

ARIZONA DRIVER

THE ENTHUSIAST'S GUIDE TO LIFE BEHIND THE WHEEL

VOLUME 18 NUMBER 1
JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2019

AUCTION SEASON
AUTO SHOW SEASON
VEHICLES/TRIPS
AND MUCH MORE

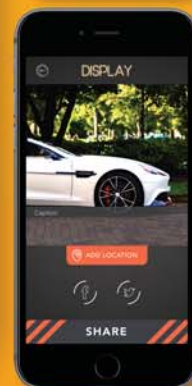
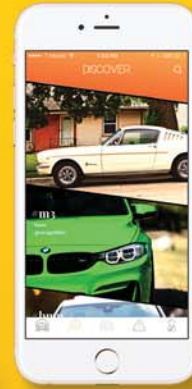
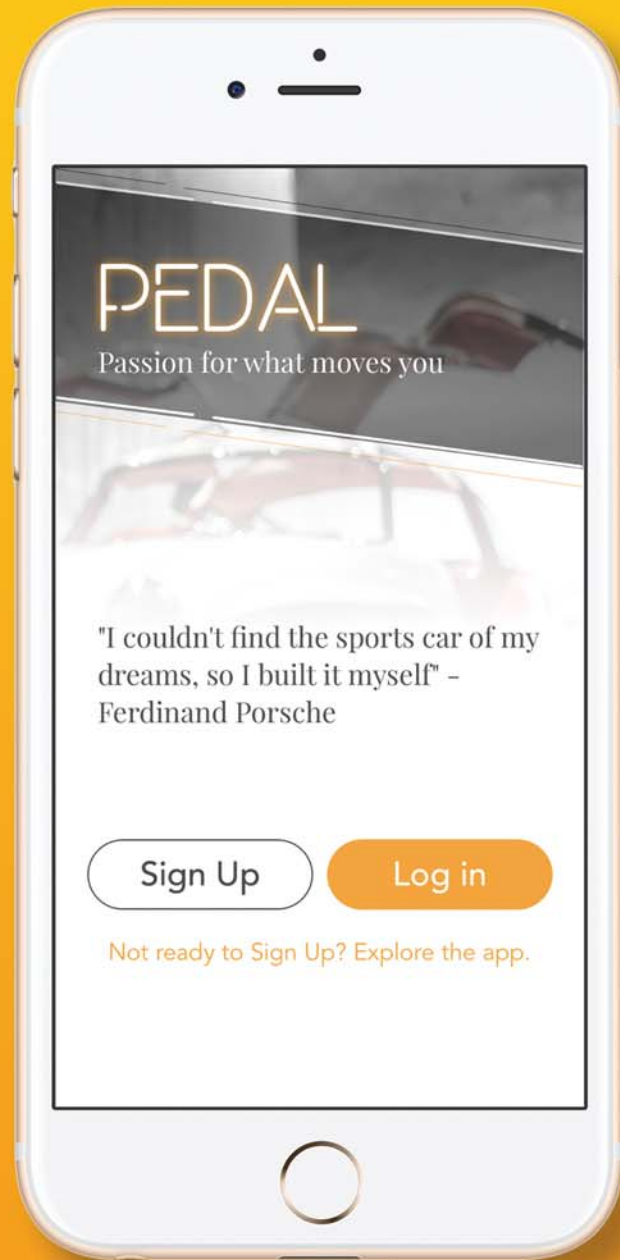


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ARIZONA DRIVER

THE ENTHUSIAST'S GUIDE TO LIFE BEHIND THE WHEEL

news & features January-February 2019

Special Events	Arizona January Auction Week 2019 A .....11 Times and places for all seven world-impacting events: Barrett-Jackson, Bonhams, Gooding & Company, RM Sotheby's, Russo and Steele, and Silver Auctions Arizona.
New Vehicle Launch Drive	2020 Mercedes-Benz GLE B .....12 Mercedes-Benz's midsize GLE, the biggest seller in their SUV lineup by far, gets a complete makeover, including advanced active suspension and even an available third row. By Joe Sage
Road Trip	Supai / Havasu Falls / Mooney Falls C .....16 Part road trip, a big part hiking trip, and even a helicopter trip at the end for some. This will whet your appetite to do the same, while also clearing up key naming conventions. By Tyson Hugie.
Motorsports	Lyn St James Talladega 30th Anniversary D .....20 Phoenix-based racing legend Lyn St James seals her spot in motorsports history during a celebration at Talladega.
A Week With New Vehicle Launch Drive	2019 Toyota Corolla 5-Door Hatchback XSE .....23
New Vehicle Launch Drive	2019 Chevrolet Colorado ZR2 Bison E .....24 Chevy has turned a lot of heads with its newest Colorado midsize pickups, gone a step farther with the ZR2 version, and now goes a step farther still, with the Colorado ZR2 Bison. We drive it in the wilds near Superior. By Joe Sage
New Vehicle Launch Drive	2019 Chevrolet Silverado 1500 2.7L Turbo E .....26 Chevy has a new trick up its sleeve for its Silver 1500 pickups: a high-torquing lightweight four-cylinder. We give it a run past Roosevelt Lake and down the Beeline Highway. By Joe Sage
Sneak Peek	2020 Chevrolet HD Pickup E .....27 A first look, with key specs and unsealed secrets. By Joe Sage
Vehicle Awards	9th Annual Hispanic Motor Press Awards .....29 Meet vehicles in ten categories deemed ideal by automotive media members keyed to this hugely significant demographic.
Special Event	Los Angeles Auto Show F .....30 Held at the end of 2018, this is really the first big show of the 2019 cycle, where much delicious hardware was revealed.
Motorsports	ISM Raceway Grand Opening and NASCAR G .....35 Sellout crowds descended upon the former PIR to enjoy the fruits of its \$178 million makeover during November NASCAR Weekend. Also info on upcoming NASCAR Spring Weekend in March.
A Week With	2019 Genesis G70 RWD 3.3T Prestige .....36 We made a good week of it in this new vehicle that's knocking down many awards, with a roundtrip to San Diego. By Joe Sage
A Week With	2019 Lexus RC F .....39
Road Trip	Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument H40 One of Arizona's most beautiful parks, down on the Mexican border, is also one of its less visited. By Tyson Hugie.
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COVER: This 1922 Bugatti Type 29/30 crossed the block at the Gooding & Company auction in January 2018, with an estimated price range of \$800,000-\$1,000,000. The oldest eight-cylinder Grand Prix-style Bugatti in existence, it was the first of just two delivered in 1922 and had been recently restored to its original configuration, with its ownership documented by extensive research, which was included along with copies of original factory records and a 1933 letter from Ettore Bugatti himself. **Photo:** Joe Sage



Tia Astle

We're at that point in the year that is both the calm and the storm. A new year has dawned, and in the orbit of the automotive industry that should mean something, and it does, and yet... we've not only been driving 2019 models for awhile (as have some of you), but we've already driven 2020 models (including in this issue). As January 2 passes, though, a few 2020 models will show up for sale at dealerships, while many more 2020 models will be revealed at big international auto shows from Detroit to Geneva to east Asia. Highlights of the season's first, the LA Auto Show, are in this issue.

There's also a fine line between the calm and the storm of world-renowned Arizona Auction Week. There are now seven within roughly the same January week (and a half-ish), but there is also the rhythm involved for months as each operation solicits consignments, the rhythm within each individual event's hours and days, and the rhythm flowing forward as Arizona's generally bellwether results fan out into the collective consciousness. Some days as many as four will be running (or six including preview days), while just a couple of days have only one—a great week to decide whether you like calm spots or all storm.

A good road trip to a National Park, Tribal Park or wilderness can also be a great mix of calm and storm, both en route and at your destination. Road tripper **Tyson Hugie** takes us both north and south in this issue, to Havasu Falls in the Grand Canyon and to Organ Pipe National Monument on the Mexican border. Calm and storm are found here in combinations of hiking, helicopter rides and, as always, even some adventures at the lunch table.

There's also a Zen-like calm in motorsports, in addition to the obvious storms and thrills. Both are represented in this issue—with famed Arizona-based racer Lyn St James celebrated at the 30th anniversary of her Talladega world record and other achievements, and with the hammers and welding torches of ISM Raceway's \$178 million redevelopment finally put to rest, in time for the major storm of a NASCAR race weekend.

Enjoy the ride!

Joe Sage - Publisher/ Executive Editor



Torva

Fine Art of Fine Automobiles

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Sturgis.....Sturgis Motorcycle Museum & Hall of Fame
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USMA.....United States Motorsports Association

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BMW M850i xDrive convertible

▼ **BMW's** first-ever 8 Series convertible is the BMW M850i xDrive launch model for 2019, with a 523-hp (and 553-lbft) 4.4-liter turbo V8—the first of a new generation—generating a zero-to-60 time of 3.8 seconds and a top speed limited to 155 mph. Its multi-layered fully-electric fabric top not only keeps out the rain and noise, but reduces weight and lowers the center of gravity compared with the coupe model. The dropped top stows under a stitched cap coordinated with the instrument panel and door/side panel trim, with a double-bubble contour that echoes the shape of the top when up. The top can be raised or lowered in 15 seconds at speed up to 30 mph. Included are a removable wind deflector and automatically deployed rollover protection; available are headrest-mounted neck warmers, which can be set manually or left to automatically adjust to your speed. Coming out of the chute with an M model as the first brings you Merino leather seats, M leather steering wheel, M pedals, illuminated sills and more. The new 8 Series M convertible is expected to hit dealers in March, at a cost of \$121,400 (plus \$995 destination).

▼ **McLaren** began closed-facility testing of Speedtail attribute prototypes last fall, with public road trials in December, steps in the year-long development of their new 250-mph center-seat “Hyper GT” hybrid, billed as the fastest, most aerodynamic and most luxurious McLaren ever. The first attribute prototype—officially designated

MVY02—is know to developers as “Albert,” a tribute to its famous McLaren F1 forebear, designed at their Albert Drive UK facility. MVY0 combines McLaren’s usual MV project initials with the letters Y0, signifying the lateral central point in the XYZ axis in CAD (computer aided design). Prototypes will be run in Europe, Africa and North America, so keep an eye peeled. The prototype is * but echoing the naming of development test mules of its legendary



McLaren Speedtail attribute prototype

forebear, the 1992 McLaren F1, it has been christened, ‘Albert’. This is a respectful reflection not only on the name of the McLaren F1 mule ‘Albert’ but also the Albert Drive premises in which the F1 was designed. Under its test livery are a production-spec chassis and 1050 PS (1036 hp) gasoline-electric hybrid drivetrain, as well as the three-seat cockpit with central driving position. High-speed trials pushing

its 250-mph top speed are being performed by McLaren chief test driver and former IndyCar champion Kenny Bräck. The central driving position and three-seat layout of the Speedtail was pioneered by McLaren F1 in 1992, a configuration that remained uniquely McLaren F1 among production cars until they confirmed the next Ultimate Series model, then code-named BP23, in November 2016. The Speedtail’s center-seat layout was first shown publicly in a proof-of-concept model using a McLaren 720S reconfigured with a single central driving seat. Four further mules followed, which will continue to be used around the world for performance and durability testing, alongside the prototype vehicles. The Albert prototype is fundamentally a Speedtail, with shape-representative body panels and dihedral doors around its unique carbon fiber McLaren Monocage core structure. The production-level spec allows attributes to be proven in real-world conditions early in the development process—including ingress and egress with the three-seat cockpit. Production of the £1.75 million (currently about

\$2.27 million) McLaren Speedtail is due to begin at the end of this year, with first deliveries in early 2020. As with the F1, 106 cars will be available—and all have already been sold.

▼ The **Chevrolet** COPO Camaro program got its start in 1969, inspired by Illinois Chevy dealer Fred Gibb, who used the company’s special order system to

build what wasn’t already offered in the Camaro. The goal was to make the car more competitive in Stock Eliminator drag racing, which was rooted in production-based vehicles. Racers would dig for every



2019 Chevrolet COPO Camaro

extra horse the factory could give them, and it occurred to Gibb that Chevrolet’s in-house special order system, known as Central Office Production Order (COPO), could provide an advantage. Typically, the COPO system was used for fleet vehicle services such as special paint or truck equipment, but Gibb used it to equip the Camaro with the all-aluminum ZL1 427 racing engine. With its lightweight block and heads, the ZL1 427 engine weighed about 100 pounds less than the iron-based 396 big block offered in the Camaro—and produced more power. It was the perfect solution for the drag strip. Chevrolet didn’t simply rubber-stamp Gibb’s request. It took plenty of convincing and some cajoling from Vince Piggins, who was responsible for the Camaro Z28 at the time, to get the project approved. There was also another catch: to make the engine eligible for NHRA competition, at least 50 examples of the car had to be offered for sale to the public. Gibb ordered them, but knew he’d have a hard time selling the pricey muscle cars, which were essentially twice the cost of a standard Camaro. He sold 13, and the remaining 37 were redistributed to other dealers. In the meantime, more dealers found out about the ultimate performance COPO Camaro models and ordered their own. When the clutch dust settled, 69 COPO Camaro models with the ZL1 engine were built. The 1969 COPO Camaro program included a number of models equipped with an iron-block version of the 427 engine. In the years after,

drag strip success evolved into collector car distinction, with the comparative handful of ZL1-engined models among the most coveted muscle cars with collectors today. An anniversary-themed 2019

COPO Camaro race car introduced at the SEMA Show celebrates the 50-year milestone of the special order, ultimate performance models and launches a 2019 COPO Camaro program. In a special Anniversary Blue Metallic that pays homage to the original Laguna Blue offered in 1969, the SEMA show car previewed the special color and graphics of the COPO Camaro 50th Anniversary Special Edition package offered for 2019. A 50th Anniver-



Lamborghini Urus ST-X concept

sary Engine Appearance Package that emulates the look of vintage Chevy performance engines, with an orange engine block, chrome valve covers and a black high-rise intake manifold, is also available for the naturally aspirated LSX-based 427 racing engine. The 2019 COPO Camaro’s available engine lineup includes a revised version of the supercharged, LSX-based 350 engine, now featuring a 2.65L Magnu-

son supercharger as well as a 302-cubic-inch engine. The COPO Camaro also features a distinctive and exclusive front-end design not shared with other production Camaro models. Only 69 2019 COPO Camaro race cars will be built—the same number of COPO Camaro models built in 1969 with the aluminum 427 ZL1 engine.

▼ **Lamborghini** Squadra Corse unveiled the Urus ST-X Concept, a racing version of the brand’s first SUV, during the 2018 World Finals in November. The concept is conceived the new format of their single-brand championship debuting in 2020 in Europe and the Middle East, combining race circuit and off-road track elements on specially prepared FIA-approved circuits. An “arrive and drive” formula is designed to offer driver-customers a complete package including car and technical support during the race weekends. Compared to the production model, the Urus ST-X Concept has been mechanically optimized and equipped with all FIA-approved safety elements, including steel roll cage, fire suppression system and FT3 fuel tank. Stylewise, the concept is easily recognized in matt Verde Mantis (green) livery, from its visible carbon fiber on the hood and larger air intakes for optimized cooling of the V8 twin-turbo engine—delivering 650



and torsional stiffening provided by a roll cage integrated in the frame, contributes to its track and off-road dual personality. Its track debut will take place at the 2019 Lamborghini World Finals.

and I'm delighted with the near perfect correlation between the simulator and this prototype. As an engineer, it's genuinely exciting to get a feel for the car you're working to create. DBX is a very different

at our brand-new facility in St Athan. As such, it is very much the start of a bold new era in the company's long history."

▼ The first **Shelby** Cobra, CSX2000, has returned to Las Vegas for an exclusive exhibit inside the Shelby Heritage Center through March 31. On loan from the Larry H. Miller family, the world-famous roadster is being displayed to the public for free, at the entrance of the Shelby Heritage Center—the first vehicle seen among the 40-plus collectible cars and trucks inside. CSX2000 is the centerpiece of daily free tours and a video available for mobile devices. The Larry H. Miller family owns many historic cars, including two of the Ford GT40s that beat Ferrari at Le Mans in 1966, taking all of the podium places. Many Shelby Cobras are also in the collection. The group purchased CSX2000 at auction in Monterey in August 2016 and have displayed it in the Shelby American Collection in Boulder, Colorado. The first Shelby roadster had been owned by the Carroll Hall Shelby Trust and displayed in Las Vegas until its sale. The Heritage Center houses a world-class collection of historic Shelby vehicles and memorabilia. The Shelby American facility is at 6405 Ensworth Street, Las Vegas. Two decades into the 21st century, Shelby American is



Aston Martin DBX prototype

▼ **Aston Martin's** first SUV, now officially named DBX—has put its first development prototype through the paces along a demanding Welsh Rally stage in the hands of chief engineer Matt Becker, begun in Wales as a nod to the company's new St Athan production facility in the Vale of Glamorgan. Though simulation has been an essential part of DBX's early development phase, the first prototype drives signify the start of real world testing, a punishing regimen that will see development prototypes of the all-new machine tackle some of the world's harshest environments, from the frozen Arctic and scorching deserts of the Middle East to high Alpine passes and the high-speed demands of the German autobahn and Nürburgring Nordschleife. The unique nature of DBX in the Aston Martin range requires a dedicated test program, with new processes, procedures and standards that reflect its all-purpose role. While it is engineered to perform with familiar Aston Martin dynamics, its envelope has to extend into areas previously off-limits to the marque's sporting roots, including multi-terrain and towing capabilities. Speaking of his first drive in the DBX development prototype, Becker said, "We have already developed and tuned DBX in the driving simulator, which has enabled us to make excellent progress in advance of the first physical prototype cars being available. Still, it's always a big day when you get to put the first actual miles on an early prototype,

kind of Aston Martin, but we will be testing it in all conditions and across all terrains to ensure it delivers a driving experience worthy of the wings badge." DBX is scheduled to be unveiled in the last quarter of 2019 and will be built at St Athan, a state-of-the-art luxury manufacturing plant that will ultimately become the "Home of Electrification" when the brand's fully-EV models enter production. Aston Martin Lagonda president and group chief execu-



tive officer Andy Palmer says, "Seeing a DBX development prototype in action is a momentous chapter in the story of our first SUV, for it is the moment it really comes alive. DBX is so much more than 'just' an SUV; it will be the first model built

still manufacturing powerful cars and trucks at its Las Vegas facility. Visitors can enjoy a behind-the-scenes view as vehicles are being built, from special observation areas. To learn more, visit Shelby American at www.shelby.com. ■

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SPECIAL EVENTS: JANUARY AUCTIONS

	FRI 11	SAT 12	SUN 13	MON 14	TUE 15	WED 16	THU 17	FRI 18	SAT 19	SUN 20
PREVIEWS										
AUCTIONS										
Barrett-Jackson										
Bonhams										
Gooding & Company										
RM Sotheby's										
Russo and Steele										
Silver Auctions Arizona										
Worldwide Auctioneers										

Arizona January Auction Week 2019

Barrett-Jackson
48th Annual Collector Car Auction Event
Nine days:
Saturday, January 12 - Sunday, January 20, 2019
WestWorld
16601 N Pima Road, Scottsdale AZ 85260
(AZ Loop 101 & FLWright Blvd)

Bonhams
8th Annual Scottsdale Auction
Thursday, Jan 17, 2019
(viewing Tuesday-Thursday, Jan 15-17)
Westin Kierland Resort & Spa
6902 E Greenway Pkwy, Scottsdale AZ 85254

Gooding & Company
12th Annual Scottsdale Auction
Friday-Saturday, Jan 18-19, 2019
(viewing Weds-Sat, Jan 16-19)
Fashion Square
4700 N Scottsdale Rd, Scottsdale AZ 85251
(Goldwater & E Highland Ave)

RM Sotheby's
20th Annual Automobiles of Arizona
Thursday-Friday, Jan 17-18, 2019
(preview Weds-Fri, Jan 16-18 unconfirmed)
Arizona Biltmore
2400 E Missouri Ave, Phoenix AZ 85016
(24th and Camelback)

Russo and Steele
19th Annual Sports & Muscle in Scottsdale
Wednesday-Sunday, January 16-20, 2019
(preview Weds Jan 16, sale starts Thurs Jan 17)
Salt River Fields
7555 N Pima Rd, Scottsdale, AZ 85258
(Indian Bend Road / Talking Stick Way at AZ Loop 101)

Silver Auctions Arizona
22nd Arizona January Auction
Friday-Sunday, Jan 11-13, 2019
NEW LOCATION:
Peoria Sports Complex
16101 N 83rd Ave, Peoria AZ 85382

Worldwide Auctioneers
3rd Annual Arizona January Auction
Wednesday, Jan 16, 2019
(preview Sunday-Weds, Jan 13-16 unconfirmed)
6460 E McDowell Road, Scottsdale AZ 85257
(McDowell Rd & 64th St/Galvin Pkwy)



Taking center stage

A new GLE—leader in a lineup of unified variety By Joe Sage

Mercedes-Benz has ever-increasing variety among its utility offerings, while more recently unifying their styling and presentation. Both are winning strategies.

The \$150,000ish G-Class, conceived in the original era of big beast SUVs, remains immensely capable off-road today while also being eminently welcome at the country club.

Their modern utility lineup has its origins in the late 1990s, as Mercedes-Benz was one of the first to blend SUV functionality with sleek styling, in the midsize M- (or ML-) Class.

The GLS (formerly GL) arrived only a dozen years ago, but carries the aura of a brand flagship, as though it has been in the lineup forever (and bonus: it starts at just \$70k)

A year later came the GLK, conceived as a

compact version of the GL.

Each had its own distinct styling and identity, sometimes surely leading to an apples-and-oranges decision adding in tangible and intangible factors of both style and function.

Now it's pretty much all apples. With a restructuring of model names brandwide, all SUVs (except G-Class) bear a GL-something name—from the subcompact GLA (an all-new vehicle mid-decade just as the new naming scheme kicked in) to the GLC (replacing the GLK), GLE (replacing the M-Class) and GLS (formerly GL). G-Class maintains its own spot tangential to this naming convention.

The utility names mirror the sedan classes—A, C, E and S for the subcompact, compact, executive (or midsize) and full-size offerings.

Over this same era of nameplate homogenization, styling also became more consistent across the Mercedes-Benz SUV lineup (again with the partial exception of G-Class).

GLC and GLE now sit in the hottest spots of the utility market—compact and midsize. They are currently also quite similar in styling, largely simplifying your decision to factors of size, perhaps powertrain and/or budget.

Both GLC and GLE have been available as SUV (conventional two-box utility) or Coupe models for the past few years (both also with Mercedes-AMG high-performance models).

As this new year dawns and you get used to writing “2019,” here we are already saying “2020” for the new Mercedes-Benz GLE.

We recently headed to San Antonio to meet and drive the new 2020 GLE lineup.

There are three models so far—GLE 350, GLE 350 4MATIC and GLE 450 4MATIC—with either a 255-hp inline-4 turbo or 362-hp inline-6 turbo gasoline engine, both with 4MATIC all-

wheel drive. The GLE 350 also offering front-wheel drive, and all in traditional two-box SUV form.

The brand has sold some five million SUVs by now, of which fully about two million have been the ML and its successor the GLE. As their best selling SUV, and inhabiting one of the hottest segments, they put a lot of attention into this gen-four GLE.

Built in the US, at their Alabama plant (as it has been since early ML days), the 2020 GLE was also largely developed in the US, where our harsh road conditions guided its performance thresholds.

The 2020 GLE is ready for these challenges with highly innovative and highly technical new suspension systems. As hot techno house music amped up from a white GLE parked in the cool night air near San Antonio's Riverwalk, the vehicle launched into an elaborate dance, with all four wheels collectively or individually at their highest and lowest, pitching, yawing, climbing and planting itself to the beat. This was a fun way to show off new E-ACTIVE Body Control, fully active suspension that creates a ride

with just about no body movement, unique to this new chassis engineering. A fully networked hydro-pneumatic suspension, it utilizes the SUV's 48-volt platform in combination with newly-developed air suspension, with spring and damping forces individually controlled at each wheel, counteracting not only body roll, but pitch and squat. A curve function counteracts almost all lateral forces, for seamless, focused cornering on a par with a motorcycle.

In sand or snow conditions where most any vehicle might be completely stuck (and perhaps far from any help), the system has an impressive free-driving mode with individual wheel actuation that actually lets the GLE “jump” rather than dig in, eventually freeing you from the depths. As elegant as a prom date, this vehicle is also a very serious off-roader, benefiting from detailed information on forward and lateral inclination, suspension level and torque distribution—in both the instrument cluster

KEEP RIGHT >>



2020 MERCEDES-BENZ GLE

GLE 350

GLE 350 4MATIC

ENGINE.....new 2.0L inline-4 turbo
 HP/TORQUE.....255 hp / 273 lb-ft
 COMPRESSION RATIO.....10.5:1
 TRANSMISSION.....9G-TRONIC 9-speed auto
 DRIVETRAIN.....GLE 350: RWD
GLE 350 4MATIC: 4MATIC AWD
 0-TO-60.....7.0 / 4MATIC 7.1 sec
 TOP SPEED.....130 mph (electronically lim.)
 SUSPENSION.....F: indep, dbl wishbone
 w coil spring, single tube gas-pressure
 & tubular torsion bar;
 R: indep, multi-link w coil spring, dbl-tube
 gas-pressure & tubular torsion bar

MPG.....TBA

GLE 450 4MATIC

ENGINE.....new 3.0L inline-6 turbo
 w ≤ 21 hp EQ boost
 HP/TORQUE.....362 hp / 369 lb-ft
 COMPRESSION RATIO.....10.5:1
 TRANSMISSION.....9G-TRONIC 9-speed auto
 DRIVETRAIN.....4MATIC AWD
 0-TO-60.....5.5 sec
 TOP SPEED.....130 mph (electronically lim.)
 SUSPENSION.....F: indep, dbl wishbone
 w coil spring, single tube shock absorber
 w SSD & tubular torsion bar;
 R: indep, multi-link w coil spring, spgl-tube
 shock w SSD & tubular torsion bar

MPG.....TBA

BODY/SEATING.....steel unibody / 5-seat
 STEERING.....speed-dependent electro-
 mechanical rack & pinion
 BRAKES.....350.....F: 12.89x1.26, R: 12.99x0.55
450.....F: 14.8x1.4, R: 13.6x0.9
 WHEELS / TIRES.....8x19 cast / 255/50 R19
 LENGTH / WHEELBASE.....194.3 / 117.9 in
 HEADROOM (F/R).....40.5 / 39.6 in
 LEGROOM (F/R).....40.3 / 40.9 (opt 41.1) in
 TURNING CIRCLE.....39.4 - 39.45 ft
 GROUND CLEARANCE.....TBA
 TOW CAPACITY.....350.....TBA
350 4MATIC.....7700 lb est
450 4MATIC.....7700 lb est
 WEIGHT.....350.....TBA
350 4MATIC.....4696 lb
450 4MATIC.....4991 lb
 FUEL CAPACITY.....22.45 - 22.5 gal

BASE PRICE: GLE 350.....\$53,700
 GLE 350 4MATIC.....\$56,200
 GLE 450 4MATIC.....\$61,150

STANDARD FEATURES:

Mercedes-Benz User Experience (MBUX) w voice control; 12.3-inch digital cluster and 12.3-inch touchscreen display; navigation; LED headlamps/tail lamps; Apple/Android; blind spot assist, attention assist, PRE-SAFE system, 5 USB ports, 19-inch wheels, easy-pack tailgate, keyless entry/start, cargo cover, chrome package, car-to-X communication and more.

OPTIONAL FEATURES:

E-Active body control w Airmatic air suspension (GLE 450 4MATIC), third row seat package, augmented video nav, MBUX gesture control, heads-up display, 4-zone climate, inductive wireless charging, driver assistance pkg w new active traffic jam assist, energizing comfort, air balance cabin fragrance system, AMG Line pkg, Night pkg, warm & comfort pkg, Burmester 3D surround sound and more.



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and in their biggest heads-up display yet.

GLE also receives a version of Mercedes-Benz's 9-speed automatic, as well as a new transfer case.

New to the GLE is fully-variable 4MATIC torque-on-demand, a system that can distribute force from zero to 100 percent to the front or rear axle, also depending upon which driving modes are selected.

Active stop-and-go assistance in rush hour traffic is functional up to 37 mph and works in conjunction with an integrated starter-generator (ISG), which also provides silk-smooth starts after every stop, one of the first things we noticed in our drive.

A combination of active brake assist with cross-traffic assist can identify the risk of a collision when turning across opposite lanes, braking the vehicle at lower speeds.

Cluster and infotainment screens are also not only larger—not one, but two 12.3-inches unified into a single doublewide—but its new MBUX (Mercedes-Benz User Experience) Interior Assistant responds to voice controls and even has the

ability to contextually interpret the intent of your hand and arm gestures (also distinguishing between driver and front passenger). Screen displays can also be customized among four tasteful style settings—Classic, Sport, Progressive (reduced digitalism) and Understated (minimalist digitalism).

The new GLE's wheelbase is more than three inches longer, creating a larger cabin overall, with notably increased second-row legroom, as well as fully adjustable second row seats—and even an optional available third row, with an all-electric second row providing easy access. The third row is deemed suitable for anyone up to 5-foot-10, which they point out provides enough seating overall for “half the soccer team.”

The 2020 Mercedes-Benz GLE 350, 350 4MATIC and 450 4MATIC all go on sale very soon. We were also shown a static display of an AMG version to follow before long. Neither a GLE Coupe version nor potential diesel powertrains have yet been announced or even discussed out loud. ■

OUR GLE DRIVE IN TEXAS

We had three long drives over a day and a half, a chance to try out all three models—GLE 350, GLE 350 4MATIC and GLE 450 4MATIC—including a little bit of town time, a little bit of freeway time, a whole lot of beautiful two-lane Texas Hill Country highway time, and even some challenging time on none of the above.

We did no major rock-crawling (though its E-ACTIVE suspension could handle quite a bit of that), but did do some ranch road driving and some fairly radical water fording. This was just a few weeks after our adventuresome Texas Truck Rodeo courses had been washed out in record rains, and the rivers were still flowing hot, heavy and very high, putting some of our roads underwater in a heavy flow. We took it relatively easy, as causeway roads are very narrow and the penalty for a mistake could be severe, but we could probably have gone full tilt—the GLE's capabilities are impressive.

In all conditions, the GLE gave us a highly engaging and blissfully isolated balance. ■



Hava good time.

Drive, hike and helicopter adventure deep into the Grand Canyon

STORY AND PHOTOS BY TYSON HUGIE
LEAD WATERFALL PHOTO BY TIA ASTLE

Driving: 2013 Acura ILX
Odometer: 207,567 miles
Trip distance (drive): 600 miles
Trip distance (hike/fly): 20 miles

Havasu means turquoise or blue-green water. Havasupai are the native people of this wondrous place. Supai is the census-designated name for this village in Coconino County, said to be the most remote community in the Lower 48 states—and one of the oldest, at over 800 years. Havasu Falls, shown here, is one of six along Havasu Creek.



Imagine living in a place so remote that the cold Dr Pepper you're about to swig had to come in on a pack mule or be airlifted there by a helicopter. Given the logistical challenges of sustaining a town so remote, I was surprised such a luxury was even available—let alone refrigerated. I even got this one at a discount because the can had been damaged during mule transport.

I'm about to introduce you to a community that has thrived in the heart of northern Arizona for hundreds of years. If you're lucky, you'll pick up a hint of 3G cell signal there. But otherwise, the inhabitants of the village of Supai are about as "low-tech" as you can get in the year 2019.

I've lived within a few hours of the Grand Canyon my entire life, yet had only been into the (mile-deep) middle of it one time, three years ago when some friends and I did a crazy 26-mile South Rim to North Rim hike. Now, it was time to put the hiking boots back on (or, just my running shoes, in this case) and trek back into one of Arizona's wonders of the world.

The Havasupai Indian Reservation is surrounded on all sides by Grand Canyon National Park, and it's one of the most difficult to obtain a hiking permit to access. In fact, twice in the past (2008, and then again earlier last year), I've had a permit that has been cancelled or rescheduled due to flooding in the canyon. This time, we crossed fingers that our trip would proceed as planned, and it did—for the most part.

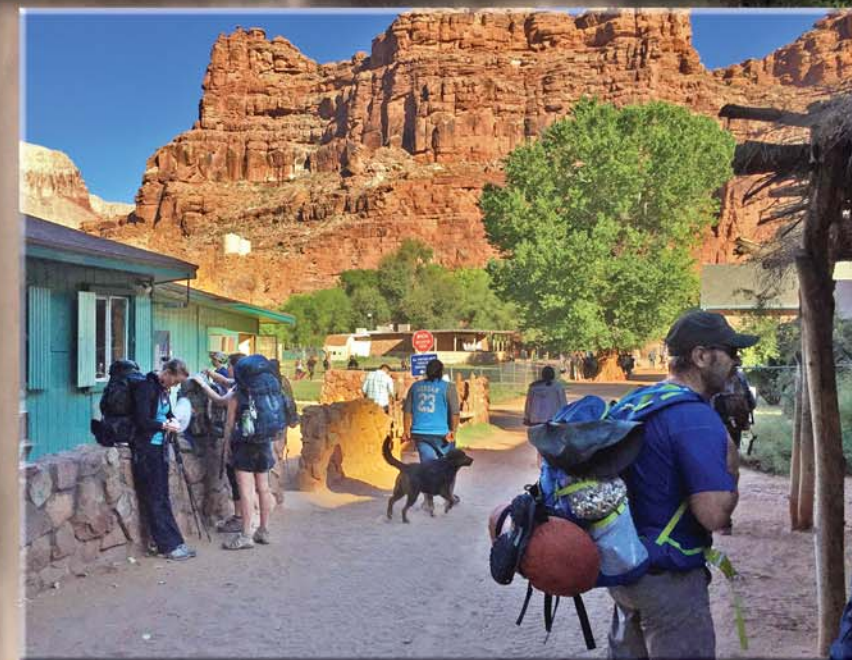
Havasupai is a word that means 'havasu' (blue-green waters) and 'pai' (people). So the 639 people who live within the 300-square-mile reservation are the people of the blue-green waters. They are governed by a constitution that was signed in 1939 and led by a seven-member Tribal Council.

Our party of nine met up at the crack of dawn—actually, a little before it—on a Friday morning last fall. Getting there was a straightforward trek up Highway 89 from Phoenix, through the Route 66 towns of Seligman and Peach Springs, and then about 68 miles on a paved two-laner to the trailhead parking lot.

Getting all my gear into a backpack was no small challenge, carefully prioritizing which items were critical for the trek. The eight-mile initial drop into the town of Supai was easy, thanks to cool morning temperatures, well-traveled pathways and primarily downhill grade. Amenities there were impressive: a café, general store, schoolhouse and churches were all present, staffed by natives and welcoming to the estimated 200 tourists who are camping in the area on any given day.

We found the perfect campsite for our party, two more miles down the dirt pathway and locat-

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ed right on the verge of Mooney Falls, the highest of six waterfalls, which sends crystal blue waters cascading about 200 feet to the canyon below. We set up a hammock along the river, which ended up being my favorite place to (literally) hang out. Best of all, we were disconnected entirely at that point from contact with the outside world.

On Saturday, we scaled the cliffside—with assistance of chains and ladders—to the pools below Mooney Falls. It was an unforgettable experience in conquering any fear of heights. The most unnerving thing about making the descent was the fact that over time, the rocks and ladders had worn smooth, so grip was limited. Besides that, the waterfall's mist kept all footholds nice and slippery with water. Yikes.

We enjoyed the sights and sounds of Mooney Falls for a couple of hours before making our ascent to camp again. That afternoon's highlight was getting a taste of some of the natives' frybread. A \$12 taco with beans, cheese and tomatoes was the ultimate afternoon snack and worth every penny to someone who was sick of eating dehydrated meals from tinfoil bags. You can also opt for the dessert version, drizzled in Nutella and caramel. In fact, Jack had two of these, and made me promise not to tell anyone. Sorry, Jack!

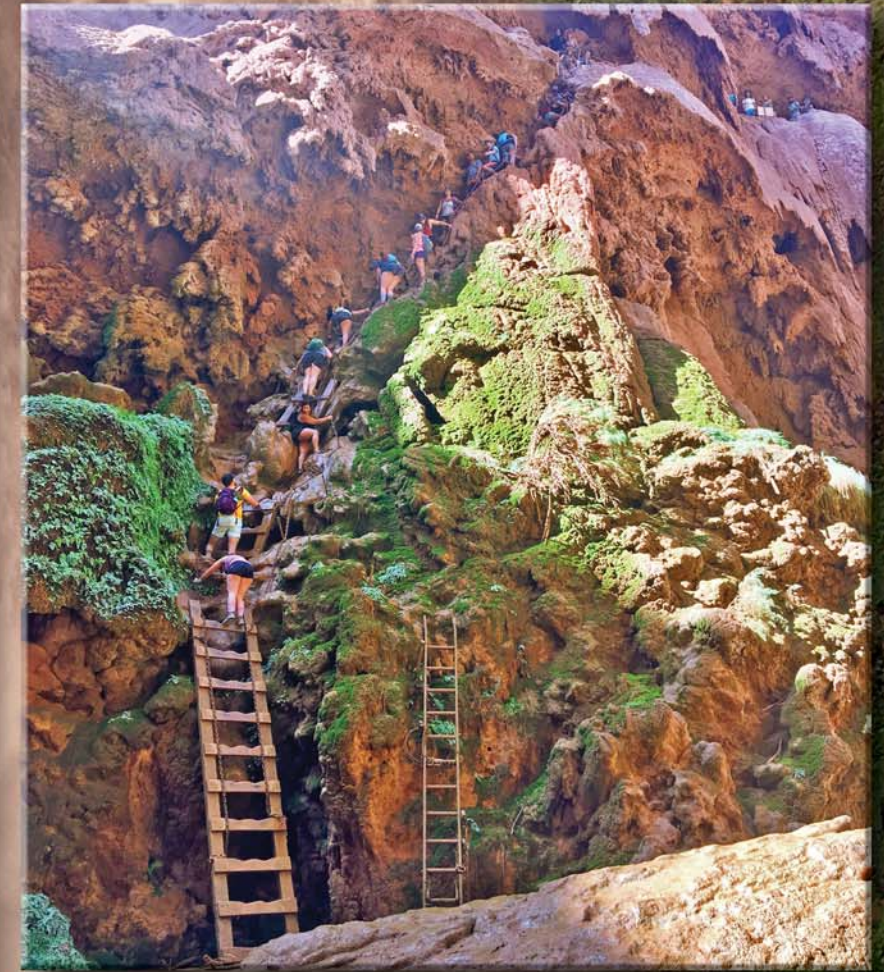
Campfires are explicitly outlawed in the Hava-supai region, so we told nighttime stories huddled around the picnic table, before calling it a night.

Already a little sore from two days of trudging around in the sand and water, I wasn't feeling too keen on a roughly 10-mile (uphill) return hike to the parking lot on Sunday morning, so three from our party elected to take a helicopter from Supai instead. It was my first time riding in a helicopter, and I was glad that I did. The one-way fare for a seven-minute flight was \$85 and because of limited seating (only room for six) and a high volume of people leaving the canyon that day, it took about four hours until we actually got onboard. The views were spectacular.

Note that horses and mules are also available for transport of your gear, yourself or both, one way or round-trip. Costs vary, but can easily approach or exceed the helicopter. Nobody in our party went that route, though a few gave us their backpacks to carry to the top by helicopter.

By the time we got back to our vehicles, the members of our group who'd opted to hike out had already beat us there and had left the area. I played catch-up in my Acura ILX and reunited with Kyle, Jack and Justin at Roadkill Cafe in Seligman, before continuing the rest of the way into Phoenix.

Now whenever I crack open a Dr Pepper, I remember this trip with fond thoughts of sand in my shoes and a babbling brook underneath me in a hammock. ■



Lyn St James seals spot in motorsports history

Seven-time Indy 500 racer Lyn St James set 21 national and international speed records during her career as a professional race car driver and is one of nine women who qualified for the Indianapolis 500.

Talladega has been known as an icon for record-setting speed since it opened in 1969 and became the stage for not one, but two speed records set by Lyn St James.

In 1985, Lyn St James became the first woman to break the 200 mph barrier on an oval, at Talladega Motor Speedway, when she drove a Ford Mustang Probe GT Prototype race car to an average speed of 204.223 mph. In October 1988, Lyn returned to Talladega and set a women's closed-course world record of 212.577 mph driving a Ford Thunderbird built by Bill Elliott Racing.

Her speed records were celebrated during the October 13-14, 2018 NASCAR Monster Energy Cup Race and Camping World Truck Series weekend, where her record-setting Thunderbird was showcased in a Ford consumer display.

"I think those laps at Talladega, first in the Ford Probe and then in the Ford Thunderbird, helped me to learn and like high-speed ovals. I have so much to be thankful for and grateful for the opportunities,"



said St James. "The Thunderbird speed record effort was an ambitious one with multiple agendas. Ford had the car built, Goodyear provided the tires, and with the

expertise of Bill Elliott Racing, those speed records were set. The irony of this whole story is that my goal of convincing Ford that I could race stock cars didn't happen."



Lyn St James later went on to race in the Indianapolis 500 seven times and became the first woman to win the Indianapolis 500 Rookie of the Year award in 1992. In 1995 during Indy 500 qualifying, she established a world record for women



on closed-course, reaching 225.722 mph.

Named one of the "Top 100 Female Athletes of the Century" by *Sports Illustrated*, St James raced in 15 Indy car races in her career. She is an accomplished road racer and has earned numerous laurels at the wheel of a variety of race cars.

She is a two-time competitor in the 24 Hours of Le Mans (1989 and '91).

She raced in 62 IMSA GT events, amassing a record of six wins, 17 top-five and 37 top-ten finishes.

Her 1985 GT victory at Watkins Glen remains the only time a woman has scored a win in that series driving solo.

Lyn raced in the 12 Hours of Sebring nine times, winning the GTO class in 1990, and was a two-time winner in the GTO Class at the 24 Hours of Daytona.

She raced in 53 SCCA Trans Am races with seven top-five finishes.

She is a member of the Florida Sports Hall of Fame and the SCCA Hall of Fame and is the author of three books.

St James founded the "Women in the Winner's Circle Foundation," which recently combined resources with the Women's Sports Foundation to establish the Podium Project Scholarship, which she leads.

Lyn is busy as a keynote speaker, is active on numerous Boards, and is an Ambassador for the RPM Foundation. She enjoys Vintage Racing, when she finds the time.

Find out more about Lyn's career and the foundations she supports online at www.lynstjames.com. ■

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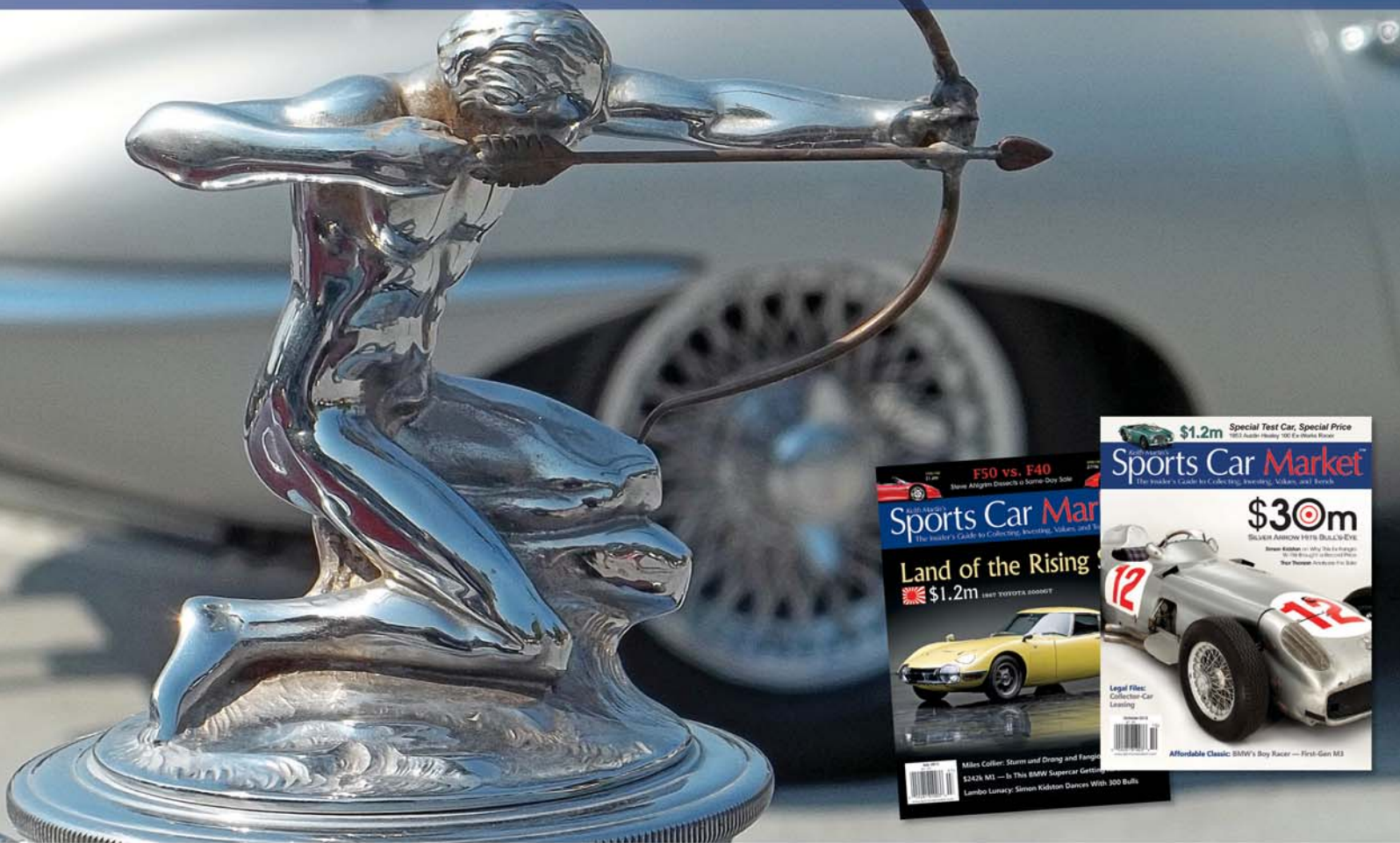
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A WEEK WITH : 2019 TOYOTA COROLLA 5-DOOR HATCHBACK XSE

Form-fitting

BY JOE SAGE

Among Toyota's lineup of fully 19 vehicles—cars, SUVs/crossovers, hybrids, pickups and a minivan—the Corolla Hatchback is considered a separate model from the Corolla. Rightly so. New for 2019, it was revealed last spring, months before a new Corolla sedan, letting the hatch establish a sportier new style direction. It suits the spirited little hatchback very well, while the hatchback suits the basic car so well, you'd be excused for thinking it has been around the whole time. That can be attributed to a number of other hot hatches in the segment, a league the Corolla Hatchback joins enthusiastically and fully ready to inhabit.

The Corolla Hatchback, which weighs in at just over a ton and a half, has a 168-hp 2.0-liter engine, versus a 132- or 140-hp 1.8-liter in the sedans.

Corolla Hatchback starts at just \$19,990 in SE trim and has the same engine, suspension, choice of automatic or rev-matching manual (IMT, or intelligent manual transmission) and other build basics as our XSE sample. For a few grand more, the XSE (the only other trim) adds worthwhile features inside and out—dual zone climate, heated leather seats, upgraded audio and a larger screen, fog lights, 18- rather than 16-inch wheels, and a chrome grille surround so you can spot the model straight

away. If you have a few grand, the XSE inclusions are winners. If you don't, the drive experience itself will be exactly equal in the SE. Best of all, the choice does not force buying a base trim just to get the manual trans, as in many other cases. (The automatic on the hatch is a “dynamic shift” CVT.)

It's a classic hot hatch formula, right down to more tangible than average front-drive torque, which tuners may embrace and others may soon ignore, though it can also provide front tire chirp (sometimes unwanted, other times ideal for street cred).

The IMT can be turned on or off. Ours arrived with it turned on, which we were told we'd love, but we turned it off pretty quickly. Someone who doesn't drive manuals all the time might like it, but if you drive manuals all the time you'll be happier taking charge of the details. We also turned off an automatic parking brake that seems out of character to the car (and paradoxically less convenient).

The hatch itself could use an engineering revisit on couple of ergonomic details—the release is very low, small and sharp, and the cargo cover can nail you right between the eyes, especially at night.

Despite 20 to 27 percent more horses than a Corolla sedan, the power curve does not have a lot of headroom in a tight move, all the more reason to welcome the 6-speed manual's gymnastics.

We also welcomed the Flame Blue paint job, the model's promotional color, which suits it well.

SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE	.....2.0L 4-cyl DOHC 16v dual inject w dual VVT-i
DRIVETRAIN	.....FWD
HP/TORQUE	.....168 hp / 151 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION	.....6-spd manual (iMT) w rev matching
SUSPENSION	.....F: indep MacPherson strut w stblzr bar; R: multi-link w stblzr bar & springs
STEERING	.....elec power-assist rack & pinion
BRAKES	.....F: 11.5" vented / R: 10.5" solid automatic electric parking brake
WHEELS / TIRES	.....18" alum bright machine finish w dark grey metallic paint / 225/40R18
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	.....169.9 / 103.9 in
TURNING CIRCLE	.....37.4 ft
GROUND CLEARANCE	.....5.1 in
SEATING CAPACITY	.....five
HEADROOM (F/R)	.....38.4 / 38.0 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	.....42.0 / 29.9 in
CARGO CAPACITY	.....18.0 cu. ft
WEIGHT	.....3060 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY	.....87 oct reg / 13.2 gal
MPG	.....28/37/31 (city/hwy/comb)
BASE PRICE	.....\$22,990
ADAPTIVE HEADLIGHTS: LED headlights w level control and auto on/off	.....415
REAR WINDOW SPOILER	.....375
ALLOY WHEEL LOCKS	.....65
PROTECTION PKG: Carpeted floor mats, carpeted cargo mat, cargo net, rear bumper protector	.....358
DESTINATION CHARGE	.....920
TOTAL	.....25,123

You get interested in a car like this because it gets to the point—simple enough, and as a Toyota surely low maintenance, but sporty and fun. Tech inclusions are generous and inexpensive, though it might do just as well without a couple of them. ■



BISON: ZR2 ON STERIODS

By Joe Sage

There is an explosion happening now in the midsize pickup market, as an ongoing boom in pickup sales across many demographics has left some realizing they don't really need a full-size truck, outside ranch country or construction sites. After years of Toyota Tacoma and Nissan Frontier having it pretty much to themselves (with Honda Ridgeline also in the segment, with a different take on things), Chevrolet and GMC reentered the zone in the US in 2015 with a new Colorado and Canyon, respectively; Ford's new Ranger is just coming to dealerships; FCA revealed the Jeep Gladiator at the LA Auto Show (also in this issue); and we're keeping an eye on upcoming auto shows for what

Ram may or may not have up their sleeve.

The Chevrolet Colorado and GMC Canyon have been well received. But, of course, some people will always take the best they've been given and still reach for the parts catalog, whether for style, performance or specific capability such as off-road.

So Chevrolet has decided to do this, too. A big part of Chevy's strategy with the Colorado midsize pickup is to offer a wide variety of models, with a wide variety of purposes, factory-ready.

Thus they created the Chevrolet Colorado ZR2, which we had in our fleet a month or so back, a beefed-up off-road, desert- and trail-running build, which was our first drive of their new midsize pick-

up. Highly outfitted with wider track, taller suspension, 31-inch tires, electronically locking differentials, a body and undercarriage modified for approach, departure and clearance hazards in the field, and a choice of gasoline or diesel powerplants, the Colorado ZR2 seems ready for anything you can throw it at—exactly as it comes off the assembly line in Wentzille, Missouri—the factory-ready philosophy applied to maximum effect. Or so we had noted a month earlier. Turns out that was "maximum so far." Meet the new maximum.

The new Chevrolet Colorado ZR2 Bison build also gets one step ahead of ZR2 shoppers who might be thinking ahead to modifications. For the

ZR2 Bison, Chevy reaches beyond the bowtie parts bin, teaming up with AEV—American Expedition Vehicles of Wixom, Michigan—builder of off-road custom vehicles and overlanding parts extraordinaire and a regular at Off-Road Expo West near Flagstaff each spring. If you've coveted their over-the-top builds and have also coveted the new Chevy Colorado, particularly the Colorado ZR2, meet your double covet.

Enhancements on the ZR2 Bison include an AEV front bumper set up to accommodate a winch; a rear bumper with recovery points; AEV hot-stamped boron steel skid plates for the front differential, engine oil pan, transfer case, fuel tank and rear differential; AEV-designed fender flares; AEV-designed 17-inch wheels (and spare); and AEV-logoed floor liners front and rear—all proclaimed upon arrival by standard fog lamps and a burly blacked-out grille reading "CHEVROLET," rather than bearing the normal tidy bowtie.

We met up with the Chevy truck team in Paradise Valley and headed out on surface streets and Valley freeways—where the truck was smooth and comfortable—then out of the East Valley on US 60 to a dedicated off-road area southwest of Superior. Here, we put the ZR2 Bison through extremes, including rock crawling and canyon-squeezing that fully challenged the truck's approach, breakover and departure angles, its outer dimensions, its undercarriage protections—and ultimately most of all its drivetrain and sus-

pension. This was a course that could break even the most serious off-road vehicle, but (with invaluable help from ground crew guiding us through the very tightest spots) our small army of ZR2 Bisons conquered it all and drove away happy and ultimately unscathed.

(From here, we swapped into the new Silverado 2.7T turbo; see other feature in this issue.)

One more note if you're shopping for the new Colorado ZR2 Bison: since Chevy knows that no matter how complete a truck they build, some are still going to reach for even more specialization, they are now offering Best in the Desert factory race components, starting with 15 suspension and other parts originally developed for Chad Hall's Best in the Desert race and Baja 1000 pre-running truck—representing over 10,000 miles of actual extreme proof of product—enough for you to build a full race or pre-running truck of your own,

ZR2 models aside, Chevy Colorado has more up its sleeve with the factory-build-ready philosophy. Watch for two more specialty models—the RST (a both tough and classy appearance package for the street-focused LT trim, with black trim details, 20-inch wheels and the Bison's bold grille); and a Z71 Trail Runner (a more moderately off-road feature set than ZR2, for Z71, with skid plates, rock rails, 17-inch wheels and big off-road tires, and again also the Bison's grille). Each is created not to dilute the ZR2 or ZR2 Bison models, but rather just to spread their wealth. ■



2019 COLORADO ZR2 BISON

GASOLINE

ENGINE3.6L DOHC dir inj V6
DRIVETRAIN4WD
HP/TORQUE308 hp / 275 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION8L45 8-speed auto
MPG16/18/na (city/hwy/comb)

DIESEL

ENGINE2.8L Duramax turbo-diesel I-4
DRIVETRAIN4WD
HP/TORQUE186 hp / 369 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION6L50 6-spd auto
MPG18/22/na (city/hwy/comb)

SUSPENSIONF: indep coil-over shock, twin-tube shocks;
R: solid axle w semi-elliptic two-stage multi-leaf springs, twin-tube shocks

STEERINGelec power-assist rack & pinion

BRAKESpower-assist 4-wheel disc w Duralife long-life rotors, ABS, hill descent avail; F: 12.2" / R: 12.75"

WHEELSBison-specific 17x8 alum

TIRES31" Goodyear Wrangler Duratrac O/R

REAR AXLE3.42

CAB / BEDextended cab / 6'2"

.....crew cab / 5'2"

LENGTH / WHEELBASE212.7 / 128.3 in

PAYLOAD1100 lb

TOW CAPACITY5000 lb

WEIGHT extended cab ...gasoline4639 lb

.....diesel4925 lb

crew cabgasoline4745 lb

.....diesel5011 lb

FUEL CAPACITY21 gal

ZR2: Front & rear locking electronic differentials, Multimatic DSSV™ dampers, off-road rocker protection, cast-iron control arms, Autotrac transfer case and more.

BASE PRICE\$42,900

ZR2 BISON: Chevrolet lettered grille, AEV steel front & rear bumpers, fog lamps, AEV hot-stamped boron steel skid plates, AEV 17" aluminum wheels, AEV wheel flares, AEV badge floor liners, AEV badge embroidered headrests, integrated recovery points, integrated winch receiver and more.

BISON ADDS\$5,750

KEY OPTIONS:

2.8L DURATEC TURBO DIESEL3500

PREMIUM BOSE AUDIO500

CHEVROLET INFOTAINMENT 3 PREMIUM W NAV:

8" HD color touchscreen, voice recog Bluetooth, audi streaming, Apple/Android, in-

vehicle apps, personalization capable495

DESTINATION CHARGE995

Big things in small packages

By Joe Sage

The 2019 Chevrolet Silverado 1500 is a decidedly full-size pickup, spanning up to almost 20 feet in length and weighing in at about two and a half tons. It competes head-on with the nominal half-tons from its siblings at GMC, as well as the other Detroit manufacturers and two Japanese brands. And Chevy faces the same market pressures as the others: delivering big truck capability, safety and durability, increasingly along with an eye to fuel economy and emissions efficiency.

It has been several years now since one of the other Detroit makers introduced a fuel-sipping V6 turbo for its full-size pickup, hoping the market would respond to something other than a V8 for at least a degree of sales, only to discover it would be one of their top sellers. This has been mirrored in the car market, where V8s and sixes have been replaced by much smaller six- and more often four-cylinder turbos, all delivering better horsepower, torque and fuel mileage than the big engines.

Against this landscape, Chevy now takes things

a step further, with an all-new engine offering for their top-selling full-size pickup, a trim but robust and highly technical 2.7-liter turbo of just four cylinders. The all-new 2019 Silverado already shaved off 450 pounds (based on Crew Cab V8)—and the slimming program continues under the hood with the availability of the new 2.7T. (Chevy Silverado 1500 with the 2.7T weighs 380 pounds less than with the 4.3L V6 it is designed to displace.)

Engineered specifically for Silverado, the new 2.7T is a clean-sheet design, receiving optimized technology in every aspect large and small (see specifications highlights at right).

We met up with the Chevy truck team in Paradise Valley for a chance to get behind the wheel, first driving the new Colorado ZR2 Bison (see also in this issue) to an off-road site near Superior, then swapping into the Silverado 2.7T.

We drove east through Superior to Miami-Globe, north along Roosevelt Lake and

Four Peaks on AZ 188, then down the Beeline Highway (AZ 87) back to metro Phoenix—about 180 miles of two-lane and rural four-lane highway with significant grades, curves and straightaways.

The goal of such a drive is kind of two seemingly contradictory things—paying close attention to the performance of this new powerplant, while simultaneously realizing its operation is so normal you stop paying attention to it. That, after all, is the engine's mission—to deliver its benefits in a transparent (and in key ways advantageous) way.

And why wouldn't it? Its 310 hp beats the 4.3L V6's 285 and is not that far off the 5.3L V8's 355 hp.

Torque tells the same tale, at 348 lb-ft beating the 4.3L V6's 305 and not that far off the 5.3L V8's 383. (Their 6.2L V8 has 420 hp and 460 lb-ft.)

What's more, the 2.7T reaches its peak torque at as low as 1500 rpm and holds it to 4000, the latter the point at which the others are just kicking in. The 2.7T is also rated at 23 mpg highway

and 20 mpg city, an around-town rating 13 percent better than the 4.3L V6. It hits zero-to-60 mph in 6.8 seconds, a full second faster than the V6.

In addition to all that lightweight performance, Silverado 2.7T brings decent brawn, able to tow 7200 pounds, with a max payload of 2280 pounds.

We've long since concluded that with modern small-displacement, lower-cylinder-count engines in passenger cars and utilities, the majority of owners, if no-one every told them it was a smaller engine, would never know or care. Whether this is the case with pickup buyers is largely moot—the vast majority of truck buyers are very active in their selection of powertrain and will know. Nonetheless, even though surely fully aware it's a smaller engine, will they care? Probably so, but we suspect the reason for this is that it will most likely become a bragging point. ■

2019 SILVERADO 2.7 TURBO ENGINE

- ENGINE**2.7L turbocharged DOHC I-4
- HP/TORQUE**310 hp / 348 lb-ft
- VALVETRAIN:** Dual-overhead camshafts, four-valves per cylinder, tripower valvetrain with continuously variable valve timing, variable valve lift and Active Fuel Management
- AIR DELIVERY:** Single dual-volute turbocharger with electronically controlled wastegate; intercooling system. 22-psi / 1.5 bar max boost
- FUEL DELIVERY:** High-pressure direct injection (3000 psi / 20 MPa) and electronic throttle control; Active Fuel Management
- IGNITION SYSTEM**High-energy coil-on-plug
- MAX ENGINE SPEED**6100 rpm
- ADDTL FEATURES:** Continuously variable oil pump; electric water pump; engine oil cooler, automatic stop/start, Active Thermal Management, exhaust manifold integrated in cylinder head
- MANUFACTURED**Spring Hill, Tennessee

2020 SILVERADO HD



While at the 2019 Silverado 1500 2.7 Turbo drive, we were afforded a very secret sneak peek of the 2020 Silverado HD—the third all-new Silverado in 18 months—so new it was presented in foam study form (which looks like the real thing, but is a firmly no-touch situation). Cameras were prohibited, and even saying we had seen it was off limits for some time. But now it can be shown (as it gets closer to being more widely revealed in February).

To be built at GM's Flint Assembly plant in Michigan, the new Silverado HD has extremely bold styling to differentiate it from the Silverado 1500 lineup. The only sheet metal shared with the 1500 is the roof. Even the biggest and tallest of us felt diminished in its presence, as in-your-face dramatic as the front-end loader it could be towing.

Heavy-duty Silverado HD pickups will have more differentiation than ever before from lighter-duty models, with all-new customer-focused trailering technology, significant increases in towing and payload capabilities and a host of technologies and features designed specifically for heavy-duty truck customers, such as a new integrated "Bedstep," for easier access to the bed while hooked up to a fifth-wheel trailer.

The cabin benefits from basic changes already made on the all-new Silverado 1500, including an additional three inches of legroom on crew cab models and a taller, more comfortable seating position.

Options under the hood of the new 2020 Silverado HD will include two new powertrains: an all-new direct-injection gasoline engine with six-speed automatic, or a Duramax Turbo-Diesel V8, delivering a whopping 910 lb-ft of torque through an all-new Allison 10-speed automatic.

With this launch, Chevrolet will have new pickups across the board—new Colorado midsize models; and all-new Silverado 1500, Medium-Duty and HD full-size models.

The new 2020 Silverado HD will come in five trims: Work Truck, Custom, LT, LTZ and High Country. The 2020 Silverado HD goes on sale in mid-2019. ■





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VEHICLE AWARDS : 9TH ANNUAL HISPANIC MOTOR PRESS AWARDS



(Left to right) German Angel (*Enfoque Social*), Juan Garcia (*Digital Trends*), Ricardo Rodriguez-Long (*Garage Latino*) and Dave Elshof (Ram Brand Communications).

Perspectiva Hispana

The 9th annual Hispanic Motor Press Awards has recognized the ten best new vehicles of 2019 for the Hispanic consumer.

According to data from Polk, Hispanics are projected to spend \$18 billion on new vehicles in 2019, accounting for 25 percent of the growth in new-vehicle sales. The impact of Latinos continues to increase exponentially in the market, influencing auto companies to consider and incorporate the needs and wants of the largest minority group in the country.

The Hispanic Motor Press Awards—organized by the Hispanic Motor Press Foundation, a non-profit 501(c)(3) educational organization that helps educate Hispanics on finding the best value vehicles in the market through grassroots efforts and events—were presented at the LA Auto Show. "California is known for setting the trends in the automotive industry, and with the largest Hispanic population in the US, it is the place to find out what we like," said Ricardo Rodriguez-Long, president of the Hispanic Motor Press Foundation.

The jury panel for the 2019 awards comprised Hispanic automotive journalists, bloggers and industry influencers selected by the organization's advisory board. Twenty individuals and one jury

director from the panel evaluate the vehicles from their perspective, keeping the Hispanic audience's preferences foremost in their minds. An educated consumer is a satisfied consumer, and the awards provide Hispanic consumers with outstanding choices based on the judging panel's own experiences with the vehicles.

Each year, there are over 250 new vehicle models to choose from. Selecting the ten best is a big responsibility for the jurors, who volunteer their time to test and compare the final selections. Auto manufacturers voluntarily submit their entries, and the panel evaluates vehicles on factors including pricing, safety, styling, comfort, technology, environmental impact and overall value. The final ten vehicles were voted the best in each class and provide proven options as the best overall selection for the needs and desires of Hispanic families.

Each vehicle's virtues were assessed as they related to the mainstream Hispanic family in the U.S. The awards' vetting process includes test drives, mass market availability, and affordability data valuations. The committee took into account overall design, comfort, safety, performance, functionality, accessory content, driver satisfaction, consumer final cost, and overall value package to

select the vehicles that offer the best value for the Hispanic consumer.

The ten vehicle winners represent the most significant new automobiles in the market and the best value in their class as it relates to the Hispanic family. The 2019 winners are:

- SUBCOMPACT CAR**Kia Rio 5-Door
- COMPACT CAR**Volkswagen Golf
- SEDAN CAR**Nissan Altima
- DELUXE CAR**Genesis G70
- MINIVAN**Chrysler Pacifica Hybrid
- CROSSOVER**Hyundai Kona
- SUV**Lincoln Nautilus
- SPORTS CAR**Ford Mustang
- ADVENTURE 4X4**Jeep Wrangler
- PICKUP TRUCK**Ram 1500

"We are proud and honored that the Hispanic Motor Press Awards are widely recognized by the automobile industry, with multiple brands using the awards in their advertising and marketing campaigns," adds Rodriguez-Long.

The Hispanic Motor Press Foundation provides objective and practical information to the Hispanic community and works with industry leaders and regulators to share programs that improve motor vehicle technology and encourage technology innovation. For more information on the Hispanic Motor Press Foundation and Hispanic Motor Press Awards including previous years' winners, visit www.hispanicmotorpress.org. ■

LA AUTO SHOW

NOVEMBER 2018



The Los Angeles Auto Show is the first of the major international shows on the calendar and the handiest to Arizona, a 45-minute flight or six-hour drive away.

LA Auto Show Press and Trade Days officially merged with a Connected Car Expo last year, under a new title of AutoMobility LA, as the show's hosts blend consumer electronics, the automotive industry and urban planning.

Automotive manufacturers still bring their first wave of new production model reveals, concepts and technological advances. Here are some highlights (alphabetically).

AUDI pushes their new electric vehicle group into the performance realm with the e-tron GT concept. Its flat-floor architecture allows sleek, long fastback styling and a low center of gravity for road-hugging performance from a 434 kW (590-hp) power pack (sent to its 285/30 22-inch wheels via quattro all-wheel-drive). Lightweight body construction (developed with Porsche) combines elements of carbon, aluminum and high-strength steel. The powertrain frees up space for trunks both front (3.5 cu.ft.) and rear (15.9 cu.ft.). Zero-to-62 mph acceleration is expected to be about 3.5 seconds, with top speed limited to 149.1 mph to maximize battery range. The Audi e-tron GT will be featured in Marvel Studios' *Avengers 4* this summer and will enter volume production in late 2020.

With a promise of 25 electrified models by 2025—12 purely electric—**BMW** had five EVs at LA. One eye-catcher was the BMW i Vision Dynamics concept for an all-electric, emission-free four-door Gran Coupe targeting 0-60 mph in 4.0 seconds, a top speed of 120 mph, and a range of 373 miles. The i Vision Dynamics concept is also a study in the brand's styling language, including an evolved window profile. BMW also showed a sportier i3s, a lightweight M3 CS, an 8 Series concept, X7 iPerformance concept, new 6 Series Gran Turismo, an M5 with new M-specific xDrive AWD, and even a BMW C-Evolution electric scooter, as well as an EV concept for their MINI brand.

Chinese automaker **BYTON** (with a North American tech center in Silicon Valley and a concept and design center in Munich) showed off its M-Byte



• Audi e-tron GT concept



• BMW i Vision Dynamics concept



• Byton M-Byte Concept SUV

Concept SUV, a production version of which is scheduled to launch in China in late 2019 and the US and Europe by 2020. Byton's focus is on artificial intelligence, electric powertrains and autonomous vehicles. Byton's booth was set up as a very short test track, where consumers could line up for a test ride in the M-Byte concept during the show, a chance to try its high-speed connectivity and see its Shared Experience Display (SED), a full-vehicle-width screen.

FIAT showed off a new 2019 500X with an all-new, standard-equipment 1.3-liter turbo with the latest iteration—MultiAir III—of FCA's exclusive valve-actuation technology, plus engine stop-start and stated best-in-class torque. Also standard are a nine-speed automatic transmission and all-wheel drive with a disconnecting rear axle for improved fuel efficiency. In addition to new front and rear fascia designs, the new small FIAT crossover's almost 70 safety and security features now include Adaptive Cruise Control and Front Park Assist. Built in Italy and available in three trims—Pop, Trekking and Trekking Plus—the new 500X arrives this spring, starting at \$25,785.

GENOVATION, of Rockville, Maryland, made its first visit to a US auto show a notable one, with the Corvette-based GXE, the world's first street legal all-electric supercar, expected to exceed 220 mph, with a range of more than 175 miles on a full charge, promising ultra-high performance and efficient daily-driver convenience. Designed, developed and produced in the US, it uses state-of-the-art batteries, inverters and electric twin-motors to generate 800+ hp and 700+ lb-ft of torque. Genovation holds the Guinness World Record for a street legal EV—190.48 mph in the standing mile—and is also the first street legal EV to record a top speed of 209 mph, a record it still retains.

An all-new 2019 **HONDA** Passport five-seat, 280-hp 3.5L V6-powered SUV with 9-speed automatic promises on-road refinement, off-road adventure and best-in-class interior space including underfloor cargo space. Passport slots between the compact CR-V and three-row Pilot in the lineup. Unibody construction, the V6, fully independent suspension and easy steering are geared toward town and long road trips, while available Honda i-VTM4 torque-vectoring AWD and four-mode Intelligent Traction Management (with snow, sand and mud modes) are aimed at tough terrain normally tackled by body-on-frame or off-road focused SUVs. 20-inch alloy wheels are standard on all trims.

HYUNDAI completes its new four-SUV lineup (atop Kona, Tucson and now just one Santa Fe) with the all-new three-row Palisade replacing the one-year 2019 Santa Fe XL as its flagship entry for 2020, with seating for up to eight, ventilated one-touch second-row seats, power third-row seats and generous reconfigurable cargo space. Technology features include a 10-inch nav screen, wireless charging, seven USB ports, heads-up display, and a clever new roof vent diffuser providing quieter, draft-free rear AC flow, for a focused stream of air whenever and wherever desired. Efficient shift-by-wire and Hyundai SmartSense technology are standard. Palisade arrives at dealers this summer.

One of the most highly anticipated and well-received reveals at LA was the new **JEEP** Gladiator, FCA's first new entry into the booming midsize pickup segment. Based on the max-capability Wrangler—with Command-Trac and Rock-Trac 4x4 systems, third-gen Dana 44 axles, Tru-Lock electric front- and rear-axle lockers, Trac-Lok limited-slip diff, segment-exclusive electronic sway-bar disconnect, 33-inch off-road tires, unmatched crawl ratios and up to 30



• 2019 Fiat 500X



• Genovation GXE



• 2019 Honda Passport



• 2020 Hyundai Palisade



• 2020 Jeep® Gladiator

KEEP RIGHT >>

inches of water fording—the Gladiator pickup claims best-in-class towing (7650 lb) and 4x4 payload (1600 lb in its five-foot steel bed). Wrangler-like body reconfigurability provides open-air freedom not found in other pickups. A soft top and two hard tops are available. Gladiator arrives in second quarter 2019.

KIA Soul is the vehicle that first turned heads toward Kia—they refer to “since Soul” as a corporate watershed, when brand sales grew by 150 percent, and note that rivals Scion xB and Nissan Cube were discontinued—and they have tackled the formidable task of updating an icon very nicely, completely new yet familiar, retaining its instantly recognizable profile and shape. The third-gen Kia Soul has a new high-tech cockpit with available 10.25-inch screen and heads-up display, while offering non-turbo and turbo models and a new 2.0L engine and “intelligent variable transmission” (IVT) combination. Two new trims—GT-Line and X-Line—make a total of six, not counting the new Soul EV also revealed at LA (as well as an all-new Niro EV).

A new midsize three-row **LINCOLN** Aviator reflects the winning style of the new full-size Navigator introduced in 2018, while bringing back a nameplate dropped in 2005, rounding out their refreshed SUV lineup along with the smaller Nautilus (formerly the MKX as they continue to move away from their recent hard-to-distinguish three-letter naming scheme for most models). Aviator has a standard 400-hp twin-turbo 3.0L V6 with 400 lb-ft of torque, 10-speed automatic and available AWD. A Grand Touring model adds advanced hybrid technology, for 450 hp and 600 lb-ft of torque. Packed with technology and premium touches, the new 2020 Aviator begins production during 2019.

MAZDA revealed gen-four of its popular Mazda3 (which has sold over six million copies since 2003) in sedan and hatchback form for 2019. Kodo design language carries forward in familiar form but with a striking new overall shape. The sedan is presented as a more elegant option, the hatchback as more emotional. The powertrain lineup includes SKYACTIV-X, a new kind of combustion engine that combines advantages of gasoline and diesel engines—an innovative spark-controlled compression ignition system allows quick response and control over gear settings for performance without sacrificing fuel economy. The new Mazda3’s global rollout starts in North America early this year.

For 2020, **MERCEDES-AMG** adds a new limited edition AMG GT R PRO to the growing AMG GT lineup. Two-door AMG GT Coupes and Roadsters receive an AMG DYNAMICS integrated driving control system, a new AMG Performance steering wheel, the center console with display buttons from the AMG GT 4-Door Coupe, and a fully digital instrument display. The AMG GT R PRO is modified for more racetrack performance, with additional lightweighting, new suspension, and aerodynamic fine-tuning for even more downforce overall. New telematics architecture makes the digital instrument display with 12.3-inch cluster and 10.25-inch multimedia screen on the center console possible.

The **MITSUBISHI** e-Evolution Concept is an all-electric high-performance SUV highlighting a new brand strategy reflecting an adventurous and progressive mindset as the company expands and accelerates EV deployment along with AI, connectivity, on-board and cloud computing. Aggressive styling projects both high-performance cross-country tourer and four-wheel-drive characteristics, from a black glass grille to blue highlights for cameras and sensors, to large air intakes to cool electric brake calipers. A large hexagonal shape in the rear panel evokes the Mitsubishi Pajero, a classic high-capability off-roader. The e-Evolution Concept is powered by three high-torque electric motors.



• 2020 Kia Soul



• 2020 Lincoln Aviator



• 2019 Mazda3 Hatchback



• 2020 Mercedes-AMG GT



• Mitsubishi e-Evolution Concept

NISSAN presented a 2019 refresh of the third-generation Murano, with a more pronounced V-motion grille, redesigned LED headlights and taillights, new LED fog lights, new 18- and 20-inch alloy wheels, and new colors. Inside are available diamond-quilted leather-appointed seats, as well as new wood or metallic finishes. Advanced safety and connectivity features are expanded, with an 8-inch multi-touch screen standard. Four trim levels have just two option packages for power panoramic moonroof, Bose audio and more. All have a 260-hp 3.5L V6, Xtronic transmission and front-wheel or optional all-wheel drive. A 2019 refresh for the eighth-gen Nissan Maxima was also shown.

PORSCHE revealed Carrera S, Carrera 4S and GT2 RS Clubsport versions of the eighth-gen 911 (internally 992). Wider wheel housings arch over 20-inch front and 21-inch rear wheels. The flat-six turbo of the 911 Carrera S and 4S now has 443 hp, up 23 percent. With 8-speed PDK DCT, the S Coupe hits 60 mph in 3.5 seconds and the AWD 4S Coupe in 3.4, both 0.4 seconds faster than the prior models. A Sport Chrono Package knocks off another 0.2 seconds. Top speeds are 191 and 190 mph, respectively. A manual transmission will be offered later. The new Porsche 911 GT2 RS Clubsport track event car is a 700-hp racing version of the street-legal 911 GT2 RS, limited to 200 units globally.

EV manufacturer **RIVIAN** unveiled its Electric Adventure Vehicles™, the R1T all-electric 5-passenger pickup and the R1S all-electric 7-passenger SUV. With up to 400+ miles of electric range, a wading depth of one meter, lockable storage bins for bulky gear, and the performance and precise control of quad-motor AWD, Rivian vehicles have been developed to help customers get out and explore the world. The foundation of the R1T and R1S is a skateboard platform for the battery pack, drive units, suspension, braking and thermal system all below the height of the wheel, leaving space above for occupants and their gear. Both will be built at Rivian’s manufacturing facility in Normal, Illinois.

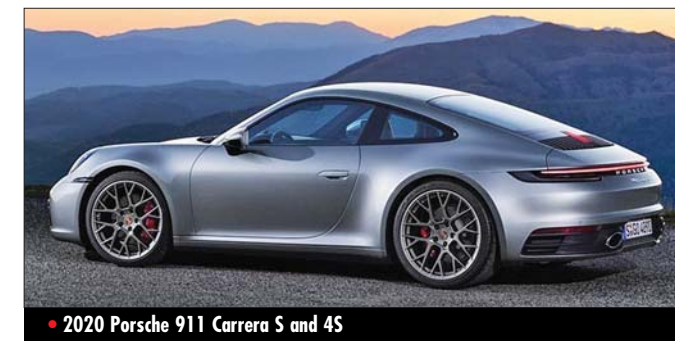
TOYOTA showed the Prius lineup still has some tricks up its sleeve, with a new electric all-wheel-drive model, the Prius AWD-e. Its Hybrid Synergy Drive system, shared with other Prius models, combines the output of a 1.8L 4-cylinder gasoline engine and two motor/generators through an electronically controlled planetary-type CVT. An Electronically Controlled Brake System coordinates control between regenerative braking and hydraulic brake force to optimize brake performance and feel. Its gasoline engine’s ultra-low internal friction and efficient combustion exceed 40 percent thermal efficiency, among the highest in the world for a gasoline engine. In addition to AWD traction and control, the Prius AWD-e projects 52/48/50 mpg (city/hwy/comb) fuel mileage.

VOLKSWAGEN has been evoking its classic VW Microbus with I.D. BUZZ EV concepts for awhile. Their newest effort, the I.D. BUZZ CARGO concept shown in LA—a spacious zero-emissions EV panel van concept—“could be” for sale by 2022, providing 340 miles of range with its largest anticipated available battery. VW hints that the CARGO might show up first as a support vehicle for their I.D. R Pikes Peak record holding race car. Special features include a digital cargo system, 230V socket for power tools, and a solar roof that can extend range by up to 9.3 miles. Can’t wait to get behind the wheel? That’s one possibility, though its “I.D. Pilot” mode allows full autonomous operation.

Upcoming shows include the North American International Auto Show (in Detroit) in January, the Chicago Auto Show in February, the Geneva Motor Show in March, and the New York International Auto Show in April. ■



• 2019 Nissan Murano



• 2020 Porsche 911 Carrera S and 4S



• Rivian Electric Adventure Vehicles™ all-electric pickup



• 2019 Toyota Prius with new AWD-e system



• Volkswagen I.D. BUZZ Cargo panel van concept

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OPENING WEEKEND

\$178 MILLION REDEVELOPMENT COMES TO LIFE AT ISM RACEWAY

NASCAR Fall Weekend at ISM Raceway (formerly Phoenix International Raceway) in November was especially festive, marking the completion and Grand Opening of their massive \$178 million redevelopment, and the crowds loved it.

Gone are the old north stands and tower. The grandstand is twice as long as it was. Changes are everywhere: new Canyon entryways with escalators and immersive tech; a new "Infield" with unprecedented fan access to race prep and drivers; a midway with new dining and beverage locations; even a new start-finish line in front of the grandstand, feeding right into the first thrilling curve.

Both fans and race crews enjoyed their new face-to-face interactions. You can't get this on TV! Once again this was the penultimate race of the NASCAR season, feeding final contenders into the ultimate season championship at Homestead-Miami Speedway the next weekend.

Brett Moffitt took the win in the Lucas Oil 150 on Friday (his fifth of the season), clinching a spot in the NASCAR Camping World Truck Series Championship race at Homestead-Miami.

Christopher Bell had been 34 points behind fourth place, but a big win in Saturday's Whelen Trusted to Perform 200 put him in the Championship 4.



ISM RACEWAY
PHOENIX, ARIZONA

Kevin Harvick was headed for a dominant win in the Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series Playoffs during Sunday's Can-Am 500, but was derailed on lap 73 when a flat tire forced him to pit early, though he worked his way back from 29th to fifth and earned a place in the Championship 4. Aric Almirola, who needed a win to move on to the final round, ultimately finished fourth and was eliminated from the championship. Joey Logano and Clint Bowyer were knocked out of the race by flat tires, leaving Kurt Busch and Chase Elliott in position to win at different points of the race, but both had their hopes dashed in the same lap, when contact between Kurt Busch and Denny Hamlin left Kurt Busch and Elliott with heavy damage. That left Kyle Busch to cross the line in first.

Joining Kyle Busch, Logano and Harvick at the following week's fight at Homestead was defending series champion Martin Truex Jr., who had finished in 14th place at ISM Raceway.

Homestead-Miami's NASCAR Cup Series Championship went to fan favorite Joey Logano, who had won just two races in the season. ■

NASCAR SPRING WEEKEND

MARCH 8-9-10, 2019

FRI MAR 8: GATORADE POLE DAY
TicketGuardian 500 NASCAR Weekend kicks off on Friday with Gatorade Pole Day. Don't miss practice sessions for both the Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series and NASCAR Xfinity Series before the starting line-up is set for the TicketGuardian 500.
RACE TIME: 3:15 PM

SAT MAR 9: XFINITY SERIES 200
Don't forget your tank top and sunglasses when you come watch the up and coming drivers in NASCAR in the NASCAR Xfinity Series Race on Saturday afternoon.
RACE TIME: 2:00 PM

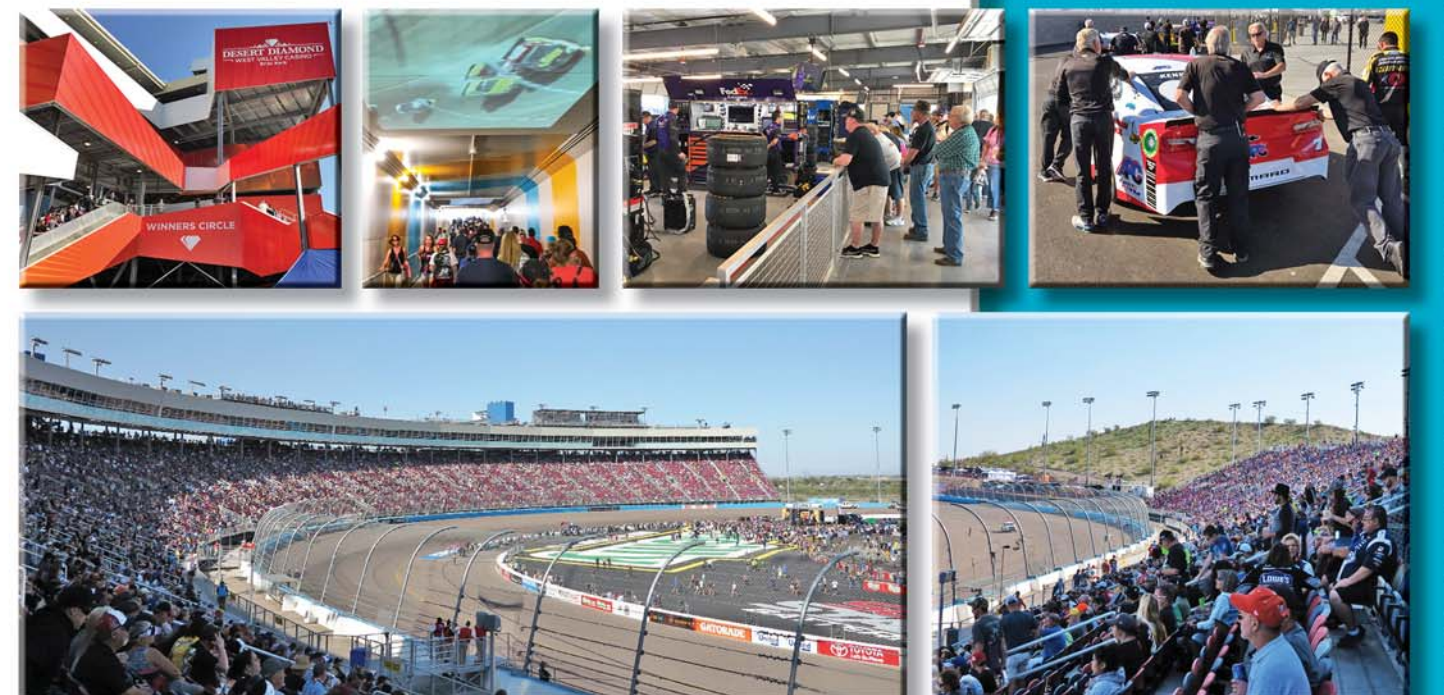
SUN MAR 10: TICKETGUARDIAN 500
Don't miss your opportunity to experience NASCAR Goes West with Champions Kevin Harvick and Kyle Busch taking on young guns like Kyle Larson and Chase Elliott on the track on Sunday.
RACE TIME: 12:30 PM

TICKETS: SEASON TICKET PACKAGE, DAILY, HILLSIDE GENERAL ADMISSION, ACCESSIBLE SEATING, WEEKEND PACKAGES

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- 1-866-408-RACE (7223)
- In person at the ISM Raceway ticket office, 125 S Avondale Blvd, Suite 200, Avondale AZ 85323 (Mon-Fri, 8am-5pm).

TicketGuardian insurance is available, in case you think your plans could change. ■



ROAD HUGGER BY JOE SAGE

It's been a couple of years now since Hyundai split Genesis off as its own brand. The former Hyundai Genesis became the Genesis G80 and the former Hyundai Equus the Genesis G90. Sales are at a niche level, and truly freestanding dealerships are slow to roll out—but enter the performance Genesis G70, and that pace may kick up a few notches, not only through demand for this model itself—major awards have come fast and furiously to the Genesis G70, with more on the way—but for the halo it shines on the overall brand.

Genesis has sport in its bloodlines, from the prior Hyundai Genesis Coupe (a two-door based on the sedan) and before that the Hyundai Tiburon.

The new four-door Genesis G70 is more grand tourer, though with a coupe-like silhouette. In this, it is much like the Kia Stinger, introduced earlier, and shares the same engine lineup, though it is shorter and lighter than the Stinger. The G70 also differs via luxury touches such as quilted Nappa leather seats and door panels (even in an available \$1500 Sport Package). The lineup starts at \$34,900 for a 2.0T with rear-wheel drive. Special editions

start as high as \$52,250. All-wheel drive, available on most, is a \$2000 item. A six-speed manual is available only on the RWD 2.0T Sport (\$37,900). Genesis G70 is strong, lightweight, has the speed and acceleration of a pricier car, and its turning circle is tighter than a Toyota Corolla Hatchback.

We had experienced the G70's nimble nature for an exhilarating stretch of mountain corner carving during the Run To The Sun comparo in Oregon last fall. This time, we would have a full week with it—and even took it on a quick dash to the coast.

We had a personal event to hit in San Diego on a Sunday, and though we had done a nonstop there and back last spring, arriving home at 5:30 am is fun, but not as much fun as it was in college. This time, we decided to do an overnight, maybe two, possibly in Yuma, or Gila Bend or El Centro.

Vehicle orientation is simple, with all adjustments and options very intuitively located and applied, above average for a contemporary interface. First is to turn off the easy access seats, which to us are like a party prank. The mildly-alternative shift interface is close enough to a standard setup

not to confuse a multiple-vehicle driver. Door handles are quite a reach, even if you're tall.

We zeroed out at the Scottsdale Airpark and hit the road about 6pm on Saturday, having decided to check fuel mileage, since this would be a long enough trip to make results meaningful.

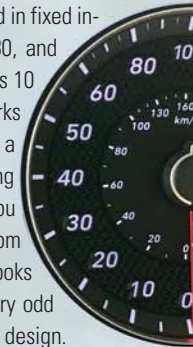
We wouldn't get deep into hypermiling—we like to see what we can achieve with normal driving style. We were willing to try Eco mode, likely indistinguishable at highway speeds. But we tended to favor Smart mode, which gives you Eco when it can and an algorithm suited to your driving when it demands more, as Valley freeways always do.

Our mileage figures rely on the binnacle read-out. At 27.8 miles out, we were at 29.1 mpg and climbing—by 30.5 miles, we were at 29.5 mpg. A facetious mental tally suggested that by the time we got to San Diego, we should be getting about 360 mpg. In reality, we were at 30.2 mpg (against a 26 mpg highway rating) as we hit 43.0 miles in Avondale, where ten surface street miles dropped us to 27.3 mpg (against a 21 mpg combined rating).

The rest was all highway, much posted at 70-75 mph, aside from slow speeds through Gila Bend, two motel stops in Yuma, and quite a bit of local

surface street driving in San Diego.

Positive impressions of Genesis G70's performance, premium fit, finish and features as experienced in Oregon were all reconfirmed during our week here. Smart cruise is well implemented, recognizing what is or isn't in front of you and whether you're changing lanes, even through the steepest and most winding highway climbs in California. Road feel is strong. One startling detail is that the speedometer is marked in fixed increments from zero to 180, and yet the distance that marks 10 mph up to 60 suddenly marks 20 mph above that (it's not a graduated scale). Glancing at just ticks on the dial, you can easily accelerate from 50 to 60 to 80, thinking it looks like 50 to 60 to 70—a very odd and somewhat dangerous design.



The route ranges from 1700 feet above sea level in the north Valley, to 52 feet below sea level at El Centro in the Imperial Valley, to several thousand feet above sea level in the California passes.

Between elevation changes, curves and climbs that push the statutory engineering limits of Interstate Highway specs, and a schedule with little downtime, the smooth-running Genesis G70 aver-

SPECIFICATIONS*

ENGINE	3.3-liter VVT twin-turbo V6
DRIVETRAIN	RWD (AWD available)
HP/TORQUE	365 hp / 376 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION	8-spd auto, paddles, rev-match
0-TO-60 MPH	4.5 seconds
SUSPENSION	F: MacPherson strut w coils and gas-charged dampers; R: 5-link independent
STEERING	rack mounted motor driven
BRAKES	Brembo ventilated F/R, sizes unknown
WHEELS / TIRES	19" alloy F: 225/40R19 / R: 255/35R19
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	184.4 / 111.6 in
TURNING CIRCLE	36.1 ft
GROUND CLEARANCE	5.1 in
SEATING / CARGO / WEIGHT	five / 10.5 cu.ft. / 3774 lb
FUEL CAPACITY	15.85 gal
MPG	18/26/21 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE (3.3T RWD)	\$43,750
INCLUDED:	Lexicon 15-sprkr audio w Quantum Logic surround & Clari-Fi music restoration tech
3.3T ELITE PKG:	Low beam assist, rain-sensing wipers, park distance warn, wide sunroof, wireless charge pad
3.3T PRESTIGE PKG:	Heads-up display, surround view monitor, Nappa leather seat surfaces w luxury quilting, heated rear seats, microfiber suede headliner
DESTINATION CHARGE	995

TOTAL	\$48,995
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* (Some specifications sourced from a variety of third parties; official information was incomplete for our early sample.)

aged 26.4 mpg for almost exactly 800 miles total, against an EPA combined rating of 21 mpg, at an average speed of 53.84 mph. That's a brag-worthy result for a car that can hit 60 mph from a standstill in just 4.5 seconds—all for \$43,750. ■

Accumulated Info

Trip **796.8** mi

Avg. **26.4** MPG

Timer **14:48** h



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High-spec Lexus

BY JOE SAGE

If you didn't already know, you might never take the Lexus RC for a coupe version of the compact IS sedan, but that's what it is. Rather than follow the convention that brings an LC coupe on the LS sedan platform, Lexus departs in the IS lineup and uses RC (for radical coupe)—for whatever reason. What you might mistake the RC for, however, is the half-million-dollar LFA supercar, especially when bearing the full "F" treatment of our sample here.

So well equipped is this car, it's not hard to see why they differentiate RC from IS. It also may help soften the impact of the near-\$80,000 price tag on a sample like ours—as a semi-freestanding nameplate, it avoids any "that's a lot for an IS" talk.

The car is incredibly well equipped even before options—as an F model will always be—though each add-on is compelling. The Premium Package at \$3420 is a great place to start, as that (exclusively) brings you this Flare Yellow paint job. We had driven a gray RC F a year or two back, and whereas it was a great car, we noted then that it begged for brighter paint. On the other hand, we had an RC F Sport in Flare Yellow last spring, and

whereas we typically point out that an F Sport is not an F, in that case we fell for the F Sport, with the slightly lighter weight and balance it may offer—but really it was surely partly for the paint.

RC F's 467-hp 5.0L V8 only adds 210 pounds, though, and changes front/rear weight distribution by only one percentage point (to 55/45), hugely significant to an engineer, but really just the difference between bringing a friend along or not.

Key components are built specifically for Lexus, from model-specific brakes by Brembo and wheels by BBS, to either Bridgestone Potenza or Michelin Pilot Sport PS2 tires engineered just for the RC F. No corners are cut on in-house engineering, either, as a skim of the specs at right will verify.

Audio quality is excellent, though as always we don't like the jumpy touchpad, a remote screen controller that replaces the prior (worse) wiggly joystick. We turned off incessant boops and beeps and adjusted tactile feedback, but the key to happiness remains the same: learn to ignore a whole wide range of extra doodads, concentrate on the driving, and you'll find it far more enjoyable.

A roundtrip to Payson on the Beeline Highway confirmed just that, while the car's bold presence always put a smile on our face when parked. ■



SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE	5.0L 32v DOHC intelligent VVT V8
DRIVETRAIN	RWD, Torsen limited slip rear diff
HP/TORQUE	467 hp / 389 lb-ft
COMPRESSION RATIO	12.3:1
TRANSMISSION	8-spd direct shift auto w/paddles
0-60 / TOP / 1/4-MILE	4.4 sec / 170 mph / 12.5 sec
SUSPENSION	F: adaptive variable; double wishbone w high-mount upper arms; high-rate coils w bound stopper; ZF SACHS chocks; large diameter hollow stblzr bar; R: adaptive variable; multi-link w low-mount upper arms; high-rate coils w bound stopper; ZF SACHS shocks, large diameter stblzr bar
STEERING	speed-dep elect rack & pinion, sport mode
BRAKES	Brembo mfg for Lexus: F: 15.0" vented w 6-piston opposed alum calipers, high-friction pads R: 13.6" vented w 4-piston opp alum cal; high-frict pads
WHEELS	BBS for Lexus F: 19x9 / R: 19x10 forged alum
TIRES	F: 255/35R19 93Y / R: 275/35R19 96Y
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	185.5 / 107.5 in
TURNING CIRCLE	35.4 ft
GROUND CLEARANCE	5.1 in
DRAG COEFFICIENT (Cd)	0.33
SEATING / CARGO CAPACITY	four / 10.1 cu.ft
HEADROOM F/R	36.5 / 34.6 in
LEGROOM F/R	45.4 / 27.3 in
WEIGHT	3958 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY	.91 oct premium / 17.4 gal
MPG	16/25/19 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE\$64,750

PREMIUM PACKAGE: exclusive Flare Yellow paint, black NuLuxe w black carbon fiber trim; heated/vented front seats w memory, electrochromatic mirrors, carbon fiber trim, rain-sense wipers, advanced blind spot monitor w rear cross traffic alert, intuitive parking assist3420

PERFORMANCE PACKAGE: carbon fiber roof, carbon fiber speed-activated rear wing, torque vectoring diff5500

ORANGE BREMBO BRAKES300

LEATHER INTERIOR TRIM800

WHEELS: 19" BBS hand-polished 20-spoke forged alloy1500

TRIPLE-BEAM LED HEADLAMPS1160

ILLUMINATED DOOR SILLS449

REAR BUMPER APPLIQUE79

DESTINATION CHARGE995

TOTAL*\$78,953

*This vehicle was delivered with no Monroney, build listed above includes obvious items; there may be a few more!



A PARK LESS TRAVELED

Border attraction offers great elbow room by Tyson Hugie

“Where should we meet up on Saturday?”

“Why?”

“Just so I can do a little mapping on times and distances.”

“So Why?”

That’s how a planning conversation about this trip could have gone. Because, of all the places our group could have picked to rendezvous before venturing into the Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument, we picked the town of Why, Arizona.

The term “town” is used very loosely, since it’s home to only about 100 people. And, as we discovered, its only restaurant (Granny Mac’s Kitchen) is closed on Saturday—the one day of the week that we’d be visiting. Guess we’ll have to sample Granny’s culinary creations on a future trip.

I’ve visited Why before—about five years ago, actually—and had learned a little about how its name came to be. The intersection of State Routes 85 and 86 originally created a Y shape, but for safety reasons were later transformed to meet at a T. It was here in Why, at the Why Not Travel Store, where James Lee of Six Speed Blog and I awaited arrival of Jason from Driven for Drives. In addition to snacks and drinks (though I was disappointed the nacho cheese machine was out of cheese), the Why Not store also sells Mexican automobile insurance policies for travelers who are on their way south of the

border. A liability-only policy runs \$35 per day, and “full coverage” rates vary.

We didn’t stick around long, because we had turf to cover a little south of Why. Tucked into the far southern reaches of Arizona—literally touching the international border with Mexico—is a special place that is remote in geography and picturesque in landscape. Even with Arizona’s weather at its prime, when tourism should be at its peak, we had the park largely to ourselves. Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument was established 82 years ago, in 1937, and sees just over a quarter million visitors per year. By comparison, another of Arizona’s parks, the Grand Canyon, sees about seven million visitors per year. I much prefer visiting the lesser-traveled park units.

Now with three cars in tandem—my 2013 Acura ILX, James’ tester Corolla Hatchback, and Jason’s 2004 Mazda 6—we visited the Kris Eggle Visitor Center, named in honor of a 29-year-old Border Patrol agent who was killed in the line of duty in 2002 by a Mexican drug smuggler. The dangers of being so close to the border are very real, and even today, visitors are encouraged to travel in groups and only visit during the day.

A 15-minute overview film taught a little about the terrain and its history. I noticed that a pair of hikers inquired with the park ranger about getting a token for completing one of the hikes, and later learned that any visitor who hikes five or more miles in the monument is eligible. We also saw a 7- or 8-year-old take

a “ranger oath” with his right arm extended. Traditions like that make visits to the parks memorable.

The Ajo Mountain Trail was the main attraction for us, and despite the fact that it was rugged and unpaved for most of the 21-mile loop, we knew we had to check it out. Per-car admission was \$20, but to me it was worth it to be able to say I’ve “been there, done that.”

I led the way and kicked up a pretty good cloud of dust for my followers while we stayed in touch by walkie-talkies. The trail extends eastward to the foothills and curves up to a panoramic lookout over the terrain. The Sonoran Desert, we had learned earlier in the film at the visitor center, is significantly one of the most “green” types of desert, and even in summer displays a wide variety of plant life. One of those plants, the Organ Pipe Cactus for which the Monument was named, is native to the area and highly prevalent.

Since amenities immediately near the visitor center were few, we decided to backtrack to the town of Ajo for a bite to eat at Agave Grill before splitting ways for the evening. James gave his hamburger a little more pizzazz by adding avocado, bacon and a fried egg. Jason and I couldn’t help but play copycat and order the same thing. The owner of the restaurant later came out to let us know how much the kitchen staff had enjoyed putting together our custom-ordered burger creations.

But the next time I visit, it’ll be on a non-Saturday so I can see if Granny Mac’s food compares. ■



Why not start your trip in Why, Arizona?
 Hike five miles or more at Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument, and you’ve earned yourself a token to commemorate your accomplishment.
 Cab of an old pickup truck made into a fountain—with music playing from inside it!
 Small town one-stop international services—need insurance while in Mexico? A place to store your car? Or your gun?
 Dinner spot at Agave Grill in Ajo, Arizona, and a burger that wasn’t even on the menu.
 Not necessarily the best road trip for low clearance and low-profile tires!



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A WEEK WITH : 2019 ACURA MDX AWD A-SPEC

Alpha Acura

BY JOE SAGE

We had driven the compact Acura RDX A-Spec last fall at the Run To The Sun open road comparo in Oregon. Here, a Performance SUV category included an RDX A-Spec (272 hp, 26 mpg highway, base price \$45,500, as tested \$46,495) and three other vehicles—ranging from \$70-120,000 base, \$86-132,000 as tested, and from 469 to 550 hp (though two of the three did have 20-something highway mpg ratings). It wasn't really a fair fight. Thus we were curious to drive the midsize MDX A-Spec—especially freestanding, not back-to-back with vehicles at two or three times its price.

An A-Spec package adds sportiness—wheels, spoilers, fog lights, aluminum pedals and such—geared toward style, not adding horses. A-Spec benefits from Acura's packaging and pricing practices, with no surprises from base price to purchase price. (As-built prices for others at Run To The Sun ran seven to 25 percent above base.) Apex Blue Pearl paint was this one's only add-on. And man, is it a screaming blue. To paraphrase Nigel Tufnel in *(This Is) Spinal Tap*, "How much bluer could this be? And the answer is none! None more blue!"

Power was adequate once in motion, less so when accelerating from a stop. In particular, it

seemed to fall short against a persistently promising growl from the powertrain. We spent considerable time with Drive and Sport modes, which affected shift points noticeably. Sport tightened up the first few shifts, but still left us with a feel of some lag through the power curve. Then again, we told ourselves it could just be due to expectations you might pick up from its earnest sound effects.

We had logbook nits about a number of feature details, such as getting seats adjusted; audio with a volume knob but not a tuning knob; and a back-up camera with lines we couldn't quite trust when curved; and a few other things (any vehicle has a few nits). We're still not fans of Acura's alternative shift interface—a collection of circles, trapezoids, levers and such that you push or pull to shift.

This MDX would benefit from a few more horses. An MDX Sport Hybrid in our fleet last spring was about 200 pounds heavier (about five percent), but had 321 total horses (about 11 percent more power), and we had found it very satisfying.

The Acura MDX lineup starts at \$44,300, front-drive. SH-AWD (for Super Handling) is an option we'd always take (two grand more on MDX models where it's an option, though A-Spec is AWD-only). A-Spec is the middle of three package possibilities (and a combination of the other two is actually a fourth possibility), and it adds \$8500 to the

SPECIFICATIONS

SEATING CAPACITY	seven
ENGINE	3.5L alum alloy VTEC dir inj V6
HP/TORQUE	290 hp / 267 lb-ft
COMPRESSION RATIO	11:1
TRANSMISSION	9-speed auto / sequential paddles
DRIVETRAIN	SH-AWD
SUSPENSION	F: MacPherson strut, 25.0mm stblzr bar; R: multi-link, 26.5mm stblzr bar; amplitude reactive dampers (active avail)
STEERING	elec power-assist rack & pinion
BRAKES	F: 12.6" ventilated / R: 13.0" solid
WHEELS	20x8.5 shark gray split 5-spoke
TIRES	264/45 R20 high-perf all-season
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	196.2 / 111.0 in
TURNING CIRCLE	38.7 ft
GROUND CLEARANCE	7.3 in
LEGROOM (F/2/3)	41.4 / 36.6 (38.5) / 28.1 (30.9)
CARGO CAPACITY	15.0 / 38.4 / 68.4 cu.ft
WEIGHT / DISTRIBUTION	4275 lb / 57/43 percent
TOW CAPACITY	(when equipped) 5000 lb
FUEL / FUEL CAPACITY	.91 oct prem / 19.5 gal
MPG	19/25/21 (city/hwy/comb)
BASE PRICE	\$54,800
APEX BLUE PEARL PAINT	400
A-SPEC PACKAGE	Sport seats w alcantara inserts and contrast stitching; sport pedals; heated and ventilated seats; 20-in alloy wheels w 265/45 R20 all-season tires; LED fog lights; add'l A-Spec-exclusive styling points
DESTINATION CHARGE	995
TOTAL	\$56,195

base price (equal to \$6500 in features, plus its AWD). The 290-hp 3.5L V6 is the same in all non-hybrid models (the hybrid has a 257-hp 3.0L V6). ■





Volkswagen MEB electric vehicle toolkit

▼ **Volkswagen**, declaring an “electric offensive,” is working toward a production capacity of more than 1 million electric vehicles per year globally by 2025. The company’s largest and highest-performance EV plant is being created in Zwickau, Germany—converting an entire plant from internal combustion to e-mobility—with a target capacity of 330,000 electric models per year, the highest of any VW Group plant. Zwickau currently builds the Golf and Golf Estate (its European wagon). By the end of 2019, production of the ID, VW’s first electric model based on a new modular electric toolkit (MEB), is due to start at Zwickau. Ultimately, six EVs for three VW Group brands are slated for production at the plant from 2021 forward.

▼ **Hyundai** Motor Company has officially launched its Hyundai CRADLE Tel Aviv office in Israel—the second CRADLE office worldwide, joining US-based CRADLE Silicon Valley—announcing a number of strategic investments in Israeli startups. CRADLE is a Hyundai corporate venturing and open innovation business focused on seed-to-growth investments in artificial intelligence, robotics, smart energy solutions, smart cities including mobility services, cyber security and other areas of interest, in support of a strategy to develop advanced future automotive technologies. To date, CRADLE Tel Aviv has invested as a limited partner in two Israeli Venture Capital funds, as well as directly in five Israeli startups:

▼ **Hyundai** Motor and **Kia** Motors have announced plans to introduce solar charging technology on selected Hyundai Motor Group vehicles. Electricity-generating solar panels built into the roof or hood of vehicles will support internal combustion, hybrid or battery electric vehicles with additional electrical power, increasing fuel efficiency and/or charge range, augmenting the vehicle’s main power source and able



Hyundai-Kia solar charging development

to charge batteries of not just EVs and hybrids, but also of internal combustion vehicles, while also improving mileage and reducing CO2 emissions. Hyundai is developing three types of solar roof charging systems. The first-generation silicon solar roof system, a structure of mass-produced silicon solar panels mounted on an ordinary roof, will be applied to hybrids and can charge 30 to 60 percent of the

battery per day, depending on weather and environmental conditions. A second-gen semi-transparent solar roof system will be applied to the panoramic sunroof of internal combustion vehicles—a world first—charging a supplementary battery and helping vehicles meet ever stricter global CO2 regulations. A lightweight third-generation, current in pilot studies for EVs and hybrids, has a combined hood and roof solar panel structure. Expect first-generation technology to appear in Hyundai and Kia vehicles “after 2019.”

▼ Focusing on three cars—Nissan Leaf, Chevy Volt and Toyota Prius Prime—the team at Olathe Toyota Parts Center decided to pit Toyota’s popular hybrid against two other **alternative energy vehicles** to see how the capacity and cost of their energy sources stack up by battery capacity, range, total price and cost per kWh. “The Prius Prime hasn’t been around long enough for anyone who wasn’t in a severe accident to need a replacement battery pack that isn’t covered by Toyota’s 8-year warranty,” says Tom Blackman, parts

director at Olathe Toyota. “But the clock is ticking, so we got curious about costs and started doing some digging.” Toyota doesn’t readily publish the price of the Prius Prime’s replacement assembly, but Olathe sells OEM Toyota parts and can access dealer cost. That’s what was used for the comparison. Like gas engine replacements, these battery packs come with a hefty price tag. Since US drivers are, on

average, keeping their cars for 11 years or longer, these particular auto parts may see an increase in sales soon. So, the team zeroed in on the two most similar vehicles that sell their battery packs as complete



Bruno Senna with SP16+ FIA race suit and McLaren 570S GT4

assemblies for a more apples-to-apples comparison. The comparison does reveal the Toyota Prius Prime battery assembly—per kWh—is nearly four times as costly as the Nissan Leaf, and more than twice as expensive as the Chevy Volt. Here’s the breakdown:

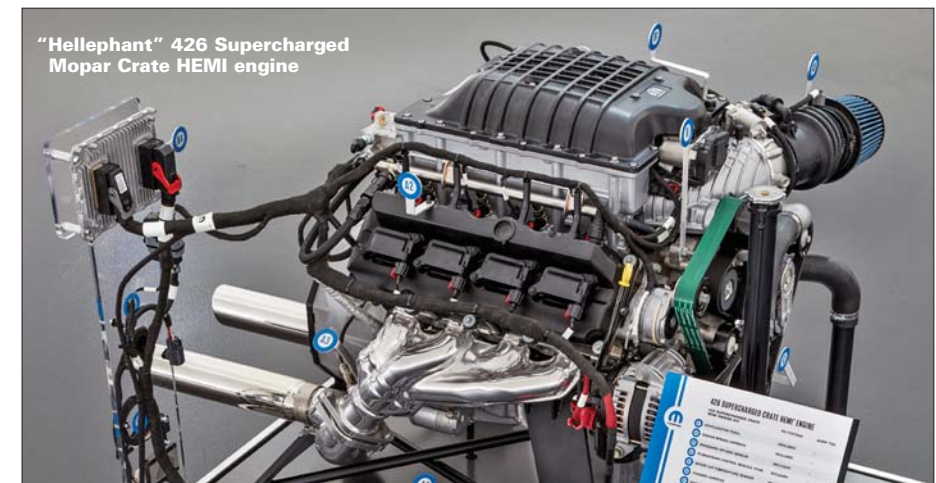
- ▼ 2012 Nissan Leaf assembly: \$6,325 retail, capacity 24 kWh, cost \$264/kWh.
- ▼ 2015 Chevrolet Volt assembly: \$6,963 retail, capacity 17.1 kWh, cost \$407/kWh.
- ▼ 2018 Prius Prime assembly: \$8,980 dealer cost, capacity 8.8 kWh, cost \$1020/kWh.

“I admit the chart makes the price differences look extreme,” Blackman says. “Back in 2012, there was speculation that replacement Leaf packs would be at least \$15,000 but it never happened. I wonder if these prices will hold as the Prime moves into the 9-year mark. It could be, at that point, Toyota sells replacement Prime packs for the same low cost per kWh as Nissan does now.”

▼ **McLaren** Automotive, known for their continuous pursuit of lightweighting technologies, now brings race drivers and fans alike the new **Sparco** McLaren SP16+ race suit, promoted as weighing at least 10 percent less than any other, the lightest race suit yet approved by the FIA, at just 590 grams (under 21 ounces) in Euro size 52 (US size 42). McLaren and Sparco joined forces to create this suit worn by McLaren F1 Racing Team drivers since 2016, and it can now be ordered by

McLaren customers. As with the Formula 1 race suits, the Sparco McLaren SP16+ is entirely handmade in Italy, each taking more than 12 hours to complete. As with McLaren’s road supercars, your suit can be

personalized to order, from bespoke colors—including matching the livery of your own race team or company—to options including side pockets, phone pocket and belt. The SP16+ has an ultra-slim zip, seamless Nomex wrists and ankles, reduced neck and shoulder pads and ultra-thin thread for stitching—all of which play weight-saving roles, some by just micrograms at a time. Two-layer fireproof construction reduces weight even further,



“Hellephant” 426 Supercharged Mopar Crate HEMI engine

while ensuring exceptional comfort and breathability. Converted from pounds sterling (approximate and pre-tax), the suit starts at about \$3010, with bespoke options from about \$320. Round that out with such things as a McLaren Bell HP7 Helmet (\$3300), bespoke McLaren Shield RW-9 Underwear Top (\$185), McLaren RB-8 Smooth Leather Racing Shoes (\$298) and McLaren RG-7 Racing Gloves (\$288).

▼ Fiat Chrysler’s **Mopar** division have a brand-new beast: the “Hellephant” 426 Supercharged Mopar Crate HEMI® engine, with 1,000 horsepower and 950 lb-ft of torque—the first such from an OEM—with bulked-up displacement, at 4.0 inches of stroke and bore of 4.125 inches. An improved supercharger with high-efficiency rotor is mounted on the all-aluminum block, providing huge weight savings. The block, used in Mopar Dodge Challenger Drag Pak race vehicles that dominated the 2018 NHRA Factory Stock Showdown class, was configured for the street in close collaboration with Mopar and engineers from the motorsports world. A distinctive “Hellephant” logo is a nod to the Mopar brand’s past and present, calling out the legendary 426 HEMI engine first introduced in 1964, nicknamed the “elephant” for its power and size, as well as the 707-horsepower Mopar “Hellcrate” Engine Kit, revealed a year earlier at the 2017 SEMA Show. The complete engine assembly includes a water pump, flywheel, front sump oil pan, supercharger with throttle body, fuel injectors and coil packs. The engine assembly can be paired with a kit for relatively simple plug-and-play by experienced installers. The engine assembly and kit are designed for installa-

tion on pre-1976 street and off-road vehicles. The engine includes additional bits from the Dodge Challenger SRT Hellcat Redeye and Dodge Challenger SRT Demon. Mopar will also offer an essential Front End Accessory Drive Kit. The engine assembly and kit will be available in the first quarter of 2019. Find more information at www.cratehemi.com and @OfficialMopar on Twitter using hashtag #Hellephant. ■

UPCOMING FEATURES

GMC Sierra Denali 1500 4x4



Infiniti QX80 AWD



Ford Ranger 2.3L EcoBoost 4x4



Arizona Auction Week 2019 results



TerrainHopper USA (Tempe) off-road mobility vehicles



Nikola electric semi trucks: Nikola World at WestWorld



NAIAS Detroit Auto Show



Geneva International Motor Show



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Shown: Garage Hotrod T-Shirt / SKU: 03-BKG-VI

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Car Guy Hotrod Steel Tool Box / SKU: 10-BKG-WCR

Car Guy Car Repair Steel Tool Box / SKU: 10-BKG-MCR

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— Many thanks! Jackie B.

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— Cheers! Michelle



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

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

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