the direct road feel of a two-seater, while rear seats are high enough to give everyone a view of the road. Seat heating and ventilation are available in front or on all seats. The ventilation system—with three intensity levels—pulls moisture away from the body rather than blowing air toward the occupant. The Panamera has a choice of lightweight, energy-efficient cli-

mate control systems. Two-zone automatic air is standard. Four-zone automatic air is optional, but still uses just one compressor, for weight and energy efficiency. It was only April when we had this car, but we noted that it takes a long time to cool off this big cabin. More careful use of the multiple zones may mitigate this.

A shift indicator in the tach gives a visual match to the PRND pattern or to the PDK, rather than just letters or numbers. A center console with seven-inch touchscreen, another 4.8-inch screen within the primary instruments, and button/switch controls on the center console and a roof console group driver functions while avoiding hierarchical screen submenus that could wrap you around a tree in some cars. The center console controls are neatly echoed for back seat occupants, both in style and in offering them control over their own destiny. We found the console controls attractive and straightforward, despite their plentitude, noting them as the best executed of many we experienced. For example, we set out to tackle the dual-zone air, given the complex and varied ways this is set up in so many vehicles, quickly finding a "mono" button that syncs it just like that.

Our car didn't have a backup camera (though we wished it did), but it did have a proximity sensor emitting a pleasant and useful triple tone as we backed to park in an angled spot.

Ambient illumination subtly highlights key areas in the passenger compartment, controllable within a wide range of brightness. LED lighting in an available Rear Interior Lights Package illuminates storage compartments and footwells.

Our audio was a 585-watt Bose Surround Sound system (\$1440) with 14 speakers plus a 200-watt subwoofer and nine amplified channels, balanced to each seat. You can opt for the \$5690 Burmester 16-speaker, 16-channel, 1,000-watt system, rounded off by a 300-watt subwoofer, all engineered specifically to the Panamera's chassis and interior—and weighing just 26.5 pounds, complete. Porsche calls it the world's fastest concert hall.

The interior is spacious, with ample back leg room. This is a Porsche in its soul, and a great solo driver. But it's common enough for us to drive a four-door sedan and have it all to ourselves, without a thought to the space in the back other than maybe for an occasional bag of office supplies. The Panamera, though, is just begging for three more full-size people to come along. It has the size, it has the room, it has the comfort, it has the heft.

The trunk, with electric opening standard, presents 15.7 cubic feet (15.2 in the Turbo) that can handle four full-size suitcases, upright, and there is an available ski bag (\$405). Folding down the rear seats lets two occupants travel with a whopping 44.6 cu.ft. (or 44.1 in the Turbo). Try that in a 911. (And please forget we just invited three to join us. What a great touring package for a twosome.)

pedal to the metal

The Panamera strikes a fine pose, even standing still. Its road-hugging height-to-width ratio, at 55.8 inches high and 76 inches wide, actually beats the 911 Carrera. A network of spoilers and air intakes enhance the stance, while providing prodigious engine and brake cooling.

In our first block or so of driving the suspension felt "like we hope there's a sport setting," feeling a bit firm but a bit plush, too, not quite firm enough. We were in luck. Porsche Active Suspension Management (PASM) is standard on all Panameras, infinitely adjusting damper forces to road conditions and the owner's driving style. All this, in turn, can be used in three ranges: Comfort, Sport or Sport Plus, using a button on the center console. A mode chosen when the car is off is retained upon restart (though we had issues with this).

Four models are equipped with steel springs, while the V8 Turbo has on-demand adaptive air suspension in each spring. Air suspension is an option on all models. To top the ante further, you can option the car with Dynamic Chassis Control and Torque

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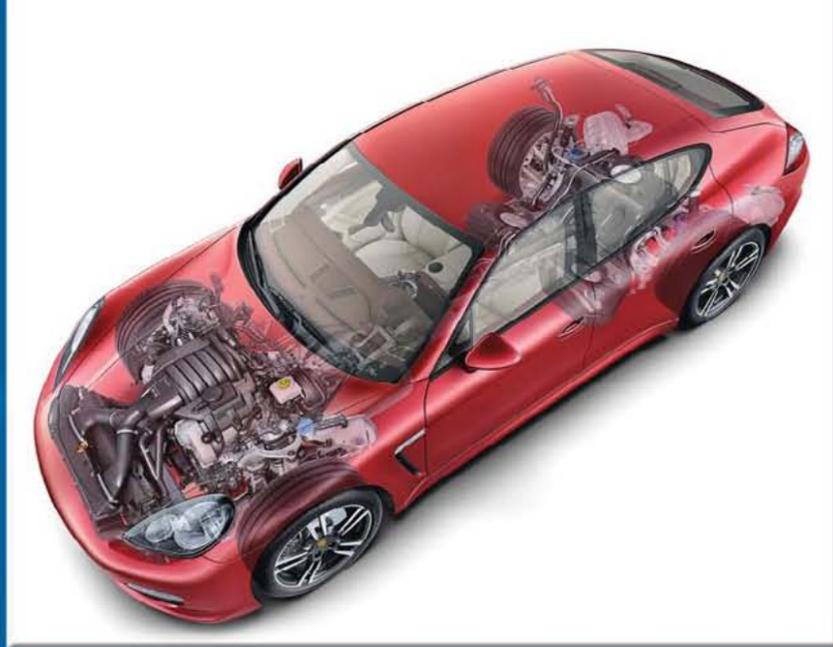
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Our car didn't have those most advanced suspension options, but within a few blocks, we had noted that a right-angle surface street turn was like riding on rails. Its rear -emphasis all-wheel drive likely contributes, as does its variable-ratio rack and pinion steering, which despite being tied in to management electronics feels mechanically pure, a rarity anymore. For a performance car, it's a great daily driver: we noted this is one of the best cars we've ever taken a routine parking lot speed bump in, and its 39.3-foot turning circle feels very tight.

It was no big surprise to ourselves to prefer the Sport setting, and we figured we'd likely run in it all the time. In Comfort, we experienced a couple of shift lags and shifts too early in the power curve for our taste. Sport felt far better in terms of power curve and shift-mapping, and we were mostly happy with its treatment of suspension, steering and brakes, though we noticed some mild twitchiness in the steering in slower (40-50 mph surface street) sweeping corner turns.

our distance drive

One of the perks of our week for the Panamera was that it coincided with the Copper state 1000 road rally. On the last day of that event, we and other media were to drive north and join the drivers for lunch in the high country north of Payson. We reconnoitered at the Fort McDowell Casino on the Beeline Highway just outside Fountain Hills. (Our copilot, not an automotive writer, commented that this was her first time in a Porsche, but that, though a very nice car, it didn't really feel like what she expected in a Porsche.) For directions, we were given a segment of the Copper state's route book and, since they were headed south from Flagstaff, simply told to follow it the other way.

That's where the fun began. We drove the distance up AZ 87—definitely one of our favorite highways and a perfect one for this car—through Payson and continuing north, then east when 260

split off. The distance in the route book indicated we had some 30-plus miles yet to go. As the Ponderosa forests began to thin out some, we were flagged down at a stretch of two-lane construction. The designated lunch hour was beginning, so we were getting restless. But in our rearview mirror, we could still see a red Mustang, a white Mopar and a silver Lexus SUV that were part of our press entourage. Okay. The flags lifted, and we resumed our drive. Time was getting tighter, so we squeezed out a bit more performance for awhile, easy to do in the Panamera. But as the terrain really opened up, and we felt we must be getting close to Holbrook, we pulled off to wait for the Mustang, Mopar and Lexus, to compare notes and assess the value of our map. Along came the red Mustang: oops, not our red Mustang. Ditto the white Mopar and the silver Lexus. What are the odds? There are no cell signals out there, so we resolved to turn around, ignore the mileage figure we had been given, and scrutinize the signage a lot more closely.

One thing we learned on that stretch is that the Panamera was such a fast and smooth 'bahn-burner, we had covered a lot more miles than we had even realized. The trip back was painfully far, as the lunch hour ticked away. We even did that one forbidden thing: stopped at one remote building for directions or at least good guesses. When we ultimately got to what just about had to be the correct turnoff, neither the name nor the number matched what was in the book. Apparently those are both different at the north end. Most everybody had finished lunch and headed south by the time we arrived, but we were able to mingle with those who remained. Our colleagues all had similar stories, each with their own distance wasted and version of giving up and turning around (and all including the futility of cellphones in that area).

Yes, we should have dug harder for an actual address of some sort for our forest destination. And yes, technology in the form of using the nav unit that was right under our noses would have been preferable in this instance to the get-lost-in-

a-sports-car method we hadn't intended but did achieve. So we emerged with a newfound respect for those technologies. The good news is that we did put on quite a few miles, covering an even wider, longer and more diverse stretch of highway than we otherwise would. The Panamera performed spectacularly on every mile.

the market speaks

Some of our colleagues think this is the finest four-door sedan they've ever driven, and they've driven 'em all. How do we see it stack up? Bear in mind we're starting with a bar that has been set inherently high. In terms of style, in the greater realm of four-door cars, it's distinctive; in the realm of \$75-135k cars, it's more subjective. In terms of interior style, appointments and technologies, it's what you'd expect, though well executed. In terms of performance, in the greater realm, it does very well; among \$75k cars, it's okay (we'll have to try the Turbo to compare \$100k+ cars). In terms of handling, among \$75k cars or even in the greater realm, it's not jaw-dropping but more than okay. Our bottom line is that it's more than the sum of these parts. Because when all is said and done, it's a four-door Porsche GT cruiser, and it will stand out from the crowd. On the other hand, to the non-cognoscenti, it can be a bit of a sleeper in its four-door guise, though it can outperform the crowd. On our last day, we had a midsize SUV zoom up to tailgate us on the freeway, despite three other open lanes. What was he thinking? We nailed it and were gone, a nice last play in the Panamera.

The first Panamera was launched in the US in fall 2009. It sold out its original goal of 25,000 units for the first year of production by July 2010. In fact, the Panamera is now the number-one-selling vehicle in the whole Porsche lineup. The addition of the V6 models is only likely to increase demand for this desirable four-door Porsche. Hurry on down.

And we'll say it one more time: some of our colleagues think this is the finest four-door they've ever driven. ■



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CONCOURS D'ELEGANCE AND CONCORSO

Photo: Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance



Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance
The 18th Fairway at Pebble Beach
Sunday, August 21, 2011

The Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance takes place on the third Sunday of August (and the rest of the Monterey events build around that). With August 1 on a Monday, this year's events run as late in the month as they ever do, with the Concours on Sunday, August 21.

Featured marques and classes for the 2011 Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance have been determined, and the process of selecting 200 exquisite cars and motorcycles to compete on the 18th fairway of Pebble Beach Golf Links should be complete as we go to press, following vetting of applications by the Selection Committee and a round of formal invitations.

"The success of everything we do really hinges on this one thing—selecting the best cars and motorcycles to compete," says Concours Chairman Sandra Button.

A major focus for the 61st annual Concours is the 125th anniversary of the automobile. In 1886, Karl Benz received the first patent for a gas-propelled car (the three-wheeled Benz Patent Motorwagen). Later that year, Gottlieb Daimler mounted an engine on a four-wheeled vehicle, and the automotive era had begun.

"It amazes me to realize that enthusiasts have gathered at Pebble Beach to celebrate automobiles for nearly half of the automobile's life," said Button.

The 2011 Pebble Beach Concours features: The creations of Benz and Daimler and their successors—notably, Mercedes and Mercedes-Benz. There are classes emphasizing style and technology, and one preservation class is devoted solely to these marques.

Early Rolls-Royce Silver Ghosts (1907–1919). Created in the Edwardian era and considered by many historians to be the most famous luxury cars ever made. These smooth, exceptionally reliable cars—often noted for their ghostlike, quiet ride—are among the most desirable collector vehicles in the world.

Stutz Centennial. Often called America's first sports car, a Stutz was entered in the 1911 Indy 500 and finished 11th, becoming known as "the car that made good in a day." The company's high performance Bearcats featured one of the first multivalve engines.

The Birth of the Ferrari 250 GTO. This Enzo Ferrari



Photo: Joe Sage

creation, engineered by Giotto Bizzarini and designed by Sergio Scaglietti, dominated Grand Touring races in the early 1960s. A total of 39 Ferrari 250 GTOs were produced between 1962 and 1964, and they are often said to be Ferrari's crowning achievement.

Italian Motorcycles. The Concours will feature motorcycles for the third consecutive year, with the creations of Italian manufacturers like Ducati, MV Agusta, Moto Guzzi and others taking center stage in 2011.

The field opens to entrants at dawn on Sunday, August 21, and judging commences at 9:00 am. The event opens to spectators at 10:30 am, and awards are presented from 1:30-5:30 pm. For more information, visit www.pebblebeachconcours.net.

Concorso Italiano Laguna Seca Golf Ranch
Friday, August 19, 2011

On Friday, August 19, the beautiful grounds of the Laguna Seca Golf Ranch in Monterey (on the Monterey-Salinas Highway, between the Monterey Airport and Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca) will once again be home to Concorso Italiano. The event features as many as a thousand vehicles of Italian origin, in an atmosphere of easy browsing and enthusiast conversations, as well as food, music and art. Take everything ever made in Italy, from fashion to Ferraris, sprinkle it with some red wine, slather it in sunshine, and top it with elegance and fun, and you have Concorso Italiano.

The event includes categories for Italian cars and motorcycles, as well as non-Italian vehicles. This year's Centerpiece Display is a Celebration of Originals and Barn Finds, each of which will knock your socks off, both visually and with its story of survival and/or rediscovery. Ferrari, Maserati and Lamborghini are joined by Fiat, Lancia, Alfa Romeo and more. Of particular note are a Ferrari F50 supercar reunion and an homage to almost a decade of the Lamborghini Murciélago. Milestone celebrations abound: 40 years of DeTomaso Pantera, 45 years of Maserati Ghibli and 40 years of Maserati Bora.

Concorso Italiano runs on Friday from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, with plenty of well-organized parking on site. Those displaying cars will now be able to extend their departure time into the evening and even Saturday, which means smoother traffic flow for spectators on Friday. For more information, visit www.concorso.com. ■

HISTORIC RACES



Photo: Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca

Rolex Monterey Motorsports Reunion
Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca
Friday-Sunday, August 19-21, 2011

Some 550 of the finest examples of automotive history, style, design and technology will fill the race paddock for 17 race groups at the Rolex Monterey Motorsports Reunion, August 19-21. Now in its 37th year at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca, the historic racing event is a cornerstone of the Monterey Classic Car Week.

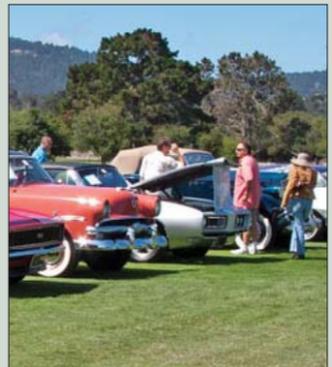
From pre-war machines like the 180-hp 1911 Fiat S74, which finished fourth in the 1911 American Grand Prix, to a mighty 1969 Lola T163 Can-Am car that boasts more than 800 hp, there will be a variety for fans to see and hear. Historical significance is a hallmark of the event and is exemplified by such cars as the 1954 Jaguar D-Type. One of the D-Types entered is a works (factory) car that Sir Stirling Moss and Peter Walker co-drove in the 1954 24 Hours of Le Mans and Reims. Another race car with significant provenance is a 1963 Ferrari 250/275P that was driven by John Surtees and Willy Mairesse, finishing first overall at the 1963 Nürburgring 1000 Kilometer endurance race.

Each car accepted has its own interesting history, which owners enthusiastically share with fans, who can tour the open race paddock. A strict set of criteria guides the Governing Committee in selecting from over 800 entry requests, based on period correctness of each car, authenticity and proven provenance. Equally important is that the car has not been mechanically altered from its original race condition.

Jaguar is the featured marque, as 2011 marks the 50th anniversary of one of the best-known automobiles of all time, the Jaguar E-Type. A number of special activities are planned to celebrate the E-Type's place in history, as well as honoring Jaguar's many motor racing accomplishments and famous drivers. Jaguar's American racing roots are firmly planted on the Monterey Peninsula—a 1950 win at the inaugural Pebble Beach Road Races was their first on American soil. 23-year-old American Phil Hill took the checkered flag.

Tickets, hospitality packages and reservations for general camping for the Rolex Monterey Motorsports Reunion are available by calling 800-327-7322 or online at www.MazdaRaceway.com. ■

MONTEREY AND PEBBLE BEACH AUCTIONS



Photos: Joe Sage

Gooding & Company Pebble Beach Equestrian Center
Saturday-Sunday, August 20-21, 2011

Gooding & Company, the official auction house of the Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance, holds its 2011 event on Saturday and Sunday, August 20 and 21, at the Pebble Beach Equestrian Center, at the corner of Portola Road and Stevenson Drive. Pre view days run Wednesday through Sunday. The auctions start at 5:00 pm Saturday and 6:00 pm Sunday.

Gooding will be presenting "the most elegant American Classic ever created"—offered at public sale for the first time. A bespoke Duesenberg Long Wheelbase Model J, the Whittell Coupe was designed by Murphy Coach Builders under the direction of one of America's outlandish Roaring Twenties bad boys, Captain George Whittell Jr. Beautifully restored and boasting just 12,000 original miles, the automotive masterpiece captivates with its striking black, red and chrome livery. Purchased in 1931 for \$17,000, the Whittell Coupe is now considered to be one of the most extraordinary and valuable Duesenbergs in existence.

Gooding & Company's Pebble Beach catalogue is available for \$100 and admits two to the viewing and the auctions. General admission tickets to the viewing and auctions may be purchased on site for \$40. Auctions are broadcast live on www.goodingco.com/auction. More information is available at www.goodingco.com or by calling 310-899-1960. For more vehicle information and up-to-the-minute results, follow Gooding & Company on Facebook, or on Twitter @GoodingCompany.

Mecum Auction Hyatt Regency Resort and Spa on Del Monte Golf Course
Thursday-Saturday, August 18-20, 2011

Mecum Auction, headquartered in Illinois and known for events every couple of weeks in the Midwest, presents their third year in the rarified atmosphere of Monterey. In their first year, they offered the famous Championship 1965 Daytona Cobra Coupe CSX 2601, which Bob Bondurant had recently driven for the first time since his races in it 40 years earlier, at the Bob Bondurant School of High Performance Driving track at Firebird International Raceway. Its next stop was at Mecum's inaugural

Monterey auction, where it bid to \$7.25 million—a new record for an American car at auction.

Mecum is very convenient to the rest of the events, at the Hyatt Regency Resort and Spa on Del Monte Golf Course, close to downtown and en route to both the Concorso Italiano and the Rolex Monterey Motorsports Reunion. It's a daytime event, easy to add to your rounds. What's more, the preview area, on the beautiful Del Monte Golf Course, is free to spectators. (Auction seating is reserved for registered bidders.)

Mecum at Monterey Muscle Cars & More is expanding from two to three days this year. Gates open for the preview at 8:00 am, and the auction starts at 10:00 am. HD Theater has live coverage from 1:00-5:00 pm each day. For complete details, visit www.mecum.com.

RM Auctions Portola Hotel & Spa and Monterey Conference Center
Friday-Saturday, August 19-20, 2011

RM Auctions—host of high-end auctions worldwide, including Phoenix in January, which kicks off their year—was the first and original auction held during the famous Monterey Classic Car Week. Over two decades, the event has carved a solid reputation for connecting top-tier automobiles with collectors from all over the globe. The 2011 event will feature some 175 investment-quality cars. RM Auctions boasts a 95 percent sell-through rate at Monterey in 2010. This year's sale runs on Friday and Saturday nights, with previews on Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

One highlight at this year's RM Auctions in Monterey will be the 1970 Porsche 911S driven through the French countryside by the legendary Steve McQueen in the opening sequence of the epic film *Le Mans* (1971), as his character contemplates life, death and racing. The car was displayed at Amelia Island this spring and has generated much interest. Built to the highest 1970 specification, complete with air conditioning and a full complement of factory options, the Slate Grey 911S was McQueen's personal transportation during film production, later joining his personal collection in California—which included everything from a Jaguar XK-SS to multiple Ferraris, Porsches, airplanes and motorcycles. The 911S is in exceptionally original condition.

A \$40 event pass admits one person to the RM pre-

views. The official auction catalog is an additional \$120 (though it does not include admission to the auctions). Bidder registration for \$200 admits two to the previews, auctions and reception and includes a catalog. RM Auctions is held at the Portola Hotel & Spa and Monterey Conference Center in downtown Monterey. For complete information, visit www.rmauctions.com.

Russo and Steele Monterey Marriott Hotel
Thursday-Saturday, August 18-20, 2011

Russo and Steele will present over 250 European sports, American muscle, hot rod and custom cars as they mark their 11th year in Monterey, held once again at the Monterey Marriott Hotel in the heart of downtown.

The auction runs for three evenings, Thursday-Saturday from 5:00-10:00 pm, with preview opportunities for four days, from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm on Wednesday and 10:00 am to 4:00 pm Thursday-Saturday.

One notable highlight is a 1967 Pickett Racing 427 Corvette historic racer, converted when brand new from a 427/435-hp tri-power coupe to an SCCA A/Production racer by its owner, Dr. Bill Green, who partnered with Greg Pickett to form the Pickett Racing Team. They raced in both SCCA National events including Trans Am and IMSA events thru 1976. Pickett went on to racing fame with a number of championships in a variety of cars.

The LS6 Chevelle, with a factory advertised 450 hp and 500 lb-ft of torque, was the highest horsepower Chevelle offered from Chevrolet. Another auction highlight will be the "Pilot Car," a 1970 Chevelle LS6 that is documented as the first of 4,475 RPO LS6 cars ever produced. Built for a GM executive, this LS6 has "Pilot job" and "if it had wings it would fly" handwritten on the build sheet. Documentation is thorough, and the LS6 has been driven just one mile since concours-level restoration.

Everyone is welcome to preview the vehicles for free during preview hours, as well as in front of the Marriott during staging, where the streets come alive with auction energy. A \$100 bidder's pass includes admission for one to the previews, all three nights of auction and an official auction pocket guide. Guest passes are available for an additional \$50, although only bidders are permitted to buy guest passes. (The auction arena is not open to the general public.) Visit www.russoandsteele.com for updates and additional information. ■

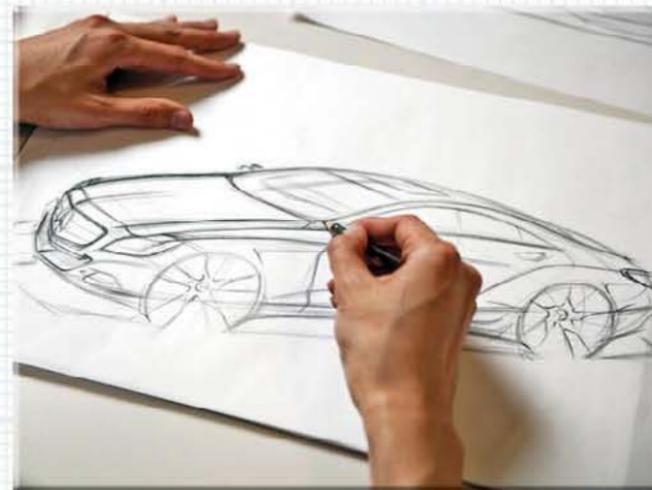
BRINGING DREAMS TO LIFE

BY JOE SAGE



CLS550

A HIGH-TECH GAME-CHANGER LIKE THE MERCEDES-BENZ CLS FOUR-DOOR COUPE STILL STARTS OUT AS A WINNING SKETCH



The four-door coupe: does such a thing exist? When the Mercedes-Benz CLS was introduced in 2004, no shortage of purists objected to the concept, or at least to the term, as a coupe is a two-door, end of story. However, nobody insisted the CLS be called a four-door coupe at all. It's just such an obvious way of looking at its stylish shape and counting its doors. Imitation remains the firmest form of flattery, and the market has now seen plenty of that, from the Porsche Panamera and Aston Martin Rapide at the high end, to the Audi A7 and upcoming BMW Gran Coupe, to the Volkswagen CC at the affordable end. Concept: confirmed. (And rolling the clock in the other direction, some say the four-door coupe has existed since at least the '40s, in the form of the Tucker Torpedo.)

Be all that as it may, the Mercedes-Benz CLS has been a big hit. And when any automaker has a popular, stylish and immediately recognizable hit on its hands, it knows that developing the next generation will be a big challenge. Moving the ball forward while not losing any brand equity can be a dangerous business.

On the plus side, Mercedes has been working through its whole lineup, modernizing styles and technologies (including technologies that impact style, such as headlights), and their bag of idioms for the next generation provides a solid foundation for evolution.

MERCEDES-BENZ VISIONARY

Also on the plus side, the company has a phenomenal team of designers. One phenom on the team is Hubert Lee, Creative Director for Mercedes-Benz Advanced Design, working out of the North American studio in Carlsbad CA—the first Daimler design studio outside Germany (originally in Irvine, before moving to north San Diego County). Lee is also the penman of the 2012 CLS. While in Napa for the US launch of both the CLS550 and CLS63 AMG, we had a chance to join Lee for a look at his process and the results it produced.

Huey Lee started out like many kids, scribbling cars in the margins of his notebooks in school and spreading out sketchpads on the living room floor. Born in Glendale CA, Lee grew up as a Southern California surfer and car freak through middle school, at which point his family moved to Korea for his high school years. Back in the US for college, Lee studied at the prestigious Rhode Island School of Design (RISD), then went to the Art Center College of Design in Pasadena and "started all over again." It was all worth it—a background he says helps him be more open and try new things. It has helped him take his passion the full distance, to say the least.

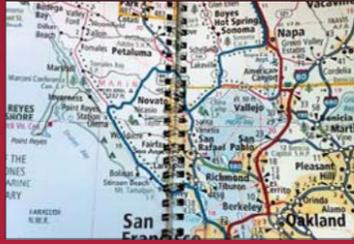
Huey Lee sees a big mission in his work with Mercedes-Benz: that the brand should be the "ambassador of European design."

Hubert Lee, Creative Director for Mercedes-Benz Advanced Design, is as hands-on as they come, while also being a big-picture strategist. At the Mercedes-Benz Advanced Design of North American studio in Carlsbad, California, Lee is definitely living the dream—while making them come alive for Mercedes-Benz customers worldwide, as often as not before they even dream them.



KEEP RIGHT >>





We flew US Airways to San Francisco International and drove the 2012 Mercedes-Benz CLS63 AMG north on US 101, first on freeway then through city streets, across the Golden Gate Bridge, up Highway One through Marin County as far as Olema, across to Petaluma and Sonoma County on two-lane roads, then over to Napa Valley wine country. Lodging was at the Bardessono Resort in Yountville.



CLS63 AMG

Design of the new CLS ran the gantlet, with an internal competition involving three advanced design studios and one production studio, starting with sketches and proceeding to 1:4-scale clay models. Three of those went on to 1:1-scale clay, then a full-scale mockup of the car was milled.

Besides the first-generation CLS, Lee draws inspiration from what he considers the prettiest and most glamorous era of automotive design: the 1930s. Inspiration derived from this can be seen in the dropping beltline and emphasized rear fender haunch of the CLS. He also acknowledges that pretty much every designer is very inspired by the female form. "The S-curve is a natural attraction," says Lee. "You can't go wrong with it." In fact, he says inspiration is found everywhere: in music, movies, nature, women, even other cars. Other cars? "Oh yes, it happens all the time!" exclaims Lee, but he emphasizes that this is a matter of inspiration, even influence—but never copying.

"I'm very proud of the dropping line on the side of the car. It creates an elegant dynamic. The front has a very proud, wide, big, upright grille—there is no mistaking when you see this car coming, that it is a Mercedes-Benz," says Lee. The CLS is distinguished by many factors, but he emphasizes the glass: "The windows define the car," with the DLO (Day Light Opening) bringing home the distinctive presence of a four-door coupe.

And all of this works anywhere. "It is fair to say" Lee tells us, "that the new CLS is the first US-designed global car." (This does not include SUVs.) By global, he means not just manufacture or distribution, but that the car will look good when exposed to the design sensibilities of the US, or Europe, or China, or anywhere. While important that it is unmistakably a Mercedes-Benz to a

prospective customer. Dr Dieter Zetsche, Chairman of Daimler AG and Head of Mercedes-Benz Cars is, after all, the design team's "first and biggest client."

During the sketch phase, everything is exaggerated, with vehicles drawn overly wide and sporting very large wheels. This is not done to pursue the impossible or delude the judges. It's done because the stylists know they will experience pushback from the engineers. Lee says designers consider themselves "lucky if we get five percent" of what they've started with. So they start big. "Push first," says Lee, "or you can't have anything new." This may seem like a broad-brush approach, but you'll not find anyone more detail-oriented. "A millimeter affects so much" in the final development, says Lee. "You have to be crazy," he mostly jokes. The work is extremely focused and very absorbing.

But it's very self-satisfying form of crazy. As the workday winds down and Huey Lee heads for home, he has an experience few do: he can see his work by the thousands, in traffic. "It's a dream come true," he says.

Huey Lee was a "tuner kid," self-described. How does he feel when he sees his work aftermarket-modified? "It's annoying," he laughs, "but it's flattering" that people find an inspiring basis for modifying. "You always have to believe in what you do. That's all you can do."

The new CLS, in summation? "If you can imagine a cheetah, crouching before takeoff, that's it—that's the car," says Lee.

As night descends over the Napa Valley, there is a gleaming lineup of brand new 2012 Mercedes-Benz CLS550 and CLS63 AMG four-door coupes awaiting us outside. The morning beckons. We are crouched and ready for takeoff.

KEEP RIGHT >>

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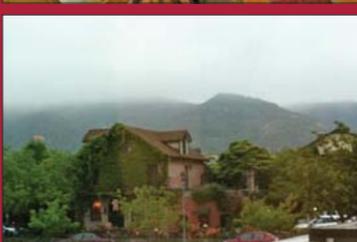
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Day two benefitted (in a way) from the trip having been set backwards on our nav. Driving clockwise on a counterclockwise route got us to the De La Montanya Winery three hours early for lunch, so we headed down the Russian River to Guerneville, doubled back for outdoor lunch, then went deep into overtime on the original route. Dinner was both hilltop and underground, at Hall Winery.



TWO VERSIONS OF THE NEW CLS

What the fleet waiting outside doesn't know is that the next day's drive is not our first rodeo. We drove the CLS63 AMG at its global launch in San Diego earlier this year (see our March/April 2011 issue), and we had driven it again for hours before dinner, taking the long way from San Francisco International Airport to Napa.

The 2012 Mercedes-Benz CLS lineup is simple, blessedly so. (For comparison, there are 15 different E-Class models.) There is a 550, and there is a 63 AMG. No 350, no 55 AMG or 65 AMG. And really, no need (not to say there may not be a niche to be filled down the road).

The CLS550 sports a new direct-injection 4.6-liter biturbo V8, with an output of 402 hp and 443 lb-ft of torque. This connects to a 7-speed automatic transmission for increased fuel efficiency, and the 550 rides on Mercedes-Benz AIRMATIC suspension. A 4MA TIC all-wheel-drive version arrives this fall.

The enhanced-performance CLS63 AMG upgrades to a new direct-injection 5.5-liter biturbo AMG V8, with 518 hp and 516 lb-ft. (So, actually, this could have been a CLS55 AMG, but, long story short, it's not.) To offset any increased thirst, the AMG version also comes with ECO Stop/Start technology and an AMG 7-speed MCT transmission. Rear suspension is AIRMATIC. If you need to take it to eleven, there is an optional Performance Package upping the ante to 550 hp and 590 lb-ft.

Both versions have a new color instrument cluster display, multicolor ambient lighting and a central controller for multiple functions. The first car to have full LED headlights, the CLS also has LED taillamps. Each features include PARKTRONIC with Active Parking Assist, available Active Lane Keeping Assist, Active Blind Spot Assist, 10 standard airbags and standard Attention Assist.

The 2012 Mercedes-Benz CLS550 starts at \$71,300, and the CLS63 AMG at \$94,900, which makes them bargain-priced about \$5000 lower than last year.

ON THE ROAD IN THE NEW CLS

We flew in to San Francisco International Airport, where we were shuttled to our first lineup of CLS550 and CLS63 AMG four-door coupes. Since we had driven the AMG a few months earlier, you might think we'd go straight for the 550, but we decided to save that for the full day, taking another CLS63 AMG for the drive to Napa. When we say to Napa, we actually mean through the streets of San Francisco (as US 101 doesn't carry through as a freeway), across the Golden Gate Bridge into Marin County, then up Highway One—one of the finest roads anywhere—as far as Olema, before heading inland and over to Napa for the night.

In our earlier AMG drive, we had noted that the car was "a screamer—a luxurious and comfortable one, but



a thrill nonetheless. Despite its two-tons-plus mass and four-door-full-back-seat nature, it flies. Simply adding horsepower to weight is not enough: the AMG formula of suspension helps, the well-balanced Mercedes-Benz basis helps and the AMG application of aluminum helps, not only by saving weight but in redistributing it a bit."

We had also experimented with its electronic engine management and suspension options, as well as Sport, Sport Plus and Manual modes. This day, despite a couple of significant construction waits—Highway One is being heavily reworked to stay one step ahead of erosion—we were able to really nail the famous twists, turns, hills and dales of this classic two-lane. All in all, it's a heavenly driver. We did notice a minor amount of hypersensitivity in the steering on a couple of turns, but it was quickly eliminated by giving it what it wants: more throttle.

For our full day, we moved to the CLS550, the model that delivers 78 percent of the horsepower for 75 percent of the price of the AMG. Would we expect any less from this than from the AMG? For the price, the horsepower difference, and some technology and feature differences, sure. Did it deliver less? No. It, too, delivered a heavenly drive, just with different characteristics. This is not the first time we've found advantages in the model with a smaller and lighter engine, or for that matter, even with a lighter touch on electronics and tech. The CLS550 was a smooth and exciting car on a wide variety of roads, as we headed north through wine country, into distinctly more mountainous terrain with challenging climbs and curves, out the other side into a broad valley and back to Napa on a combination of a bit of freeway and quite a bit of open two-lane. In some ways we welcomed the more sedate steering characteristics, and the 4.6L V8 made it a nimble handler.

Which one would we take home? If you put either one in our garage with all obvious clues removed, or if we'd never driven both, we'd be delighted with either one, long term. For those who like to drive aggressively—not just faster overall, but with some throttle and a real bite to their cornering—the AMG offers plenty. And with the clues not removed, from the prominent brakes to its exhaust note to its sheetmetal and badges, the AMG63 makes the more powerful statement in, for example, the competitive roads of the northeast Valley. For those who would just as soon take the other 25 grand and put it into a little low-mileage roadster, a small crossover SUV, or keep it in their pockets, the CLS550 will never disappoint. Check your wallet, then do as we did: drive them both. ■

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TUCSON SUMMER: COOL TIMES

ELEVATION 2500'...AND ALWAYS SOMETHING GOING ON

Photo: David Jewell © Metropolitan Tucson Convention and Visitors Bureau



Photo: MTCVB



LASER LIGHT SHOWS AT FLANDRAU

The University of Arizona Flandrau Science Center and Planetarium (above) hosts kid-friendly activities from 6 to 9 pm on Thursdays, and 1 to 4 pm on Sundays. Kids and adults will enjoy learning the stories behind the constellations with the fun and animated "Legends of the Night Sky" show in the planetarium, followed by a brief interactive star projector demonstration of how to find the constellations in Arizona's night skies. At 7:30 pm on Thursdays and 2:30 pm on Sundays, lean back and escape into a medley of music in a family-friendly laser light show. For more details about family fun time at UA Science: Flandrau, call 520-621-7827 or visit online at www.flandrau.org.

REID PARK ZOO

Reid Park Zoo in central Tucson is the perfect place to enjoy time outdoors while discovering the wonders of wildlife. Visitors travel from South America to the Asian rainforest, and then to the African savanna. During Summer Safari Nights (Friday evenings from 5 pm to 8 pm through July 8) enjoy cool evenings of family fun, with viewings of favorite animals, encounters with animal ambassadors, and crafts, games and face painting for the kids. The Zoo's summer hours (8am-3pm) run from June 1 through Aug. 31. Giraffe Encounter times also change for the summer: 9:30-10:15 am every day of the week, with an additional Giraffe Encounter at 1:30 pm on Saturdays and Sundays. For more information, call 520-881-4753 or visit www.tucsonzoo.org.

DINNER AND A MOVIE DOWNTOWN

The Fox Tucson Theatre (at left), downtown Tucson's elegant vintage movie palace, will show a classic movie on Fridays or Saturdays at 7:30 pm and again on Sundays at 2 pm, from June 18 through August 19. Movies are scheduled to include *American Graffiti*, *Saturday Night Fever*, *Rocky*, and others. For details, call 520-547-3040 or visit foxtucsontheatre.org. Moviegoers have excellent choices for dinner before the show, in downtown Tucson's revitalized dining and nightlife scene. Newer restaurants include 47 Scott, A Steak in the Neighborhood, Downtown Kitchen + Cocktails, The Hub, Empire Pizza, Monkey Burger, and V Fine Thai. For more details, contact the Downtown Tucson Partnership at 520-837-6504 or visit them online at www.downtowntucson.org.

HELP ARIZONA STATE PARKS

Arizona Highways' award-winning photography and travel journalism have brought Arizona's beauty and splendor to visitors and natives alike for more than 85 years. Now the publication is teaming up with Arizona State Parks to help the parks remain open and accessible. For each \$24 one-year subscription to *Arizona Highways*, \$5 will be donated to the Arizona State Parks Foundation. Funds may be directed to a specific park; Tucson-area state parks include: Catalina, Kartchner Caverns, Oracle, Patagonia, Picacho Peak, Tombstone Courthouse, and Tubac Presidio. Call 800-543-5432 or visit www.arizonahighways.com/stateparks.html.

Photo: David Jewell © MTCVB



ROCKIN' DOWNTOWN WARDROBES

One-of-a-kind clothing made by talented independent and emerging designers has been a key aspect of the retail philosophy at Rockin' Queen since it opened in downtown Tucson in 2008. The small but imaginative boutique just celebrated its third year of delivering high-quality handmade garments and outstanding customer service. For more information call 520-461-1076 or visit www.therockinqueen.com. Another boutique, Desert Bloom Downtown, is known for its artistic window dressings, which entice shoppers with clever displays featuring samples of the fabulously original high-end fashions within, which are collected from around the world. For more information, call Claudette at 520-792-9882.

SIZZLING SUMMER SOUNDS

Four weeks of musical magic are coming this summer to the Arizona Inn (below left), Tucson's famed historic luxury inn located in midtown near the University of Arizona. From June 21 through July 16, guests can enjoy weekly evening concerts featuring Tucson's finest vocalists and musicians performing in the Sizzling Summer Sounds Cabaret Series presented by Invisible Theatre Company. Special cabaret-and-hotel packages are available. For tickets and more information about ongoing performances, call Invisible Theatre at 520-882-9721 or Arizona Inn at 800-933-1093.

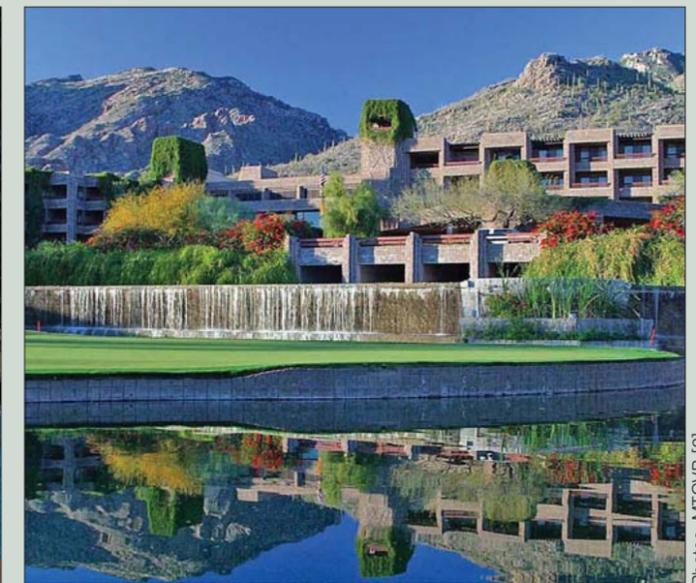


FEEL LIKE A KID AGAIN

The Mini-Time Machine Museum of Miniatures (above center) is admitting adults for the kids' admission price of \$5, every Thursday. All ages will be delighted by the museum's three entertaining and interactive areas: Enchanted Realm, History Gallery and Exploring the World. Take a guided tour at 11:30 am, Tuesday through Saturday, or take your time and discover the magical mini kingdoms on your own. This 15,560-square-foot museum of amazing antique and contemporary miniatures is the only one of its kind in the Southwest. Call 520-881-0606 or visit www.theminitimemachine.org.

VENTANA CANYON WILD SUMMER

Loews Ventana Canyon Resort (below right) has partnered with two top Tucson attractions—Arizona Sonora Desert Museum and Tucson Botanical Gardens—to offer fun, educational experiences to vacationing families on weekends this summer. Desert Museum docents will show native animals, and lead treks on the property to investigate bats and plants, while stargazing parties will focus on Tucson's famed clear night skies. The Tucson Botanical Gardens will loan its wicked plants display and horticulturist Dr. Ergot Ratbane for special appearances. The resort's summer room rates start at \$99. For more information, call 800-234-5117 or visit www.loewshotels.com/en/Ventana-Canyon-Resort.



TWILIGHT GOLF AT EL CONQUISTADOR

Tucson's largest golf resort offers 45 holes of championship golf on three exceptional courses (above right). This summer, guests at the Hilton El Conquistador Golf & Tennis Resort can book any tee time after 3 pm for \$25 per player, plus tax. This special summer rate includes green fee, golf car, and practice balls. For more information, call the El Conquistador Country Club at 520-544-1801 or visit www.elconquistadorcc.com.

SUMMER HARVEST CELEBRATIONS

Summer's harvests will be celebrated at two festivals in Southern Arizona. Triangle T Guest Ranch will host the 2nd Annual Garlic Festival and Benefit, July 29-30, with garlic from RichCrest Farms, garlic-infused dishes, garlic products, a cooking contest, and hand-crafted merchandise as well as horseback trips to raise money for the Wounded Warriors Project (520-586-7533). Apple Annie's Produce & Pumpkins presents Sweet Corn Extravaganza, July 16-17 and 23-24, with bushels of corn-on-the-cob and other fresh treats (520-384-2084).

FREE VISITOR INFORMATION

Download a free digital version of the 2011 *Visit Tucson: Official Destination Guide* on www.visitTucson.org, or call 1-800-638-8350 to order a copy and begin planning your trip to Tucson and Southern Arizona. ■

Photos: MTCVB [2]

Photos: MTCVB [2]

Up-to-date kicks on route 66

WITH POTENT POWERTRAINS,
A SMOOTH POWER TOP,
DECENT MPG AND VALUE PRICES,
THE NEW CAMARO CONVERTIBLE
IS RIGHT AT HOME
ON THE MOTHER ROAD

STORY AND PHOTOS
BY LARRY EDSALL



Let's get the least impressive things about the 2011 Chevrolet Camaro convertible out of the way quickly: The top needs about 20 seconds to power itself up or down, which may seem an eternity in this day and age of convertible tops that disappear as quickly as a dragster reaches the timing lights. Nonetheless, don't overlook the fact that, at long last, you can buy a Camaro with a TOP THAT POWERS ITSELF UP AND DOWN.

Let's see, what else? Well, the trunk isn't huge, and when the top goes down it takes some of the available space. But once again, don't overlook the fact that THE TOP POWERS ITSELF DOWN so you can enjoy not only the open road but also the open air.

And speaking of the open air—and now we're already interrupting our list of least impressive things to insert one of the most impressive—the cockpit is amazingly quiet and unwindblown (is that a word?) when the top is down, even at speeds legal only on Interstate highways in the western United States.

One other thing for our least impressive list: For some enthusiasts' tastes, the car is a little softly sprung and not quite track-day-ready. On the other hand, the ride not only is quiet and unwindblown, but exceptionally smooth and comfortable at those highway speeds. And if you really want a track-day car well, the ZL1 version of the new Camaro is coming down the road—and very quickly.

More than the sum of its parts

OK, so let's recap: The 2011 Chevrolet Camaro convertible has a top that powers itself up and down, that takes up some of the space where you might otherwise want to store a third suitcase, and the car allows you to ride in comfort and, based on the reactions we saw during our 700-mile test drive, in attention-grabbing style.

Whether we were getting thumbs up on the highway or questions at a gas station or whether it was the three young men at the motel who asked if they could take their pictures with the car—each of them taking his long turn sitting behind the steering wheel and smil-

KEEP RIGHT >>



ing widely while the others snapped his photo with their cellphones and immediately uploaded them to Facebook—the new Camaro convertible turned heads while at the same time turning mouths into smiles almost as big as those of those three young men.

The 2011 Chevrolet Camaro convertible we tested was the ZSS, the top-of-the-line trim level (also available are the 1LT, 2LT and 1SS).

The LTs are propelled by Chevy's 304-horsepower 3.6-liter V6, which we've experienced and enjoyed while driving Camaro coupes with fixed steel roofs. In fact, we liked the V6 so much that we speculated that it's probably the engine we'd order should we find ourselves in a position to buy a new Camaro convertible,

which we haven't, but which a close friend has done very recently; he's a long-time but aging motorcycle rider, and the Camaro convertible keeps him in the open air but with four wheels rather than just a pair on the pavement.

By the way, our reasoning regarding the V6 was that the convertible isn't going to be a track-day car but a boulevard cruiser, and for cruising boulevards or country roads, 304 horsepower would seem sufficient.

However, the SSs benefit from a 6.2-liter V8. Cars equipped with six-speed automatics carry a 400-horsepower L99 powerplant while those with six-speed manuals, like the one we were driving, get the 426-hp LS3.

The result: Driving the new Camaro SS convertible is

a lot like driving a Corvette, except you spend a lot less and gain a back seat.

The 2011 Chevrolet Camaro 2SS carries a base price of \$39,650 (or \$29,275 for the 1L T). For your nearly 40 grand you get the car, its powertrain and power top, plus StabiliTrak dynamic control, four-piston Brembo brakes, front and seat-mounted side airbags, six months of OnStar directions and connections, dual exhaust with polished tips, a rear spoiler, 20-inch wheels, heated external mirrors, fog lamps, rear parking assist, heads-up display, Boston Acoustics premium audio system with 10-inch subwoofer and USB port, XM satellite radio, trip computer, retro-style four-pack auxiliary gauges, auto-dimming interior mirror, tilt and telescoping steering column, leather seating with heated front seats, cruise and audio controls mounted on the retro-styled deep-dish steering wheel, dual power outlets, cup holders and more, including a very cool ambient lighting system built into the door panels.

Our vehicle also was equipped with the \$1,200 RS appearance package—flangeless aluminum wheels with a Midnight Silver painted finish, high-intensity discharge headlamps with "halo" rings, fog lamps and unique taillights.

As-tested price with destination charges is \$41,700.

Getting our kicks

The week we had the Camaro convertible coincided with a trip we needed to make to Gallup, New Mexico, as in "you'll see Amarillo, Gallup, New Mexico, Flagstaff, Arizona, don't forget Winona..." That's right, Gallup is one of the cities featured on the "Get Your Kicks" song about Route 66, and that's precisely what we decided to do—with some bonus sightseeing along the way.

We left Phoenix early in the morning and wound our way up through the Mazatzal Mountains to breakfast at the Knotty Pine Cafe in Payson. Then we climbed more, up the Mogollon Rim, then shot across the high desert to Holbrook, where we stopped to take pictures of the car at the historic Wigwam Village Motel with its teepee-shaped accommodations and a variety of classic cars that would make you think you're traveling the Mother Road in the 1950s.

We backtracked a little from Holbrook to drive thought the Petrified Forest and Painted Desert national parks, then headed to Gallup, detouring off Interstate 40 as often as possible to explore as much of the old Route 66 as we could find. One of the things we found was a long-abandoned gas station where the pumps still were set at \$1.299 for regular and \$1.499 for premium. By the way, those were the prices for a whole gallon, not per quart.

Speaking of gasoline prices, while they're currently at new if not record heights, we didn't break the bank on our 700-mile trip. Another very nice thing about the new V8-powered Camaro is that you're turning only around 1700 rpm while traveling at 70 miles per hour. The EPA rates the car at 16 miles per gallon in city driving and at 24 on the highway. We averaged 23.2 without any sort of hypermiling. In fact, there were a few times when we well exceeded 1700 rpm.

We got our kicks in the Camaro convertible on old Route 66, but we're confident you'll get them no matter what road you choose to drive. ■



CANNONBALL RUN WORLD EVENTS

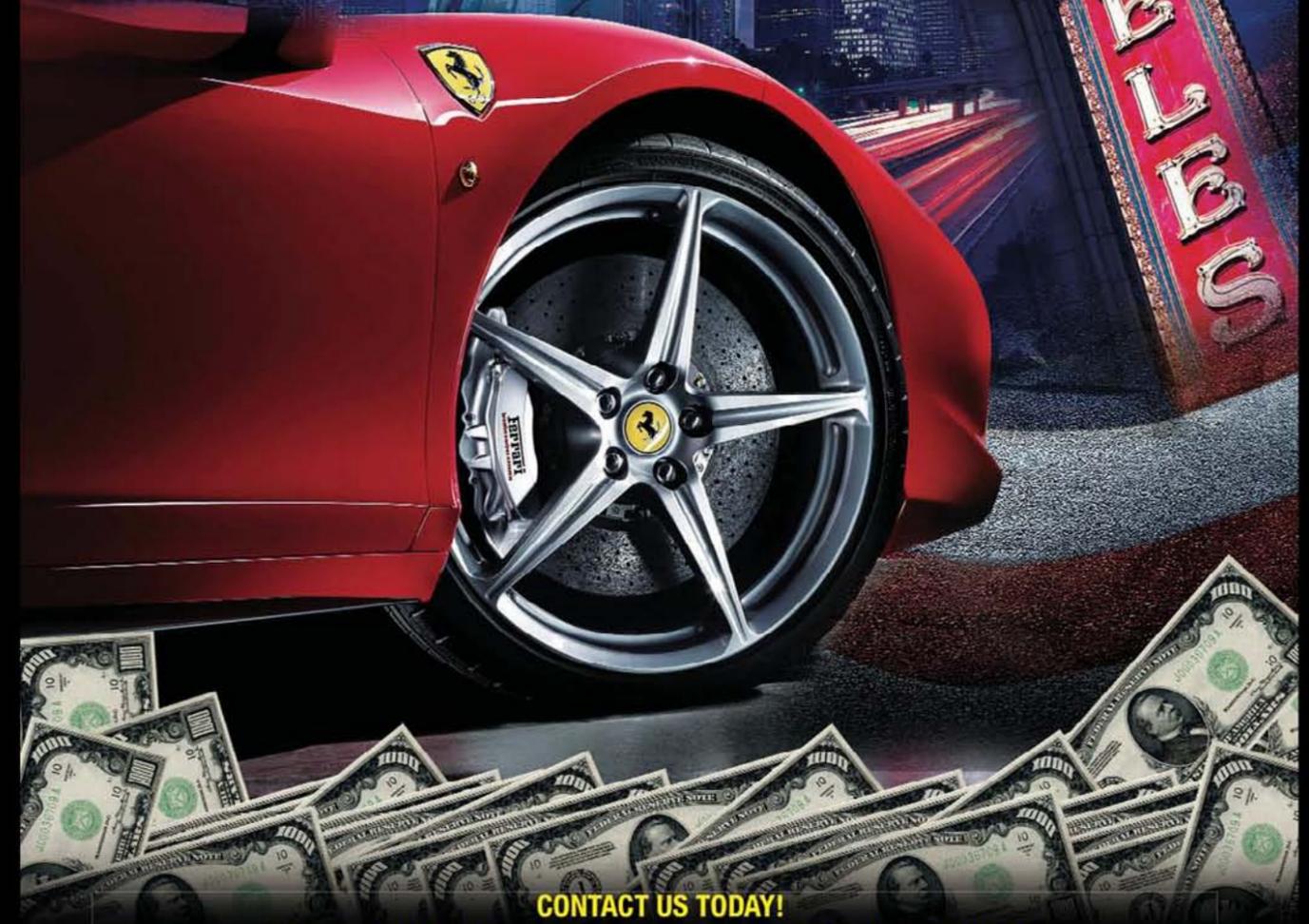
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Mercedes-Benz Concept A-Class

Revealed before the show at new Mercedes-Benz Manhattan

Nobody drives in Manhattan. Everybody knows that. But it's not really true. Or, if it is, they still buy and service cars there, to park at notoriously great expense for their forays into the hinterlands. Mercedes-Benz tells us some 27,000 customers buy and service vehicles in Manhattan. Thus it should be no surprise that their dealership there—the only company-owned US store—is one of the largest. And it's now becoming larger (and more convenient), as Mercedes-Benz Manhattan moves into its new 330,000-square-foot digs at 770 11th Avenue between 53rd and 54th Streets.

What better place to kick off the 2011 New York International Auto Show, and what better way than with a slick new concept that's certain to find its way to dealers' floors sooner than later.

Meet the Mercedes-Benz Concept A-Class. This name has been used before, for a small van-like vehicle that somewhat resembles an extended Smart car (and uses the same kind of engine-in-a-sandwich floor construction). In fact, as those have been sold in Mexico (as well as in Europe and other places around the globe), they have been a novel but not uncommon sight on the roads of Arizona. Forget all that. There is now a global (but not available here) B-Class, which carries the format and front-wheel drivetrain of the old A-Class into the future, in a slightly larger size that's evocative of the big 7-seater R-Class.

The new A-Class aims at a different spot, or at least aims to make that spot appealing to the US buyer. Though slightly echoing the hatchback shape of the little A-Class MPV, and maintaining

front-wheel drive in concept form, the Concept A-Class revealed to us in New York is lower to the ground and decidedly more carlike. It's also more elegant. As interest in smaller and more fuel-efficient cars grows, savvy manufacturers are working hard to deliver something that will appeal to a premium market buyer (and that can deliver profits). The midsize Mercedes-Benz E-Class has had a style and feature renaissance over the past two years, and the C-Class has caught up with it just this year. The whole lineup now appeals in style and grace, as well as offering a broad range of function—and price.

The Concept A-Class is more than a sheetmetal study. Under the hood is a 210-horsepower turbocharged four-cylinder gasoline engine (a 2-liter version from the new M270 series) with a dual-clutch 7-speed transmission. The transmission, a three-shaft setup, shifts automatically and smoothly, promising a sporty, comfortable and economic ride. The Concept A-Class carries cutting edge electronics from cars higher in the lineup, such as a radar-based collision warning system with adaptive brake assist. The concept also includes a high level of smartphone integration. Park your phone in the car and all functions are synchronized with the COMAND interface, including audio plus email and social networks.

Impossible to miss at the reveal was the grille, with a striking deep-dish radiating pattern. This is reflected in the high-performance full-LED headlights and fiber-optic DRLs. We look forward to this one coming to market. ■



Small is big

Amid big ticket vehicles with big horsepower were these gems delivering much in small packages

LEMAY—AMERICA'S CAR MUSEUM

Our first stop was the Lower Level of Javits Center where the LeMay Museum had taken over 22,000 square feet for "the smallest display" at the show: Le Petit Concours, a collection of mini- and micro-cars owned by enthusiasts and club members in the greater New York area. This stunning collection from the past set the stage for noticing some of the cooler small cars on the main show floor.

HYUNDAI VELOSTER

We came back to look at this more than once. It's a knockout. This three-door coupe from Hyundai debuted at the Detroit show in January and is coming to market as a 2012 model. Spy photos have revealed a turbo version. The driver has a wide door, while the passenger side has doors front and rear. Loaded with entertainment and other electronic features, the Veloster is powered by a new 1.6-liter direct-injected four-cylinder engine mated to the company's first EcoShift™ dual-clutch transmission.

TOYOTA PRIUS C

You've probably heard that Toyota has declared the plural of Prius will be the Latin, "Prii" (pre-eye), based on results of almost 2 million votes from customers and fans. The company is developing an expanded lineup of four models, with the Prius v joining the classic Prius and its Hybrid version next. At the show we had our eye on this Prius c concept, a sporty, low-slung hatchback. This is the smallest of the group, an urban car aimed at eco-sensitive young singles and couples who want a fun-to-drive Prius. The name may or may not change, but it should come to market in 2012 promising the highest MPG of any non-plug-in hybrid.

DISCOBALL SMART CAR

We heard someone say the Discoball Smart Car was evidence that smart had nothing else new to show. But we dug it. The car belongs to Apparattjik, a Euro electro band who perform in giant transparent cubes, in costumes made of mirrors. Fragile as that sounds and this car looks, they call their style "combat-disco." The Discoball is an electric drive smart fortwo with thousands of mirrors hand-glued to the exterior. It took seven craftsmen three days to build, just in time to open a Berlin exhibition honoring famed German architect Mies van der Rohe.

KEEP RIGHT >>

NYIAS TRAVEL NOTES



We flew to Newark, took the monorail to our car and drove 14 miles to the river in over two rainy hours. E-ZPass did not work. The Weehawken ferry is familiar from the Capt. Sullenberger river story. Other days, NJ Transit took us through the Meadowlands from the 'burbs, to Amtrak in to Penn Station. Lodging was in NY state just across the line from the NJ headquarters of BMW, Mercedes, Rolls-Royce, Volvo and others.



SCION iQ

You already thought Scion built small cars? Well, get a look at this. The iQ "premium micro-subcompact" is just 120.1 inches long, but seats four and has very compelling design and features. It actually seats what they call "3+1," with an adult seat behind the front passenger and room for a child (or package or pet) behind the driver. Its 1.3-liter 90+hp four-cylinder is mated to a CVT. Safety technologies abound, from electronically distributed ABS to vehicle stability and traction controls. Ten airbags include the world's first rear window curtain airbag. Rated an Ultra Low Emission Vehicle (ULEV-II), the Scion iQ aims for MPG in the high 30s. Six-speaker audio rocks your little world.



VOLKSWAGEN BEETLE, BULLI CONCEPT

It's hard to say which generated more interest: the new VW Beetle, which is going straight to production, or the Bulli microbus, for now just a concept. The Beetle is subject to more scrutiny, as people debate whether it's true to the spirit of the original car (most seem to think it does a better job than the preceding New Beetle) and whether it has more appeal to male buyers, with its lower, wider stance. The Bulli concept (Bulli being the name for the VW Bus in Germany) pulls forward more spirit of the original microbus than prior concepts, and its electric drivetrain might arrive at the right time, if it were to be built.



LOTUS EVORA S AND EVORA IPS

Lotus Advisory Council Member and legendary car guy Bob Lutz opened the press conference for Lotus, showing off the new Evora S and the Evora IPS (which stands for Intelligent Precision Shift). The Evora S has the same 3.5-liter V6 engine as the standard Evora, but is supercharged, producing 345 horsepower and hitting 0-to-60 in 4.6 seconds. The Evora IPS adds an automatic transmission, with the option of manual paddle shifting or fully automatic modes.



MINI COUNTRYMAN

There was no ice on the streets of New York, and there's likely none in your driveway, but the MINI Cooper S Countryman ALL4 is ready, should the need arise, as demonstrated at the show by its impressive wall-clinging grip. This version brings a combination of performance, capacity and four-wheel-drive grip to the lineup, all in one model. The subtext here is that MINI displayed four Countryman versions with KISS-inspired designs at the show, which band members introduced and autographed. The four (cars) were then put up for auction on eBay, with proceeds benefiting UNICEF to help children in Japan and emergencies around the globe. If you're a big KISS fan, you can immediately recognize which car is which. Yes? ■



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MODIFIED HONDA VAN LENDS A HELPING HAND

PHOENIX-BASED VMI 2011 HONDA ODYSSEY WHEELCHAIR CONVERSION VAN

Vantage Mobility International (VMI), of Phoenix, has created a wheelchair accessible conversion of the redesigned 2011 Honda Odyssey, with VMI Northstar and Summit conversions now available through authorized mobility equipment dealers.

"We designed our wheelchair conversion of the 2011 Honda Odyssey minivan based on tools and systems acquired from our Lean Manufacturing and Six Sigma initiatives," said Ted A. Larson, VMI vice president of engineering. "Our engineering team was able to pinpoint potential issues during development and correct them before production began. It's our way of staying true to the same core values that has made Honda one of the leading automotive manufacturers around the world."

The Honda includes an improved FLEX floor that provides an unprecedented 12 3/4" drop from the original floor, affording the conversion two unique distinctions; the most wheelchair maneuvering room and the lowest ramp angle of any VMI conversion. E-coated for corrosion resistance and assembled with lightweight stamped metal components, the FLEX floor is VMI's foremost statement on innovation.

Both the Honda Northstar and Summit conversions feature an improved PowerKneel™ system to reduce noise and increase dependability. The PowerKneel lowers the vehicle to provide the wheelchair user with a lower ramp angle when traveling into and out of the vehicle. The system has an electro-hydraulic actuator that uses less energy and a built-in manual release for safety. The Northstar conversion has a 55" door opening

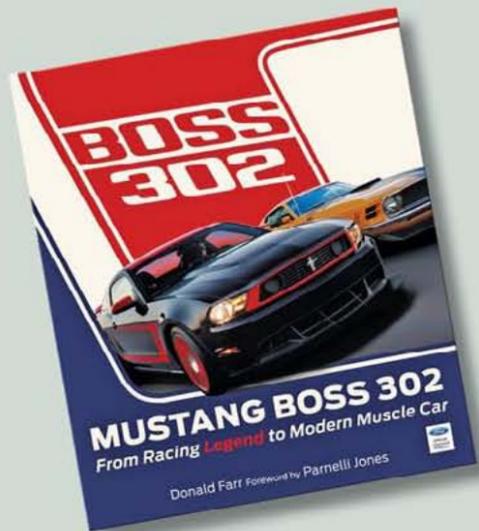
height, 30" usable ramp width, 750-pound load rating and SURE DEPLOY™ Emergency Backup System. It has successfully completed two 10,000-mile validation cycles. The Summit conversion has the same 55" door height, a 28 7/8" usable ramp width and 600-pound load rating.

VMI has passed all required Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS), including the rigorous 50 mph rear-impact collision, which tests floor structure and fuel system integrity.

The VMI-converted version of the 2011 Odyssey is available in Honda's four trim levels—EX, EX-L, Touring and Touring Elite—all powered by a 248-hp I-VTEC V6 engine. The Odyssey offers best-in-class fuel economy of 19 MPG city and 28 highway through its six-speed automatic transmission and Variable Cylinder Management. Entertainment options include 650-watt stereo audio with USB interface and 16.2-inch dual DVD screen.

Job number one for a wheelchair conversion van is mobility for the disabled, but VMI reminds us that ramp access can also make it easier to haul furniture, deliver a new washing machine or pick up a big screen TV.

Honda's reputation for quality and value is well established, and VMI takes particular pride in working with their vans, to demonstrate their commitment to the same. VMI also has conversions for 2008 and newer Chrysler Town and Country and Dodge Caravan minivans, Ford E Series full-size vans and others. The full line of VMI products includes domestic and import conversions, platform lifts, scooter and wheelchair lifts and transfer seats. For complete information, visit their website at www.VantageMobility.com. ■



MUSTANG BOSS 302: FROM RACING LEGEND TO MODERN MUSCLE CAR

By Donald Farr (officially licensed by FORD), with foreword by Parnelli Jones.

Of the many high profile names in the history of the Ford Mustang, one stands apart: BOSS. Originally created to homologate the new Boss 302 engine and option package for SCCA Trans-Am racing, the Mustang Boss 302 debuted for the 1969 model year and was built in limited numbers for the street. Designed by the legendary Larry Shinoda, the Boss cars were easily distinguished from their less potent stablemates by their race-bred powerplants, standard spoilers and bold graphics.

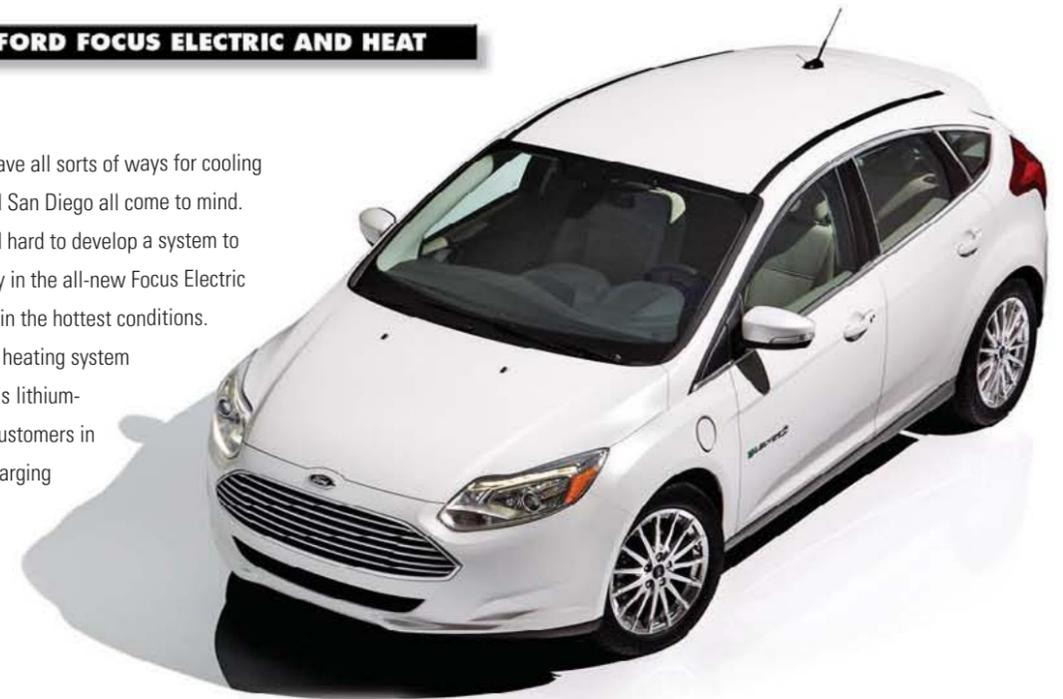
With no small amount of fanfare, Ford is paying homage today to its performance past with the reintroduction of the 5.0-liter (302 cu.in.) V8 in the Mustang GT. Though no longer the iron-block, pushrod Windsor engine of yore, Ford's newest iteration of a DOHC, modular V8 is the most potent base Mustang GT motor yet, topping 400 horsepower. And for the 2012 model year, Ford is at long last reviving the most revered of all Mustang models: BOSS. With a new racing counterpart and a modern street version that makes more than 440 horsepower, the Boss is truly back.

Donald Farr has been on staff at *Mustang Monthly Magazine* for 30 years. In addition to his magazine work, Donald authored *Mustang Boss 302: Ford's Trans-Am Ponycar* and co-wrote *How to Restore Your Mustang* with *Mustang Monthly* founder Larry Dobbs. He currently owns the 1966 Mustang GT that his grandfather purchased new.

The book arrives in stores on August 29, 2011, at a retail price of \$30. ■

When the mercury starts to rise, we have all sorts of ways for cooling ourselves down: pools, cool drinks and San Diego all come to mind. But the engineers at Ford have worked hard to develop a system to specifically cool the lithium-ion battery in the all-new Focus Electric and keep it working at its prime, even in the hottest conditions.

An advanced active liquid-cooling and heating system integrated into the Ford Focus Electric's lithium-ion battery packs is engineered with customers in the hottest climates in mind. While charging or in use, the battery uses a chiller to lower the temperature of the coolant going through the battery as needed.



How the new Ford Focus Electric will keep its cool in the heat of an Arizona summer

Ford's electrification strategy includes the launch of five electrified vehicles in North America by 2012 and Europe by 2013. The new Focus Electric—the company's first all-electric passenger car—is a zero-emissions, gasoline-free version of Ford's popular global Focus model.

In Arizona, we have obvious specific questions about new technologies: how will they work when the thermometer climbs to 110, 115, 120 degrees? Will they start? Will they keep us cool? Fundamental physics can never be avoided, but clever engineers can mitigate just about anything. We gave an in-depth look at how the Chevrolet Volt deals with these issues (also with a liquid-cooled system) in our March/April issue. Here's the word from Ford.

Extreme temperatures can affect an electric vehicle's battery performance and reduce its range. That's why Ford will use an advanced active liquid-cooling and heating system to regulate the temperature of its lithium-ion battery packs, which are designed to operate under a range of ambient conditions.

"If the battery became too hot, we would have to limit the use of energy, to protect it. The liquid-cooled system allows us to reduce those constraints and get the most out of the battery," says Dave Fabricatore, Thermal Program Management team engineer. "We're helping owners by making sure their battery is always ready to go, regardless of the weather."

The Ford Focus Electric uses an integrated cooling system to keep the different systems in the vehicle at their optimal operating temperatures. The air conditioning system is actually used to refrigerate coolant going to the battery using a "chiller," so as coolant passes through, it's brought down to the temperature the battery requires. Temperature sensors all over the vehicle let the cooling system know when it needs to kick in.

The cooling system can even work when the car is running or when it is charging, which can help reduce charge time in hot climates as the battery is kept at a desirable temperature. As our garages climb to 130° or so in August, this is key.

"Batteries can heat up when they're charging or being used, and it's made worse by ambient temperatures," says Fabricatore. "Controlling the temperature lets us deliver the best range and power for the customer, while improving the longevity of the battery."

The Ford Focus Electric will launch in late 2011 in 19 pilot markets, including Phoenix and Tucson.

The liquid-cooled battery system will give the Focus Electric an advantage over any all-electric vehicles with air-cooled battery systems, especially in Arizona, where of course the air is not particularly cool. In addition to Phoenix and Tucson, these hot-weather pilot markets include Atlanta, Austin, Houston, Los Angeles, Orlando, Raleigh-Durham, Richmond and not-that-hot San Diego.

Ford launched the Transit Connect Electric small commercial van in 2010 and will launch the all-new Focus Electric later this year. In 2012, these models will be joined in North America by the new C-MAX Hybrid, a second next-generation lithium-ion battery hybrid, and the C-MAX Energi plug-in hybrid. ■

ARIZONA RIDER

THE ENTHUSIAST'S GUIDE TO LIFE ON TWO WHEELS

BIKES AND BANDS ROCK THE BIG TOP

PHOTOS AND STORY BY RANDALL BOHL

When spring rolls around in the Valley, so do motorcycles, by the thousands. Pre-Rally activities ran from March 25-29, and the 15th Anniversary Arizona Bike Week Cyclefest at WestWorld in north Scottsdale kept everybody busy from March 30 to April 3. Beyond plenty of camaraderie and great open road riding all week, Cyclefest anchored the Miss Arizona Bike Week Pageant, the Wall of Death, the 1st Annual Leather and Luck Tournament and multiple charity rides and poker runs. Additional events included the Backstage Biker Bash with Gretchen Wilson, the Baddest Bagger in AZ event, tributes and honors, and a string of live performances.

The Pre-Rally included Legends Bar & Grill Breakfast Socials, The Hideaway Grill Kick-Off Party and Chester's HD Backstage Biker Bash. Buddy Stubbs Harley-Davidson hosted the 7th Annual Buddy Stubbs Bike Week Bash. And there were Biker Parties at TT Roadhouse, Greasewood Flat, The Steel Horse Saloon and other sites.

Wednesday March 30 began with a Legends Bar & Grill Breakfast Social, followed by the 280-mile Riding for Kids Charity Run on behalf of Camp Courage Burn Camp for Kids. The day wrapped up with Sinister Indus-

tries Day, and the Arizona Bike Week Hero Party honoring Barry Caraway at The Hideaway Grille. Entertainment was provided by the Cell Phone Cowboys and Sludge's Build-A-Band at the ABW Roadhouse in the afternoon, then a performance by Coverz, Inc., the Miss Arizona Bike Week Pageant, and Skid Row performing at the HandleBar Saloon well into the night. Warrant performed at the HandleBar on Thursday.

After Friday's Legends Social, the group met at Paul Yaffe Originals to launch the Hamsters Custom Motorcycle Group's "Dry Heat" Charity Poker Run benefitting Black Hills Children's Care in Sturgis SD. After lunch at Cody's Smoke House and Grill in Cave Creek came The Hideaway Grill & Broken Spoke Gypsy Tour, ending at WestWorld. Afternoon performances included Hollywood & Vine (formerly Hellbound), the 74th Street Band and Jasmine Caine, with a break for a tribute to Excellence aware for Arlen Ness before a standing-room-only concert by Heart in the HandleBar Saloon. Capping the evening were the 5th Annual Jager Games.

Additional concerts included Buckcherry on Saturday and Mogollon on Sunday, at the HandleBar Saloon.



Bike Rally Photos of Red River NM offered 8x10 prints of bikers "on the road" entering Cyclefest, within hours of arrival. This was a very popular place to see, be seen and see yourself immortalized. www.bikerrallyphotos.com

At the entrance to WestWorld Cyclefest, manufacturers offered test rides. Harley-Davidson was present, of course, as well as Kawasaki, Can-Am, Star Motorcycles and the V-Star lineup from Yamaha. Shown is a truckload of Boss Hoss V8-powered machines from Tennessee, brought in by the Scottsdale Boss Hoss dealership.

Looking for enhanced V-Twin performance? S&S Cycle was on hand with technical experts showing their extensive line of aftermarket parts to beef up your Harley, including heads, cylinders and exhaust systems. www.sscycle.com

The Cell Phone Cowboys were jamming in the AWB Roadhouse when we stopped in, playing a bit of everything rock and even adding some horn to bring a little sound of New Orleans to the desert.

Speaking of heavy metal, JL McKinney jewelry for men (and women) offers several lines of silver and turquoise biker bling created by Lionel and Tillie McKinney, as well as lines by several other artisans from Albuquerque. www.jlmckinney.com

A break from the walking and shopping landed us in the Cyclefest Cantina party tent, where Sludge's Build-a-Band is rocking. Sludge (far right) is the morning DJ at 93.3 KDKB Phoenix.

KEEP RIGHT >>





Ray Helmer, owner of FastLights LEDS, brought his fully-loaded 18-wheeler from Georgia with several cycle lifts and technicians to install custom lighting on your bike while you wait (or while you checked out some more of Cyclefest). Check them out in color at night at www.fastlightsleds.com

Among the HandleBar Saloon headliners were Skid Row, Warrant and Buck Cherry. Ann and Nancy Wilson of Heart (above) rocked an overflow crowd on Friday night. www.heart-music.com

Another stop by the HandleBar Saloon gave us a chance to refresh with Arizona's own Coverz Inc., rocking '70s and '80s hits. www.coverzinc.com

Cyclefest being about eating, drinking, concerts ... and shopping ... we found plenty of ladies' apparel and "add-ons," including gear by Jackie Faulkner of Palm Desert CA, who brought her Sophisticated Sparkles to town, including clothing, jewelry, handbags and hats—just about everything a lady needs other than shoes. www.braladys.com

The most unique vendor at Cyclefest may have been Bad Ass Bouquets of Scottsdale. Owner Michele Dusz has conceived floral arrangements that are "memorable yet mobile"—fine artificial flowers that can take the wind at speed, attached to your bike or leather lapels. Custom silver skull holders were one example that could balance the effect. (Michele provided backstage floral arrangements for Heart.) www.badassbouquets.com

Skip and Leilani Greel of Lake Havasu City AZ own the River Exchange. Leilani and her Serger (which is one heavy-duty sewing machine) can stitch any of hundreds of patches onto your best set of leathers while you wait. (Skip tells us he'd be willing to sell the business and retire, if you're looking for a career opportunity; Leilani is not included with the business.) www.biker-biker.com

A good reason to stick around the HandleBar Saloon after Coverz Inc. was to watch the lovely ladies competing for the Miss Arizona Bike Week 2011 title.



THE INSIDE TRACK: BRIEFS & RUMORS



GMC Granite concept

■ **GMC** has approved production of the Granite small crossover concept, which first debuted at the 2010 North American International Auto Show in Detroit. A well-placed source says it will be built complete with the concept's dramatic rear-hinged rear doors—no B-pillar makes the Granite easier to enter, exit and load, even with bulky items. About the same size as the Honda Fit, the Granite would be the smallest GMC ever. The inside feels spacious for its size and has flipping/folding seats that enable a mountain bike to be loaded completely inside with the tailgate closed. A 1.4-liter turbocharged four-cylinder engine with six-speed transmission drives the front wheels.

■ Making its global debut at the 2011 New York International Auto Show, the **Lexus LF-Gh** concept is a case study for the new Lexus look. Designers aimed to blend style, performance, efficiency and environmental compatibility in a premium, grand touring sedan. LED lighting hints at the range and scope of new materials, electronics and dynamic systems. Overall, the LF-Gh's styling embodies the definition of what an authentic grand touring sedan from Lexus could be. The concept has Blue LED Lexus Hybrid Drive badges located on the front grille and rear trunk lid so we can assume production vehicles will provide equal measures of fuel efficiency and performance on demand.



Kia KV7 concept

■ **Kia** is exploring the modern "activity van" with its recently unveiled KV7 concept. Expanding on recent design successes like the Soul, Sorento, Sportage and Forte Koup, the KV7 takes a functional approach beyond mere transportation to a mobile gathering space. With a single gull-wing door on the passenger side opening to a large, adaptable interior, the KV7 becomes a space for friends to gather, go places and carry things. A wide stance, vertical windshield, smooth exterior and 20-inch wheels give a confident look. The KV7 concept is powered by Kia's new Theta II 2.0-liter GDI turbocharged engine (rated up to 285 hp) mated to a six-speed automatic transmission. The pair combines to deliver V6-like power and performance while achieving better than 30 mpg on the highway.

■ The turbocharged **Suzuki** Kizashi Apex concept, shown at the recent New York International Auto Show, bridges the gap between automotive and motorcycle divisions. A Garrett turbocharger with air-to-liquid intercooler, electronic boost control and engine control unit calibration brings strong performance to day-to-day drivability. The system takes the Kizashi's peak output into the 275-300 horsepower range, with a maximum boost of 8.5 psi. The Apex concept is dressed in a Suzuki superbike race design theme highlighting the vehicle's bloodline connection to Suzuki's GSX-R Superbike. The interior is black leather with laser blue Alcantara accents on sport seats and steering wheel. No production has been announced, but it could be a great halo car for the brand.



Suzuki Kizashi Apex concept

■ Most Americans have a story or two about getting through airport security these days. Some wonder: would I be better off to drive? A new comparison calculator, created by the budget and coupon site **BeFrugal.com**, takes the mystery out of deciding. Input locations, dates and other details for a trip, and their Fly or Drive Calculator does the rest, comparing the cost and time of traveling by car or plane. Its educated decisions are based on distance, number of travelers, vehicle type, time it will take, cost including hotel and taxi, and even estimated CO₂ impact of the trip.



Volkswagen Scirocco R-Cup

■ **Volkswagen R GmbH**—maker of the not-available-here Scirocco R—has been sponsoring the Scirocco R-Cup in the framework of the DTM race series in Europe since 2010. Now they are extending their sponsorship to new core markets. In 2011, five races will be run in China and two races in Malaysia. The R product brand will be the focus of activities surrounding the motorsport events. For example, a vehicle exhibition showcasing the road models of Volkswagen R GmbH will be a regular feature at races in the series. VW says, "The Scirocco R-Cup in China is a very good platform for supporting our own internationalization strategy. We will soon also have a presence in the key Chinese market with our successful Golf R and Scirocco R models. In addition, we will be progressively expanding our programme of R-Line equipment packs."

■ **Cannonball Run World Events** has a new racing game app, bringing its popular road rallies to life on the iPad and iPhone and promoting their all-new North American road rally, Rat Race, coming in September. The game allows anyone to create and time their own routes, drive routes made by other users, interact with Cannonball participants and receive live updates during official Cannonball Runs, including the Rat Race, an eventful week during which drivers travel from coast to coast picking up clues which eventually lead one lucky grand prize winner to a locker containing a large sum of cash. The app is \$3.99 from the iTunes Store, or visit www.cannonballworld.com/apps.

■ **Terrafugia** announces they have grown from 12 employees in June 2010 to 24 a year later, thanks to a combination of winning a DARPA TX contract and additional investment. Their move to a new 19,000-sq.ft. facility last summer enabled construction of full production tools and fabrication of prototype production molds and jigs. They say they are now able to produce every part internally, to bring the Transition® "flying car" to full compliance with all applicable ASTM Light Sport Aircraft and Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards. They are scheduled to show one of two production prototypes at EAA AirVenture in Oshkosh



Terrafugia Transition®

during July, but it won't be ready to fly. The first test flights are expected in March of next year, with their anticipated first delivery date in late 2012.

■ Good news for drivers seeking lower (or no) fuel bills: small cars and electric cars are doing well in new crash tests by the **Insurance Institute for Highway Safety**. Six of 13 small cars recently evaluated by the IIHS earned their TOP SAFETY PICK award, and not one earned a poor rating in any of four tests. This is a significant turnaround from a few years ago, when small cars struggled to earn top safety ratings. Models subjected to the new round of tests included hybrids as well as gasoline-only models that fall among the most fuel-efficient vehicles available in the US market. Two significant new mainstream electric cars were also tested, with the Chevrolet Volt and Nissan Leaf earning the highest IIHS safety ratings in the first-ever US crash-test evaluations of plug-in electric cars. The



Nissan Juke in IIHS crash testing

milestone demonstrates that automakers are doing well applying the same safety engineering in new electric cars as they do in gasoline-powered vehicles. ■

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

UPCOMING FEATURES

Monterey: Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance, Concorso Italiano, auctions galore and more

Photo: Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance



Photo: Joe Sage

2011 MINI Countryman



2012 Fiat 500 Sport



2012 Mercedes-Benz M-Class launch in Montana



2012 Toyota Prius v launch in Colorado



2011 Land Rover LR4



2011 Range Rover Sport HSE



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