

ARIZONA DRIVER

THE ENTHUSIAST'S GUIDE TO LIFE BEHIND THE WHEEL

VOLUME 17 NUMBER 2
MARCH-APRIL 2018



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**ARIZONA AUCTION WEEK: RESULTS / FUTURE CLASSICS / HAGERTY YOUTH
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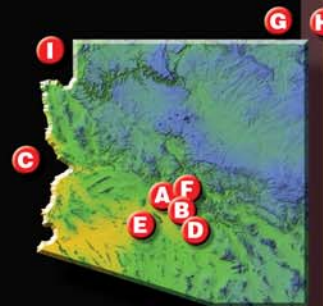
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COVER: James Hinchcliffe running his No 5 IndyCar at PIR—Phoenix International Raceway—during the Phoenix Grand Prix in April 2017. For 2018, the track has become ISM Raceway, the cars have a new aero kit, new balance point and other changes, while Hinchcliffe and No 5 are expected to be here as always, when IndyCar has its second race of the 2018 season at ISM Raceway this April. See race information and details on the new cars in this issue. Photo: courtesy ISM Raceway.



The year always starts out with a bang here. People flock to Arizona from all over the country and all over the world to attend our seven collector car auctions in January and perhaps go home with a lifetime dream or a sound investment—or both. There was no Arizona Concours this year, though it may return in the future. But this didn't slow things down much, as there are probably about 40 ancillary happenings during Arizona Auction Week for any particular individual embedded in the greater madness. The big North American International Auto Show in Detroit is also in January, a chance to compare and contrast the excitement of the newest machines (and 5 degree temps) with the excitement of the classics (and 80 degree temps) here. We bring you news of both Detroit and the auctions in this issue, as well as recaps of several of those ancillary events.

These are going to be two big months at Phoenix's favorite racetrack. First, you'll find its new name—ISM Raceway—thoroughly ensconced now. You'll find their \$178 million redevelopment to be well along. And you'll have another couple of chances to catch the familiar start-finish line—during NASCAR Spring Weekend in March and during the Phoenix Grand Prix Verizon IndyCar Series weekend in April—before it moves to current Turn 2. It's worth a trip or two now to catch the old line, which will also augment the experience next November when NASCAR rolls around again using the new start, which opens right into the challenging dog leg. Details on all of this are in this issue.

Also in this issue are a number of new vehicle drives, a couple of which we put some serious miles on—a Ram 1500 Rebel up through the Navajo Nation and Utah to northwest Colorado, and an Acura MDX Sport Hybrid into the ghost towns of southern Nevada.



Fast, faster, bigger, smaller, old, new and newer, and over quite a range of prices and miles, there's definitely something in here for everybody.

Enjoy the ride.

Joe Sage - Publisher/ Executive Editor

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ARIZONA DRIVER MAGAZINE

PO Box 13387, Scottsdale AZ 85267
 Advertising: 480-948-0200
 www.arizonadrivermagazine.com

- facebook.com/ArizonaDriverMagazine
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- NWAPA...Northwest Automotive Press Association
- PAPAPhoenix Automotive Press Association
- RMAPRocky Mountain Automotive Press
- SAMA.....Southern Automotive Media Association
- TAWATexas Auto Writers Association
- USFRAUtah Salt Flats Racing Association
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The future looks bright

UNDERSTATED 1998 TOYOTA SUPRA MOD WINS "BEST IN SHOW" HONORS

Event recap and snapshots courtesy ClassicCars.com

In a competitive field of 163 domestics and imports, a 1998 Toyota Supra was named "Best in Show" at the 3rd Annual Future Classic Car Show presented by ClassicCars.com and Gateway Classic Cars. Kicking off Arizona Collector Car Week, the event employs concours-level judges offering their expert verdict on meticulously conditioned vehicles in six categories, along with an overall "Best of Show" top honor. By popular demand, a new Best Modified award was introduced this year.

Held on the rooftop of the Scottsdale Quarter shopping district, the Future Classic Car Show featured vehicles from model years 1975 through 2018. Guests were offered an up-close look at both stock and tuned BMWs, Chevys, Fords, Hondas, Lamborghinis, Mazdas, Mopars, Toyotas and more.

Occupying the top three levels of the parking structure, the event generated proceeds for "Wheels For Love," a program established by Shriners Hospital For Children, which provides custom-fitted wheelchairs and bicycles for children at Shriners Hospitals across the country.

From a crowded field of entrants, the '98 Supra was selected "because it was the most understated, heavily customized car I have ever seen," explained ClassicCars.com's East Coast Editor and Analyst Andy Reid. "It exemplified all a future classic is supposed to be. Though it is modified, it's been done at a level of expertise that we'd normally see through a dealer. This attention to detail exemplifies the passion of its owner, who loved the car so much, he actually bought it back from an

enthusiast that he'd sold it to previously."

In addition to the Supra winning "Best in Show" honors, category winners included:

- Best of Decade 1975-1986: 1981 Toyota Starlet
- Best of Decade 1986-1996: 1991 GMC Syclone
- Best of Decade 1996-2006: 2003 Mitsubishi Evo
- Best of Decade 2006-2018: 2015 Corvette Grand Sport
- Best Original Vehicle: 1978 Corvette
- Best Modified Vehicle: 2008 Acura RSX Type S
- Fan Favorite: 1977 Toyota Celica

"Historically, Arizona Auction Week has catered to a more mature audience that is focused on traditional, pre-'72 classic cars," said Roger Falcione, CEO of ClassicCars.com. "The point of our event is to make enough people in the collector hobby feel that they have ownership, and expose traditional collectors to the passion and enthusiasm that a younger audience feels for these newer models. This year's show exemplified how diverse this new sector of the hobby truly is, from a period-correct Toyota Starlet to a first-generation Corvette ZR-1 to an entire row of R35 Skylines and BMW M cars."

The event is sponsored by Gateway Classic Cars, Hagerty classic vehicle insurance, Classic Auto Logistics and the Universal Technical Institute, which is training tomorrow's automotive technicians and restorers.

ClassicCars.com, founded in 2007 and headquartered in Phoenix, is devoted to helping owners sell classic vehicles online. Featuring more than 30,000 vehicles, ClassicCars.com boasts the world's largest online selection of classic and collector vehicles for sale. ■



Best of Show 1998 Toyota Supra

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McLaren Senna

▼ The **McLaren Senna** is designed, engineered and developed with single-minded purpose: to be the ultimate McLaren track-concentrated car for the road—their most extreme street-legal car yet. Named to honor legendary Formula 1 driver Ayrton Senna, this is the lightest McLaren road car (at 2,641 lb) since the McLaren F1 and bears the most powerful McLaren internal combustion engine ever, a mid-mounted 4.0-liter twin-turbocharged V8 delivering 789 bhp and 590 lb-ft of torque through rear-wheel drive—all combining for a power-to-weight ratio McLaren promises will deliver “savage performance.” The car’s sexy skin and overall bearing are an expression of McLaren’s “form-follows-function” philosophy. Production will be limited to 500 units, all hand-assembled at the McLaren Production Centre in Woking, Surrey, England starting in the third quarter of this year. The McLaren Senna is to be priced at £750,000 (currently about \$1,030,000), including taxes in the UK.

▼ A May 2017 change in Arizona law opened our market to a new non-ethanol biofuel as an option for higher performance, for those willing to pay extra for it. **Isobutanol** (in the form of alcohol-to-jet fuel, or ATJ) is known more as a biofuel for jets, to help airlines dramatically reduce their carbon footprint. But Gevo, one of the largest isobutanol manufacturers, is expanding availability of isobutanol for use directly in cars and other on-road, off-road and marine vehicles. Gevo initially

entered the on-road market in Houston, through a distribution partnership with Musket Corporation, announced in November 2016, and began expanding into cities in Arizona last year. By last summer, Gevo’s distribution partners had seen the number of gas station pumps offering isobutanol almost double, with a corresponding triple-digit increase in gallons sold at those pumps. Isobutanol-gasoline fuel blend is ethanol-free and meets all



Dodge Challenger SRT Demon at Dodge//SRT Bondurant Drag Racing School

EPA and local regulations in the markets into which Gevo is looking to serve. The fuel was initially popular with owners of boats, motorcycles and small-engine vehicles. But it offers higher energy content than ethanol and has high octane, which is attracting owners of classic cars and drivers who seek higher-performing fuels. Gevo is also working on developing an East Coast supply chain.

▼ **Dodge//SRT** and the **Bob Bondurant School of High Performance Driving** are adding a new Dodge//SRT Bondurant Drag Racing School featuring the 840-hp Dodge Challenger SRT Demon. The program will be held at Bondurant’s facility and the official NHRA drag strip at adjacent Wild Horse Pass Motorsports Park. The full-day program starts with about two hours of classroom instruction covering fundamental rules of drag racing, including proper launch, staging technique, reaction time, signals and safety pre- and post-checks. On-track instruction, under the direction and supervision of a Bondurant professional instructor, includes 22 single-lane runs, including a wet-box burn-out, stage, 60-foot pass, half-pass and full-pass, in a variety of Challenger models: the 840-hp Challenger SRT Demon, 707-hp Dodge Challenger SRT Hellcat and Hellcat Widebody, and 485-hp Dodge Challenger SRT 392. The performance-packed one-day drag racing course is offered at no additional charge to Dodge Challenger SRT Demon owners. Owners of other Dodge//

SRT vehicles, who already receive a full-day high performance driving class, can upgrade their training to two full days (one day road course, one day drag strip) for \$999. The course is available to non-Dodge vehicle owners for \$1,999. The program, with classes starting March 9, is a part of Bondurant’s Golden 50th Anniversary this year and is a collaboration with Dodge, Goodyear, Shell and Pennzoil.

▼ **SpaceX** achieved lunar and interplanetary travel potential with the launch on February 6 of its Falcon Heavy rocket, the most powerful operational rocket in the

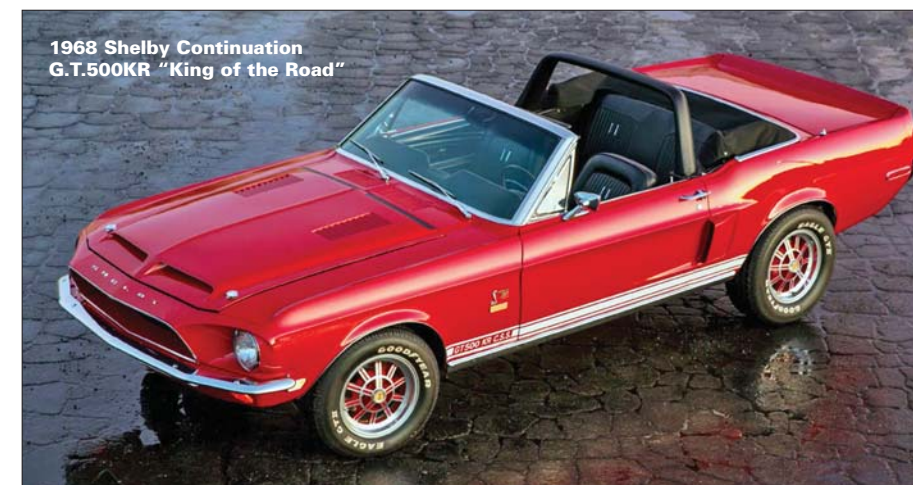


Tesla Roadster launched by SpaceX Falcon Heavy

world by a factor of two, able to lift more than twice the payload of the next vehicle, at one-third the cost. Only the Saturn V moon rocket, last flown in 1973, delivered more payload to orbit. Three reusable cores make up the first stage of Falcon Heavy: two side cores (boosters) connect to the center core at its base and the inter-stage. Twenty-seven Merlin engines generate over five million pounds of thrust. Though private, this is the first US-based super-heavy-lift launch vehicle since the Space Shuttle and earlier Saturn V rocket were retired. Falcon Heavy launches from Cape Canaveral, Florida, on a leased pad originally used by the Saturn V. Such demonstration flights carry a mass simulator—generally something expendable such as a load of steel or concrete blocks. But instead, SpaceX and **Tesla** CEO Elon Musk contributed his own original red Tesla Roadster to this effort, mounted in the second stage and released into a precessing Earth-Mars elliptical orbit around the sun. A “Starman” mannequin sits behind the wheel of the open car in a SpaceX Mars mission flight suit, with David Bowie’s *Space Oddity* blaring on the car’s audio, a “Don’t Panic” message on the center display in homage to the late Douglas Adams’s *A Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy*, and an Arch (“Ark”) digital archive with Isaac Asimov’s *Foundation Trilogy* and other records of human achievement on board. Cameras on booms in front and to the side of the Tesla beam back live images so Earthlings can follow the intrepid Starman’s adven-

tures. When asked the point of sending his \$200,000 collectible Tesla Roadster into space, Musk says, “There’s no point, obviously! It’s just for fun and to get the public excited.” The Tesla’s orbit will coincide

with Mars’s orbit at times—at which point it may discover whether we have built twisty two-lane highways and roadside cafés on the red planet by then. “At times, it will come extremely close to Mars,” says Musk, “and there’s a tiny, tiny chance that it (could) hit Mars. Extremely tiny. I wouldn’t hold your breath.” More likely is for the Tesla and its artifacts—or as much as can survive eons of space radiation and flying hazards—to continue its journey for a bil-



1968 Shelby Continuation G.T.500KR “King of the Road”

lion years. Stay tuned for updates.

▼ **Shelby American, Inc.** will build a limited number of 50th Anniversary 1968 Shelby G.T.500KR “King of the Road” continuation muscle cars, using 1968 Mustang donor cars and including a Shelby serial number for documentation in the official Shelby registry. Powered by big block motors, the Shelys will be available for fast-

backs and convertibles. Shelby American president Gary Patterson led its official introduction on January 20 at Barrett-Jackson, where the company introduced commemorative edition Shelby Cobras in 2012 and 2015, both instant collectibles that sold out in record time. Over the last several years, Shelby American has broadened its lineup, adding new vehicles in direct response to customer demand, taking both a glance back and a step forward. “An enthusiast can buy a modern muscle truck, off-road capable pickup or a sports car based on the current generation Ford Mustang,” says Patterson. “We also offer three versions of the historic Cobra, a GT40 continuation and a genuine Shelby Cobra Daytona fastback. Now you can purchase a ‘new’ 1968 Shelby G.T.500KR through Shelby American.” Shelby’s G.T.500KR represented peak horsepower and torque in a Ford platform as the muscle car era began to close. The “King of the Road” had a cast iron version of Ford’s FE big block 428 V8, choice of a manual or automatic transmission, high performance brakes and suspension, and special styling touches inside and out. The 1968 Shelby Continuation G.T.500KR will pack even more big-block punch, with a 427 V8 from Carroll Shelby Engine Co. in either aluminum or cast iron—also with either a manual or

automatic transmission—and Shelby-spec suspension and brakes. 1968 Mustang donor cars must have factory VIN intact. Any standard Shelby color from 1968 can be chosen. As with the 50th anniversary edition Shelby Cobra, anniversary badges will be added. Limited to ten fastbacks and ten convertibles, the cars start at \$249,995.

KEEP RIGHT >>

▼ **Red Bull Global Rallycross** has unveiled its 2018 schedule, with 12 rounds, eight events and a long-awaited return to Europe. Top drivers are expected to in-



Red Bull GRC
Polaris RZR RS1

clude three-time defending Supercar champion and ex-Formula 1 star Scott Speed, rallycross and drifting champion Tanner Foust, NASCAR veteran and 2017 Fan Favorite Driver Steve Arpin, World Rally Championship veteran Chris Atkinson and many others. The 2018 schedule is as follows:

Round 1:.....Louisville, KY.....May 19-20
Rounds 2-3:.....[TBA].....June 9-10*
Round 4:.....New Orleans, LA.....June 23-24
Round 5:.....Los Angeles, CA.....July 7-8
Rounds 6-7:.....Indianapolis, IN.....Aug 11-12*
Rounds 8-9:.....Atlantic City, NJ.....Aug 25-26*
Round 10:.....Seattle, WA.....Sept 15-16
Rounds 11-12:..Europe [TBA].....Oct 27-28*
*indicates doubleheader

The season will have three distinct classes of racing: joining Supercar and GRC Lites championships will be side-by-side competition using the new Polaris RZR® RS1. "Since we first announced (the class), fans have been eagerly awaiting the news of which side-by-side model would compete," said Red Bull GRC CEO Colin Dyne. RZR marketing director Matt Boone adds, "The all-new vehicle is race inspired and built for the best drivers in the world. We cannot wait for those drivers to put the single-seat side-by-side to the test." With the power and suspension of the RZR XP 1000 and an upgraded drivetrain, the RZR RS1 focuses on performance, chassis balance and agility. Its single seat optimizes center-of-mass. The Polaris GRC class will implement similar safety requirements and race format to the existing GRC categories, promising Polaris GRC competitors more track time than other side-by-side series.

▼ **Saleen Automotive, Inc.** is re-asserting itself in the supercar market with the new 1300-hp 7.0-liter twin-turbo Saleen S7 Le Mans (LM) Edition. The S7R race version

carbon fiber and rides on Saleen forged five-spoke Le Mans-style wheels equipped with center locking wheel nuts with automatic safety locks—fronts 19x9.5 shod with 275/30/ZR19 high-performance tires and rears 20x12.0 with 335/30/ZR20 tires. The chassis is built with 4130 lightweight steel space frame and honeycomb composite panels. Advanced wind tunnel-developed aerodynamics include integrated split-channel airflow throughout the car, full underside aerodynamics, advanced-design front tray and side skirts, full-body-width rear spoiler and heat-rejecting tinted glass. Safety features include integrated roll protection, aluminum honeycomb impact-absorbing panels, three-point seat belts with automatic pre-tensioner and aluminum honeycomb front crush structure with integrated rear crumple zones. Comfort and convenience features include a high-volume flow-through ventilation system, AC, rear video camera with interior LCD display, 240-mph speedometer, race-inspired central-mounted digital tachometer with S7R-style shift lights, fully adjustable tilt/telescope steering column, power windows and locks, keyless remote for doors and rear trunk, variable intermittent wipers, electric heated windshield, remote engine hatch and fuel filler door release, and a premium sound system.



Saleen S7
Le Mans Edition

Steve Saleen, with the first S7 LM Edition revealed at the LA Auto Show. Each one is being hand built at Saleen's Corona, California headquarters. The S7 LM's transmission is a longitudinal 6-speed all-synchromesh with limited-slip differential. Its metallic clutch has 8.0-inch twin-disc hydraulic actuation bow-through uprights. The S7 LM has an all-new, exclusive black and silver paint scheme with clear-coated

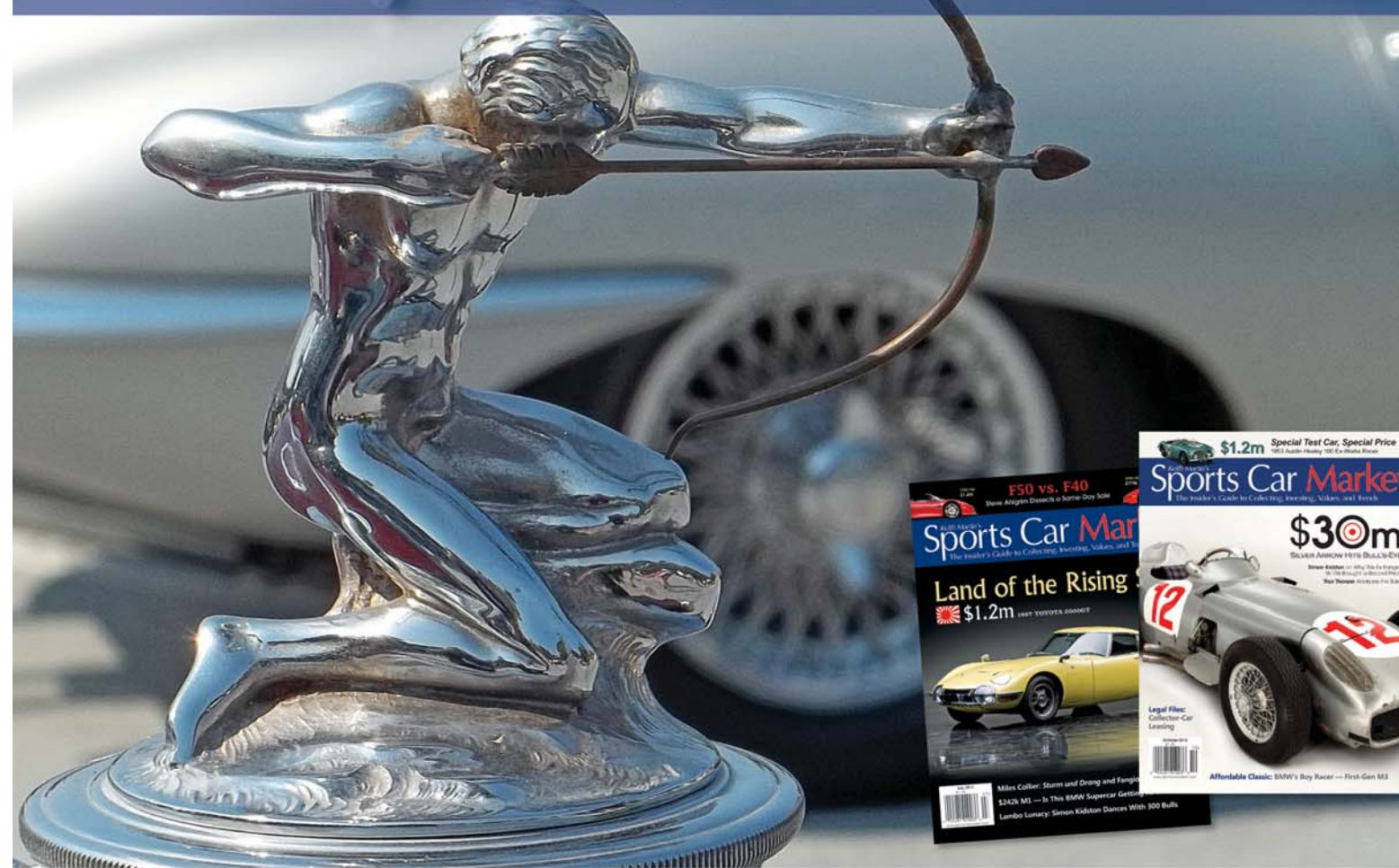
The standard interior in black Alcantara with multi-tone leather and suede includes performance sport seating, aluminum and color accents, custom-fitted driver seating position, and a dual leather and Alcantara steering wheel. Also included is the special LM-edition trim. The Saleen S7 LM is priced at \$1,000,000. With a mere seven in production, this is surely a collector supercar from birth. ■

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Every auction year starts here

The week and a half collectively known as Arizona Auction Week featured seven high-profile collector events again this year. Last year's big news included the addition of Worldwide Auctioneers, in their second year in Scottsdale for 2018, and Russo and Steele's move to Salt River Fields at Talking Stick, easing the traffic burden north of the Central Arizona Project Canal, still home to several hundred thousand Barrett-Jackson visitors. This year saw two changes: the Arizona component of Silver Auctions, with three auctions a year here including January, is under new ownership; and the Arizona Concours d'Elegance called it quits after four very successful—but presumably expensive—years, at least for now, with the door left open for it to return if new sponsorship funding is secure in the future.

It's an extremely busy couple of weeks, with not only the auctions at hand—each with its own schedule, ranging from one to nine days running, and spread all over the map—but also with an endless stream of ancillary activities and events, from new model reveals to airport receptions to auction executive presentations to gala events and much more. Go go go.

The auctions themselves are of paramount interest within the hobby-slash-industry worldwide, as the first to set the new calendar year's trends. Here are highlights of each.



Bullitt and Bush-Leno photos courtesy Barrett-Jackson

Barrett-Jackson

47th Annual Collector Car Auction Event
Nine days: Saturday, January 13 - Sunday, January 21, 2018
 WestWorld, 16601 N Pima Road, Scottsdale AZ 85260 (AZ Loop 101 & FLWright Blvd)

▼ Barrett-Jackson sales hit \$106.8 million from 1,721 vehicles, almost all at no reserve, with a remarkable sell-through rate of 99.1 percent. Over 1,100 automobilia items brought \$3.7 million, and \$6.21 million was raised from charity vehicle sales, for a total of more than \$116.7 million. Celebrity guests included Jay Leno, Michael Phelps, Kenny Chesney, David Spade, Tim Allen, Alice Cooper, Chad McQueen, former President George W Bush and Arizona Governor Doug Ducey. Charity cars included a current-gen Ford GT at \$2.55 million; a 2018 Corvette Carbon 65 Edition at \$1.4 million (which goes to Bush's Military Service Initiative); the first production 2019 Corvette ZR1 (\$925,000); Carolyn and Craig Jackson's Corvette 35th Anniversary at \$350,000; and VIN 001 2019 Ford Mustang Bullitt (with film star Chad McQueen, son of 1968 *Bullitt* star Steve McQueen, onstage), at \$300,000. Barrett-Jackson has raised \$102 million for charity to date. Top sales were a 2015 Porsche 918 Spyder (\$1,430,000), 1952 Ferrari 212 Europa (\$1,100,000), 1965 Chevrolet Corvette Cutaway Coupe (\$1,100,000), 1969 Chevrolet Camaro ZL1 (\$770,000), 1966 Shelby GT350 Prototype #001 (\$605,000) and a 2015 MTI Racing Boat (\$548,900). New world records include a 1951 Cadillac Custom Coupe (\$150,700), 1951 Chevrolet Styleline Deluxe Convertible (\$126,500), 1958 Chevrolet 3100 Custom Pickup (\$198,000), 1961 Ford F-100 Custom Pickup (\$165,000), 1958 Chevrolet Corvette Custom Convertible (\$440,000) and a 2018 Dodge Challenger SRT Demon (\$159,500).

▼ Barrett-Jackson auctions include Scottsdale, Palm Beach, Northeast at Mohegan Sun, and Las Vegas. John Staluppi (buyer of the charity 2018 Corvette Carbon 65 Edition in Scottsdale) will sell his prized 140-plus car collection from the Cars of Dreams Museum at Palm Beach in April. www.barrett-jackson.com



Barrett-Jackson photo



Bonhams

7th Annual Scottsdale Auction
Thursday, Jan 18, 2018 (viewing Tuesday-Thursday, Jan 16-18)
 Westin Kierland Resort & Spa, 6902 E Greenway Pkwy, Scottsdale AZ 85254

▼ European sports cars led the pack at Bonhams this year, with Porsche, Ferrari, Mercedes and Bentley taking top results. Their seventh annual Arizona event, a relaxed affair among rarified goods, totaled \$25.2 million, with an 87 percent sell-through rate. The star car was a historic 1958 Porsche 550A Spyder works racer that won 2nd in class and 5th overall at Le Mans, and 1st in class at Nürburgring. A brisk and intense volley of bidding ended with a private US collector prevailing at a final price of \$5,170,000, a new world auction record for the model. Top-selling Ferraris included a restored, matching-numbers 1972 Ferrari 365 GTS/4 Daytona Spider at \$2,640,000 and a 1991 Ferrari F40 Coupe at \$1,512,500. Other top lots included a 1957 Mercedes-Benz 300SL Roadster (the first imported to the US) at \$1,512,500, and a 1930 Bentley Speed Six Le Mans Replica Tourer to a California enthusiast at \$1,457,500, 50 percent-plus above its high estimate. Two of Carroll Shelby's personal cars, a 1966 Ford Shelby GT 350H Fastback and 2006 Ford GT, drawing intense global interest, exceeded all estimates, at \$253,000 and \$489,500, respectively. And a 1982 Lancia Rally 037 Stradale, also carrying much attention, beat its estimate at \$451,000. "Our sale really demonstrated the strength of the collector car market across all eras of motoring," said Rupert Banner, Group Motoring Director, the auctioneer along with Jamie Knight, Group Motoring Chairman. "We had lots of global interest and many new, first time buyers, which is a very positive indication of the growth and future of the hobby." ▼ Bonhams—since 1793—followed Arizona with a Las Vegas Motorcycle Auction and the Grand Palais Motorcar Auction in Paris. Bonhams hosts a wide variety of auctions of many types worldwide throughout the year. www.bonhams.com



Bonhams photo



Gooding & Company

11th Annual Scottsdale Auction
Friday-Saturday, Jan 19-20, 2018 (viewing Weds-Sat, Jan 17-20)
 Fashion Square - corner of Goldwater south of Highland - Scottsdale

▼ Gooding & Company's two-day Scottsdale sale achieved over \$49 million in sales, at an 85 percent sell-through rate. The auction house established 20 new world auction records and sold 12 cars at over \$1 million each, including the highest sale of the week among all the auctions, a 1965 Ferrari 275 GTB Speciale at over \$8 million. President David Gooding and auctioneer Charlie Ross sold 110 of 129 lots at average price of \$447,415 per car. Top sales included the 1965 Ferrari 275 GTB Speciale, originally owned by Battista Pininfarina, at a world record price of \$8,085,000, a 1954 Ferrari 500 Mondial at a world record \$4,455,000 and a 1931 Bugatti Type 55 Roadster at \$4,070,000. One crowd-pleasing high-ticket highlight was a 1967 Ferrari 330 GTS which sold to the original owner's family for \$2,530,000, the fourth-highest sale of the event. Additional high sales included a striking 2014 Pagani Huayra (\$2,090,000), an Iso Grifo A3/L Prototype (a world record at \$1,760,000), a 2015 McLaren P1 (\$1,732,500), four Mercedes-Benz 300 SLs (two Gullwings and two Roadsters from model years 1954 through 1960) for prices ranging from \$1,083,500 to \$1,320,000. The twelfth over-a-million sale was a 1953 Ferrari 212 Europa Coupe at \$1,067,000. Gooding also achieved a new world record price for the Lexus marque, with a Lexus LFA Nurburgring Package at \$825,000. Another world record was set with the sale of a 1951 Alfa Romeo 1900C Spring at \$616,000. ▼ Gooding & Company has an auction during the Amelia Island Concours in March and is the official auction of the Pebble Beach Concours in August. www.goodingco.com





RM Sotheby's

19th Annual Automobiles of Arizona
 Thursday-Friday, Jan 18-19, 2018 (preview Weds-Fri, Jan 18-20)
 Arizona Biltmore, 2400 E Missouri Ave, Phoenix AZ 85016 (24th and Camelback)

▼ RM Sotheby's 19th annual Arizona auction, held again at the historic Arizona Biltmore, had \$36.5 million in sales with an 88 percent sell-through rate. The star here was a numbers-matching 1966 Shelby 427 "Semi-Competition" Cobra CSX 3040, selling at a world record price of \$2,947,500 against a pre-sale estimate of \$2.0 to \$2.4 million. Interest was strong across a wide range of vehicle types spanning pre-War American classics through landmark European sports cars and modern high performance machines, with Preston Tucker's rare Tucker 48 bringing \$1,792,500 (against an estimated \$1.25-1.5m) and a Bugatti EB110 GT hitting another record, at \$995,000. Sales from *A Century of Sports Cars*, a single-owner group of 11 cars, focused on Italian sports and GT (at no reserve), included a 1964 Ferrari 250 GT/L Berlinetta Lusso (\$1,682,500), a 1960 Ferrari 250 GT Cabriolet Series II (\$1,407,500) and an award-winning 1955 Alfa Romeo 1900C SS Speciale by Boano (\$1,270,000). Other top ten sales included a 2017 Ferrari F12tdf (\$1,325,000), 1952 Ferrari 212 Inter Coupe (\$1,187,500), 1987 Porsche 959 Komfort (\$1,160,000), 1957 Mercedes-Benz 300SL Roadster (\$1,083,000) and a 1965 Shelby 289 Cobra (\$995,000). Also noteworthy was a 1935 Auburn Eight Supercharged Speedster at \$769,500, strongly beating an estimated \$500-650k. A 4540 km (2820 mi) 1993 Bugatti EB110 GT (one owner from new) set a new GT auction record at \$967,500; a 1907 Ford Model K Roadster (one-family owners since 1957) set a world record at \$252,000; and a 1977 International Scout II Traveler Custom brought \$128,800. ▼ Next up for RM Sotheby's was Paris. The official auction of Amelia Island Concours in March, RM Sotheby's is also hosts auctions in Monterey, Hershey, Michigan and worldwide. www.rmauctions.com



Russo and Steele

18th Annual Sports & Muscle in Scottsdale
 Wednesday-Sunday, January 17-21, 2018 (preview same)
 Salt River Fields at Talking Stick, Indian Bend Road at AZ Loop 101 - Scottsdale

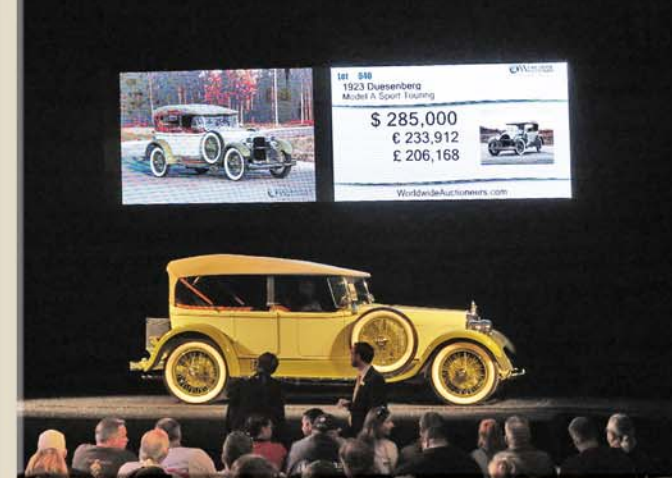
▼ Russo and Steele returned to its location at Salt River Fields at Talking Stick, new last year, with a new concours-style vehicle display layout and the Main Auction Pavilion on 100 percent hard surface asphalt. A newly expanded 13,000 sq.ft. Vendor Pavilion, also on asphalt and fully climate controlled, housed over 130 vendors, from leather boots and furs, to a food-court-style seating area for the Food Truck Showcase and a jumbotron streaming the live auction, all directly adjacent to the "auction in the round" action. The event got underway on Wednesday with the first preview day followed by an evening seminar, *Cashing In on the Block*, an in-depth presentation and Q&A on how to play the game. Top sales at Russo included a 1967 Chevrolet Cheeta, one of only ten known in the US (\$660,000), a 1965 Shelby GT350 #47 Fastback, one of 562 first-year GT350s built, this one signed by Carroll Shelby (\$341,000), a 99-point Bloomington Gold-winning 1967 Chevrolet Corvette 427/435 Roadster (\$302,500), two 2005 Ford GTs—a low-miles car signed by Steve Saleen (\$236,500) and one with a 698-hp Ford power kit (\$217,250)—a 1969 Dodge Charger Daytona garaged for the past 40 years (\$198,000), a 1967 Chevrolet Corvette 427/400 A/C Roadster (\$175,000) and a 2015 McLaren 650S Spyder (\$156,200). Russo and Steele continued their sale in the weeks following, with a number of vehicles still available by online post-sale auction. ▼ In addition to Scottsdale, Russo and Steele hosts annual auctions in Newport Beach in June and Monterey in August, and has announced a new event at Amelia Island in March 2019. www.russoandsteele.com



Silver Auctions Arizona

21st Arizona January Auction
 Thursday-Sunday, Jan 18-21, 2018 (check-in from Tues Jan 16)
 We-Ko-Pa Resort & Conference Center - (AZ 87 Beeline Hwy, north of Fountain Hills)

▼ Silver is the only auction house with multiple sales in Arizona each year: during January Auction Week, again in March, and a third around November. It's also the farthest afield of the January events, held at We-Ko-Pa Resort and Conference Center at Fort McDowell, north of Fountain Hills on the Beeline Highway (AZ 87) and well worth the drive, a refreshing getaway. Silver has some of the most eclectic, attainable and readily driveable auction vehicles you can still find. In January 2017, they sold 241 vehicles for a total of \$3,343,913—under \$15,000 each, average—from great values in the tens of thousands, over 100 vehicles at under \$10,000 and some in just the hundreds. Last fall, Silver Auctions (based in Spokane WA, with other auctions throughout the Northwest) sold their Arizona operation to longtime enthusiastic vintage car hobbyist Emmett Rice, founder and operator of Vintage Autohaus & Imports in Amarillo TX, joined by Andy Stone, formerly of Leake Auctions; Jason Rose, former VP of operations at Barrett-Jackson; Rob Brunton, formerly with Penske Automotive and Leake; and Rodney Stokes, general sales manager for Vintage Autohaus. Silver's bigger tent this year was full of hospitality for a bigger crowd they have long deserved. Silver Auctions Arizona's parking lot feels as though you have just found the coolest random used car lot in the world. Our dream is to stock our garage at Silver and just keep reselling and restocking ad infinitum. We were unable to get auction results for January 2018, but will keep an eye peeled. ▼ Now with new owners, Silver Auctions Arizona is the only event running more than once here, in fact three times—in January, March and November. (The former parent Silver Auctions holds events in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming and the Dakotas.) www.silverauctionsaz.com



Worldwide Auctioneers

2nd Annual Arizona January Auction
 Wednesday, Jan 17, 2018 (preview Sunday-Wednesday, Jan 14-17)
 6460 E McDowell Road, Scottsdale AZ 85257 (McDowell Rd & 64th St/Galvin Pkwy)

▼ The arrival of Worldwide Auctioneers brought the week to a total of seven auctions last year. This year repeated as a one-night auction on Wednesday, first on the calendar other than nine-day Barrett-Jackson. Worldwide concentrates on low volume, high quality and diversity. Last year was all no reserve, while this year moved to a combination of reserve and no reserve. Fifty-three vehicles brought \$6.3 million, \$120,304 per car average, with a sell-through rate of 65 percent. As the newest auction in town, some were notably good buys. Top sales are a cross-section of the event's varied offerings: a 1938 Mercedes-Benz 320 Cabriolet (\$420,000), 1971 Plymouth Hemi 'Cuda (\$418,000), 1965 Shelby GT350 (\$352,000), 1923 Duesenberg Model A Sport Touring (\$346,500), 1957 Kurtis Kraft 500G Indianapolis 500 Roadster (\$308,000), 1939 BMW 327 Cabriolet (\$253,000), first-year 1953 Chevrolet Corvette Roadster (\$250,000), 1966 Rolls-Royce Silver Cloud III Drophead Coupe (\$244,750), 1962 Jaguar E-Type Series I OTS (\$236,500) and a 1959 Maserati 3500 GT Coupe (\$217,250). A highlight was the unprecedented offering of a meticulously restored Adolf Hitler-commissioned 1939 Mercedes-Benz 770K Grosser Offener Tourenwagen. One of just five in private hands, the car was seized by the US Army at the end of World War II, a definitive symbol of Allied triumph over evil. In recognition of its dark origins, Worldwide arranged to contribute 10 percent of proceeds as a charitable contribution to The Simon Wiesenthal Center; however, the car bid to \$7 million, but did not achieve its reserve. ▼ Worldwide also has auctions in Arlington, Texas in April, Pacific Grove (Monterey) in August, and Auburn, Indiana in September, as well as performing select, stand-alone auctions of private collections. www.worldwide-auctioneers.com



SIZE DOESN'T MATTER

EVERY JEEP CAN CONQUER THE BIG STUFF AND SLIP THROUGH THE TIGHT SPOTS. PERSONALITY MAY POINT YOU TOWARD YOUR PICK.

BY JOE SAGE

Size does matter, of course, which is why Jeep has subcompact, compact, midsize and full size SUV offerings—Renegade, Compass, Cherokee and Grand Cherokee. And then there's the world-of-its-own Wrangler, though as sales of the Wrangler 4-Door continue to climb, it does overlap the wider world of Jeeps by a number of key measures. No matter how you slice it, each offers the full capabilities and unmistakable brand identity of Jeep: the four sport utes all offer Trailhawk models (and Wrangler has the Rubicon)—clear proof all are engineered to meet Jeep's own strenuous standards for their nameplate.

Size may not end up being your main criterion when Jeep-shopping. Wrangler aside, since it has its own appeal and purpose, many will choose from among the four by comparing specific dimensions, tow capacity and other objective comparables. Our chart of a few basics gives some feel for this, providing some confirmations and some surprises. Lengths and wheelbases stairstep almost linearly, with a slight bit more gap from Compass to Cherokee. Width and front legroom are all close. Cargo volume drops in the Cherokee from the smaller

	LENGTH	WHEELBASE	WIDTH	FR LEGROOM	CARGO VOL	GRND CLRNCE	WEIGHT	TOWING	BASE PRICE
RENEGADE	166.6	101.2	74.2	41.2	18.5-50.8	6.7-8.7	3044-3573	0-2000	\$17,995
COMPASS	173.0	103.8	73.8	41.8	27.2-59.8	8-8.5	3184-3633	0-2000	\$20,995
CHEROKEE	182.0	107 ±	73-75 ±	41.1	25.8-54.9	8.7	3655-4108	2000-4500	\$23,995
GRAND CHEROKEE	189.8	114.8	76.5	40.3	36.3-68.3	8.6-11.3	4545-5374	6200-7400	\$30,595

Compass, but tow capacity is significantly more. Weights overlap considerably at the smaller end, and the price walk fights to avoid much overlap.

Engine and drivetrain options are a big part of the overlap in clearances, weight, towing and price. With that and the fact that size classifications themselves are increasingly blurring throughout the industry, we suspect a great many people will choose their favorite Jeep from among probably two or three out of the four that might most closely match their anticipated size needs, but ultimately by one model's individual style and personality.

The Jeep SUVs are anything but a cookie-cutter resized set of the same thing. Renegade, the smallest, belies its size with a beefy presence that reflects the Wrangler. The style and personality of the compact Compass, new last year (replacing both the prior Compass and Patriot) have led it to be called the baby Grand Cherokee by many, but they are well apart in size and price.

Between Compass and Grand Cherokee sits the nominally midsize Jeep Cherokee—closer to the Compass in wheelbase and cargo, closer to Grand Cherokee's length, cleanly between them in weight, and differentiated by a favorable price-to-towing ratio, as it were, against the smaller two.

Jeep Cherokee designer Brian Nielander sums it up: "The Jeep family has shared traits, but each is a bit different. There's the hard core side with Wrangler, there's the premium side with Grand Cherokee, and all the rest are in between."

Cherokee's streamlined, bold—and somewhat unexpected—styling set it apart when it was born (in 2013 as a 2014 model, replacing the Liberty in the lineup—and yes, Jeep has a great many really strong names in reserve)—with its bevel-slant-ed grille, unusual front headlight and DRL treatment and high-set taillights above a largely blank

KEEP RIGHT >>



SPECIFICATIONS

LAYOUT	.....	Transverse front engine, 4x2/4x4
CONSTRUCTION	.....	Steel uniframe
ASSEMBLY	.....	Belvidere Assembly Plant, Illinois
ENGINE (2.4L PZEV)	.....	2.4L 16v I-4 MultiAir w sequential multiport electronic returnless injection, chain-driven SOHC
HP/TORQUE	.....	180 hp (6400 rpm)
	.....	171 lb-ft (4600 rpm)
COMPRESSION RATIO	.....	10.1
FUEL	.....	.87 octane regular unleaded
OIL / COOLANT CAPACITY	.....	5.5 qt / 7.1 qt
MPG	.....	tdb
ENGINE BUILD	.....	Dundee Engine Plant, Mich
ENGINE (V6)	.....	3.2L 24v Pentastar V6 chain-driven DOHC, engine stop/start (ESS), hydraulic roller finger followers
HP/TORQUE	.....	271 hp (6400 rpm)
	.....	239 lb-ft (4400 rpm)
COMPRESSION RATIO	.....	10.7:1
FUEL	.....	.87 octane regular unleaded
OIL / COOLANT CAPACITY	.....	6 qt / 9.7 qt
MPG	.....	tdb
ENGINE BUILD	.....	Trenton Engine Plant, Mich
ENGINE (2.0L)	.....	2.0L 16v VVT D1 I-4 turbo chain-driven DOHC, engine stop/start (ESS)
HP/TORQUE	.....	270 hp (5250 rpm)
	.....	295 lb-ft (3000-4500 rpm)
COMPRESSION RATIO	.....	10.0:1
FUEL	.....	.87 reg unl ok / 91 prem unl recmd
OIL / COOLANT CAPACITY	.....	5.0 qt / 3.4 qt
MPG	.....	tdb
ENGINE BUILD	.....	Trenton Engine Plant, Mich
ALTERNATOR	.....	160 amp / 180 amp opt
BATTERY	.....	700 amp AGM: H7
TRANSMISSION	.....	9-speed automatic
4X4 SYSTEM: ACTIVE DRIVE I (OPT) LATITUDE, LATITUDE PLUS, LIMITED		Fully disconnecting 4x2 mode w auto 4x4 engagement, full-time 4x4 mode w active on-demand clutch
4X4 SYSTEM: ACTIVE DRIVE II (OPT) LATITUDE PLUS, LIMITED		Fully disconnecting 4x2 mode w auto 4x4 engagement, electronic 4x4 Low & Neutral range shift, active on-demand clutch, electronic hill descent control
4X4 SYSTEM: ACTIVE DRIVE LOCK (STANDARD) TRAILHAWK		Selec-Speed control, electronic 4x4 Low & Neutral range shift, full-time 4x4 mode, active on-demand clutch, mechanical locking differential, electronic hill descent control
LOW RANGE	.....	2.92:1
STEERING	.....	electric power rack & pinion
TURNING CIRCLE	.....	4x2 37.6 ft / 4x4 37.7-38.1 ft
SUSPENSION/FRONT	.....	McPherson strut, long travel coils, one-piece steel subframe, alum lower control arms, stabilizer bar.
SUSPENSION/REAR	.....	Four-link w trailing arm, alum lateral links, isolated high-strength steel rear cradle, coils, stabilizer bar.
BRAKES	.....	F: 13 vented, single-piston floating opt: 13 vented, twin-piston floating R: 10.95 (opt 12.6) solid, single-pstn floating
WHEELS	.....	17-19" alum, vary by model
TIRES	.....	vary by model, options avail
ANGLES	.....	4x2 4x4 I 4x4 II 4x4 Lock
APPROACH	.....	16.7 18.9 21.0 29.9°
BREAKOVER	.....	17.7 19.5 21.7 22.9°
DEPARTURE	24.6 25.0 27.3 32.3°
GRND CLEARANCE	4x4 Lock 8.7 min running

SPECIFICATIONS: CONT'D >>



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and somewhat concave rear panel. Bold worked. Sales came on strong. But over time, "others have moved more upscale, and Cherokee risked being left behind; it was like the awkward teenager that still needed to grow up a bit," says Nielander.

Sheet metal from the A-pillar forward has been massaged, with the angle in the grille toned down, the lip of the hood raised—"prouder, stronger and more premium," says Nielander—and the unusual front light styling of the prior version replaced by a significantly more mainstream treatment. The reworked front body has the added bonus of better performance in small overlap crash testing. The rear has new taillights, and the license plate moves up to a recess in the liftgate, for a much more balanced appearance ("more mature," per Nielander). There are also five new wheel offerings, including the first 19-inchers on a Cherokee (with top Overland trim).

The restyling is welcome, but the magic is in the continuity—the new look is immediately recognizable as Jeep Cherokee, projecting the same character and model identity as the prior version. It's somehow both dramatically and subtly different at the same time, a nice piece of evolution.

The interior has also had a complete rework, from outer vents to center stack, with more space created in the center console. As with other recent Jeep interiors, there's a range of color and material offerings evocative of various exotic destinations around the globe, from Iceland to Marrakesh.

The new Cherokee is lighter (helped by an aluminum hood, new power steering unit, composite rear liftgate, even a capless fuel filler) and has more cargo capacity (helped by that rear restyling) than the model it replaces.

There are five trim levels, four of which are

available as front-drivers or 4x4s (Trailhawk is 4x4 only). Four-wheel drive runs \$1500 on any trim, and we'd think any Jeep should have it. In reality, about one-third of Cherokees are bought with two-wheel drive, but that's still a 4x4 take rate some 15 points higher than for competitive vehicles.

The Cherokee family offers three engines (see sidebars). A 180-hp 2.4L four, PZEV rated, is standard from base model up to mid-trim 4x2 Limited. From 4x4 Limited on up, a V6 is standard. And on all but the base Latitude, a 2.0L turbo will be available, one point shy of the V6's horsepower but with considerably more torque. Fuel mileage ratings were not yet released for any.

Multiple four-wheel-drive systems are standard or available, depending upon model—see specifications sidebar for their basic variables. As is the norm, not every engine, transfer case, tow capacity or even wheel size is available on every trim.

We drove the new Cherokee in Southern California—on two-lane coastal highways, climbing and curving mountain roads, and of course off-road, including through challenging, wheel-flying articulation tests and fairly extreme rock crawling. The vehicle is just the right size to handle it all—spacious and comfortable on the road, big enough to handle the biggest bumps, small enough to squeeze through the tightest spots. Then again, they all are—even Grand Cherokee is engineered to handle the narrowest spots of the Rubicon Trail.

You may pick your Jeep by very specific criteria that lead you to extremes. But within the range of typical needs from daily driver to Trailhawk weekends, it's just as likely you will find one that rings your bell with its styling and best suits your budget. It's a strong family and a tough choice, but only because there are no bad options. ■



SPECIFICATIONS: CONT'D

LENGTH / WHEELBASE	...182 in / 106.48-107.1 in
CARGO CAPACITY	.....25.8 / 54.9 cu.ft
FUEL CAPACITY	....10.5 (bolt undr)/10 (brsh gd)
WEIGHT: 4X2	.....3655-3779 lb
4X4	.....3953-4046 lb
4X4 LOCK	.....4028-4108 lb
DISTRIB F/R (4X4)	.....57/43%
TOW CAPACITY...all incl Class II hitch	2000 lb
2.4L PZEV w Class III hitch	2000 lb
2.0L w Class III hitch	4000 lb
3.6L V6 w Class III hitch	4500 lb

MODELS:

2.4L PZEV	...Latitude, Latitude Plus, Limited 4x2
3.2L V6	...opt Latitude, Latitude Plus, Limited 4x2
.....standard: Limited 4x4, Overland, Trailhawk	
2.0L TURBO	.....opt all but Latitude

BASE PRICES:

LATITUDE 4X2 (2.4L PZEV)	.....\$23,995
LATITUDE 4X4 (2.4L PZEV)	.....+1500
LATITUDE PLUS 4X2 (2.4L PZEV)	.....26,495
LATITUDE PLUS 4X4 (2.4L PZEV)	.....+1500
LIMITED 4X2 (2.4L PZEV)	.....30,375
LIMITED 4X4 (3.2L V6)	.....+1500
OVERLAND 4X2 (3.2L V6)	.....36,275
OVERLAND 4X4 (3.2L V6)	.....+1500
TRAILHAWK 4X4 ONLY (3.2L V6)	.....33,320



Youth get a taste of their driving futures

Hagerty introduces 10- to 25-year-olds to one-of-a-kind car experiences during Arizona Auction Week

Hagerty, a global company specializing in products and insurance for people who love cars, welcomed more than 180 young enthusiasts in the Scottsdale area to the excitement of cars during Arizona auction week through two special events: The Hagerty Test Garage and NextGen AutoFest. "Kids and young adults have always loved cars

and driving and always will," says Hagerty CEO McKeel Hagerty. "And while Arizona auction week attracts car enthusiasts from around the world, young people in the local community don't often have the chance to be involved. That's why we bring the Hagerty Test Garage and NextGen AutoFest directly to them."



HAGERTY TEST GARAGE

Hagerty Test Garage provided more than 115 fifth-graders from Tavan Elementary School with a hands-on experience at various automotive-based stations. Students were exposed to bidding or being an auctioneer in a model car mock auction; were exposed to early automotive racing history with a 1913 Bugatti; saw up-close automotive restoration demonstrations, ran slot car races; and built a wind-powered car.

The Test Garage culminated in an artwork contest with the theme "Why I'm Excited to Drive." Hali Rosberg, age 11, winner of the contest, said "I am excited to drive because I will be able to go where I please. I'm also excited to drive because I want to get my dream car, a gloss black Mustang GT with flames. It gets me 'revved up' and makes me want to drive even more!"

NEXTGEN AUTOFEST

Held at Scottsdale Auto Park, NextGen AutoFest provided a group of more than 65 students ages 16-25 with access to one-of-a-kind experiences: a preview of auction cars at Worldwide Auctioneers; test driving vintage mini racers from Vintage Kart Co.; and a meet and greet with celebrity guests Sarah "Bogi" Lateiner of Velocity's *All Girls Garage* and Wayne Carini of Velocity's *Chasing Classic Cars*.

While some may expect youth to be less interested in driving, in 2017 alone, more than 2,300 young people fueled their passion for cars with Hagerty youth programs, including eight Driving Experiences, 125 Youth Judging programs, NextGen AutoFest, Test Garage, and the Hagerty Family Car Fest.

Hagerty is a worldwide automotive brand dedicated to the love of driving. They are the world's largest specialty insurance provider for classic vehicles of all kinds. The online Hagerty Valuation Tool is widely viewed by the vintage car community and automotive media as a gold standard for current values and market trend insights. *Hagerty*, the magazine, is among the highest circulation car magazines in the country. Hagerty's "The Barn Find Hunter" is among the most popular automobile focused shows on YouTube, with more than 230,000 subscribers. Hagerty also offers Hagerty Plus, the industry's most comprehensive roadside service, and prides itself on preserving and expanding our automotive heritage through the Historic Vehicle Association (HVA), the RPM Foundation and numerous youth outreach programs. Get more information at 800-922-4050 or www.hagerty.com. Learn more about Hagerty's youth programs at www.hagerty.com/corporate/hobby-support/youth-programs ■

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A NEAR-INFINITE MODEL RANGE

A twofold spread of horsepower, price, style and purpose **BY JOE SAGE**

For those still translating earlier Infiniti badging, the Q50 replaced the G37 sedan (with a Q60 replacing the G37 coupe/convertible). Infiniti Q50 is a compact executive sedan with the persona of a midsize, giving it a fair shot at competing in both segments—more challenges, yet more chances.

With fully 12 models in the Q50 lineup, Infiniti is ready to take on all comers. First are four 208-hp two-liter 4-cylinder turbo (2.0t) models, in two trims, Pure and Luxe, times two drivetrains (rear-wheel or AWD), running from \$34,200 to \$38,550 before add-ons—though as you'll see in our sidebar, add-ons are to be expected.

Next are six three-liter V6 twin-turbo (3.0t) models in three trim/engine levels: four 300-hp Luxe and Sport trims (RWD/AWD, \$38,950 to \$42,650); and two 400-hp twin-intercooled Red Sport (RWD/AWD, \$51,000 or \$53,000). Finally, there are two 3.5L V6 Hybrids (RWD/AWD, \$50,600 or \$52,600).

Short of the Hybrid or the highest-performance Red Sport, and short of adding AWD (to any) for \$2000, our rear-drive Infiniti Q50 3.0t Sport is tops among the most mainstream models, yet closer to the lower end of the price scale, a definite sweet spot. The Sport approaches the style and performance of the Red Sport, with the same aggressive

grille and downforce front lip, though 100 shy of the Red Sport's horses. Fuel mileage is fairly close across the whole lineup—just one point between Sport and Red Sport AWD, and just two between RWD 2.0t and Hybrid. Even pricing (even with options) comes close enough between models that your decision can be made on other attributes.

The driver interface includes a dual-screen center stack with a prominent display for nav and cameras (though we'd wish to swap audio up there when we already know where we're going; and the backup camera needs better nighttime imaging).

Performance in our RWD 3.0t Sport was strong, so much so that its Liquid Platinum (silver) paint didn't do it justice. We might buy a Red Sport just to get its Dynamic Sunstone Red paint (an \$800 option that really juices things up). On the other hand, fewer horses and stealthier paints might keep you out of trouble but not out of fun.

There's enough to keep you busy just among the various Q50 builds at your Infiniti dealer that you may forget the many other possibilities in the segment. That's not brainwashing, just competitive positioning. With this 3.0t Sport model, rule out competitors short on premium and short on sport, and things really narrow down quite a bit. ■

SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE.....3.0L alum alloy V6 twin turbo, resin-coat pistons
DRIVETRAIN.....RWD (AWD available)
HP/TORQUE.....300 hp / 295 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION.....7-spd auto, sport mode, downshift rev match, adapt shift control, hill start assist, VDC/cancel
SUSPENSION.....F: indep double wishbone w stblzr bar; R: multi-link independent w stblzr bar
STEERING.....rack electric power (direct adaptive avail)
BRAKES.....F: 12.6x1.1, R: 12.1x0.6 (larger Red Sport avail)
WHEELS / TIRES.....19x8.5 alum alloy / 245/40R19
LENGTH / WB / TURN CIRC.....189.6 / 112.2 in / 36.7 ft
LEGROOM (F/R).....44.5 / 35.1 in
WEIGHT.....3774 lb
FUEL / FUEL CAPACITY..... premium unleaded / 20.0 gal
MPG.....20/29/23 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE: 3.0t Sport.....**\$40,650**

INCL: LED auto headlights, LED DRLs/fogs/turns/brakes, sport front fascia, leather seats/wheel, 8-way pwr front seats w man thigh extension & lumbar, dual zone auto climate, keyless entry and start, dual touch display, Bluetooth, two USB, aux/video, voice recog, one-touch tinted moonroof.

ESSENTIAL PACK (3.0t SPORT): nav w voice recog, InTouch services, SiriusXM Traffic, heated front seats & wheel, 60/40 fold rear seat, remote engine start.....2500

PROASSIST PACKAGE: blind spot warning, rear cross traffic alert, backup collision intervention, around view monitor w moving object detection, front/rear sonar, predictive fwd collision warning, fwd emergency braking.....1650

PERFORMANCE PACKAGE: dynamic digital suspension, sport brakes w silver paint calipers, paddle shift.....1500

SENSORY PACKAGE (SPORT): Bose 16-spkr Performance Series Centerpoint surround sound audio, power tilt/tele wheel, memory for seat, steering column, mirrors, advanced climate control, interior ambient lighting, auto-dim outside mirrors.....2650

INFINITI ILLUMINATED KICK PLATES.....465

DESTINATION CHARGE.....995

TOTAL.....**\$50,410**

A new balance point. by Joe Sage

The GMC Acadia used to be a full-size utility and was the first seven-seater that made us realize we personally like those, even driving solo. Last year, Acadia evolved into a midsize—bigger than the five-seat Terrain, smaller than the up-to-eight Yukon line. The net result is an Acadia that's still a seven-seater but doesn't have to be: when set up for five seats, you have a healthy 41.7 cu.ft. of cargo space, or pop up the third row and you can haul soccer kids and 12.8 cu.ft. of cargo—a tradeoff in the ratio of cargo to people, but generous in the majority of one-to-five-seat situations.

There are six flavors of Acadia, starting with SL (\$29,995) and running through SLE-1, SLE-2, SLT-1, SLT-2 to Denali (\$46,095). Our SLT-1 is about 60 percent of the way through the price range, yet has a rich leather interior in Kalahari brown and black, with considerable pizzazz.

Our model had some feature shortcuts, such as one-touch down but not up for the driver's window.

On the plus side, the extensive features it does have were intuitive and quick to configure. The touchscreen had us set up with radio presets good for our week in just minutes, and an owner can surely become a virtuoso with more time. Headlight controls

were a little odd, but not for long. Instruments are clear and comfortable, with easy controls for temperature and air flow. There's impressive completeness but refreshing simplicity to the layout.

With all seats up, rear cargo volume is small indeed. But dropping the third row seats is fast and easy—a strap on the back of each retracts the headrests, then the seat goes flat. Third row seats are small, as is typical, but overall it's a good balance of possible configurations. And an adventurous twosome has almost 80 cu.ft. of cargo space.

One comic frustration was with the liftgate. When parked in a tight garage, you might want to open it just a little, to grab a small package—but it only wants to open all the way, yet won't, rather bumping your wall then slamming shut before you can grab anything. No choice but to drive back out.

Ours had all-wheel drive, which we favor. This pushed our Acadia a bit above two tons, not bad for a seven-seater. It also tows two tons, and even with average fuel mileage, its 22-gallon tank gives 550 miles of highway range. Bearing the heavier V6 (there's a four available), ours felt somewhat ponderous upon acceleration, cornering or maneuvers. Its torque is noticeably lower than its horsepower. Few soccer moms or dads seek neck-snapping performance, though, and in motion, it's a solid ride. ■

SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE.....3.6L DOHC VVT dir inj V6 (2.5L I-4 avail)
DRIVETRAIN.....AWD (FWD available)
HP/TORQUE.....310 hp / 271 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION.....HydraMatic 6-speed auto
SUSPENSION.....F: MacPherson, direct-act stblzr bar; R: 5-link indep, coils w stblzr bar
STEERING.....elec vari-effort power, active return assist
BRAKES.....F: 12.6" / R: 12.4"
WHEELS/TIRES.....18-in alum / P235/65 R18 a/s
LENGTH/WHEELBASE.....193.6 / 112.5 in
TURNING CIRCLE.....38.7 ft
HEADROOM (F/2/3).....(w/o sunroof) 40.3 / 39.6 / 37.2 in
LEGROOM (F/2/3).....41.0 / 39.7 / 31.1 in
CARGO VOLUME.....12.8 / 41.7 / 79.0 cu.ft
WEIGHT.....(FWD 4-cyl 3956 lb) AWD V6 4259 lb
TOW CAPACITY.....4000 lb
FUEL CAPACITY.....22.0 gal
MPG.....17/25/20 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE.....**\$41,560**

ALL TERRAIN PACKAGE: 7-passenger seats, advanced AWD system, hill descent control, 20" aluminum wheels, black roof rails.....1800

DUAL SKYSCAPE SUNROOF.....1400

EXTERIOR CONVENIENCE PACKAGE: Roof rack cross rails, molded assist steps.....860

TRAILERING PACKAGE: w active tow.....650

NAVIGATION.....495

QUICKSILVER METALLIC PAINT.....395

GMC INTERIOR PROTECTION PACKAGE: All-weather floor mats 3 rows, all-weather rear cargo mat.....300

DESTINATION CHARGE.....975

TOTAL.....**\$48,435**



Just for fun.

by Joe Sage

Head-turning looker, persona projector, hands-on performer

When I once mentioned the low mileage on a performance sports car of our own at the dealership. "These all have low mileage," the service rep noted. "They're everybody's second or third car." Case in point: the Alfa Romeo 4C Spider, an absolute blast to drive, but about as far from a do-everything daily driver as you can get.

Getting in and out is the first challenge—the taller you are or the bigger your feet, the moreso. But once in, time to fire it up and get underway.

The shifter is a four-button affair (neatly in a quadrifoglio pattern): A/M in a red circle at the left (auto/manual); "1" up top, N on the right, R at the bottom. The parking brake is a classic manual lever between the seats. There is no Park, as it's a twin-clutch manual, accessed electronically by these buttons and paddle shifters (the shift buttons are tucked under the dash, where a shift lever would never fit). Or you can run in Auto, but you still start out by pressing "1." Give it some gas and it feels as though the brake is still on, though it's not, so give it some more. This car seems to want to you to let it know you're the boss.

The powertrain has notable sound effects, fun in their own right, though hard to reduce if there's a

cop next to you or you're in a family neighborhood.

The Alfa 4C begs for the open road. It wants to be pushed. And you'll want to push it.

Steering is manual rack and pinion, with a heavy touch that's a bit of a workout but rates very high for connected feel, as does the suspension. It's a full-on sporting experience.

Even with the Spider's removable top (also a manual affair; release inside, but step out to roll up from both edges), the car is remarkably solid and tight. Every change in pavement surface and every Botts' dot is communicated to you accurately. The Alfa 4C is as track performance kartlike as anything you'll find. It's not the kind of car that makes you wish you had 12 errands around town, but it's definitely the kind that makes you think you need to drive to Payson for lunch. The shift points are so well mapped, you can perform very well just in "A" much of the time. In top performance drive mode, on your way to that high country sandwich, you'll engage the paddles.

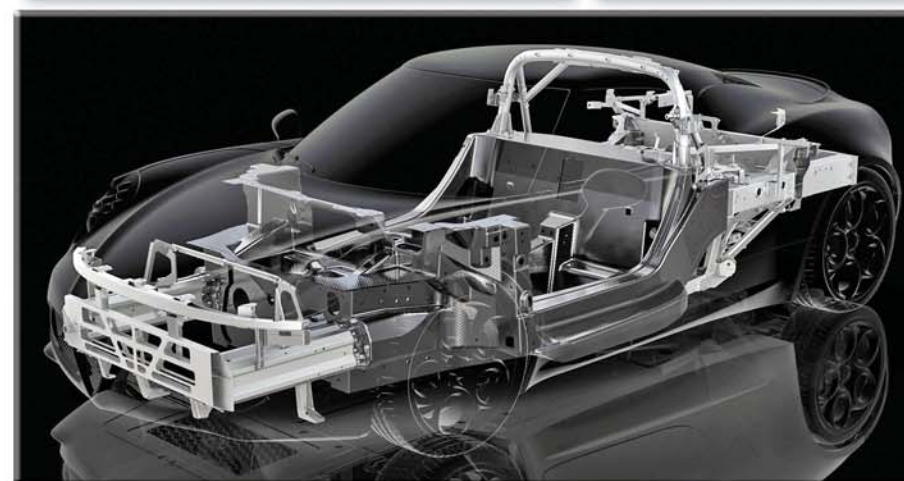
Instruments and controls are both spartan and very complete, a winning combination. The interior is big enough to be comfortable, but small enough that even an owner's manual just over 100

pages is relegated to the trunk. The car is constructed of an extremely strong and lightweight unidirectional carbon fiber monocoque tub, with aluminum structure in front and behind. The body shell is low-density, high-strength composite. There is no front trunk, despite a body seam that suggests one—structure, suspension and your footwell occupy this space.

A transverse mid-engine and rear drive leave 3.7 cubic feet of trunk space in the rear. The rear hatch (released by a button on the driver's door frame) is heavy and requires a rod to keep it open—creating a near-comic scenario in any number of what might best be three-handed maneuvers.

The Alfa 4C requires a high level of attention. The experience is raw yet rewarding, in the best tradition of a sports car. Whereas so many of today's performance cars have not only shot into six figures but also into grand touring luxury and size, the Alfa 4C Spider has that true sports car character and high level of engagement, though with such modern conveniences as power windows, traction control and driving modes, unlike such a car from 60 years ago.

It's increasingly rare to find something cool in the performance and sports categories that everybody else doesn't already have. But the Alfa Romeo 4C is still relatively rare and certainly distinctive, even here. ■



SPECIFICATIONS

SEATING CAPACITY	.....two
ENGINE	.....1742cc turbo 4-cyl mid/transverse
HP/TORQUE	.....237 hp / 258 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION	.....6-speed automatic / manual twin clutch
DRIVETRAIN	.....RWD
STEERING	.....manual rack & pinion
SUSPENSION	.....F: double wishbone: high-strength tubular control arms, alum knuckles & tubular anti-roll bar; R: MacPherson: rear strut: shocks w hollow piston rod & side-load spring; high-strength steel tubular control arms & aluminum knuckles
BRAKES	.....F: 12x1.10 vented; Brembo fixed four-piston calipers. R: 11.5x.087 vented; dual opposing calipers. Tandem diaphragm pwr w zero lost travel.
WHEELS	.....Fluoroformed alum alloy, 5-dual-spoke staggered F: 17x7, F: 18x8
TIRES	.....Pirelli P Zero AR 3-Season: F: 205/45ZR17, R: 235/40ZR18
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	.....157.0 in / 93.7 in
TURNING CIRCLE	.....40.5 ft.
CARGO VOLUME	.....3.7 cu.ft
WEIGHT / DISTRIB F/R	.....2487 lb / 41/59%
FUEL / CAPACITY	.....9.1 premium unl / 10.5 gal
MPG	.....24/34/28 (city/hwy/comb)
BASE PRICE	.....\$65,900
ALFA ROSSO (RED) PAINT	.....1500
RACING MICROFIBER/LEATHER SEATS	.....500
SPIDER CONVENIENCE GROUP (PKG 22A): cruise control, rear parking assist	.....900
SPIDER TRACK PKG 3: leather/microfiber steering wheel, race tuned suspension	.....1600
ALFA ROMEO RED CAR COVER	.....400
CARBON FIBER ITALIAN FLAG MIRRORS	.....300
BI-XENON HEADLAMPS	.....1000
EXHAUST: Akrapovic dual mode cntr mount	.....3000
AUDIO: Alpine premium w subwoofer	.....900
TIRES: 205/40R18 & 235/35R19 performance	.....1200
WHEELS: 18x7 & 19x8.5 bright fan spoke	.....1800
BATTERY CHARGER	.....150
ALFA RED BREMBO BRAKE CALIPERS	.....350
DESTINATION CHARGE	.....1595
TOTAL	.....\$81,095

HAGERTY FUTURE COLLECTIBLE

Hagerty classic car experts have added the Alfa Romeo 4C Spider to their "Hot List" of Future Collectible Vehicles—chosen for their joy of driving and anticipated future collectibility for enthusiasts—citing a stand-out combination of Italian design and hand-craftsmanship, race-inspired technologies and supercar level performance. "At a time when many vehicles are growing increasingly larger and more sophisticated, the Alfa Romeo 4C Spider offers a refreshing alternative with an extremely lightweight and simple roadster," said CEO McKeel Hagerty. "It provides the same amount of fun as far more exotic and pricier vehicles." The Hagerty Hot List represents the most collectible cars under \$100,000 to buy today. In order to be selected by Hagerty experts for their annual Hot List, a vehicle must deliver the joy of driving today, will continue to further every gearhead's love of driving and become collectible in the future. ■

The \$150 trickle charger on our car's option list is a worthwhile investment, as you will likely not be driving this car every day. But oh, those days you do!

ISM RACEWAY NEWS & UPDATES

The race facility known since 1964 as Phoenix International Raceway has a new name for 2018: ISM Raceway, as part of a multi-year partnership between the track and smart venue tech pioneer ISM Connect. A groundbreaking new ISM 360° Connect network “digital fan engagement experience” has advanced technology and data capabilities to interconnect fans, partners and the venue itself with digital display screens, interactive experiences, social media integration and a mobile app providing schedules, maps or other content. Experiences will include the new infield Fan Zone, new pedestrian tunnel connecting the infield to the expanded grandstands and ISM Canyon (one of two new Canyon interactive entrances, with over 20,000 sq.ft. of fan engagement and brand activation).

REDEVELOPMENT AND GRAND OPENING

The \$178 million ISM Raceway Project Powered by DC Solar modernization (DC Solar is title sponsor and multi-year sponsor of a redesigned Midway) will be completed by November 2018. // The Bobby Allison Grandstand is roughly doubled, with the new section providing excellent shade for both portions. Two Canyon entry towers will have four new escalators and five new elevators. The existing Allison grandstand will be upgraded, and both sections will have individual seats with cupholders and free in-seat WiFi. // As you arrive for spring race weekends this year (see facing page), the new Canyon 1 escalators are finished, and the new Bar & Grill is open for business. You'll find the Petty grandstand gone, with Bryan, Foyt and existing Bobby Allison grandstands still in use. // The start-finish line is still in its familiar place, but after IndyCar in April, it will be moved to old Turn 2, in front of the expanded grandstands and just before the well-known dog leg, shaking up competition considerably, launching into one of the most challenging areas of the track. Fans will have a great view of both pre-race and Gatorade Victory Lane, now centrally located in front of the new grandstand. // Concessions, merchandise stands, guest services and medical center will all be new or completely renovated. New suites in a variety of sizes for groups of 18 and up get new seating for easier mingling between outside and in. The new Curve

Fan Hospitality Club was finished and open by last fall's NASCAR Weekend. // You'll see progress on the new pedestrian-only tunnel near current Turn 2, which will access a completely redesigned infield—from the new DC Solar Power Pavilion to a Fan Zone featuring a first-of-its-kind Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series Garage, placing fans face-to-face with the superstars of the sport, over a waist-high fence right into the garages, as their favorite teams prepare for the races. There will also be glassed-in garage hospitality suites. // Get ready for the Grand Opening of the completed facility during NASCAR Fall Race Weekend, November 9-11, 2018. All the north grandstands will be down, with RV camping in their place, the entire new grandstand and Canyons will be open, the start-finish line will be moved, the new infield Fan Zone and Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series Garage will be open, and the ISM 360° Connect digital fan experience will be fully implemented. You won't want to miss it!

ISM RACEWAY AND TICKETGUARDIAN

ISM Raceway has a new partnership with mobile ticketing insurance provider TicketGuardian, as title sponsor of the Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series race on March 11 (see facing page) and to offer fans a new benefit: now when you buy tickets to ISM Raceway events, you'll have the option of TicketGuardian's ticket protection coverage.

ISM RACEWAY PRIX VIEW AND INDYCAR NEWS

Fans gathered at ISM Raceway on February 10 for a Prix View open test session, with virtually the entire field of drivers on the track preparing for the 2018 Verizon IndyCar Series, opening March 11 in St Petersburg, Florida, with the Phoenix Grand Prix in April the second race of the season (see facing page). Drivers were also available for an autograph session. // Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing swept the fastest times during Prix View. Driver Takuma Sato posted the fastest lap of the weekend in Saturday's evening session, at 189.855 mph; he was also fastest in afternoon practices on both Friday and Saturday. Teammate Graham Rahal topped the leaderboard in Friday night's session, with a lap of 189.090 mph. Also fast throughout the test sessions were Team Penske's Will Power (fastest lap 189.769 mph), AJ Foyt Enterprise's Tony Kanaan (189.632 mph), Team Penske's Josef Newgarden (189.399 mph) and Andretti Autosport's Marco Andretti (189.008 mph). // This was a first drive of the streamlined 2018 IndyCar aero kit (shown below), which had been revealed at the North American International Auto Show in Detroit just three weeks earlier. Following six months of testing controlled by IndyCar and engine builders Chevrolet and Honda, the car has a “Coke bottle-shape” that decreases downforce and shifts weight balance more toward the front, with less reliance on the front wing, sidepods moved forward for better driver protection, a lower floor, and about 35 pounds removed from the rear. The aero kit can be applied to an existing chassis, for significant cost savings. ■



NASCAR SPRING RACE WEEKEND

FRIDAY MARCH 9: GATORADE POLE DAY: TicketGuardian 500 NASCAR Weekend kicks off with practice sessions for both the Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series and NASCAR XFINITY Series before the starting line-up is set for the Ticket Guardian 500. • Race at 3:15 pm.

SATURDAY MARCH 10: DC SOLAR 200: Don't forget your tank top and sunglasses when you come watch the up and coming drivers in NASCAR in the DC Solar 200, NASCAR XFINITY Series Race. • Race at 2:00 pm.

SUNDAY MARCH 11: TICKETGUARDIAN 500: Don't miss your opportunity to experience NASCAR Goes West with Champions Kevin Harvick and Kyle Busch taking on young guns like Kyle Larson and Chase Elliott on the track. • Race at 12:30 pm.



ISM RACEWAY
PHOENIX, ARIZONA

PHOENIX GRAND PRIX INDYCAR WEEKEND

25TH ANNIVERSARY OF MARIO ANDRETTI'S FINAL CAREER WIN: As the stars of IndyCar take over the track in Saturday night's Phoenix Grand Prix—the second race of the season—the weekend will be filled with events celebrating Andretti as one of racing's most iconic and renowned racing legends, as well as ISM Raceway's rich open-wheel history. The event will be highlighted by a reunion of the drivers who participated in the 1993 IndyCar race that culminated in Andretti's last open-wheel victory. Fans can interact with these legendary drivers in a panel discussion and autograph session. // In the 1993 IndyCar race at Phoenix, driving for legendary Newman/Haas Racing, Andretti became the oldest recorded IndyCar winner on a traditional race course (at 53 years, one month and seven days old), as well as the first driver to win IndyCar in four different decades and the only driver to win races in five consecutive decades. Andretti still holds IndyCar records for most starts (407), most pole positions earned (67), most laps led (7,595) and most career top-three finishes (144). // ISM Raceway will celebrate his remarkable accomplishments through special merchandise, trading cards, a tribute panel and special commemorative items for fans. // The 1.022-mile oval at Phoenix has hosted 63 Indy cars races dating back to 1964.

FRIDAY APRIL 6: VERIZON INDYCAR SERIES QUALIFYING: Verizon IndyCar Series teams adjust their cars during practice as they prepare to take on the Phoenix Grand Prix. Action ends at night, when Verizon IndyCar Series drivers set the field during qualifying. • Race at 5:00 pm.

SATURDAY APRIL 7: PHOENIX GRAND PRIX, VERIZON INDYCAR SERIES: High-speed action returns to ISM Raceway for the Phoenix Grand Prix. Catch IndyCar's brightest stars under the lights for 250 miles. In addition, don't miss the return of the USAC Silver Crown Champ Car Series in the Phoenix Copper Cup and the Vintage Desert Classic prior to the Phoenix Grand Prix (see below). • Race at 6:00 pm.

ALSO: USAC QUARTER MIDGET SERIES: The USAC Quarter Midget division will return to ISM Raceway on the DC Solar Power Pavilion. Among the former Quarter Midget stars that raced at Phoenix and made their name in motorsports include Tucson native Alex Bowman and 2015 NASCAR K&N Pro Series West Champion Chris Eggleston. • Friday and Saturday.

• **USAC SILVER CROWN CHAMP CAR SERIES:** The USAC Silver Crown Phoenix Copper Cup will take place on Saturday, April 7. Catch the stars of tomorrow, past participants have included Tony Stewart, Kasey Kahne, Cole Whitt, JJ Yeley, Mike Bliss, and more! • Saturday.

• **VINTAGE DESERT CLASSIC:** Presented by *Classic Racing Times*, Friday and Saturday, April 6-7. Get up close and personal with some of the most legendary cars in open-wheel racing history, by purchasing an INDYCAR Paddock and Pit Pass to personally access the Vintage Desert Classic Paddock. Take photos of these legendary cars that embody racing history, meet some of the owners, then watch the cars as they take the track as part of an exhibition run prior to the Phoenix Grand Prix, Verizon IndyCar Series Race. • Exhibition run: Saturday 4:30 to 4:40 pm.

• **HISTORIC CAR CORRAL:** In recognition of a long racing and automotive tradition in Arizona, a car corral on the DC Solar Power Pavilion will have legendary open-wheel racecars on display, with Phoenix local race legends also on hand for a fan autograph session.

CAMPING: Don't just attend a race, live the NASCAR experience as a resident of ZOOMTOWN, U.S.A.® ISM Raceway. Each camping space comes with two passes: one for your RV, one for your tow or personal vehicle (excluding infield camping). RV services (fresh water, pumping, trash pick-up and showers) are also available.

RV SPACE: Call 866-408-RACE (7223)

TICKETS: Online: ISMRaceway.com // **Phone:** 866-408-RACE (7223)

In person: Raceway ticket office, 125 S Avondale Blvd, Suite 200, Avondale AZ 85323. ■



(At right) Mario Andretti at Phoenix Raceway in 1993. Photo courtesy ISM Raceway.



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New! New! New!

The Greasemonkeys have been developing a full line of all steel metal tool boxes with lift out tray and the most cool car guy graphics. We may have to call these "deco-boxes," as we've got the feeling that they just may be too good to stash tools in.

- 16-inch durable steel tool boxes
- Rugged all steel end cap construction for greater strength
- Powder coated rust resistant
- Quality color graphics
- Nickel-plated steel latch and hinge provides added security
- Full length tote tray inside
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Car Guy Vintage Motorcycle Steel Tool Box

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Car Guy Hotrod Steel Tool Box

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Car Guy Car Repair Steel Tool Box

SKU: 10-BKG-MCR

\$39.95 each

Eligible for free shipping!

♥ Not only are your products awesome, but the service and the people are too! I very much intend to pass the word along about how great it is to do business with the Busted Knuckle Garage.
— Many thanks! Jackie B.

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



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

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

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NEW VEHICLE REVEAL : SALEEN SPORTRUCK AT BARRETT-JACKSON

SALEEN 700-HP TRUCK

HOT NEW PICKUP REVEALED AT BARRETT-JACKSON

In addition to displaying and auctioning hundreds of desirable vehicles at its January auction in Scottsdale, Barrett-Jackson has become the site for a number of new model reveals. This year, Steve Saleen, founder, designer, CEO and mastermind of Saleen Automotive, and company president Amy Boylan chose the event as the time and place to reveal their latest Saleen-designed performance vehicle: the 2018 Saleen Sportruck.

Steve Saleen's extensive history in truck racing boasts the most wins in the SCCA Truck Series, including a national championship. Saleen built their first Sportrucks in the 1980s, including Ranger pickups, S331 pickups, and a limited-edition Supercharged Harley Davidson for Ford. The builder's level of performance and design is well established among truck enthusiasts, and this lat-

est model has been highly anticipated.

The Saleen Sportruck, starting at \$51,965, is available with a number of powertrain options, including a 700-hp V8 Supercharged edition with a Saleen-designed full-flow exhaust system, in any of three cab styles—RegularCab, SuperCab or SuperCrew—each with special attention to exceptional aerodynamic design. The truck features signature Saleen fender vents, a minimum-drag, high-downforce front fascia, side skirts and a unique functional rear fascia—all with no compromise to its utility as a truck. Saleen Racecraft Suspension has Racecraft specific-rate front coil springs, front performance shocks, specific-rate rear leaf springs, rear performance shocks, and front sway bar and bushings.

The Sportruck rides on Saleen 22x10 alloy

wheels and General Tire Grabber 305/40R22 rubber, front and rear.

The Performance interior includes Saleen signature two-tone leather sport seats with Saleen embroidered headrests, front and rear floor mats with Saleen embroidery, Saleen race-inspired pedals, Saleen white face gauges, Saleen race-inspired center-stripe leather-wrapped steering wheel and a serialized Saleen plaque.

"The return to our heritage with the Saleen Sportruck is a perfect fit for our program. We now have a full line of high-performance vehicles carrying the Saleen Brand," said Saleen.

The Saleen Sportruck is offered in 13 exclusive Saleen Colorlab colors and includes a 3-year/36,000 mile Signature Series limited warranty.

Saleen's three main product lines are its Saleen Super Cars, Saleen Signature Series, and Saleen Performance Vehicles, all designed and engineered at Saleen headquarters in Corona, California. ■



Extreme C-Class: AMG C63 S. by Joe Sage

The Mercedes-AMG C63 is readily identified by its more aggressive grille and lower front air dam, dramatic rear haunches, larger performance wheels and quad exhaust. Big differences lie under the skin, notably a 4.0-liter biturbo V8, a hand-built AMG wonder akin to that in the GT and GT C Roadsters and Coupes, with 469 horses in the C63—or in the case of our higher-tuned C63 S Cabriolet, 503 hp. The S version also has an electronic limited-slip rear end (mechanical in the non-S C63), even larger wheels, dynamic engine mounts, carbon ceramic front brakes and a sportier steering wheel to remind you you made the top choice. One of the first places we took it was to lunch with NASCAR driver Brad Keselowski, so we were, well, inspired on our drive back to the office. This car is best when taken seriously and performs better the more seriously you take it—its joys increase exponentially when pushed.

We had spent considerable time, already, playing with drive modes (Comfort, Sport, Sport Plus and Racing) and scrutinizing the manual for some ten minutes wading through details of its soft top operation (concluding from its potential complexities that it's supposed to be fun and carefree to drive a convertible and shouldn't be like preparing a launch at the Kennedy Space Center). The net takeaway is that it was both easier and more rewarding to simply put the top down (one button on the console), raise the front AIRCAP and rear wind deflectors (another button), lower four windows at

once (a third console switch), put it in one of the Sport modes, then add more aggressive exhaust acoustics for good measure (a console switch). With power, sound effects and the top down on a sunny, 80-degree February day, the C63 S becomes a very effective tool for doin' things right. As manual shifters at heart, we're not always big users of paddles, but the AMG's tightly tuned sequences quickly became part of our performance dance.

The AMG C63 S is happiest at speed, cornering hard—a performance vehicle that's optimized for exactly these things. Around town, its Comfort and even Sport modes make it a no-compromise daily driver (though its aggressive suspension—or maybe the feel of its electro-mechanical steering—is noticeable in slow turns, say in a parking lot). We tried Race mode only briefly and would need track time to appreciate its differences.

The C models—C43, C63 and C63 S—comprise the AMG lineup's entry point, but this \$80-to-100k model (almost exactly double the cost of the C300 Sedan on the facing page, before or after options) tackles its spot in the performance and prestige pecking order admirably, from all those horses and track-inspired suspension, to luxury sport finishes and features inside and out.

A non-S C63 starts \$8,000 lower than our C63 S, while a C43 (with a 362-hp "AMG-enhanced" 3.0L V6 starts \$12,700 below that, also differentiating itself by coming only with 4MATIC all-wheel-drive, while the C63 and C63 S are rear-drivers only. ■

You can see our blue tester on our social media sites and in the table of contents, but we also like this C63 in Designo Cardinal Red paint (\$1080 vs \$720 for our blue) and AMG forged cross-spoke black wheels (\$2100 vs \$1600 for our silvers).

SPECIFICATIONS (C63 S CABRIO)

ENGINE	handcrafted AMG 4.0L V8 biturbo
DRIVETRAIN	RWD
HP/TORQUE	503 hp / 516 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION	AMG Speedshift MCT 7-spd / paddles
0-TO-60 / TOP SPEED	4.0 sec / 174 mph (elec ltd)
SUSPENSION	F: indep multi-link w coil, sgl-tube shock w contin adjust damp & tubular torsion bar; R: same
STEERING	speed-dep electro-mech rack & pinion
BRAKES	F: 15.4" / R: 14.2"
WHEELS	F: 9x19, R: 10.5x19 cast standard
TIRES	F: 255/35 R19 / R: 285/30 R19 standard
LENGTH/WB/GRND CLEAR	187.0 / 111.8 / 4.0 in
TURNING CIRCLE	37.1 ft
LEGROOM (F/R)	42.0 / tba in
LUGGAGE CAPACITY	(top up/down) 8.8 / tba cu.ft
WEIGHT	4226 lb
FUEL CAPACITY	17.4 gal
MPG	17/22/19 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE	\$81,500
BRILLIANT BLUE METALLIC	720
INCLUDED: Nappa leather, natural grain black ash wood and brushed aluminum trim, black soft top	incl
AMG PERFORMANCE EXHAUST SYSTEM	1750
VENTILATED FRONT SEATS	450
HEADS-UP DISPLAY	990
19" FR 20" R AMG FORGED CROSS-SPOKE WHEELS	1600
EXTERIOR CARBON FIBER PACKAGE II: mirror housings, rear spoiler lip	1750
PREMIUM PACKAGE: Burmeister Surround Sound, power fold mirrors, AIRCAP, semi-auto trunk separator	1300
ADVANCED LIGHTING PACKAGE: Active LED headlamps, adaptive high beam assist, 3-color ambient lighting, AMG illuminated door sills	1090
MULTIMEDIA PACKAGE: COMAND® nav w 3 yrs map updates, 5 yrs traffic/weather (SiriusXM), voice control, 8.4" color display	2100
AMG NIGHT PACKAGE: High-gloss black elements: A-Wing, front bumper trim, side sill inserts, ext mirror housings, rear diffuser trim, black chrome-plate tailpipes, silver-chrome Lamella grille	750
EXTERIOR CARBON FIBER PACKAGE: Front apron A-wing, side sill inserts, rear diffuser trim, silver-chrome Lamella grille	1750
ADVANCED PARK ASSIST PACKAGE: Parktronic w active parking assist, surround view system	1090
PREMIUM DRIVER ASSIST PACKAGE: Active blind spot assist, Distronic Plus w steering assist & stop-and-go pilot, active lane keep assist, Pre-Safe Plus, BAS Plus w cross traffic assist, Pre-Safe brake w pedestrian recognition, speed limit assist	1700
DESTINATION CHARGE	995
TOTAL	\$100,235

Mainstream C-Class: C300. by Joe Sage

The Mercedes-AMG C63 S Cabriolet on the facing page and the Mercedes-Benz C300 Sedan driven here share bloodlines, but were brought up quite differently, that one with its cousin the F1 race driver, this one with its cousin the office executive. For most people, the C300 will be the point of departure, though we can't help but compare and contrast the two.

The C300—with about half the horsepower for about half the price of the C63 S—is 18 percent lighter, 2.5 inches shorter, surprisingly enough a hair closer to the ground (it has smaller wheels) and has a tighter turning circle. (It holds more luggage, too, but after all, the AMG here is a convertible.)

By the time you've spent yourself up from \$40 grand to 60 for a C300 with an option list like ours, though, if performance is more your game, you'll might take a look at the 503-hp AMG C-Class beast on the facing page, at \$80 grand. On the other hand, by the time that C63 S is in turn optioned up to \$100 grand, you may look again at this basic C300.

The Mercedes-Benz C300, with a 2.0L four-cylinder turbo, has plenty of power for its

lighter weight (as with the AMG version, the C300 has aluminum sheet metal over its steel unibody)—enough to dive into that rare gap in traffic and enter a new lane in confidence. The powertrain generates a healthy, competitive growl that falls somewhere halfway between what it is, a 2-liter turbo, and a V8.

The car is feature-laden, giving us a typical mix of creature pleasures and interface frustrations, but is basically a painless and seamless experience from seats to controls.

This is a compact, to the E-Class's midsize, yet it is functionally and experientially very close. This puts it in the fringe of two hugely competitive segments, but its premium attributes give it an edge. The C300 is also available with rear-wheel drive, something quite rare in these segments, but a handling and performance plus, especially well suited to dry Arizona roads (and with stability control for your forays into high country winters—or for two grand (and gaining just 166 pounds while shaving one MPG), you can be ready for anything, any time, with the 4MATIC all-wheel-drive option. ■

SPECIFICATIONS (C300 SEDAN)

ENGINE	2.0L aluminum alloy 4-cyl turbo
DRIVETRAIN	RWD (AWD available)
HP/TORQUE	241 hp / 273 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION	9-speed 9G-Tronic Plus auto
SUSPENSION	F: indep multi-link w coil, single-tube shock w SSD & tubular torsion bar; R: same
STEERING	speed-dep electro-mech rack & pinion
BRAKES	F: 13.0" / R: 11.8"
WHEELS/TIRES	7x17 cast standard / 225/50 R17
LENGTH/WB/GRND CLEAR	184.5 / 111.8 / 3.8 in
TURNING CIRCLE	36.8 ft
LEGROOM (F/R)	41.7 / 35.2 in
LUGGAGE CAPACITY	12.6 cu.ft
WEIGHT	3472 lb
FUEL CAPACITY	17.4 gal
MPG	24/33/27 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE	\$40,250
SELENITE GREY METALLIC	720
OMITTED: Wood console, analog clock	(325)
MB-TEX DASHBOARD & UPPER SILLS	350
HEATED/VENTED FRONT SEATS	1030
PANORAMA ROOF	1000
HEADS-UP DISPLAY	990
19-INCH AMG MULTI-SPOKE WHEELS	500
BURMEISTER SURROUND SOUND	850
LED LOGO PROJECTORS	200
HANDS-FREE PACKAGE: w electronic trunk close	250
LEATHER SEATING PACKAGE: w power passenger seat, 3-position memory, thigh support	1950
ADVANCED LIGHTING PACKAGE: Active LED headlamps, adaptive high beam assist, 3-color ambient lighting, illuminated door sills	1900
MULTIMEDIA PACKAGE: COMAND® nav w 3 yrs map updates, 5 yrs traffic/weather (SiriusXM), voice control, 8.4" color display, touchpad	2200
AMG LINE PACKAGE: AMG body styling, brushed alum pedals w rubber studs, AMG floor mats, sport suspension, sport steering, perforated front discs w Mercedes-Benz calipers, rear spoiler	2175
ADVANCED PARK ASSIST PACKAGE: Parktronic w active parking assist, surround view system	1090
PREMIUM DRIVER ASSIST PACKAGE: SiriusXM, Keyless-GO, active blind spot assist, Distronic Plus w steering assist & stop-and-go pilot, active lane keep assist, Pre-Safe Plus, BAS Plus w cross traffic assist, Pre-Safe brake w pedestrian recognition, speed limit assist	3050
DESTINATION CHARGE	995
TOTAL	\$59,175



Changes in latitude

A long, semi-purposeless drive in Ram's purpose-built Rebel. By Joe Sage

Ordering your own new pickup to spec is one of the more complicated vehicle purchases you might tackle. Fuel, engine, transmission, transfer case and rear end choices, times cab and bed choices, times all the other options and packages in the book, give you hundreds if not thousands of possible combinations. Checking available inventory can save a lot of pain and suffering. Having a new truck just plopped in your lap can also do this.

RAM REBEL: When we receive a truck to drive for a week for review, we don't have to make those tough choices. This 2018 Ram 1500 Rebel Crew Cab 4x4 arrived in white and black over black leather, with upgraded Uconnect and audio, Ram Boxes, a tonneau cover and other goodies. Nice specs.

We've had the Ram Rebel for a week before. We've it them at Ram lineup launch events (and are about to drive the all-new 2019 model). We've driven them at trophy competitions including the Texas Truck Rodeo, Active Lifestyle Vehicle Awards in Arizona, and Mudfest (the Pacific Northwest's Outdoor Activity Vehicle of the Year awards). We've driven them at FCA's off-road proving grounds near Chelsea, Michigan. We've driven with the truck's lead engineer, Elizabeth Krear, getting a play-by-play on how none of the impressive Rebel-specific attributes and features compromise any of the elements of a base Ram 4x4—Rebel has specialized suspension and considerably expanded wheel travel for its 33-inch tires, but all its special duty adaptations subtract nothing from the basic capabilities and specs of a mainstream Ram 1500—same fuel mileage, same towing within literally just a few pounds, and so on.

Now that you can order a Rebel with a leather

interior (like our sample here) and with or without bold Rebel graphics (ours came without), it's hard to think of a situation where it wouldn't cover all bases (unless you need more payload or towing, but for that, there's the Ram 2500 Power Wagon).

ROAD TRIP: With one eye always on our vehicle schedule and the other on a map, we hatched half a plan before this truck even arrived: a possible dash up to Northwest Colorado. This drive can be done in about 14 hours nonstop (one friend insists just eleven), but with the scenery en route, not to mention some cliffhangers, it's best done in daylight, with well-timed overnights. A motel stop anywhere from Moab, Utah to Grand Junction, Colorado gives you daylight for spectacular Monument Valley, as well as for any deer, elk, pronghorn, moose and/or blizzards in Northwest Colorado.

With its huge tires and adjustable ride height, a Rebel would be great in the legendary snows of the Colorado Rockies. On the downside, the region was having a low snow year to that point. On the upside, skies and roads were predicted to be clear, and we definitely needed to make good time.

The Ram Rebel would be ready for us Wednesday, but would be at a vehicle drive event in California for its first few days. We arranged to have the truck waiting at the airport, ready to swing home for some winter gear and head north. Unfortunately, this would run us through Monument Valley in the dark, but it would work overall.

ARIZONA: We were interested in fuel mileage for the long haul, with Rebel's big 5.7L HEMI V8's fuel-saving "multi-displacement" cylinder deactivation at cruising speeds (the same trick that makes a Dodge Challenger Hellcat a reasonable daily driver when not out thrashing it at the track). Note: you

can also buy the Rebel with a Pentastar V6 (and for that matter as a 4x2, which a few do each year).

In the first 30 miles of town and urban freeway, our readout ranged from 16 to 33 mpg regularly, with bursts into the 40s and 50s, even 99 at one point, single digits at another; 16 began to dominate. Climbing I-17 between 2,000-3,000 feet, we were at 10-11 mpg, which could make our long trip twice as expensive as we'd hoped. But as we hit Sunset Point and headed across the grassy open plains, we were reading 17 to 45 mpg. Nice.

Bear in mind, we were driving as normally and energetically as ever, with steep climbs and slower semis, RVs and microcars to conquer in stride.

It had been a long time since breakfast in California, so we pulled off to grab a bite at the Highway 69 exit. "Nice truck," we found ourselves saying reflexively as we got back in. Back on I-17, as we left a lesser truck in the dust on a steep climb, we concluded that one cool thing about the Rebel is that as it gets bigger and tougher, it also gets faster. You do sometimes feel its take-on-anything tires on pavement irregularities just a little, but that's an appropriate part of the balance of duties in this truck. Also, despite our having long legs, we noted it could use a "dead pedal" left footrest.

As we passed the 4000-foot mark (the second time, north of Verde Valley), we noticed the binacle was bearing an "aero" readout—notification that the air-adjustable ride height had automatically hunkered down for our highway speeds.

It was getting dark as we passed through Flagstaff, but we were pretty good on gas, though it's quite a stretch between pumps from there north. Our Rebel had the 32-gallon tank option (a \$445 must-have), so we forged on into the night.

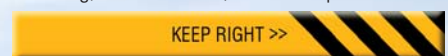
NAVAJO NATION: North on US 89, about half-way from Flagstaff to the US 160 turnoff, you cross into the Navajo Nation, which the route traverses for almost as many miles as the Arizona portion to



(Below) Monument Valley, the ultimate Western panorama, is a Navajo Tribal Park. Though its image shouts "Arizona," it's mostly in Utah. // (Above) Fisher Towers Road and the Colorado River outside Moab. // (Right) Cameron Trading Post in northern Arizona; I-70 through Glenwood Canyon, Colorado.

that point. We stopped at the Cameron Trading Post but didn't refuel yet, nor in Tuba City, as we wanted to minimize our fuel stops on the overall trip. We took on 22.3 gallons in Kayenta. Guesstimating our early mileage around town, this was a rough 15.5 mpg, not bad against its 17 combined rating, considering this included not only local errands, but the climb from 1700 feet in the north Valley to over 7000 near Flagstaff, with a lot of up and down throughout, all in a fast-moving big 4x4.

UTAH: Monument Valley is on the Navajo Nation, a little bit in Arizona but mostly in Utah (the state line is about 23 miles north of Kayenta). Crossing it at night was even a decent one-time trade-off, especially when timed with an almost-full supermoon. As midnight passed, we thought about stopping for the night in Mexican Hat, or Bluff, or Blanding, or Monticello, but each push onward



SPECIFICATIONS

FORMATCrew Cab, 5'7" box
SEATING CAPACITYfive (2/3)
CONSTRUCTIONladder-type frame, steel cab, double-wall steel pickup box

ENGINE ...5.7L HEMI® V8 multi-displcmt VVT
HP/TORQUE395 hp / 410 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION8HP70 8-speed auto
DRIVETRAIN / REAR AXLE4x4 / 3.92
STEERINGpower assist
SUSPENSION ...F: upper/lower A-arms, stblzr bar, Bilstein monotube shocks w air susp; R: five-link w track bar, stblzr bar, Bilstein monotube shocks w air susp.
BRAKESF: 13.2x1.1 vented two-piston; R: 13.8x0.87 disc single-piston; ABS F/R.
WHEELS17x8 aluminum
TIRES33-inch Toyo Off-Road
LENGTH / WHEELBASE229.0 in / 140.5 in
GROUND CLEARANCEF 9.8 in / R 9.3 in
WIDTH / HEIGHT79.4 in / 75.5 to 79.6 in
TURNING CIRCLE46.2 ft
APPR/BRKOV/DEPARTup to 23.9/24.2/27.8°
WEIGHT (F/R)5387.61 (3141.9/2245.71) lb
TOW CAPACITY10,140 lb
GVWR / PAYLOAD6900 / 1510 lb
FUEL CAPACITY(standard 26) opt 32 gal
FUELregular unleaded (midgrade rec)
MPG15/21/17 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE\$47,395

THE FOLLOWING ARE INCLUDED:

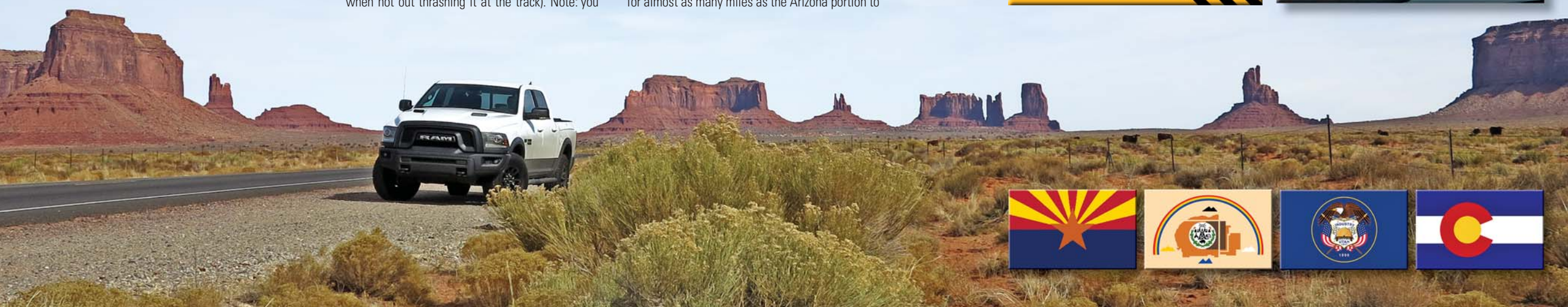
FUNCTIONAL/SAFETY FEATURES: front/side-curtain, rear airbags; Class IV hitch receiver, 4-corner air suspension, remote keyless entry, locking tailgate, 4-wheel ABS discs, cruise, remote start, ParkView rear camera, day/night rearview mirror, theft deterrent system.

INTERIOR FEATURES: Uconnect 4C w 8.4" display, Android/iOS, SiriusXM/HD radio, 2USB+aux, remote SD card slot, integrated voice command w Bluetooth, 6-speaker audio, dual-zone auto climate, perforated steering wheel w accent stitching, wheel-mounted audio controls, heated steering wheel, power 10-way driver 6-way passenger seats, heated front seats, power lumbar adjust, off-road truck rubber floor mats, rear power sliding window, second-row in-floor storage bins, fold-flat load floor storage.

5.7L HEMI V8, dual bright-tip exhausts1450
8-SPEED AUTOMATIC500
SEATS: leather-trim buckets w Rebel logo1545
LUXURY GROUP: LED bed light, power heated auto-dim mirrors / power fold / courtesy lamps, visors w illum vanity mirrors, overhead console w garage door opener695
PROTECTION GROUP: transfer case & front suspension skid plates225
RAM 1500 BLACK REBEL GROUP: 17x8 matte black alum wheels, powder coated fr bumpers595
REAR WINDOW DEFROST195
KEYLESS ENTER N'GO300
BLACK TUBULAR SIDE STEPS595
32-GALLON FUEL TANK445
ALPINE AUDIO: 9 spkrs, subwoofer495
UCONNECT 8.4 NAV: add GPS nav795
RAM BOX CARGO MGMT SYSTEM: four adjustable tie-down hooks, divider, extender1295
TONNEAU COVER w embossed Ram's head500
TRAILER BRAKE CONTROL295
SPRAY-IN BEDLINER495
DESTINATION CHARGE1395

TOTAL\$59,210

ASSEMBLY/SOURCESWarren, Michigan
Engine Saltillo Mexico
Transmission US
Content: 57% US/Canada, 27% Mexico



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The frontier still lives in Northwest Colorado. / Downtown Steamboat Springs. / Dawn at Wilson Arch in Utah, an easy roadside stop if you don't have time for Arches National Park (note teeny person up in there). / First glimpse of the San Francisco Peaks.

Our route was about 760 miles each way: 312 miles from Scottsdale to the Utah line, 222 miles across Utah to the Colorado line, and from there to our turnaround in Steamboat Springs either 220 or 226 miles (we took one route up, another back for that stretch). Figuring the Navajo Nation as the sovereign entity it is, that's 182 miles to the Navajo Nation, 150 miles across the Navajo Nation, 202 miles across the balance of Utah, and Colorado 220/226.

would help in the morning. Sleep would also help, so we called it quits in Moab, where there are a great many hotels, even in the off-season.

The Rebel would of course have been happy to just stay in Moab, home to world renowned off-road red rock adventures. But we were just driving through. In the morning, with the temperature now about 20, we were on our way. We took a favorite shortcut as the sun came up: Fisher Towers Road along the Colorado River northeast of Moab, about 15 miles shorter and officially five minutes longer, though more like an hour longer if you stop to take photos, which we did and you surely will.

COLORADO: Whether you take the shortcut or the main highway, you end up on I-70 headed east into Colorado via Grand Junction, then (optionally) through Glenwood Canyon—one of the last and most challenging sections of the Interstate Highway system. We fueled up for the second time, just shy of Vail—25.6 gallons—then put the Interstate behind us and drove north on beautiful two-lane Colorado 131 to Steamboat Springs. Home to an average of 27 feet (or likely as not 40 feet) of snow per ski season, they were having a dry winter, which in ski town terms meant just 130 inches of snow by late January, rather than the normal 250 or so. We would have welcomed a good blizzard, just for the variety (and driving fun), but dry roads and clear skies saved significant time overall.

We still benefited from the Rebel's four-wheel drive and big tires (which, along with four inches of additional length, give it a turning circle that's bigger than a standard Rebel short bed crew cab, but that still feels remarkably tight), maneuvering snowpacked ranch roads and plowed piles around town. Four feet of fresh snow would have been a ton of fun in the Rebel—and such a storm did arrive a couple of weeks after our trip. Next time!

For five days on the road, we were in Steamboat Springs itself for basically a day and a half.

ON THE FLIP-FLOP: Our downbound route and cycle were almost the same, but for Steamboat Springs to Grand Junction, we drove west on US 40 to Craig, Colorado, then south on Colorado 13 to I-70. We spent a few hours visiting in Grand



Junction and Fruita, grabbed nighttime breakfast at Denny's, then headed toward Moab. It was dark and it was late, so we skipped Fisher Towers Road, sticking with I-70 till US 191 south to Moab.

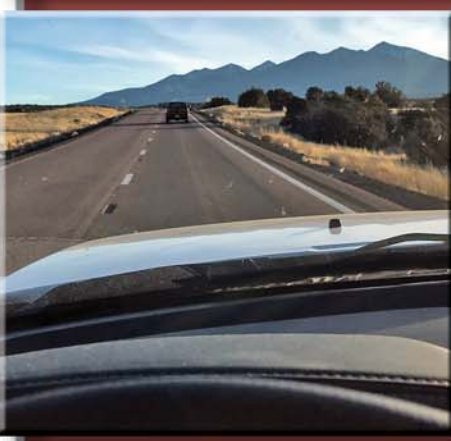
Both ways, at Moab we grabbed clean and easy chain motels, each about \$70 this time of year including pretty decent breakfasts at both. We gassed up once more in Moab, enough to get us back to metro Phoenix with just a hair to spare.

We stopped at Wilson Arch between Moab and Monticello—a quick substitute for experiencing the 77,000 acres of Arches National Park. And we caught Monument Valley in daytime this time.

A KEEPER?: Cruising down I-17 toward Phoenix, our fuel economy read in the low 20s, hitting 27 as we exited onto a Valley freeway. The week's average was 18.8 mpg—with no fuel-sipping hypermiling, just all-out road tripping, with considerable climbs, local miles in several towns and inefficient cold weather in the mix. This close to 20 mpg in a HEMI is something to be real happy with. If all your time is around town, it'll be a little lower. But with a truck like this, you'd be remiss not to get out of town when you can. We did, and we had a ball.

This Ram Rebel was a (theoretical for us) keeper. Color, trim and options were fine (saving us some tough choices). We wish it were available with a manual transmission, though virtually nothing is, and it made almost no difference on a drive like this. We're tall and probably wouldn't order side steps, but could live with them. The one thing we're still pondering are the Ram Boxes. We've happily used them for hot off-road treks in Arizona, loaded with ice and water bottles. The trade-off is that they consume width within the bed itself—still with a clear four feet between wheel wells for building materials, but for carrying substantial loads of mixed items, that volume in front of and behind the wheel wells is valuable.

But that's it. And since it was already in our hands, we could live with it exactly as built. ■



DETROIT

NORTH AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL AUTO SHOW

JANUARY 2018

The North American International Auto Show (NAIAS) in Detroit—home region, of course, to America's Big Three—is the first of the new calendar year and second of the overall annual cycle, after Los Angeles (see our Jan/Feb issue). Most of the world's major manufacturers are represented at this huge show in Cobo Center downtown, and there are always a number of significant concepts and new model reveals at this show. Here are a few highlights, in alphabetical order:

- The all-new **2019 Audi A7** made its US debut at NAIAS. The four-door Sportback (or five-door) loses its drooping butt with a continuous light strip of 13 vertical segments joined together in the rear taillights, while reconciling dueling industry trends of overly convoluted body creases vs overly smooth body shells with one bold, straight crease. The new A7 has more interior space, notably for rear passengers, while showing a new subtle grille evolution, wider and lower.

- One year after its concept reveal in Detroit, the all-new **BMW X2** made its world debut—a low-slung AWD 2+2 sports activity coupe with the sturdier construction of an X model crossover. Its 2.0L TwinTurbo 4-cylinder turbo and 8-speed automatic deliver 228 hp and 258 lb-ft of torque, bringing the little ute-coupe to 0-60 mph in 6.3 seconds. The BMW X2 arrives at dealers this spring. Also debuted was the 2019 BMW i8 Coupe.

- The **2019 Ford Ranger** arrives later this year to tackle the burgeoning US midsize pickup market (sales up 83% since 2014). Based on an Australian global product, for North America it gets new styling, high-strength steel frame, a 2.3L EcoBoost four, the only 10-speed automatic in the segment, and driver-assist tech both on- and off-road. It will come in SuperCab and crew form in three trim levels, with appearance and off-road packages.

- Once one of the quirkiest little hybrids, Honda Insight is returning in mainstream form. The **Honda Insight Prototype** shows the premium 5-passenger compact (above Civic in the lineup), to be built in Indiana starting later this year with a gen-3 two-motor hybrid system, long wheelbase, 60/40 rear seats and a full trunk, available leather, 8" touchscreen, 7" info screen, Android/Apple, system updates by WiFi and an anticipated 50-plus MPG.

- All-new **2019 Hyundai Veloster** and Veloster Turbo models, a collaborative effort between Seoul and the US design center in Irvine, feature stan-



• 2019 Audi A7



• 2019 BMW X2



• 2019 Ford Ranger



• Honda Insight Prototype



• 2019 Hyundai Veloster



• 2019 Kia Forte

dard multi-link rear suspension, a comprehensive exterior and interior redesign—still with distinctive two-plus-one doors—powertrain updates (with available 1.6L turbo), and updated infotainment and connectivity. Veloster is built in Ulsan, Korea and arrives here in second quarter 2018.

- We drove the **2019 Jeep Cherokee** introduced at NAIAS a couple of weeks later in Southern California—see our feature elsewhere in this issue.

- The **2019 Kia Forte** compact in its third gen evolves with long hood and short deck styling cues inspired by the new Stinger, and increased length for more legroom, headroom and cargo. It features Kia's first in-house designed-built Intelligent Variable Transmission (IVT), Smart Stream tech for an estimated 35 MPG combined, a standard 8" touchscreen, Android/Apple, and advanced driver assistance. LX, S and EX trims will ultimately expand.

- The **Lexus LF-1 Limitless concept**, a flagship luxury crossover study by Caltex Design Research Inc in Southern California, fuses organic shapes of liquid metal with the sharp edges of a traditional Japanese sword, "fluid yet aggressive." Features include panoramic glass roof, distinctive split rear spoiler, digital side-view monitors and 4D nav. A production LF-1 could have fuel cell, hybrid, plug-in hybrid, gasoline or all-electric powertrain.

- It's always a challenge to update an icon. Maintaining an external appearance that has not significantly changed since 1979, the new **Mercedes-Benz G-Class** has new suspension, Dynamic Select driving modes, "G-Mode" and three 100% differential locks to enhance both ride comfort and agility, on- or off-road in any conditions. It goes on sale in late 2018. Also revealed at Detroit were new **Mercedes-AMG 53-series** versions of the CLS, E-Class Coupe and E-Class Cabriolet with a new 429-hp electrified 3.0L 6-cylinder engine.

- **MINI** revealed updated Hardtop 2-Door, Hard-



• Lexus LF-1 Limitless concept

top 4-Door and Convertible models with new design accents, updated drive technology, additional customization options and expanded MINI Connected digital services. LED headlights are joined by new LED taillights bearing a Union Jack flag design. New exteriors include Solaris Orange, Starlight Blue and Emerald Grey metallic paints, and Piano Black. Logos and wheels are also updated.

- The **2019 Ram 1500** has reduced weight by almost 225 pounds, with 98% high-strength steel in the frame also improving durability and rigidity for handling. Max payload increases to 2,300 pounds, and max tow to 12,750 pounds, while fuel economy benefits from a mild hybrid system on both 3.6L Pentastar V6 and 5.7L HEMI V8 engines. New styling also boosts aerodynamics. We'll be driving these soon, with a full writeup in the next issue.

- The fifth-gen **2019 Toyota Avalon**, designed and built in the US on a new TNGA K sedan platform with multi-link rear suspension and available Toyota-first adaptive variable suspension (AVS), has new V6 and hybrid powertrains with more power and higher fuel mileage. Standard Entune 3.0 has WiFi hotspot, wireless charging, smartwatch and Amazon Alexa connectivity and Apple Carplay. The new Avalon arrives in late spring.

- A new **2019 Volkswagen Jetta**, starting at \$18,545, is built on award-winning MQB architecture with a coupe-like profile, shorter overhangs and a new face. Its 1.4L TSI engine pairs with 6-speed manual or 8-speed automatic. The driver-centric interior moves to premium materials, with available heated-ventilated leather seats and 400w BeatsAudio. VW also unveiled a sporty VR6 2018 Passat GT, starting at \$29,090.

The Detroit show in January is followed by many domestic shows, notably the big Chicago show in February and New York International Auto Show in April. Key international shows in this timeframe include Geneva in March and Beijing in April-May. ■



• 2019 Mercedes-Benz G-Class



• New MINI Hardtop 2-Door



• 2019 Ram 1500 Limited



• 2019 Toyota Avalon



• 2019 Volkswagen Jetta

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A WEEK WITH : 2018 VOLKSWAGEN TIGUAN S FWD

Lineup shakeup

by Joe Sage

When a top trim level of a vehicle is reviewed, some think that will skew impressions and not represent lower trims. A base model like this 2018 Volkswagen Tiguan S FWD could also skew perceptions, though it's impossible to conversely ignore the higher trims: as in the buying experience, you can't help thinking what you could get for a bit more money and whether it's worth it.

This is the base out of four trims (times two: each offers FWD or 4Motion AWD). Prices range from ours at about \$25 grand up to SEL Premium 4Motion at \$37,550, about a 50 percent climb. At this S level, you lack keyless entry and start, automatic climate control, heated seats, better audio (the top model has a 9-speaker Fender system), leatherette (SE and SEL) or leather (SEL Premium), and so on. Pricier models provide desirable differences; but it's nice to have an economical option.

VW has discontinued the big, premium 5-seat Touareg, while adding the 7-seat Atlas at a notably lower price (see chart). The Tiguan badge moves to the new SUV driven here, much closer in size to the departed Touareg, though for tow capacity, only the V6 Atlas now comes close to the old Touareg. Atlas has the power, with even its turbo-four out-putting more than the new Tiguan's, by virtue of lower compression. Seating for the new Tiguan is seven only with FWD, but with AWD just five. The prior-gen Tiguan carries over for now as a 2017 Tiguan Limited, one last chance to go for smaller size, with all prices still below the new Tiguan.

We were aware of our base model tester's limited features, but as the week went on, we grew to find it quite enjoyable. Depending upon your budget, seating or towing needs, VW's new range of SUVs covers bases well, though differently than before. One thing for certain: the brand with roots in small cars is going bigger with SUVs. ■

EVOLUTIONARY COMPARISON	2017 Tiguan Ltd (DISC-HOLDOVER)	2018 Tiguan (NEW)	2017 Touareg (DISCONTINUED)	2018 Atlas (NEW)
Seats	5	7 or 5 w/AWD	5	7
Length (in)	174.5	185.1	188.8	198.3
Wheelbase (in)	102.5	109.8	113.9	117.3
Turning circle (ft)	39.0	37.7	39.0	38.1
Cargo volume (cu.ft)	23.8	12.0-73.5	32.1	20.6-55.5-96.8
Passenger volume (cu.ft)	95.4	123.9 / 101.1 AWD	103.6	153.7
Engine	2.0T 4	2.0T 4	3.6 V6	2.0T 4 / 3.6 V6
Horsepower	200	184	280	235 / 276
Weight (lb)	3448 / 3646 AWD	3777-3858 AWD	4696	4222 / 4502
Tow (lb)	2200	1500	7716	2000 / 5000
MPG (comb)	22 / 21 AWD	24 / 23 AWD	19	(4) 24 / (V6) 19
Base price	\$21,995 / \$23,970 AWD	\$24,595-37,550	\$49,495-60,195	\$30,750-39,410

SPECIFICATIONS

SEATINGseven
ENGINE2.0L TSI dir inj 16v DOHC turbo 4-cylinder
DRIVETRAINFWD (AWD avail)
HP/TORQUE184 hp / 221 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION8-spd auto w Tiptronic®
SUSPENSIONF: strut-type, lower control arms, coils, telescopic dampers, anti-roll bar; R: multi-link, coils, telescopic dampers, anti-roll bar
STEERINGelectric power assist rack & pinion
BRAKESpower, dual circuit, 13.4x1.2 vented front, 11.8x.5 solid rear discs
WHEELS/TIRES17x7 alum alloy / 215/65 R17 H A/S
LENGTH / WHEELBASE185.1 / 109.8
TURNING CIRCLE37.7 ft
LEGROOM (F/R/3)40.2 / 36.5 / 27.9 in
WEIGHT (FWD) / TOW3777 lb / 1500 lb
FUEL / FUEL CAPACITYregular unleaded / 15.3 gal
MPG22/27/24 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE (TIGUAN S FWD)**\$25,195**

INCLUDES: ABS, anti-slip, engine brake assist, EBD, hydraulic brake assist, ESC, electronic differential lock, intelligent crash response system, auto halogen headlights, LED DRLs, heated-folding-power mirrors w turn signals, intermittent wipers, rear window washer-wiper, black roof rails, manual climate control, multi-function steering wheel, tilt-tele, cruise, 6-way manual adjust front seats, 40/20/40 second row seat, 50/50 third row seat, cloth seats, console w cupholders & armrest, reading lights & illum vanity mirrors, carpeted cargo area w tie-down hooks, rear camera, 6.5" color touchscreen, AM-FM radio, USB input, 6-speaker audio, Bluetooth, color multi-function display w trip computer, power locks, electric parking brake.

WARRANTY: 6-year 72,000-mile limited warranty, BUILT: Engine/assembly Mexico; transmission Japan.

DESTINATION CHARGE900

TOTAL**\$26,095**



Built from the inside out.

Type R turns the Civic into something completely else. BY JOE SAGE

It's obvious the Civic Type R is a looker. A head-turner. But you forget about that when you sit in the cockpit. In fact, it's our guess the engineers weren't thinking that way as they were developing the powertrain and suspension, even the aerodynamic body bits. This ultimate Civic is all about what's under that sexy skin.

The Type R is engineered to deliver performance and packaged to inspire red hot desire, all delivered in the low to mid \$30s, complete.

There have been hot Civics in the US before, notably various iterations of the Civic Si, which has had a high degree of commonality with a Type R long available overseas. We still get the Si here—but its position at the top of the podium has

been usurped by our new domestic Type R.

Civic Type R is distinguished first and foremost by its power: 306 hp and 295 lb-ft of torque from a two-liter turbo four—built in Ohio, the most powerful production Honda automobile engine made in the US (exceeded only by the Acura NSX twin-turbo V6, also made in Ohio). This low-inertia monoscroll turbo delivers peak torque quickly, from 2500 to 4500 rpm. The engine, with a 100,000-mile maintenance cycle, is shipped to the UK for final build of the cars (with a Japan-sourced transmission).

The power runs through a short-throw 6-speed manual (only), with selectable rev-matching, to a helical limited-slip front differential. Honda's fastest-ever US car, Type R's top speed is 170 mph.

This car is such a performer, you may find yourself glancing down at the fuel gauge, thinking you must be gobbling it up, having this much fun.

Surprise! After an exuberant

day or two, ours was still nearly full. Getting almost 30 mpg is the icing on the cake with this car.

The body and chassis are based on the highly praised new gen-10 Civic, designed to tackle the advanced steering, handling, ride quality and high-speed stability of premium Europeans. (The adaptation of this new global platform made a US Type R possible.) Type R is 38 percent more rigid, with upgraded suspension, extreme attention to aerodynamics, and a retuning of its chassis from many hours on tracks from Japan to Nürburgring.

Civic Type R is also distinguished by style. In our sample's Championship White paint over red and black interior, it has all the subtlety of a storm trooper in a hijacked X-wing starfighter. The new Civic's dramatic styling, on steroids in the Type R and not at all shy, suits this car's personality well.

By performance and style cues, the Civic Type R seems to aim for the same audience as the Subaru WRX STI and the departed but lingering Mitsubishi Evolution (see chart). The huge difference is that, unlike those four-wheel-drivers, the Type R is a front-driver, uncommon in 300-plus-horse-

power performance cars. We'd expect amplified torque steer in a high-powered front-drive layout, but the Civic Type R engineers have tackled and conquered this. As the chart shows, 300+ pounds of weight advantage equals a significant rise in fuel mileage (and on regular gas in the Type R).

The Type R powertrain's wide-ranging, strongly-spaced gears can overlap in daily driving and still provide tons of acceleration and torque, with neither showy sound effects nor sewing machine boy

racer acoustics, rather the good solid growl of pure mechanics. Savvy tuner cars and rice rockets mostly left us alone on the road, while BMW sedans and Porsche Cayennes seemed to feel an immediate need to (try to) prove themselves.

Honda Civic Type R is refreshing and pure, saving weight and avoiding complexity with a few manual features—a third millennium version of classic "horsepower model" muscle cars that didn't squander performance or your dollar on frills. ■

	ENGINE	HP	TRANS	DRIVE	WEIGHT	FUEL	MPG	BASE PRICE
Honda Civic Type R	turbo 2.0L	306	6M	FWD	3117	reg	28	\$33,900
Subaru WRX STI	turbo 2.5L	305	6M	AWD	3446-3525	prem	22	\$36,095
Mitsubishi Lancer Evo (2015)	turbo 2.0L	291-303	5M/6A	AWD	3527-3571	prem	22-23	\$34,495-40,995



SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE	2.0L direct inject turbo 4-cyl
HP/TORQUE	306 hp / 295 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION	6-speed manual lightweight single-mass flywheel, helical limited-slip differential
DRIVETRAIN	FWD
STEERING	dual-pinion vari-ratio EPS
SUSPENSION	Adaptive damper system: F: dual-axis strut, 29.0x5.0 tubular stblzr; R: multi-link, 20.5 solid stblzr bar
BRAKES	F: 13.8" four-piston Brembo vented/cross-drilled disc; R: 12.0" solid disc
WHEELS	20x8.5 alum alloy w red wheel lip accent
TIRES	245/30ZR20 90Y max-performance summer tires unique to Type R
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	179.4 in / 106.3 in
WIDTH / HEIGHT	73.9 in / 56.5 in
TURNING CIRCLE	39.5 ft
SEATING CAPACITY	four
CARGO VOLUME	25.7 / 46.25 cu.ft
WEIGHT / DISTRIB F/R	3117 lb / 61.8%/38.2%
FUEL CAPACITY	12.4 gal
FUEL	regular unleaded (premium rec)
MPG	22/28/25 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE	\$33,900
COLOR	Championship White Also available in Rallye Red, Aegean Blue Metallic, Crystal Black Pearl and Polished Metal Metallic
INTERIOR	Black/Red

THE FOLLOWING ARE ALL INCLUDED:

SAFETY FEATURES: Advanced compatibility engineering™ (ACE™) body structure, vehicle stability assist w traction control, ABS, electronic brake distribution (EBD), Brake Assist, multi-angle rear camera w dynamic guidelines, TPMS, i-SRS advanced front airbags, SmartVent front side airbags, side curtain airbags w rollover sensor, 3-point seatbelts at all seats (fronts w automatic tensioning), LATCH (lower anchors and tethers for children), front seatbelt reminders, child-proof rear locks.

EXTERIOR FEATURES: Milano Red Honda "H" badges (front/rear), Type R badges (front/rear), aluminum hood, integrated rear-window antenna, smart entry w walk away auto lock, security system w remote entry & hatch release, body-color door handles, body-color power side mirrors, LED DRLs, LED fog lights, LED auto headlights, LED brake lights, roof-mounted fin antenna, body-color roof-mounted vortex generators, wing spoiler, chrome wheel nuts, underbody spoiler w Rallye Red striping, center-mounted triple outlet exhaust, capless fuel filler.

INTERIOR/COMFORT/CONVENIENCE FEATURES: Push-button start, sport pedals, black/red leather wheel, aluminum shift knob, Type R serial number plate on console, dual-zone auto climate, one-touch turn signals, variable intermittent wipers, rear wiper/washer w heated wiper zone, power windows w one-touch up/down both front, power locks w illuminated front controls, cruise, tilt-telescope wheel, LED pocket light, console w sliding armrest & storage, sliding visors, door-pocket storage front/rear, remote trunk release, map lights, rear seat heat ducts, rear defroster w timer, cargo area light, high-bolstered sport seats w red/black suede-effect fabric & double red stitching, 60/40 folding rear seatback, 540-watt premium audio w 12 spkrs+subwoofer, 7-inch touchscreen display, HondaLink, Apple/Android, SiriusXM/HD, Honda satellite nav w voice recognition & digital traffic & turn-by-turn, USB, Bluetooth, Pandora, SMS text, radio data, speed-sensitive volume, customizable driver info interface.

DESTINATION CHARGE	875
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TOTAL	\$34,775
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OPTIONS: A handful of available options & accessories are in reasonable double or triple digits.

CMP MOTORCYCLES

Upstream/downstream benefits

Biggest Acura has NSX supercar hybrid technology at far smaller price BY JOE SAGE

Most manufacturers with a high-powered halo car use it to add glory to the brand, but Acura is using the highly innovative drivetrain technology in its NSX mid-engine supercar as an active laboratory for other vehicles in the lineup.

The current NSX (a Sport Hybrid SH-AWD model only) came to market in 2016, a long-anticipated gen-two of the legendary two-seater after a decade's hiatus. A version of its advanced hybrid drivetrain had already hit in 2014, in a special Sport Hybrid SH-AWD model of the RLX sedan.

Now a special Sport Hybrid SH-AWD model of the big MDX three-row, seven-passenger SUV (the best-selling luxury three-row SUV) adapts the system for another 31 horsepower, also getting a 28 percent bump in fuel mileage, all for just \$1500 more than a regular MDX, clearly a triple win.

The Super Handling AWD and Sport Hybrid systems become one to a high degree, with one front electric motor built into the transmission and two inboard rear electric motors contributing to torque and power. The motors are also a big part of the braking system, using their own rapid slow-down to bring the vehicle to a stop, while regenerating the hybrid battery, as well—for very direct stopping power in most normal driving, with connected

deceleration almost like a manual transmission.

The interior of the MDX (new in 2017) is spacious and comfortable, with one of the more intuitive user interfaces we've seen—and for 2018, with a 30 percent faster response time, refreshed menu structure and Android/Apple now standard. The MDX Sport Hybrid uses Acura's pushbutton electronic shift interface. We're not the world's biggest fans of alternative shifters (which could confuse a driver given duties in an unfamiliar vehicle), but we're starting to warm up to this one. At first, it may require looking away from the windshield, but its differentiated shapes and actions let you adapt to blind operations pretty quickly.

A look at our comparative chart below gives you an idea of what you get with this package on the MDX. Here's a vehicle that's not much heavier than the RLX sedan, yet turns notably tighter and, despite the lowest horsepower of the Sport Hybrid trio, can tow 5000 pounds (with an available towing package). And, of course, it's the one that can seat seven and/or haul up to almost 70 cubic feet of cargo (though not at the same time, although even with seven butts in seats, it has 25 percent more cargo volume than the RLX. And one more thing: it's a third the price of the NSX. ■

SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE / DRIVETRAIN	.....3.0L SOHC V6 / AWD
HP/TORQUE	.....(6300 rpm) 257 hp / (5000 rpm) 218 lb-ft
3-MOTOR SPORT HYBRID SYSTEM	: 47 hp front elec motor built into 7DCT trans; 72 hp rear inboard Twin Motor Unit (2 36 hp motors); 1.3 kWh Li-ion battery pack.
ENGINE/HYBRID OUTPUT	.....321 hp / (instant) 289 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION	: 7-spd dual clutch (DCT) w electronic shift control, advanced shift-hold on upshifts in aggressive driving, grade logic reducing hunting on steep hills
SUSPENSION	.....F: MacPherson; R: multi-link, actv damp
STEERING	.....motion-adaptive elec power
BRAKES	.....Electronically controlled hydraulic system, regen from front/rear motors slows vehicle in most cases
WHEELS / TIRES	.....20x8.0 alloy / 245/50R20 all-season
LENGTH / WB / TURN CIRC	.....196.2 / 111.0 / 37.6 ft
CARGO CAPACITY	.....15.0 / 38.4 / 68.4 cu.ft
WEIGHT / TOW CAPACITY	.....4484 lb / (avail) 5000 lb
FUEL / MPG	.....prem unl / 26/27/27 (city/hwy/comb)
BASE PRICE w Advance Package	.....\$58,150
ALL INCLUSIVE: Vehicle stability assist, ABS, EBD, handling assist dynamic braking, multi-use touchscreen, SiriusXM, Bluetooth hands-free link, keyless entry & start, push button shift, driver 10-way power seat w memory, heated front seats, HomeLink, stainless steel sport pedals, power tailgate, power moonroof w tilt, jewel eye LED headlights, auto-dim heated power mirrors w turn indicators.	
INCL TECH PACKAGE: Nav w voice recog, AcuraLink w real time traffic/street/fwy conditions, ELS Studio premium audio, HD radio, GPS-linked tri-zone climate w filtration, remote start, blind spot info, rear cross traffic monitor, rain sense wipers, LED puddle lights.	
INCL ADVANCE PACKAGE: Surround view cameras, sport seats w perforated leather trim, 2nd row captains' chairs, vented front seats, wood trim, heated steering wheel, 10-way front passenger power seat, heated 2nd row seats, LED fogs, park sensors, rear door sunshades, roof rails.	
DESTINATION CHARGE	.....995
TOTAL	.....\$59,145



STANDARD TURBO KIT

Fits all Twin Cam® applications from 88CI to 110CI. Includes a 3pc finned plenum, complete exhaust, TiAL™ blow off valve and wastegate, Accufab clamps, billet cam cover, oil feed & drain lines, pre-programed Thunder-Max tuner, high flow injectors, 2-bar map sensor, and all necessary hardware. CMP Turbos™ are assembled and ready for installation. Polished kits come standard with a chrome RSD cam cover and polished Accufab clamps.

RETAIL PRICING:

COMPLETE BLACK KIT \$7895
COMPLETE BLACK & POLISH KIT \$7995
COMPLETE FULL POLISH KIT \$8195



HIGH OUTPUT KIT

Fits all Twin Cam® applications from 111CI to 124CI. Includes a Garrett® ball bearing turbo, 3pc finned plenum, complete exhaust, TiAL™ blow off valve and wastegate, Accufab clamps, billet cam cover, oil feed & drain lines, pre-programed Thunder-Max tuner, high flow injectors, 2-bar map sensor, and all necessary hardware. CMP Turbos™ are assembled and ready for installation. Polished kits come standard with a chrome RSD cam cover and polished Accufab clamps.

RETAIL PRICING:

COMPLETE BLACK KIT \$8495
COMPLETE BLACK & POLISH KIT \$8595
COMPLETE FULL POLISH KIT \$8795

CMP TURBO KITS ARE MADE TO OUTLAST AND OUT PERFORM THE COMPETITION. OUR ENDLESS CUSTOMIZABLE OPTIONS COMBINED WITH OUR SUPERIOR RELIABILITY MAKE US THE FIRST CHOICE FOR THE NATION'S TOP BUILDERS. OUR REPUTATION FOR BEING THE BEST HAS FUELED OUR GROWTH AND WE ARE LOOKING FOR DEALERS.



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623.780.4976

	TYPE	SEATS	ENGINE	HP/TORQUE	CARGO	TURN CIRCLE	WEIGHT	MPG (c/h/c)	TOW	BASE PRICE
NSX (Sport Hybrid SH-AWD)	.....supercar	.....2	.....twin turbo 3.5L V6	.....573/476	.....4.4	.....39.7	.....3803	.....21/22/21	.....-	.....\$156,000
RLX Sport Hybrid SH-AWD	.....4dr sedan	.....5	.....3.5L V6	.....377/341	.....12.0	.....40.5	.....4380	.....28/29/28	.....-	.....\$61,900
MDX Sport Hybrid SH-AWD	.....7p SUV	.....7	.....3.0L V6	.....321/289	.....15.0-68.4	.....37.6	.....4484	.....26/27/27	.....5000	.....\$52,100



Nevada ghost town sampler

Invigorating expanses of the southern Nevada desert are home to a number of Wild West towns that survive as great road trip destinations, set among rally-worthy two-lane highways. **STORY AND PHOTOS BY TYSON HUGIE**

It takes a workhorse to travel back to an 1800s mining town, and Acura has just the right vehicle for the job. This marks the fourth time I've put a third-generation MDX through its paces. After completing over 1,000 miles in the latest iteration of its three-row SUV, I can say with certainty that the latest MDX is a capable, fun-to-drive machine that offers up first class comfort for a trip of that distance. Do I have to give it back?

In April, Las Vegas, Nevada will once again play home to a regional Acura NSX club meetup called WestFest. Last year, the event brought out over 50 cars and 80 people. As part of the planning committee, my role is to establish and plan out the logistics of a scenic group drive to be held on Saturday, April 28. It's not easy to come up with drives for a caravan of that size.

Considerations include finding somewhere we have not yet been; likely traffic and weather patterns on the day and time of our trip; road conditions appropriate for a group of supercars; whether there are any tolls or park fees; whether the group can run all together or whether it makes

more sense to split the group; and places for fuel and snack stops along the way.

As one can imagine, it takes a great deal of effort to coordinate such an activity. I partnered up with my friends Dane and Brandon, both Las Vegas locals, to take the MDX out on a Saturday morning and scout the terrain. It was the perfect vehicle for our expedition to the desert: second-row accommodations are posh, with captains' chairs and plenty of space all around. There are of course independent climate controls for passengers in all areas. Meanwhile, I pampered myself up front with a heated seat, heated steering wheel and convenient cup holder for my iced caramel macchiato.

You'd think we were going to the local shopping mall and not to the middle of nowhere.

Our drive route for the day was about 160 miles and took us four hours from start to finish, including our sightseeing and lunch stops.

Nelson, Nevada is one of many ghost towns in the vast expanses of land around the southwest. It's nestled in El Dorado Canyon, about 12 miles off Highway 95 to the east. If you blink, you might

miss the turnoff, so it's a good thing Dane was coaching me from the passenger seat on where to make my exit at Highway 165. We passed only one other vehicle on the way into Nelson from there.

The two-laner got a little more narrow, a little more rough and more curvy as we dipped down in elevation toward the Colorado River. Soon the buildings of the old mining town came into view, along with dozens of old cars left out to the elements with windows down (or broken out) and interiors rotting away. I parked the MDX in a dirt lot, and we got out to wander around a little, noting how silent it was outside aside from the scuffling sound of our shoes on the gravel.

We must have been the first tourists in town that day, as a resident desert rat came out of what appeared to be the main general store and put away the "closed" sign while inviting us inside. The wooden building doubles as his home, but he sells all sorts of remnants of the Wild West in there. My favorite display was an exhibit of some of the various films the town of Nelson has appeared in, including the Kurt Russell classic *Breakdown*.

Luckily for us (and unlike Kurt Russell's red Jeep Grand Cherokee in that movie), the MDX didn't give us any check-engine lights or troubles of any nature. We snapped a few photos in Nelson before continuing eastward another few miles to where we could drive nearly to the banks of the

mighty Colorado River on a dirt road. There was a nice paved turnaround spot that will be a perfect photo-op for the group of NSXs at the April event.

Our next destination on the drive loop was Searchlight, Nevada, a teeny spot on the map that (like most small towns in that area) got its start as a mining community in the late 1800s but mostly dried up by the mid-1950s. The name came from one of its original prospectors who said, "It would take a searchlight to find gold out here."

We rolled onward toward Highway 164 westbound and then over to Interstate 15 northbound. I hit the gas on the onramp. For a full-size SUV that's loaded down with technology and comfort niceties, the MDX still scoots down the road with more than ample power. I observed an overall combined MPG of about 26 despite going heavy on the throttle a few times. Range on a full tank is in the high 400s.

The Country Club Buffet at Primm Valley Casino, right along the California-Nevada state line, satisfied our hunger before we made our last stop of the day. Stacked along the east side of I-15 are seven columns of vividly painted boulders, referred to as "Seven Magic Mountains." The massive rocks were cut from a nearby quarry and painted fluorescent colors by Swiss artist Ugo Rondinone. The art installation was opened in 2016 and will be removed sometime this year, so I was glad to get a chance to see it.

The MDX stickers at \$58,000 as tested, including Tech and Advance packages with a full suite of

Nelson, Nevada (below left) was pretty much closed when we arrived, but opened for business as soon as we pulled in. Our Acura MDX Sport Hybrid took us to Nevada in 21st century style, where we found 20th century motoring relics kept fresh in the high and dry desert air. The Seven Magic Mountains art installation along I-15 is a sight to see, if you hurry.

AcuraWatch driver-assistance aids. The Lane Keeping Assist System (LKAS) is helpful but I could do without ACC (Adaptive Cruise Control). I much prefer to set a cruise speed and have it be maintained—with ACC engaged, the vehicle starts slowing down well in advance of approaching a vehicle ahead, so you have to change lanes very early, which isn't always possible or convenient, though it's something I could learn to live with.

There's a lot to love about the MDX. Those captivating jewel eye headlights with LED turn signals are just as much function as form. ELS Studio Premium audio system will knock your socks off. I set the bass and the subwoofer to maximum levels for optimal punch, and it retained crisp clarity all the way up to max volume level 40. Sirius XM never sounded so good. If it's solitude you want, a quiet cabin is easy to achieve, too. I sailed along at 75 mph with minimal wind, road or engine noise. The MDX's 7-speed dual-clutch transmission keeps the revs low at those speeds. It was tough to give the keys back after being pampered for seven days.

The region has great options for our NSX event, but just 4.5 hours from Phoenix, we've also discovered Nelson, Nevada is an easy weekend trip. ■





BMW M5 Guinness World Records refueling while dual drifting

▼ On December 11, 2017, instructor Johan Schwartz performed a sustained drift at the **BMW** Performance Center in Greer, South Carolina, in the new BMW M5, covering exactly 232.5 miles on a skid pad to set a new Guinness World Record for the longest drift in eight hours, shattering the previous record by 143 miles. A custom-built refuelling system developed by BMW in collaboration with North Carolina-based Detroit Speed made it possible to drift continuously without a break for the full eight hours, as required by Guinness. The BMW M5 was refueled during the drift in much the same way fighter jets refuel in mid-flight, though in this case the operation was performed by hand. A second BMW M5 driven by BMW Performance Center chief driving instructor Matt Mullins accompanied the record-breaking M5, with Mullins adapting to Schwartz's drifting rate, so Matt Butts of Detroit Speed could carry out the refuelling operation, secured by a safety tether that let him straddle the space between the two moving vehicles by leaning out of the rear window of the second car. "Although we practised the refuelling several times before the Guinness World Records title attempt, there was very little margin for error," said Butts. "We're very excited to have played a part in Johan and BMW recapturing this record." A second Guinness record was set for the longest twin vehicle water-assisted drift: Schwartz and Mullins drifted together for one hour, covering a total of 49.25 miles.

▼ **McLaren** has opened an F1 Service Center in Pennsylvania, offering maintenance and service for McLaren F1s located in North America. This is one of only two authorized service facilities outside of McLaren Special Operations (MSO) headquarters in Woking, UK. Operated by McLaren Philadelphia, the facility is located at a separate remote site in Pennsylvania, to ensure customer privacy. The new cen-



ter replicates services provided in Woking, with staff trained by MSO technicians on complete F1 service, from basic annual maintenance to full system refreshes and even major renovations. MSO has seen rapid growth in bespoke services for its heritage cars including the McLaren F1, SLR, McLaren P1 and 650S. The new facility means North American owners will no longer have to ship their cars to the UK for

maintenance. While never officially imported to the US, it is believed that there are over 20 F1s in North America now. The Pennsylvania Service Center holds one of the original sets of special tooling required to service the F1. An annual F1 service involves a meticulous level of inspection to the vehicle—fluids, filters, wiper blade replacements and a full suspension inspection—plus a full "vehicle shakedown" on a closed test track or runway with high speed runs to assess the vehicle through its full performance envelope. A second-annual service requires a higher level of inspection and includes a brake service and flush, a more in-depth vehicle alignment, CV joint service, air-conditioning service and coolant service. Every five years the fuel tank must be replaced—an extensive process that involves removing the powertrain from the vehicle. The McLaren F1 had a limited production run of only 106, making it one of the most exclusive cars in the world today. It took four years to meticulously plan, design and build the F1, which broke numerous world records during the 1990s.

With a 620-bhp 6.1-liter V12, it remains the fastest naturally aspirated road car ever built. McLaren F1 was the first-ever road car with a carbon fiber chassis, and many of the F1's most innovative technologies, from its carbon fiber tub to dihedral doors, flat underbody and airbrake are still signature features on McLaren cars sold today. Another McLaren F1 Service Center on the West Coast will follow in the future.

▼ Celebrating the worldwide impact of legendary machines by **Porsche**, the **Petersen Automotive Museum** officially opened "The Porsche Effect" to the public



in February. Organized in partnership with Porsche Cars North America, the new display features 50 of the brand's most iconic cars presented in both the exhibition and in an all-new vault tour in the museum's underground treasury. The exhibit features a collection of cars, historical documents and artifacts, each illustrating the brand's evolution—from its engineering-house beginnings through its modern-day road and race cars. Display vehicles include a 1939 Type 64 Berlin-Rome race car, 1964 901, 1987 928 H50 Study, 1955 550 Spyder, 1985 959 "Paris-Dakar," Steve McQueen's 356 Speedster and Petersen Founding Chairman Bruce Meyer's 1979 935 K3 Le Mans winner. The exhibit runs through January 2019. For more information, visit www.Petersen.org.

▼ **FCA** will modernize its Warren Truck Assembly plant, as they prepare to relocate Ram Heavy Duty truck production from Saltillo, Coahuila, Mexico to Michigan in 2020, adding 2,500 new US jobs and solidifying the US as the global manufacturing hub for Ram products. Total US investment by FCA has grown to more than \$10 billion since 2009, with more than 25,000 jobs created to date. This Ram Trucks investment is in addition to an announcement made in January 2017, which committed to spending a portion of another \$1 billion in Warren Truck Assembly to expand the Jeep® product line with the addition of the all-new Jeep Wagoneer and Grand Wagoneer. The

Saltillo Truck Assembly Plant will be repurposed to produce future commercial vehicles for global distribution. The company also announced that approximately 60,000 employees in the US will receive a

special bonus payment of \$2,000 each (senior leadership excluded). FCA attributes the two actions in part to the passage of US tax reform legislation late last year.

▼ The **Sturgis Motorcycle Museum and Hall of Fame** will see the Museum double in size within three years, while the Hall of Fame portion will have its own campus. The Main Street location will get a major revitalization, courtesy of gener-



ous donations from supporters, Board members and the Law Tigers, while Scott Peterson Ford has donated land for the second, larger Museum site. The Law Tigers jumpstarted the building fund with more than \$100,000. "Our Museum is growing," says Executive Director Myrick Robbins, "and within three years, the Hall of Fame portion will have its own campus near exit 32." The larger building will

house the Hall of Fame, pre-1938 collection and various galleries. Key features will include permanent collection displays, featured galleries, a café, meeting rooms, a gift shop, restoration and training areas, and various outdoor areas. Completion of Campus 1 (Legendary Main Street) is expected in July 2019, with Campus 2 (Heritage Hill) planned for completion in time for the Sturgis 80th Anniversary in 2020.

▼ Development of a cruise ship port in the shallow waters of the Gulf of California (Sea of Cortez) at Puerto Peñasco, Sonora, Mexico (popularly known in Arizona as **Rocky Point**) has new life in the form of more than \$13 million from the Mexican federal government for 2018, after being on hold for about two years. Construction is set to resume on the first phase of the port project this year, with completion scheduled for 2020.

▼ As it continues to establish itself as a freestanding brand from Hyundai, **Genesis** has opened its first standalone headquarters-owned showroom, Genesis Gangnam, near the prime business district of Samsung-dong, Gangnam-Gu, Seoul. The brand worked with architectural firm Office for Metropolitan Architecture (OMA) on design and build. Unlike typical dealer-

ships with glass windows, only small portions are visible from outside, for a private setting that enhances interaction between customer and product and incorporating brand scent and sound. All Genesis products including the flagship G90, G80 and G80 Sport and the recently-launched G70 will be on display, along with all available exterior colors, wood and interior leather material for comparison. ■

UPCOMING FEATURES

2018 Hyundai Kona launch in Kona, Hawaii



2019 RAM 1500 launch in Arizona



ISM Raceway NASCAR and IndyCar recap



2018 Overland Expo West



Lyn St James Talladega 30th Anniversary



Ford Driving Skills For Life teen program



Wide Open Baja



Arizona to Pacific Northwest RV tour



Stephanie Jarmagan



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