

ARIZONA DRIVER

THE ENTHUSIAST'S GUIDE TO LIFE BEHIND THE WHEEL

VOLUME 22 NUMBER 5
SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2023

Lexus RX 500h
F SPORT Performance AWD

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





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Since 2016, **Drive Toward a Cure™** has been on a mission to support Parkinson's Disease research AND patient care, with donations benefiting the **Michael J. Fox Foundation** and the **Parkinson's Foundation**. Most recently, we created our own 'Access to Care' fund that supports **Parkinson's Foundation Centers of Excellence** throughout the country, in areas including Atlanta, Phoenix, Boston, Denver, Houston, Nashville, New York City, Portland and San Diego. And we're not done growing!

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Genau Autowerks (San Francisco) raised **over \$7,500** by inviting friends and customers to take part in a fun wine country drive to visit The Racers Group. With some key sponsors lined up, every penny of the registration fees went to support the UCSF Parkinson's Disease Clinic.



The **Peachstate Region** (Atlanta) of the **Porsche Club of America** raised **over \$5,300** simply by taking a regular club rally event and setting donation options for participants that included a "Gold Donor" level which 1 out of every 3 registrants opted for!



A rally to visit the 425 Magazine Northwest Idea House (Seattle) organized by **Lochwood-Lozier Custom Homes** and **Avants** raised **more than \$12,000** from registrations and generous donations in the days that followed.



Drive Toward a Cure is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization.
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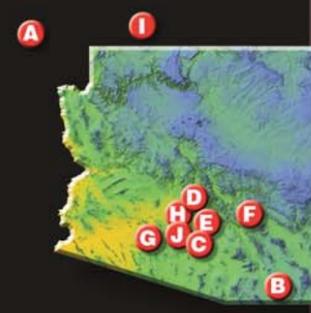
THE ENTHUSIAST'S GUIDE TO LIFE BEHIND THE WHEEL

news & features September-October 2023

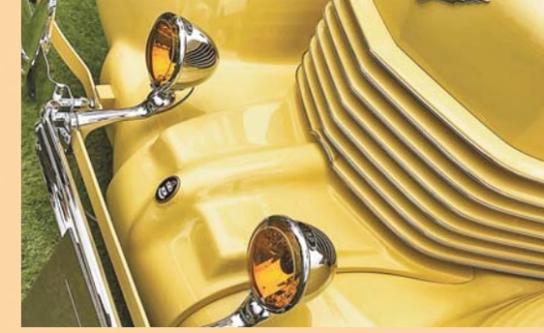
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COVER: 2023 Lexus RX 500h F SPORT Performance AWD is one of several plug-in-hybrid and other electric or electrified vehicles in this issue, demonstrating that this is a pretty amazing time in powertrain evolution—possibly even better than the final destination. Photo: Joe Sage



Mark Urbina

Radford Racing School

William Dorée

START YOUR ENGINES : FROM THE PUBLISHER

This issue completes our first 20 years of publishing *Arizona Driver Magazine*—the next one, November-December 2023, will mark the 21st anniversary of our first issue, November-December 2002. It's a good time to revisit our mission, which has been outlined in the same way on every cover for the duration.

First, there's our title. *Arizona* covers the fact that this is a regional publication—it is designed to serve focused content to a targeted audience (by geography and the demographics that automatically follow). *Driver* reflects the human who operates and enjoys the machine, all the places they will go and the related things they will do.

Next is the masthead slogan—*The enthusiast's guide to life behind the wheel*. *Enthusiast* may seem self-explanatory, but we had discussed other publications that emphasize services for dead batteries, towing, theft and the like. As an early member of our brain trust noted, "These are for people who hate their cars!" Thus, our positive note. *Life* spins off an early sales staffer who had raised an eyebrow and asked, "This isn't going to be another lifestyle magazine, is it?" Well, no. And yes. Within its focused mission. *Behind the wheel* is a nod again to the human experience—a confirming echo of *Driver*, you could say.

That leaves the topic bullet points at the bottom of the cover. Yes, we cover *vehicles*, certainly—the automakers see to that. *Equipment* and *technology* take things deeper, as there is always more to learn, especially in these exciting and turbulent times, yet presented from the standpoint of the driver (e.g. autonomous vehicles sharing our roads are an awareness need, but likely not aspirational, for the enthusiast or even daily driver). The rest, *people-events-destinations-attractions*, have degrees of overlap—from motor-sports to collector auctions to car shows to road rallies to that big, wonderful mission of anyone behind the wheel, travel. Business and highway news fall within basically all these bullet points. We hope you enjoy the mix.

And, as always, enjoy the ride!

Joe Sage - Publisher/ Executive Editor

ARIZONA DRIVER

MAGAZINE



PUBLISHER/EXECUTIVE EDITOR:

Joe Sage

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS/PHOTOGRAPHERS:

Randall Bohl, Nick Calderone, Chris Collard, Sandra Muñoz Dorée and William Dorée, Tyson Hugie, Stephanie Jarnagan, BJ Killeen, Christina Lawrie, Mercedes Lilienthal, Sue Mead, JP Molnar, "LandSpeed" Louise Noeth, Doris Ong, Brenda Priddy, John Priddy, Kimatni Rawlins, Kelly Sallaway, Lyn St James, Tim and Kristin Sharp, Dave Stall, Paul Strauss, Valerie Thompson, Scott Tilley, Sherri Tilley, Aaron Turpen, Jan Wagner, Nicole Wakelin, Shawnda Williams, Kevin A Wilson, Meagan Wristen

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- SAMA.....Southern Automotive Media Association
- TAWA.....Texas Auto Writers Association
- TxMPA...Texas Motor Press Association
- WAJWestern Automotive Journalists

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- USMA.....United States Motorsports Association

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Caterham Project V concept EV

▼ **Caterham** has revealed Project V, a lightweight fully-electric coupé concept vehicle. Engineering and manufacturing feasibility were conducted during the development process, and a production car could arrive in late 2025 or early 2026. Designed as an EV from the start, Project V is the creation of new chief designer Anthony Jannarelli, whose vision has been brought to life by world-renowned Italian engineering firm Italdesign. Its powertrain has a single 200kW (272PS) motor mounted in the rear axle, paired with a 55kWh USOC lithium-ion battery pack with advanced thermal management, with a stated ability to recharge from 20-80 percent in as little as 15 minutes via a 150kW DC rapid charger. With 0-62mph acceleration in less than 4.5 seconds, Project V has an estimated top speed of 143 mph and target WLTP range of 249 miles. The Project V show car uses a 2+1 seating layout (with 2+2 optional), providing optimized ingress/egress and providing more comfort for a rear seat passenger. Lightweight and simple, Caterham has targeted a curb weight of 2,624 lb (2+1 configuration) by using an innovative carbon fiber and aluminum composite chassis. A simple, driver-focused infotainment system features smartphone mirroring and a digital instrument cluster. The concept build has double wishbone front and rear suspension with fully adjustable geometry, electrically assisted power steering, a staggered Michelin Pilot Sport 4S tire fitment (19-inch front and 20-inch rear) and four-

wheel disc brake with high-performance calipers. The Caterham Project V show car made its public debut at Goodwood Festival of Speed in the UK. A new entity, Caterham EVo, has been established to handle business and investment interests related to Project V. For more information on Project V, visit caterhamcars.com/en.

▼ **Alpine** revealed a new A110 S Enstone Edition limited series this summer ahead



Alpine A110 S Enstone Edition

of the 2023 Formula 1 British Grand Prix at Silverstone, celebrating the combined know-how of their two factories in Enstone, UK (F1) and Dieppe, France (A110). The 300-unit limited series is powered by the A110 S's 300 bhp engine, the Enstone Edition accelerates from 0-62 mph in 4.2 seconds and has a top speed of 171 mph on track with an optional aero kit. With over 30 years of Formula 1 expertise, the

Alpine factory in Enstone, which develops state-of-the-art components and technologies for the BWT Alpine F1 Team, is using the same carbon for the first time for the features in the A110 S Enstone Edition's cockpit—an interior made up of authentic carbon components from the same design tools, moulds and autoclaves as F1, including a visor decorated with the famous A arrow, the central console bearing the BWT Alpine F1 Team signature, and its carbon fiber drop zone. The cockpit is finished in black microfiber with grey stitching. A plaque numbered from 1 to 300 displays the exclusivity of each car, as well as the sporting origins of its cockpit materials. Each owner will receive a certificate of authenticity from the Enstone factory, signed by the BWT Alpine F1 Team. The special edition features an exclusive combination of matte gunmetal bodywork, available in two shades of matte grey—a dark Gris Tonnerre or a light Argent Mercure—contrasting with a matte black roof. To honor Alpine's British heritage, the hood is available with a Union Jack in gloss or matte tone-on-tone black—standard in

the UK and an option in France and other countries. Other edition-specific highlights include 18-inch matte black GT race wheels and Brembo silver calipers; wrap-around Sabelt Racing seats with exclusive Enstone Edition embroidery; an optional aero kit; and carbon rear quarter panel flags. Orders for the A110 S Enstone Edition from Alpine Centres in France have opened at 85,000 euros, including VAT.

▼ **Lamborghini** Squadra Corse launched its first hybrid endurance racing prototype, the SC63, at Goodwood Festival of Speed, followed by the start of testing, set



Lamborghini SC63 hybrid endurance racing prototype

to compete in the Hypercar class of the 2024 FIA World Endurance Championship, including the 24 Hours of Le Mans, and in the GTP class of the IMSA WeatherTech Sports Car Championship Endurance Cup, including the 24 Hours of Daytona and 12 Hours of Sebring. Lamborghini has partnered with Italian team Iron Lynx to run the car in international competition and has signed world-class drivers from Formula 1 and endurance racing. The LMDh-category project represents a new concept of racing and fits the Direzione Cor Tauri strategy presented in 2021, a roadmap for electrification leading the company to hybridize the entire model range by the end of 2024 and, starting with the SC63, also being applied to the motorsports program. The SC63 features an all-new 3.8-liter twin turbo V8 developed specifically for the racing program, in a “cold V” configuration, with the turbos mounted outside the vee of the engine, making them easier to cool and to service. This layout also lowers the mass and optimizes the car's center of gravity. Along with specifically developed aero balance and attitude, this is also the most effective for tire grip, for perfect balance, drivability and consistent speed both over a single lap and also across long distance races. Power from the engine and hybrid system, standard across the LMDh cars, is limited by regulation to 500kW, with the

power unit managed by a Bosch electronic unit. The LMDh rule set also specifies a standard gearbox, battery and motor generator unit (MGU), helping to contain development costs for the prototype, while

there is still freedom for Lamborghini engineers to exert their influence, customizing gear ratios and the mechanical differential. Ligier is partner in developing and building the monocoque. As the first manufacturer to select Ligier on an LMDh project, Lamborghini was free to specify development of a push rod front suspension, overall weight distribution, ease of service for critical parts, a bellhousing between engine and gearbox that optimizes tor-



Porsche Mission X concept car

sional stiffness while housing the electric engine, and high level endurance brakes. Livery is in keeping with the Huracán GT3, with the SC63s in Verde Mantis green with a black Nero Noctis strip over the hood, cabin, carbon diffuser, rear fin and wing. The cars will also wear green, white and red Italian Tricolore and will carry the branding of long-time partner of Lamborghini, Swiss watch maker Roger Dubuis.

▼ Celebrating 75 years of their sports cars, **Porsche** has revealed its newest concept car: the Mission X. A design study, not offered for sale, with production to be decided later, Mission X measures about 177 inches long and 78.7 inches wide, a relatively compact hypercar. With a wheelbase of 107.4 inches, it has the dimensions of the Carrera GT and 918 Spyder. For aerodynamic purposes, the concept car has staggered tires, with 20-inch wheels up front and 21-inchers at the rear. The concept's sculpted form and muscular lines intend to show that hypercars do not have to look aggressive. Its low-slung body, less than 47.2 inches tall, is finished in Rocket Metallic, specially made for the concept. Design elements in a carbon fiber below the beltline have a satin finish and are slightly colored, while their material structure remains recognizable. The rear axle is fitted with almost transparent aero blades, designed like turbines for better brake cooling. A lightweight glass dome with carbon fiber reinforced plastic (CFRP) exoskeleton extends over its two occupants, while Le Mans-style scissor doors are attached to the A-pillar and the roof, opening forward and upward. The vertical base form of LED headlight modules was inspired by historic racing cars such as the Porsche

906 and 908 then drawn well down towards the road. When activated, the light opens up like an eye blinking open. A sculptural full-width rear light appears suspended in the air. While charging, the “E” of the Porsche name pulses. Inside, the two seats are colored differently—apart from leather pads in Andalusia Brown, the

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driver's seat is Kalahari Grey and forms a single unit of color with the center console and dashboard, while the passenger seat is in contrasting Andalusia Brown shade. CFRP seat shells have six-point seatbelts



Morgan Super 3

integrated into the monocoque. An open-top steering wheel, has mode switches and shift paddles. Multiple on-board cameras are available on demand. Porsche states that if Mission X goes into series production, it should be the fastest road-legal vehicle around the Nürburgring Nordschleife; should have a power-to-weight ratio of roughly one hp per 2.2 lbs; should achieve downforce well in excess of the current 911 GT3 RS; and should offer significantly improved charging performance (with 900-volt system architecture, roughly twice as fast as the current Porsche leader, Taycan Turbo S.

▼ The **Morgan** Motor Company has announced that the Super 3—launched in February 2022—is returning to the United States. With the first vehicles already in the country, Super 3 is now available to view, test drive and order through Morgan's network of authorized dealerships. The US-specification vehicle, which is homologated as a motorcycle, features several subtle differences from its European equivalent. Integrating our federal homologation requirements, while still retaining its retrofuturistic persona, has been a key consideration since the beginning of the Super 3's design. Most visibly, the front light configuration has been modified and now features headlights that are within the body shape of the vehicle. Further federal requirements include different tail-lights, turn signals and reflectors. The Super 3 has been well received in Europe,

by media and customers alike. Lauded for its unique driving experience, design and configurability, Super 3 has already been recognized by Morgan fans across the US, long before the first ones arrived on our

soil. Prior to Super 3, the last Morgan available in the US was the Morgan 3 Wheeler, which ceased production in 2019. Morgan's four-wheeled models—the Plus Four and Plus Six—are not currently available. However, the company is working through the approvals process to bring the Plus Four here, which would be the first time a series production four-wheeled Morgan (that isn't an Aero model) has been available in our market since 2005. You can find more



Lotus Emira First Edition twin-turbocharged 2.0L 4-cylinder

information about Morgan and their nearest dealership location via a dedicated US website: morgan-motor-usa.com.

▼ **Lotus** revealed their newest wares at the Goodwood Festival of Speed in the UK, the perfect spot to witness the "Lotus Moment," a parade of Lotus cars past and present, taking place every day to celebrate the brand's 75th anniversary year.

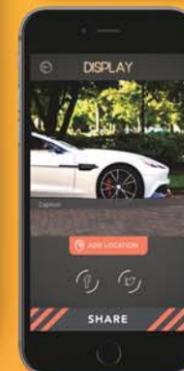
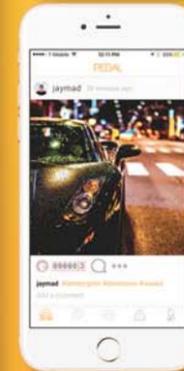
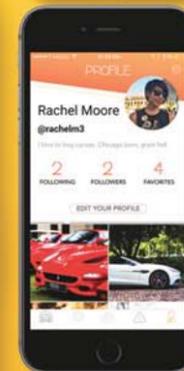
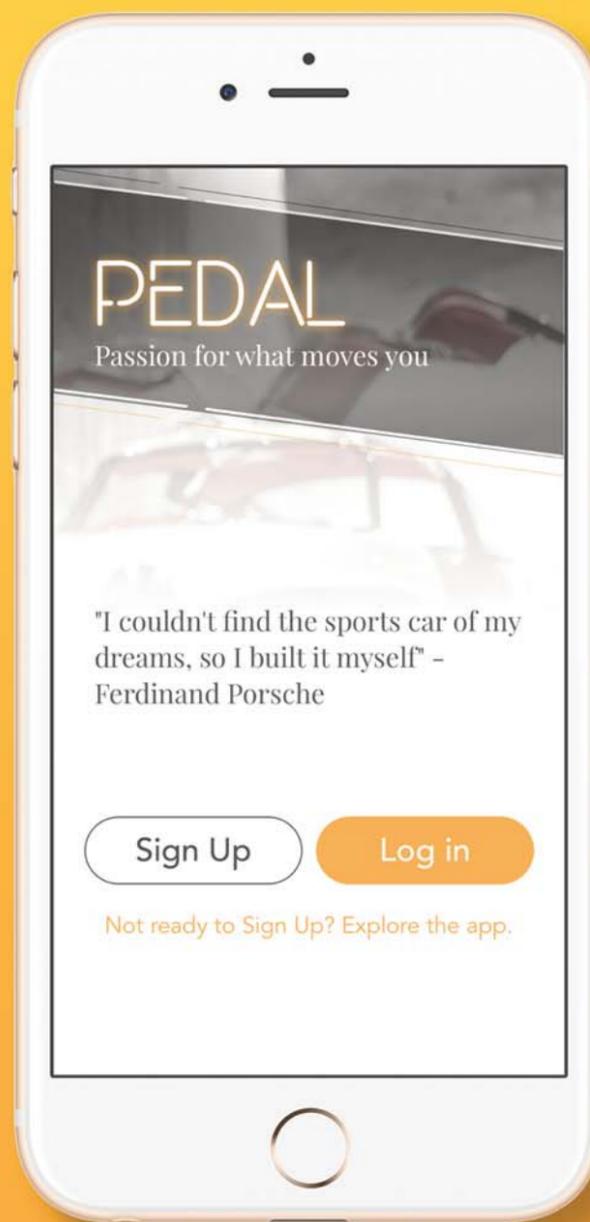
One was the Eletre, an EV aimed at a new generation of Lotus customers, bearing the core DNA of the Emira and Evija, reinterpreted as a practical, versatile and spacious family-oriented hyper-SUV. The occasion also included the eagerly anticipated expansion of the Emira range beyond its existing award-winning 3.5-liter supercharged V6 model, with the public debut of a 2.0-liter four-cylinder version. This will be the most powerful four-cylinder Lotus sports car ever, a 360-bhp twin-scroll turbocharged mid-engine—supplied by technical partner Mercedes-AMG—good for 0-62 mph in 4.4 seconds, with a top speed of 180 mph. While the V6 offers both six-speed manual and automatic transmissions, the 2.0L has only an eight-speed dual-clutch transmission (also from Mercedes-AMG). With a lightweight, strong, stiff, bonded and extruded aluminum chassis structure, the new car aligns well with the Lotus ethos of delivering higher performance by reducing mass. At 180 bhp/liter, the car has the highest specific power output in the Emira range. The cabin features a flat-bottomed steering wheel, 12.3-inch TFT instrument cluster and 10.25-inch infotainment touchscreen with integrated navigation, all designed in-house with Android and Apple connectivity standard. The 10-chan-

nel, 560W premium audio system was developed for the Emira in partnership with KEF and features the renowned British brand's signature Uni-QTM technology, which combines tweeter and mid-range into a single, acoustically-optimized unit. Heated twelve-way power seats are offered in Nappa leather in either black,

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red, ice grey or tan, or in black Alcantara with contrast stitching in either yellow, red or ice grey. Like the Emira V6, the new 2.0-liter car is built in the Chapman Production Centre (CPC) at Hethel, named

become synonymous with the original car itself, which now resides at the renowned British Motor Museum in Gaydon, UK. Makkina set out to showcase the characteristics that made MVC575 such a milestone

driving modes, data and navigation, and a central binnacle shows road speed, charge levels and battery range. Makkina is curator of the brand and, with the blessing of BMW Group, who own the Triumph name, are proud to bring its TR25 to life.

▼ Also making its debut at the Goodwood Festival of Speed was the first car in the **Bentley** Speed Six Continuation Series. Much more than a replica, a continuation car is built to the same designs and using the same processes as the original car that inspires the series. The Speed Six is the second pre-war Continuation Series by Mulliner, Bentley's bespoke and coach-building division, following the Blower Continuation Series, which itself was the first pre-war continuation ever created. "Speed Six Car Zero," the engineering development car for the program, will be retained by Bentley. Based on original drawings and mechanics' notes drawn from the archive, original 1930 24 Hours of Le Mans competitor "Old Number 3" and Bentley's own Speed Six (GU409) provided real-world references, while the finished design includes race improvements found between the 1929 and 1930 iterations of the 24 Hours of Le Mans. Over 600 new components comprise the massive 6.5-liter six-cylinder race-spec engine,

with initial engine tests indicating peak power of 205 bhp, within 5 bhp of the original Le Mans spec engine of 1929 and 1930. One "Factory Works" car and 12 pre-sold customer cars will follow, with each customer offered a personal fitting service for their car. Every car will be individually handcrafted from scratch in the Mulliner workshop in Crewe, England, each taking 10 months to complete. ■



in honor of the company's legendary founder and inspiration. However, it starts life at Lotus Advanced Structures in nearby Norwich, where sub-assembly of the lightweight aluminum chassis structure takes place. Combined, these world-class centers are part of a £100 million investment by Lotus in its UK facilities. Customers in the UK have the option to pickup their Emira from Hethel and, as part of the experience, tour the CPC assembly halls where their car was made. Current price is £81,495 or 95,995 euros. Available to order now, with customer deliveries starting later this year.

—its two distinctive headlights (a design element synonymous with subsequent Triumph sports cars, with a signature '25' in the center as a nod to Makkina's 25th anniversary); sleek, aerodynamically-optimized exterior surfaces; the single-seat configuration with optional flip-out jump seat for a passenger; and an uncompromising driver-focused cabin. Using the all-electric BMW i3S as a platform, with its low center of gravity and compact propor-



▼ Seventy years after its record was secured and 100 years since the Triumph name first appeared on a production car, the **Triumph** Motor Company returns under a different name and sporting a new, modern design direction with the electric Triumph TR25 by Makkina concept car. Created by leading London automotive design house Makkina, the car pays particular homage to the "Jabbeke" Triumph TR2, MVC575, which broke the land speed record for production cars under two liters in May 1953, during speed trials in Jabbeke, Northern Belgium, achieving an impressive record speed of 124.889 mph with test driver Ken Richardson at the wheel. The Jabbeke TR2 MVC575 was a pre-production prototype, featuring streamlined parts including an under shield, rear-wing spats, and a metal cockpit cover. The color of the car, a pale blue-green hue, has now

tions, Makkina has given the TR25 near 50-50 weight distribution, allowing it to corner as a true sports car should. The TR25's cockpit aims to create a setting with no unnecessary distractions, with minimalist instruments and controls allowing for the enjoyment of a pure driving experience, while a self-centering dial in the spoked steering wheel displays all vital information, the wheel itself accesses

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Speaks for itself

BY JOE SAGE

The more Mercedes-Benz simplifies their extensive lineup in some ways, the more complex it can seem to get in others.

It's almost hard to recall now, and seems longer, but there has been much evolution. Their SUVs started pretty simply, with just the ML in the late 1990s. (There was always the G-Wagen, too, though that has remained in kind of an orbit all its own.) Then came the big three-row GL, in the mid-first decade of this century, followed by a much smaller sibling, the GLK (as a smaller GL of sorts, its name following the SL and SLK roadsters' pattern).

All became much clearer around the mid-

dle of our prior decade—2015 or so, which now seems so long ago and the lineup so well established—as all were renamed slightly and became a family as the lineup expanded, following suit to the familiar sedan classes, as S Class, E Class and C Class begat the GLS, GLE and GLC SUVs.

The GL or GLS has long been a favorite of ours, while the GLC has also caught our eye, even when tastes ran higher up the line by size. While GLE had quite a different style and feel from the big GL, GLC followed suit as more of a downsized version of GLE, perhaps even better proportioned.

The current C-Class SUVs, the GLC lineup, are pretty simple, at least those in the US market. While there can be Benz, AMG and even Maybach versions of many products in the lineup, plus now EV equivalents of many, and regular two-box and Coupe versions of

SUVs, for C-Class there are simply two standard two-box and one Coupe Mercedes-Benz SUVs and one AMG Coupe SUV. There is no EV in C-size for now. In fact, the only difference between the two Benz two-box SUVs is that one is rear-wheel-drive, the other with the same engine but 4MATIC all-wheel-drive.

Ours driven here is the rear-drive standard two-box Benz—not 4MATIC, not a Coupe, not an AMG—and, as such, the base unit in the entire GLC family. This brings to light one of its key attributes—this Mercedes-Benz luxury utility is priced in just the upper-mid \$40s (ours, heavily optioned, reaches the mid-\$50s). It's already looking like a great buy at this point, simply based on badge and price, in a lineup that runs to just under \$70,000 base, for its one current AMG Coupe version in the US.

However, the lineup is also continuing to evolve even as we study it. (It's already easy

to find conflicting info, among corporate and consumer materials and third-party sources, partly because of European versus US versus universal sources, partly because the (SUV) Coupe version is sometimes included with tallies of the (two-box) SUV and sometimes not—and it's all affected by rapid development in general and for multiple huge key global markets, notably Europe, China and the US.

Just days before this issue's final deadline, Mercedes corporate emailed us news of an AMG GLC 63 S E Performance Hybrid SUV joining the group (with it not completely clear whether this is a European-only model, at least immediately). This relatively fuel-economical 680-horsepower super-utility will start at about \$131,700 (equivalent).

Our week with the new generation-two GLC produced few specific notes, which we take as a plus, confirming that, as noted in the headline, this vehicle—from features, to fit and finishes, to performance and handling, to styling and stance—largely speaks for itself.

Much is new for 2023, however—a new digital instrument panel and central touchscreen (derived from the flagship S-Class, as are other interior design and materials points), with more powerful processing, advanced voice control and video navigation; a small bump in dimensions with big benefits in legroom and cargo capacity; a more powerful engine with EQ Boost standard in all GLC 300 trims; a “transparent hood” camera feature available on the 4MATIC; and various new paint, interior and wheel options.

We're suckers for 4MATIC, for AMG builds, even for the Coupe version, although less efficient with interior volume, but in Mercedes' case one of the most stylishly executed.

All that said, this base unit is exactly what you expect it to be, and generous in all regards, even before considering its highly competitive pricing. This in itself is refreshing in turbulent evolutionary times. There's a lot to be said for just delivering on high expectations while still keeping it simple. ■



SPECIFICATIONS

ASSEMBLY.....	Bremen, Germany
ENGINE/TRANSMISSION ..	Germany / Germany
CONTENT.....	75% Germany / 0% US/Canada
ENGINE	2.0L inline-4 turbo with EQ Boost 48V mild hybrid system
HP/TORQUE	255 hp / 295 lb-ft
+EQ BOOST	up to +23 hp / +148 lb-ft
COMPRESSION RATIO	10.5:1
TRANSMISSION	9G-Tronic 9-sp auto
DRIVETRAIN	RWD (4MATIC model avail)
0-TO-60 / TOP SPEED	6.2 sec / 130 mph
SUSPENSION.....	F: four-link steel w selective damping system; R: indep multilink w selective damping system
STEERING	speed-dep electromech direct rack & pinion
BRAKES	F/R: internally vented disc
WHEELS	19-in multispoke
TIRES.....	235/55R19 Michelin Primacy AS
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	185.7 / 113.1 in
GROUND CLEARANCE	TBA
TURNING CIRCLE	38.7 ft
HEADROOM (F/R)	41.3 / 39.65 in
LEGROOM (F/R).....	40.7 / 37.4 in
CARGO CAPACITY	21.9 / TBA cu.ft
WEIGHT	4167 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY.....	.91 octane prem unl / TBA
MPG	25/32/28 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE	\$47,100
DASH: MB-Tex w Nappa look.....	350
PANORAMA ROOF	1500
SIRIUS XM w 6-mo trial	350
WHEELS: 19-in multispoke	600
DRIVER ASSISTANCE PKG: Active assist: Distronic distance, steering, lane change, lane keep, Pre-Safe Plus, blind spot, active brake assist w cross-traffic, evasive steering assist, emergency stop assist, speed limit, route-based speed adapt	1950
EXCLUSIVE TRIM: surround view system, Guard 360°, Burmester surround sound, illum door sills, enhanced ambient lighting, MB navigation	2250
DESTINATION CHARGE	1150
TOTAL	\$55,250

2023 GLC SUV LINEUP

GLC 300 SUV	255 hp	▼ \$47,100
GLC 300 4MATIC SUV	255 hp	49,100
AMG GLC 63 S E Performance Hybrid SUV	680 hp	±131,770
<i>(just released in Europe)</i>		

And related but currently broken out separately:

2023 GLC COUPE (SUV) LINEUP

GLC 300 4MATIC Coupe	255 hp	54,700
AMG GLC 43 Coupe	385 hp	68,200

Our only nitpick, worthy of just passing mention: a current interior design point, already encountered in other models, uses smooth black rubbery plastic membranes—some of which are touch and slide, others of which conceal pushbuttons, itself confusing—to in some cases combine multiple functions. Accordingly, we have found it unexpectedly difficult to, for example, set seat positions into memory without turning on the heated seats, which share the same membrane.

TRAVEL SITES TO BE SEEN



sedona.net
flagstaff.com
prescott.com
thecanyon.com
grandcanyon.net
oakcreekcabins.com

Hotels, Resorts and Lodging
Bed & Breakfasts - Inns - Cabins/Cottages
What To Do
Real Estate and Relocation
Spas - Galleries - Artists
Restaurants - Shopping
FAQs - Resources
Special Offers - 11th Hour Getaways

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SPECIAL EVENT : PEBBLE BEACH CONCOURS D'ELEGANCE 2023

1937 Mercedes-Benz 540K named Best of Show at Pebble Beach

This year, cars from 18 countries and 30 states pulled onto the competition field of the 2023 Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance. Named Best of Show was a 1937 Mercedes-Benz 540K Special Roadster—first owned by the Shah of Afghanistan and one of just three similar cars surviving in the world today—presented by Jim Patterson of the Patterson Collection in Louisville, Kentucky.

"This 540K balances strength with sweeping lines and style, and its history is unique," said Concours chairman Sandra Button. "In talking with Jim about this car, I was impressed by the time and thought invested in this restoration. Every piece of this beautiful Mercedes-Benz was researched so carefully to honor its history."

Prior to this win, the marques of Bugatti and Mercedes-Benz were tied for the most Best of Show wins at Pebble Beach. This win puts Mercedes-Benz in the lead, with 10 wins in total.

"In Kentucky, you know, we talk about winning the Derby. Well, there's such a thing as winning the Triple Crown," said Patterson. "I've won this Concours twice before, so this is a Triple Crown for me."

It was also the second year in a row and eighth overall of an RM Auto Restoration build winning the Best of Show award.

Other strong Best of Show contenders included the Auriga Collection's 1930 Mercedes-Benz 710 SS Special Roadster, 1932 Alfa Romeo 8C 2300 Corto Figoni Cabriolet, shown care of Gregor Fisker, and 1939 Delahaye 165 Figoni et Falaschi Cabriolet owned by the Peter Mullin Automotive Museum Foundation.

Competition got underway on Thursday as the majority of Concours entries participated in the 25th Pebble Beach Tour d'Elegance, which traces about 70 miles of scenic coastal roads. Entries that complete the Tour have the advantage if they tie in the Concours class competition.

The Pebble Beach Concours raised more than \$2.68 million for charity this year, bringing the event's total charitable donations to over \$37 million to date. Through



the Pebble Beach Company Foundation, the event's primary charitable partner, funds benefit more than 90 local charities, impacting the lives of more than 10,000 children annually in Monterey County.

Gooding & Company, official auction house of the Concours, hosted its 19th sale at the venue (see also in this issue).

The 73rd Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance will take place on Sunday, August 18, 2024, and will celebrate the marques of Packard and Maserati, as well as the creations of Italian coachbuilder Pietro Frua. More features will be announced this fall. Visit: www.pebblebeachconcours.net. ■



RX: prescription for change BY JOE SAGE

Lexus stakes a claim for the RX as having created the luxury crossover segment. That's more than fair, having been with us since 1998, when the crossover term was just first starting to get legs. An instant hit, it sold about 42,000 units in North America in its first year and has continued apace from there.

Generation five has arrived for 2023, with a new platform, suspension, powertrains and styling—simultaneously instantly recognizable and recognizably updated.

Notable right up front and center is its new grille and nose, an update to the long-running spindle grille, now a dramatic sharknose they call the spindle body—just as distinctive, truncating the angular hourglass of the old grille, while bearing a clever echo of that shape

with a light grille-like pattern stamped into its bodywork—to our eye all bolder, cleaner and stronger. This has developed over the past couple of years through concept vehicles, then production EVs, and its adoption seems destined to become equally universal.

Another welcome revision is to the infotainment interface. The gateway to functions for years was first a jumpy joystick, then a finicky trackpad, then with some functions migrating to the screen. The evolution took awhile, but now it's all-screen, a huge improvement.

We drove the new Lexus RZ 450e AWD EV in our prior issue, a very positive experience. The new RX is a very close cousin, sharing the RZ's electric-ready platform, lightweight and rigid with a low center of gravity, which

lengthens the RX wheelbase, contributing to exceptional ride and handling. That wheelbase is in fact one of the only specifications that is exactly the same between RZ and RX, although most overall are very close.

Our top trim F SPORT Performance AWD, a plug-in hybrid to boot, starts with a 271-hp 2.4L turbo-four and six-speed automatic, then adds an 80-kW electric rear eAxe, for a combined 366 hp and 406 lb-ft, delivered to the pavement through DIRECT4 all-wheel drive. The setup also tows about 3,500 pounds (with brake, not on ours, or about 1,000 without).

Our sessions start with an intense setup of features and interfaces, things an owner can fine-tune over time, but for us an all-at-once trial by fire, thus usually containing plenty of

annoyances. The RX was notably user friendly, however, all the moreso without that former joystick or trackpad barrier. Options are prioritized wisely, with uncommon consideration to the fact that many features need to be set just once when new, making repeat-access functions far easier to revisit regularly.

Other delights include the inside door handles, which consider something pretty much everybody else seems to have missed for all these years—when you're exiting, you push the door open, but almost universally have to pull a handle in order to push the door. Here, it's a new touch setup with a push action for a push result. It's surprising, maybe even awkward the first time, but from there it makes so much ergonomic and engineering sense, a smile is guaranteed every time. We highly appreciate the cleverness of its philosophy.

From power—including its layer of electrification—to handling to suspension, everything about the RX is far above average. Our

logbook noted it as being “near flawless; you pretty much never get tired of driving this; it's a total keeper.” We never even tried its drive modes—they had never crossed our mind because nothing is lacking in its default setup, another rare philosophical plus in our book.

Nothing is without a couple of nits noted, especially as that's part of our basic mission, but we largely dismissed them, also thinking of a concept we've surprisingly never used—if we scored these on 100-point scale like a high school test, this would get all As, with something generating a nitpick maybe getting a 95 instead of 100, but still an A, because everything is just done so well.

Sometimes incremental changes are the most powerful ones. All was well conceived and received in prior generations of Lexus RX. And as advanced as Toyota-Lexus electrified powertrains have long been, the introduction of this PHEV proves the incremental approach, once again, to be wise and highly effective. ■

With an economy founded in “the Five Cs”—copper, cotton, citrus, cattle and climate—Arizona is originally the Copper State, honored by our state capital topped off by a copper dome. Though the Grand Canyon State nickname was adopted as tourism boosters decided that too many people seemed to think the Canyon was in Utah, the Copperstate 1000 Road Rally and many businesses stay true to the Copper State name. Vehicles in copper paint are few and far between, and somehow even when one is offered, we're disappointed that that's not the sample we receive. This time around, we scored, with our RX 500h arriving in Copper Crest.



SPECIFICATIONS

ASSEMBLY	.....	Cambridge, Ontario, Canada
ENGINE	.....	2.5L turbo-4 16v DOHC, chain drive w Dual VVT-i, D-4ST injection
HP/TORQUE	.....	271 hp / 339 lb-ft
COMPRESSION RATIO	.....	11.0:1
MOTOR	.....	F/R: perm magnet synchronous
BATTERY	.....	288V 240-cell NiMH
TOTAL SYSTEM HP/TORQUE	.....	366 hp / 406 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION	.....	6-spd sequential-shift electronic w intelligence Direct Auto
DRIVETRAIN	.....	DIRECT4 AWD
0-TO-60 / TOP SPEED	.....	5.9 sec / 130 mph
SUSPENSION	.....	F: F-SPORT-tuned, indep MacPherson struts w coils, solenoid-actuated shocks, stblzr bar, performance damper; R: multilink w coils, gas shocks, stblzr bar, performance damper
STEERING	.....	elec power rack & pinion
BRAKES	.....	F: 15.74x1.10 vented, F SPORT 6-piston opposed calipers; R: 13.39x0.71 vented; floating-type single piston
WHEELS	.....	21-in 10-spoke matte black alloys
TIRES	.....	235/50 R21 SL a/s
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	.....	192.52 / 112.2
GROUND CLEARANCE	.....	8.07 in
APPROACH / DEPARTURE	.....	15 / 25°
TURNING CIRCLE	.....	curb-to-curb 35.4 ft
HEADROOM (F/R)	.....	(pano rf) 37.6 / 37.03 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	.....	41.06 / 37.36 in
CARGO CAPACITY	.....	29.59 / 46.19 cu.ft
WEIGHT	.....	4684-4750 lb
TOW CAPACITY	.....	999 / (or w brake) 3494 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY	.....	premium unl / 17.7 gal
MPG	.....	27/28/27 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE	.....	\$69,630
SPECIAL COLOR: Copper Crest	.....	595
LEXUS INTERFACE: 14-in touchscreen, Drive Connect w cloud nav, intelligent assistant, destination assist 3-yr trial	.....	1105
DIGITAL REARVIEW MIRROR	.....	200
PANORAMIC VIEW MONITOR	.....	800
COLD AREA PKG	.....	100
HEATED/VENTED FRONT SEATS	.....	680
POWER REAR SEATS	.....	550
PANORAMA GLASS MOONROOF	.....	500
TRIPLE-BEAM LED HEADLAMPS	.....	1565
POWER REAR DOOR W KICK SENSOR	.....	150
DIGITAL KEY: (4G: requires subscription)	.....	275
TRAFFIC JAM ASSIST: (4G: requires Drive Connect subscrip)	.....	620
ADVANCED PARK	.....	250
120V AC INVERTER	.....	550
REAR BUMPER APPLIQUE	.....	90
DESTINATION CHARGE	.....	1150

TOTAL **\$70,780**

2023 LEXUS RX LINEUP

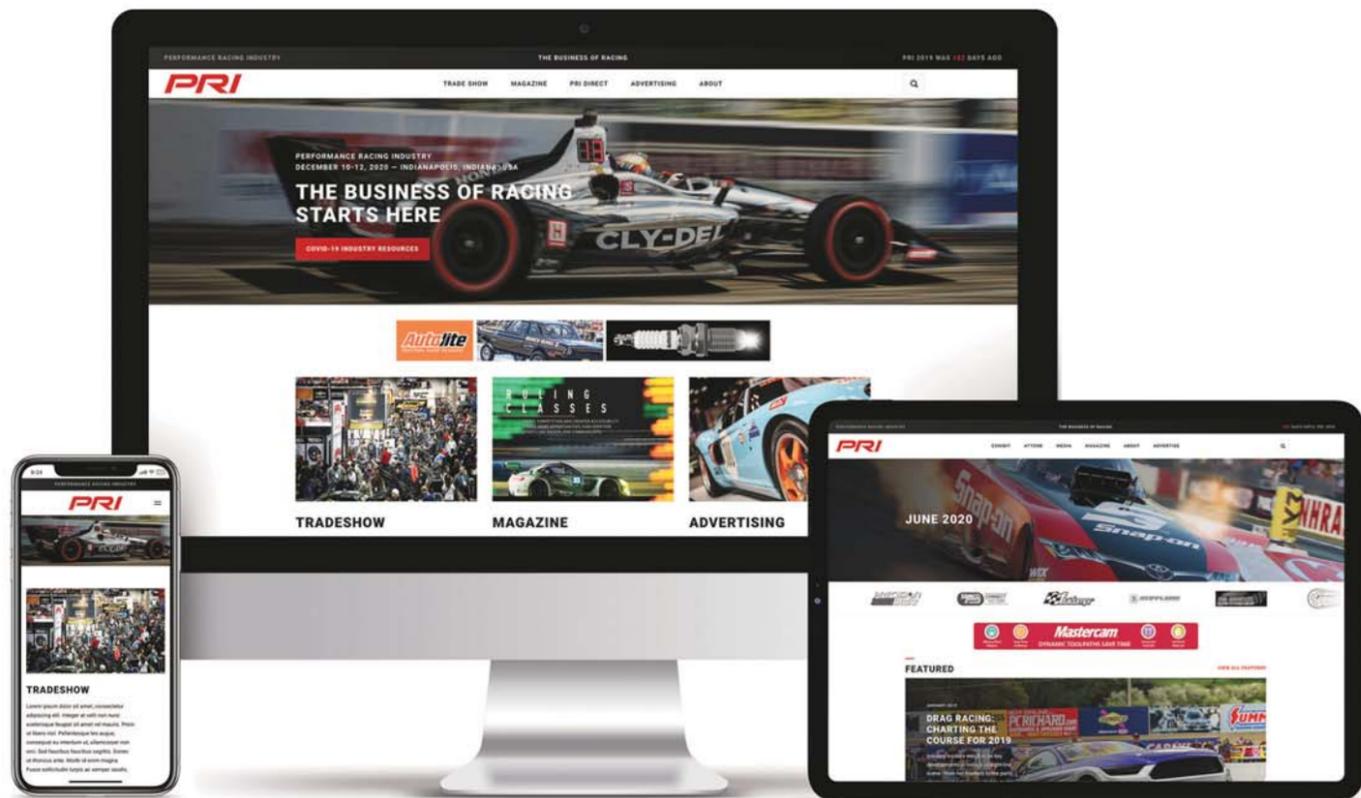
Check latest prices. See our sticker price above.

	FWD	AWD
RX 350	\$48,550	\$50,150
Premium	50,550	52,150
Premium+	53,150	54,750
F SPORT Handling	---	57,750
Luxury	56,500	58,150
RX 350h	---	50,150
Premium	---	52,150
Premium+	---	54,750
Luxury	---	58,150
RX 500 F SPORT Performance	---	62,750



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SPECIAL EVENTS : MONTEREY/PEBBLE BEACH 2023 : AUCTIONS

Monterey/Pebble Beach 2023 Auction Highlights

BONHAMS/CARS

Bonhams/Cars achieved \$30.25 million for the rare 1967 Ferrari 412P Berlinetta, one of just two 412Ps built, at their Quail Auction in Carmel. The fourth most valuable Ferrari ever sold at auction, it also surpassed the previous Bonhams record for a 1954 Mercedes-Benz W198 at \$29.6 million in 2013. Over 1,000 people gathered in person to see the Berlinetta sale. The event presented 109 lots, achieving a total of \$55 million. A world record was also set for a Porsche 906, the 1966 'Carrera Six' Two-Seat Endurance Racing Coupe, at over \$2 million. ▼ Next for Bonhams are Goodwood Revival on September 9 in the UK, then the last US sale of the year, the Audrain Concours Auction on September 29 in Newport RI.



GOODING & COMPANY

Gooding & Company, official auction house of the Pebble Beach Concours, grossed over \$95 million in sales from 133 lots sold at its 19th annual Pebble Beach auction, led by a beautifully patinated, unrestored 1962 Ferrari 250 GT SWB Berlinetta, one of 24 sales over \$1 million. Average per car was \$714,522, and five sales set new world records. Remarkably strong results were also noted for exceptional Brass Era antiques, with classics from the prewar era also doing well. Gooding saw record in-person attendance and especially strong viewership for the two-day event. ▼ Next for Gooding is its London Auction, September 1.



MECUM AUCTIONS

Mecum's annual Daytime Auction at the Hyatt Regency Monterey Hotel and Spa's Del Monte Golf Course saw overall sales above \$45 million for the three-day event. Top seller was a 1966 Ferrari 275 GTB/6C Alloy Berlinetta at \$3.41 million, with six of the top 10 breaking \$1 million and Ferraris claiming seven of the top 10 slots. Private collections also did well, totaling above \$19.21 million, topped by the Veloce, Schnell & Fast Sports Car Collection, The Don Williams Estate Collection and the Mike and Debbie Rogers Datsun Collection. ▼ Mecum heads to Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center in Dallas September 20-23 to auction some 1,500 classic cars.



RM SOTHEBY'S

RM Sotheby's had \$164 million in sales at its 26th annual Monterey auction, at an 86 percent sell-through rate, the third most successful in RM Sotheby's Monterey history. Bidders hailed from over 40 countries for the three-day event, with 20 percent first-timers, a strong indicator of continued growth and interest. Top seller was the 1957 Jaguar XKSS at \$13,205,000. The top 10 were all above \$3 million. Also of particular interest were Porsche, a world record \$1.1 million Lexus LFA, several Ferraris, and highly optioned late model cars from the late 1980s and beyond, many selling well above estimate. ▼ RM Sotheby's upcoming auctions include St Moritz on September 15 and Hershey on October 4-5. ■



FAMILY PICKUP HOMETOWN REUNION

STORY BY ALEX URBINA
PHOTOS BY MARK URBINA

My father's family grew up in the small copper mining town of Bisbee, Arizona. My grandfather was a miner and bought a 1951 Chevy Truck as his work truck and family vehicle. My father and his five sisters all grew up with that truck. They even took their driver's license test in the old truck.

About 20 years ago, my grandfather passed away, and the rusty old truck was passed onto my father. Now living in Santa Clarita, California, my father's dream was to restore the truck in honor of his dad. One year later, however, my father died of cancer, and he never got a chance to realize that dream. But before he passed, he gave the old truck to me.

Going to Bisbee for the 4th of July every year was part of growing up for me. It was how my dad liked to use up his vacation time. I have many fond memories of this tradition, and the parade was always a highlight.

Every year since my dad passed 19 years ago, I would sit roadside at the Bisbee 4th of July parade and watch a classic car or two pass by, and every year, I would have inspirational thoughts about following through with my dad's dream, but I always had excuses.

In 2021, my first grandson was born, and in 2022, we took him on our annual 4th of July trip to Bisbee for the first time, along with the rest of the family. While I was there again at the parade, I saw another classic car drive by, and I decided that I didn't want to die and pass on this rusty old truck to my son and grandson without restoring it.

When the parade was over, I turned to my wife and declared out loud to her that I was going finish the restoration and bring it back the following year to surprise my aunts in the parade.

As soon as I got home, I reached out to two of my cousins who are in the automotive industry to help me; they agreed. One of my cousins, Chubby from Chubby's Automotive, helped me with the full restoration project. My other cousin, Larry from Larry's Auto Body, helped me paint the

(cont'd)





truck. Both are from Sylmar, California.

It was one of the most challenging things I've ever done in my life. No one knows the amount of rigorous hard work, endless money pit and relentless sacrifices someone has to make to restore a classic car unless you've actually done it.

The truck was Bisbee inspired. It has a custom mural painted on the back panel of the bed and custom chrome Bisbee emblems. On the last day before we left for Bisbee, in the wee hours of the morning, I was finally able to put on the last bolt, check the final fluid levels, and attach the last piece of chrome trim.

On July 1st, we loaded it on the trailer and headed off for Bisbee, me and my family. Somehow I was able to keep the secret from my three aunts who live in Bisbee and surprise them in the parade. It was such a surreal moment for all of us—very emotional. ■



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RADFORD MAJOR EXPANSION

ALL TRACKS AT WILD HORSE PASS MOTORSPORTS PARK, INCLUDING NHRA-SANCTIONED DRAG STRIP, TO REMAIN OPEN AND PART OF RADFORD RACING SCHOOL'S GROWTH

Radford Racing School has announced that it has expanded its business in Chandler, by collaborating with the Wild Horse Pass Motorsports Park on the Gila River Indian Reservation to keep the park's four permanent tracks open and available to Radford students. These include a 14-turn, 1.6-mile Main Track road course; 10-turn, 1.25-mile East Track road course; 12-turn, 1.1-mile West Track road course with 3/8-mile straightaway; and 1/4-mile NHRA-sanctioned drag strip.

The School's existing tracks include a recently upgraded 15-turn, 1.6-mile main track, designed by champion racer Bob Bondurant in 1990; a .50-mile kart track; and 10-acre skills pad. Off-track, a newly renovated guest center, trackside student lounge, gift shop and event center complete the Radford Racing School experience, which is shared by thousands of drivers from around the world each year.

"We are here to stay—in a big way," says Radford Racing School owner Pat Velasco. "Since adding new courses, including a drag racing class with a 9-second NHRA license option, we've had tremendous interest from enthusiasts, pro racers, and partners alike."

With all tracks in operation, Radford has the capacity to accommodate more students and classes, offer new automotive experiences and the ability to bring major automotive- and motorsports-related events to the region.

With this news, Radford Racing School is now the largest driving and racing school in the world, spanning more than 447 acres.

"There's significant advantage to training at an established, long tenured facility like Radford Racing School," says Velasco. "Three of our instructors, who've taught some of the best in the racing business, each just celebrated 25 years at the

School. Our permanent location means students can always expect a consistent, high-quality experience year-round—we are home to drivers who return again and again to progressively hone their skills."

About Radford Racing School

Founded in 1968, the Radford Racing School, located in Chandler, Arizona, is the only purpose-built driver training facility for performance enthusiasts and the largest driver training center of its kind in the world. The school maintains over 80 race-prepared vehicles, sedans, SUVs and open wheel formula cars, as well as gas-powered go-karts.

For more information about the school, visit RadfordRacingSchool.com or call 480-403-7600.

RADFORD
RACING SCHOOL



Honda gets it

by Joe Sage

Honda brought a new idea to the scene in the late 1990s with the Insight, an exceptionally small and frugal hybrid car with its own quirky looks (soon followed by Prius). But Honda holds a place in our hearts for soon creating the first hybrid that came across as a regular car, just with that nifty extra powertrain trick—the 2003 Civic Hybrid (a variation of a car with us since the 1970s). This bore a conventional look, just being itself without the pretentious constant declaration that it's a hybrid.

The head count of hybrids was still so small and their mission so specific that when Arizona introduced an alternative fuel license plate in 2007, allowing one-occupant vehicles to use our (then new and few) HOV lanes, only Civic Hybrid, Insight and

Prius very specifically qualified.

Honda Accord gained its hybrid version in 2012. The 2023 Honda Accord is all new—generation eleven of a car with us since 1976. Built in Marysville, Ohio, and full of innovations (see sidebar), this mainstream midsize sedan is a tour de force, with a new hybrid powertrain in four of its six trim levels, including our next-to-top Accord Hybrid Sport-L. The (pricier) hybrids are expected to account for about 50 percent of new Accord sales.

The hybrids combine a 2.0-liter Atkinson cycle engine and electric motor to produce a combined 204 hp and 247 lb-ft of torque, while achieving 44 mpg combined (or 48 mpg on the Hybrid EX-L).

Our week with the Accord Hybrid would include 4th of July, but although Honda had enthusiastically okayed a high-mileage holiday weekend road trip, we ended up closer to home, our usual local driving plus a long two-lane run in the countryside on the 4th, somehow without holiday traffic.

Our enthusiasm for this seemingly innocuous midsize sedan set in quickly, as a red light turned green and we tackled a lefthand double sweeper to the freeway, gave it the pedal and hugged the curb as we accelerated—all well beyond the expected for front-wheel-drive and a CVT.

Brakes are excellent—firm, definite, balanced and accurate. Horsepower is mainstream (but still more than an older Corvette or 911), but is helped by the car's nice light weight and balance, especially considering it bears extra battery weight.

We don't always play with drive modes (on the idea that things should be, though seldom are, optimized out of the box). And we tend to take CVTs for what they are (figuring most people will never even be aware they have one). Nonetheless, we did play with modes on the Accord Hybrid, largely in pursuit of optimizing that drivetrain to our liking.

We ran in sport mode for awhile, in line with its persona, but turned this off because the CVT drive-

train was giving us quite a whine (and sport probably offered no big benefits at that moment, as we were cruising on a 60-mph straightaway). But we turned it right back on at our next light and felt an immediate improvement in its posture, just more dead-on tight and accurate. Acceleration was certainly improved, as were lane maneuvers. And we had already been impressed by braking in sport mode. Yet, we didn't care for the driveline noise, so now we had a conundrum on modes. Yet, it's our mission to be paying attention. As with the CVT itself, would most people notice?

We tried eco mode briefly. Coming from sport, there just wasn't much response to our pedal input, and we missed that pep. Then again, we're certain some owners will purposefully choose eco mode all the time and wouldn't change a thing.

The CVT drivetrain does add Linear Shift Control, not described as mimicking conventional shift points, per se, as many do, but rather as mimicking the speed-linked rev feel of shifting conventional gears under acceleration. None of this was particularly noticeable—perhaps most appropriate of all on a family sedan. Sport driving involves full

intent and control. But routine driving in traffic is equal parts intent and response. A transmission with no distractions seems fine here.

Our longest drive out of town started in sport, but we switched out of it to mitigate noise (knowing that, curves and hills aside, we were largely cruising). And we then forgot all about that, normal mode being just fine for ride-ranging conditions.

What's more, we had that fuel mileage potential. We don't hypermile, but do glance at readouts, and the Accord Hybrid is as good as its word, getting 39-40 mpg the whole time, without even trying, just our usual spirited driving, some town, some open road, with a large portion in sport mode. Achieving the 44 mpg rating seems easy.

Normal mode seems to have provided the win-win for noise, performance and fuel mileage probably 90 percent of the time. It's not intended to be a race car, anyway, so this works just fine.

We'd say we had an all-around winning week in the new Honda Accord Hybrid. Add it all up, and it's arguably more like a premium European sports sedan than ever, less powerful, sure, but at half the price and with twice the fuel mileage. ■

If there's one thing we might modify, it would be to upgrade the audio. It's not urgent, something you might get around to at some time. We wouldn't touch the head unit—those are far too integrated now—but some added power and upgraded speakers could do the trick.



SPECIFICATIONS

ASSEMBLY.....	Marysville, Ohio
ENGINE/TRANSMISSION.....	Japan / USA
PARTS CONTENT.....	US/Can 50% / Japan 25%
PASSENGERS.....	five
ENGINE.....	2.0L DI Atkinson 16v DOHC Dual-VTC (146 hp) plus AC synchronous permanent magnet motor (181 hp)
HP/TORQUE.....	(total system) 204 hp / 247 lb-ft
COMPRESSION RATIO.....	13.9:1
TRANSMISSION.....	CVT
DRIVETRAIN.....	FWD
SUSPENSION.....	F: MacPherson strut, 27.2x5.0 tubular stblzr bar; R: multi-link, 16.5 solid stblzr bar
STEERING.....	elec power asst dual pinion
BRAKES.....	F: 12.3 vented; R: 11.1 solid
WHEELS.....	19x8.5J matte Berlina black
TIRES.....	235/40R19 96V all-season
LENGTH / WHEELBASE.....	195.7 / 111.4 in
GROUND CLEARANCE.....	5.3 in
TURNING CIRCLE.....	curb-to-curb 38.4 ft
HEADROOM (F/R).....	37.5 / 37.2 in
LEGROOM (F/R).....	42.3 / 40.8 in
CARGO CAPACITY.....	16.7 cu.ft
WEIGHT.....	3488 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY.....	unl; 91 oct rec / 12.8 gal
MPG.....	46/41/44 (city/hwy/comb)
BASE PRICE.....	\$33,875
PAINT: Radiant Red Metallic.....	455
DESTINATION CHARGE.....	1095
TOTAL.....	\$35,425

2023 HONDA ACCORD LINEUP

Check latest prices. See our sticker price above.

1.5T.....	LX.....	\$27,295
	EX.....	29,060
2.0T hybrid.....	Sport.....	31,345
	EX-L.....	32,990
	Sport-L.....	▼ 33,325
	Touring.....	37,340

MANUFACTURING INNOVATIONS

Accord has been built in Marysville, Ohio, since Honda's plant opened there in 1982, the first such by a global automaker in the US. Continual research here improves content, quality and worker ergonomics. Highlights for the all-new Accord include:

- New hinge engineering reducing parts, improving quality and boosting worker efficiency while installing the hood.
- A more efficient one-piece two-layer carpet installation process increasing both sound insulation and comfort.
- New in-vehicle Electronic Power Steering calibration flashing system.
- A complete front-end redesign for higher quality and quicker build with both hood fixture and fender location consistently set.
- Sub-assembly of the 3-piece front sub-frame brought in-house for the first time.
- Investments in automation and welding for new rear wheel arch styling.
- One-piece taillight mounting design with new process eliminating welding steps.
- Parts made in-house from material previously recycled, for higher efficiency and accuracy, reduced materials and time. •

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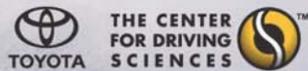
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ARIZONA CONCOURS 2024 CALL FOR ENTRIES AND TICKETS

The Art of Automotive Design" is the theme for the sixth edition of the Arizona Concours d'Elegance, to be held on January 21, 2024 at the newly renovated Scottsdale Civic Center, with a splendid array of 100 rare and historic automobiles on display, some of the world's most superb examples of the art of coachbuilding and car design, in the atmosphere of a stylish garden party.

The Arizona Concours is a professionally judged and curated assembly of rarely seen dream cars and highly valued collector vehicles, examples that impress and excite not only car lovers but anyone who appreciates the beauty of expressive design. Judged vehicles range from antiques from the dawn of motoring through pre-war classics, sports and competition cars, to modern-day exotics.

Previously held at the Arizona Biltmore Resort in Phoenix, the Arizona Concours is now presented in partnership with Scottsdale Arts, an organization responsible for multi-disciplinary artistic services in Scottsdale. Proceeds from the Concours benefit local artists and the arts community.

January 2023 marked the event's first time at the Scottsdale Civic Center, where a \$35 million

renovation had been still underway, confining the show to a finished section. Construction is now complete, and the 2024 Concours will be expanded to fill the entire landscaped space, with the awards ceremony held on an elegant new outdoor stage. "The award presentations for 2024 will be the most dramatic ever presented by the Arizona Concours," notes event co-chairman Ed Winkler.

ARIZONA CONCOURS 2024 CALL FOR ENTRIES

The 2024 Arizona Concours d'Elegance is seeking spectacular, rare and historically significant automobiles for entry. Owners and caretakers of vehicles that exemplify the concept are invited to submit their cars for entry on the newly updated event website. Awards will be presented in each of 15 vehicle classes, along with special awards and the coveted Best of Show trophy.

ARIZONA CONCOURS 2024 TICKET SALES

Tickets for the 2024 Arizona Concours d'Elegance are now available, with a financial incentive to purchase in advance. Single admission currently costs \$75, increasing to \$85 on October 1 and then



to \$100 on January 1, 2024.

There are also Concours Plus tickets that include admission to a collector car lecture series on Saturday, January 20 and early "Dawn Patrol" admission to the Concours starting at 7 am. These are currently \$100, increasing to \$110 on October 1 and \$125 on January 1, 2024.

ENTRY-TICKETS-SPONSORSHIPS: WEBSITES

To apply for vehicle entry, learn more about sponsorship opportunities or purchase tickets, visit:

ARIZONA CONCOURS D'ELEGANCE

www.arizonaconcours.com

Tickets are also available at the Scottsdale Center for the Performing Arts box office and at:

SCOTTSDALE ARTS:

www.scottsdalearts.org/events



Photo: Patrick Darby

MAGIC POWERTRAIN BY JOE SAGE

S tellantis, current iteration of the automaker long known as Chrysler, has long held a reputation for talented engineers and advanced powertrains. As many others dive headfirst into EV territory, they have avoided being bleeding edge adopters, holding on to more traditional builds a bit into overtime, to massive acclaim from their customers (and climbing to the top of reliability ratings by continuing to tweak the tried and true).

But plenty of evolution has been methodically underway in the background and is now coming to light in a big way. While EVs are being developed, PHEV (plug-in hybrid) presence is rising rapidly, as these powertrains— seen by many all along as a

best-of-all-possible-tech solution—are ever more widely recognized and understood.

Dodge kept a solid V8 game going much longer than most, though this is the last year of Challenger and Charger as you've known them. Their next evolution will combine their muscle stature with the latest tech, already demonstrated by a PHEV in the new compact Hornet lineup, but applied to its R/T performance trim, proving electrified benefits without enthusiast compromise. Chrysler Pacifica has had a PHEV variant for years, which they decided to just call a hybrid (better understood by dealers and customers alike, with plugging in just something you could do, but didn't have to). Ram Trucks

added eTorque mild hybrids to the lineup in 2019. And Jeep's 4xe (four-by-e) PHEV powertrain arrived with Renegade 4xe and Compass 4xe in 2019 as 2020 models, then Grand Cherokee 4xe for 2022.

The Jeep 4xe powertrain has gone quickly from novelty to mainstream, with Wrangler 4xe first revealed in summer 2020 and now available on six of eight trims—the High Altitude 4xe-only, and as an option on all others except the base unit or the top Rubicon 392 V8. All are Wrangler Four-Doors.

The top attributes of Jeep and 4xe are fully combined in our Wrangler here—the Rubicon 4xe, its smooth, clean, powerful, economical PHEV powertrain underpinning famed off-road abilities.

With a 400-volt, 96-cell battery pack below the rear seat (preserving off-road protection and inte-

rior space) plus a 2.0-liter gasoline turbo, this 375-hp Wrangler provides top torque at low speed for quiet running through the canyons), plus up to 21 miles in full EV mode, as you expect from a PHEV, while all Trail Rated, with the solid axles, full-time transfer case, extreme suspension and 30 inches of fording ability you expect from a Rubicon.

The combination's 470 lb-ft of torque matches the Rubicon 392 V8, with electrified benefits—an extra kick right from the start of the power curve, along with a pure electric mode that allows a gas pump-free work week in town for many users.

Off-road capability not only equals the familiar Rubicon, but in some cases increases it, as the 4xe powertrain provides traction to the rear axle not via a prop shaft, rather through a dedicated electric motor, allowing the two axles to control torque independently, which can be more effective than the V8's mechanical system, also providing instant electric boost to the rear wheels when needed.

Our sample adds the Rubicon X Preferred Pack-

age, an \$8500 option that turns a Rubicon 4xe into a semi-separate trim level, the Rubicon X 4xe.

We had driven the Jeep 4xe powertrain at comparo events, typically about 20 minutes each. The Grand Cherokee 4xe won Family Utility and Electrified Utility categories, was runnerup for Extreme Capability Vehicle and won the top Outdoor Activity of the Year Award at NWAPA Mudfest in the Pacific Northwest. We had a very similar build to this Wrangler last spring at Mudfest—that one a Rubicon 4xe, even the same color, but with a 20th Anniversary package rather than this one's X Package. That one won both as Two-Row Family SUV—the largest category—and the top off-road trophy for Extreme Capability Vehicle—the smallest but most focused performance subcategory.

The breadth of those wins—from family SUV to toughest on the trails—is very much in sync with what we have now found during a full week with the Rubicon X 4xe here at home.

While we took our hero pix of the Rubicon 4xe

(cont'd)

2024 JEEP® WRANGLER LINEUP

	2-DOOR	4-DOOR	4xe PHEV
Sport	\$31,895	\$35,895	--
Sport S	35,395	39,395	49,995
Willys	39,395	43,395	54,735
Sahara	--	47,825	56,845
High Altitude	--	--	66,995
Rubicon	45,395	49,395	60,585
Rubicon X	54,895	58,895	69,085
Rubicon 392	--	87,595	--



The new Wrangler looks fantastic in any color, and it comes in more than ever, with several added in 2023 and more for 2024. Our prearrival pix were in High Velocity (bold yellow) and we thought that looked great, wouldn't want it in any other color, perfect. Then ours arrived in this stunning almost battleship-navy-grey simply known as Earl, and same thing—you wouldn't want it in any other color. You will definitely want to see the full range of choices. Good luck deciding!

SPECIFICATIONS

ASSEMBLY	.....Toledo North Assembly, Ohio
ENGINE	.....Termoli, Italy and Trenton South Engine Plant, Trenton, Michigan
LAYOUT/CONSTRUCTION	.....ladder-type frame, open steel and aluminum body
ENGINE	.....2.0L turbo-4 chain-driven DOHC, 16v dir inj, PHEV, throttled/cooled EGR (exhaust gas recirc), alum/alum
COMPRESSION RATIO	.....10.0:1
HP/TORQUE	.....270 hp / 295 lb-ft
PLUG-IN HYBRID SYSTEM:	
eTORQUE BELT-START GENERATOR/MOTOR	
PEAK PWR / START TORQUE	.....44 hp / 39 lb-ft
INTEGRATED TRANSMISSION TRACTION MOTOR	
PEAK PWR/TORQUE	.....134 hp / 181 lb-ft
BATTERY	.....lithium ion Li-NMC 260-400V DC
MAXIMUM CHARGE RATE	.....7.2 kW
TOTAL PEAK HP/TORQUE	.....375 hp / 470 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION	.....8-spd auto 8P75PH PHEV
DRIVETRAIN	.....4x4
TRANSFER CASE	.....MP30220R Rock-Trac full-time, 2H/4auto/4H/4L, 4.0:1 ratio
AXLES	.....3rd gen Dana, front Tru-Lok electronic locking diff; R: 3rd gen Dana 44 HD full float, Tru-Lok electronic diff
AXLE RATIO	.....4.10
SUSPENSION	.....F: solid axle, link coil, leading arms, track bar, coil springs, high-pressure gas-charged monotube shocks w MTV tech and hydraulic rebound stop, stblzr bar; R: solid axle, link coil, trailing arms, track bar, coil springs, high-pressure gas-charged monotube shocks w hydraulic rebound stop, stblzr bar
STEERING	.....electro-hydraulic power
BRAKES	.....hydro-electric ABS w fully blended regeneration capacity; F: 12.9x1.1 vented, twin-piston floating cal; R: 14x0.86 vented, single floating caliper
WHEELS	.....17x7.5 machined w black pockets
TIRES	.....LT285/70R17C BF Goodrich T/A K02 all-terrain
TURNING CIRCLE	.....38.9 ft
GROUND CLEARANCE	.....10.8 in
APPR/DEP/BRKVR	.....43.8 / 22.5 / 35.6°
WATER FORDING	.....31.5 in
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	.....188.4 / 118.4 in
HEADROOM (F/R)	.....40.8 / 40.3 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	.....40.8 / 38.2 in
CARGO CAPACITY	.....27.7 / 67.4 cu.ft
CURB WEIGHT	.....5226 lb
TOW CAPACITY	.....3500 lb
RANGE	.....all-electric 21 miles
FUEL / CAPACITY	.....87 min, 91+ rec'd / 17.2 gal
MPG	.....49 MPGe / 20 (comb)
BASE PRICE	.....\$60,585
PAINT:	Earl clear-coat exterior.....595
RUBICON X PREFERRED PKG (29V):	Nappa leather seats, 12-way power front seats, heated front seats, heated steering wheel, acoustic front seat-area carpet, acoustic laminated front door glass, Alpine premium audio, HD radio, active noise-control, connected travel & traffic services, Uconnect 5 nav w 12.3-in touchscreen, body-color Rubicon highline flare, remote start, auto high-beam, integrated off-road camera, rear defrost, rear wiper/washer, steel bumpers front & rear, blind-spot & cross-path detect, ParkSense rear park.....8500
SKY ONE-TOUCH POWER TOP:	removable rear quarter windows w storage bag.....3295
FLOOR MATS:	Mopar all-weather.....170
WARN WINCH1995
DESTINATION CHARGE1795
TOTAL\$76,935

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in the wild (itself not surprising), we drove the heck out of it in town, too, as anyone may well do.

We had also considered taking it for a longer distance road/off-road drive, though realizing that while 49 MPGe sounds enticing (benefitting from 21 miles of EV range), its 20 mpg combined rating would prove more realistic over hundred of miles.

We still would have done it, given more time. The Wrangler 4xe's powertrain is pure magic. You can somewhat feel that it's a smaller turbo engine without the deeper growl of a V8 (and while it matches the V8 Rubicon's torque, horsepower is a little lower, at 375), but you can feel its strength.

In town, this Wrangler cruises very nicely. The 4xe powertrain is powerful, and it is quick. It's almost hard to believe you're also atop a big beefy-tired Wrangler Rubicon. You can run it up a freeway ramp, merge into aggressive high-speed traffic, choose your lanes, hold or change your lanes, and react to the surprises your fellow travelers always inflict, along with the best of the best.

On the freeway, you can sense the strength and capability of its big tires riding atop its wondrous suspension, but though geared toward maximum off-road, that's not how it feels; it's more just an awareness that it's there—the best of all worlds.

At one point, a good 20 or 30 cars ahead of us suddenly lit up their brake lights—a great test of this Jeep's brakes, and they did great. While most

regenerative brake systems inevitably feel a little different, this one's "fully blended" hydro-electric regenerative system was superlative, with emphasis on its primary job and regen just a bonus.

For parking, we found the rear camera provided an unusually clear and accurate view.

Don't expect the big-wheeled Rubicon to corner quite like a performance car on surface streets, although you'll easily push beyond what you'd normally do in a vehicle like this. It has no surprises or disappointments, at a minimum feeling and performing well ahead of what you might expect.

Despite its skills in civilization, you know you have a Wrangler Rubicon—its height, posture, the lighter-than-average heft of its removable doors, its window controls in the center console, all that unmistakable Wrangler look and feel.

We did have a very full afternoon at a major off-highway vehicle park, pretty much all to ourselves. We uncharacteristically started out in 2HI, to see what we'd learn, and it did just fine. We figure in rear-wheel drive it benefits from less weight up front than a V8, so chalk one up for 4xe. We did the rest of our session in 4HI (as opposed to 4Auto, more of a slick-surface variable thing). Our moderately extreme terrain never called for 4LO.

While other Wrangler 4xe builds have a Selec-Trac transfer case with 2.72:1 low range, Rubicon 4xe has a Rock-Trac unit with 4.0:1 low range,

along with 4:10 axle ratios (vs 3.3 in others), Tru-Lok electronic locking differentials, and gen-three Dana axles (including 44 HD Full Float in the rear).

The Jeep team is gifted. Here, they've also been granted a gift, the world famous Wrangler to work with, and as always have done its legacy proud.

No question, the Jeep 4xe powertrain has gone from novelty to mainstream in record time. And it now proves itself in a great build of the Rubicon.

You can still get a gasoline-only V8 Wrangler Rubicon 392—but at about \$30 grand more than a V6 Rubicon X or about \$20 grand more than the lower-horsepower but equal-torque Rubicon 4xe.

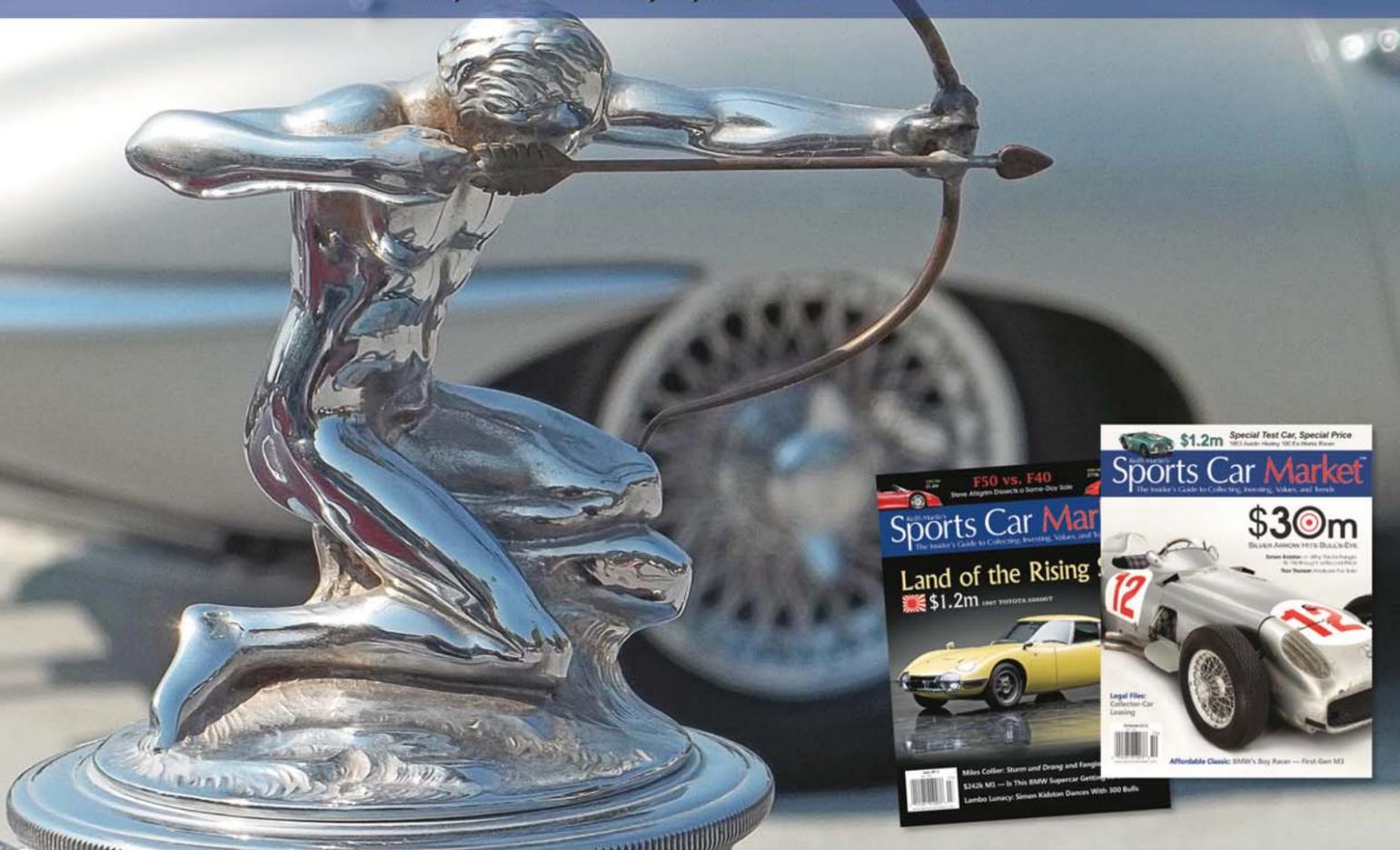
Whereas a vehicle like this used to be a matter of compromise to the hard-core, it no longer is. Plus there are more and more people considering their first Wrangler, even a maximum-duty one, only having known they want one. This rig has to be useful in the most challenging off-road situations, and as a Rubicon of course it is. But realistically it has to be useful in normal conditions as a daily driver. For the sake of buyers, fellow traffic, and the brand itself (which has every reason to try to please them all), it has transformed superbly here, truly proving to be a does-it-all machine.

We had posed a question on social media before our Wrangler 4xe's arrival: "Is there anything this CAN'T do? Let's find out!" And the answer is: nope, not really! This is a stunning build. ■



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GM closing Arizona IT Innovation Center

Nine-year-old facility to close in October, eliminating more than 900 salaried jobs

Exactly nine years ago, we attended the ribbon-cutting at the new General Motors Information Technology Innovation Center in Chandler, their fourth location (along with Warren, Michigan; Austin, Texas; and Roswell, Georgia) for in-sourcing the company's innovation capabilities and tapping into Arizona's ever-expanding pool of new and experienced IT talent.

About 500 employees were already employed there, about 25 percent of them recent college graduates, with GM expecting to hire a total of 1000 employees at the Chandler center over the coming five years—most focused on web technologies, end-user applications, dealership and factory systems, and vehicle technology.

GM's IT Innovation Centers were conceived as part of a companywide transformation to improve performance, reduce operating costs and increase output of technical innovations. GM announced Chandler as the site of the company's fourth IT Innovation Center in March 2013, and construction on the 170,000 square-foot center was completed in June 2014.

The facility became part of a global campus connected by full-room, large-screen 24/7 teleconferencing—featuring real time two-way, three-way or more-way video links with teams in other centers throughout the GM network

—in Korea, China, Austin, Australia, Detroit and other hotbeds of development worldwide. This aimed to enable rapid development of the latest in a wide range of e-based customer interface and satisfaction methodologies, while incorporating flex hours, creative commons for collaborative brainstorming, stand-sit workspaces, idea walls for sketches and notes, and more for its employees. Developed here were customer-first technologies including some of the first systems for purchasing a car 100 percent online.

In late August, *The Detroit Free Press* reported the planned closure of the facility in October, eliminating the jobs of about 940 workers, most of whom are part of GM's corporate IT support team.

The news followed a GM announcement the prior week saying they planned to eliminate about 200 engineering positions, in an effort to reduce vehicle complexity, stating that many of those engineers were expected to move into other jobs within the company.

General Motors spokesperson Kevin Kelly told industry journal *Automotive News* that some IT employees will continue to work in Arizona on software-defined vehicle technology, while those whose positions are terminated can apply for open positions until the end of October. ■



Summer is a special time for those living in the Sonoran Desert. Temperatures can quickly rise into triple digits. Each year, we “vacate” our homes and load up our overland rigs with as many gadgets as possible to provide the comforts of home-away-from-home. But in loading them, we must be careful to not exceed the maximum payload capacity of our rigs. Then, it’s time to head out.

We head toward a mountainous area that we think is the perfect overland spot. Here, it provides cooler temperatures that match a very relaxed vibe. We’re talking about Four Peaks, in the Mazatzal Mountains on the eastern horizon of the Valley of the Sun, an excellent overland choice located around 60 miles from downtown Phoenix.

The mountains are part of the 60,740-acre Four Peaks Wilderness Area. Not to be confused with Four Peaks Brewery, this wilderness area offers a scenic drive with impressive views of saguaros, manzanitas, and pine trees. It will take between two and three hours to get to the scenic overlook. But trust us: you will be in awe of the fantastic view. The Four Peaks Wilderness Area has a minimal elevation of 1,700 feet, climbing up to 7,600 feet on Brown’s Peak, the tallest of the four nubs.

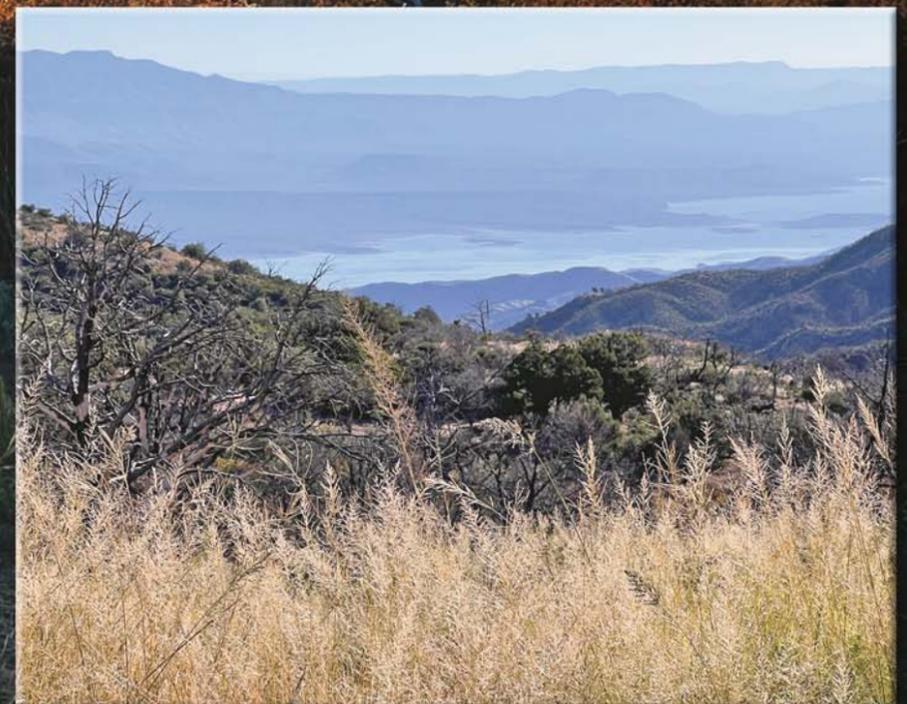
To reach the views that dreams are made of, you will take a well-maintained 28-mile off-road trail to get to the coveted overlook. Your rewards are mesmerizing views of Roosevelt Lake and the cities of Mesa and others in the Valley, from an elevation of 5,774 feet.

The trail

The first five miles of the trail begin an off-road adventure that winds through stands of cacti and giant boulders. As you gradually begin the climb, you’ll notice the road offers many twists and turns, leading to various washes, creeks and pull-ups for boondocking campsites.

Passing the Mud Springs Trailhead leads to the most technical part of the adventure. In other words, this is where the trail begins to test your nerve. You’ll encounter tight turns at about 17.8 miles in. At the top of the trail, you’ll come upon a junction of routes. A right turn

(cont’d)



Overlanding: high atop Four Peaks

BY SANDRA MUÑOZ DOREE
PHOTOS BY WILLIAM DORÉE

onto FR-648 is next. From here, continue south on the path for two miles toward the Pigeon and Lone Pine Trailheads. You will find the overlook thick with vegetation and stunning 360-degree views. It is here we set up our Off Grid Trailer for the night.

Cooking on the mountaintop

Our Camp Chef Mountaineer burner made our dinner of pulled pork sandwiches and cowboy beans an easy fix. Meanwhile, our trusty Truma Cooler kept our Four-Peaks Hazy IPA ice-cold. Kicking back into our Dometic chairs put us in perfect position to view the most extraordinary sunset. It was a kaleidoscope of colors ranging from pinks and yellow streaks blending into glowing orange rays. It was the perfect way to end the day and begin a nearly impossible evening. Gusty winds cleared the skyline to display a full moon. That was our cue to put away the chairs and awning. At that point we decided to hunker down in the comfort of our Off Grid Trailer.

The next morning, we woke to a vibrant sunrise peeking through our window. Resplendent with vibrant blues, yellows and orange glowing rays, it was enticement enough to get us out of the comfort of our OGT. Soon, the smell of freshly scrambled eggs, bacon and hash browns filled the air. Freshly brewed coffee and breakfast burritos, combined with a panoramic view of Ponderosa pine and mountains as far as the eye could see is definitely one of the best ways to start the day.

The best time for adventure

It's best to explore Four Peaks during the week, as it gets crowded on weekends. Temperatures for this overlanding adventure are best from late October to early May. Research the trip in advance so there are no surprises. Finally, for this trail, a 4x4 vehicle is a must.

More to explore

What must go up must come down. The fun continues via SR 288, a scenic backcountry road that takes you to Payson, where routes SR 260 and SR 288 merge to the entrance of Mogollon Road.

The Mogollon Rim is a rugged escarpment defining the southern Colorado Plateau. The Rim extends across the forest, where you can marvel at plateau views and the desert canyon country. A unique view can be had by overlanding to the top of a 2,000-foot drop known as "The Edge of the World." Camp along this ridge and wake up to views of miles of ponderosa pines. It's the perfect end to a great adventure.

The Arizona landscape enjoys a well-earned reputation for those searching for cooler weather. At the same time, you can go from the triple digits all the way to cold weather gear. Preparing for both extremes will guarantee you have a great trip, regardless of which way the wind blows. ■



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NASCAR CHAMPIONSHIP WEEKEND NOVEMBER 3-5, 2023

Experience all Phoenix Raceway has to offer— from concerts, to pre-race and more—during the exciting NASCAR season finale in November.

The 2023 Fall NASCAR Championship Weekend at Phoenix Raceway has four major races over three days—the NASCAR Craftsman Truck Series Championship and ARCA Menards Series West Championship on Friday; the NASCAR Xfinity Series Championship on Saturday; and the NASCAR Cup Series Championship on Sunday.

Only one of the final four drivers will be crowned a champion. Who will have what it takes to be the last one standing in Ruoff Mortgage Victory Lane?

TICKETS & INFORMATION: To secure tickets for this November's NASCAR Championship Weekend, information on additional experiences and entertainment, and the latest updated schedule details, call the Phoenix Raceway ticket office at 866-408-RACE (7223) or visit online at phoenixraceway.com.

Fans looking to buy or resell reserved seats can also visit SeatGeek.com. ■

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 31	
NASCAR Racing Experience.....	8:00 AM - 2:00 pm
Halloween Bash (trackside).....	5:30 - 7:00 pm
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 2	
NASCAR Craftsman Truck Series practice and qualifying	tbd
ARCA Menards Series West practice and qualifying.....	tbd
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 3	
NASCAR Xfinity Series practice	tbd
NASCAR Cup Series practice.....	tbd
NASCAR CRAFTSMAN TRUCK SERIES CHAMPIONSHIP	
tbd	
ARCA MENARDS SERIES WEST CHAMPIONSHIP ..	
7:00 pm	
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 4	
NASCAR Xfinity Series qualifying	tbd
NASCAR Cup Series qualifying	tbd
NASCAR XFINITY SERIES CHAMPIONSHIP	
4:00 pm	
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 5	
NASCAR CUP SERIES CHAMPIONSHIP RACE	
1:00 pm	
Schedule and details subject to change	



Hang on tight!

BY JOE SAGE

The stage was set for this by having had the 2023 Acura Integra's prior top build, the 200-hp A-Spec with Technology Package (ours with the six-speed manual available only on that trim) a year ago, and its performance cousin, the 315-hp Honda Civic Type R this spring (see both at lower right).

Now, Integra brings back the Type S for 2024, in its longstanding role as a sportier and more powerful alternative to its siblings, while also a more refined premium badge alternative to Civic Type R. The fourth Acura Type S adaptation brand-wide in the past two years, this Type S is identified as the most powerful, best performing Integra ever.

After its absence of almost 20 years, the new Integra—earlier predominantly a small two-door coupe—comes solely as a five-door liftback (looking much like a sedan, though with more cargo volume). For 2023, Acura had offered the same 200-

hp turbo-four across the Integra lineup, all shifting via CVT with the exception (as on ours) of that six-speed manual option on the top A-Spec Tech trim, topping out at \$35,800 (with either transmission at the same price). A-Spec Tech for 2024 is up just \$700 as of now, while the Type S sits well above that—its 320-hp 2.0-liter turbo and other performance bits move its price up nearly 40 percent above the top A-Spec. Great news for shifters: Type S, its enthusiast mission in mind, is manual-only.

Some brands dislike cross-badge comparisons, but Acura themselves present key points distinguishing Integra Type S from Honda Civic Type R.

Though sharing hardware, Acura Integra Type S and Honda Civic Type R are developed by wholly separate teams, with different performance targets aimed at different buyers, generally favoring street for the Type S and track for the Type R. The

Acura has a different throttle map from Honda, with noticeably more torque at half throttle. Suspension tuning and damping are more compliant for Integra Type S—its top Sport+ drive mode comparable to Civic Type R's middle Sport mode and Acura's Sport more like Type R's Comfort. Integra Type S wheels are lighter than either the A-Spec or the Civic Type R. A high level of sound deadening as in other Integra trims remains in the Type S, while reduced in the Honda to shave weight. Despite this—and other premium content including heated front seats, power driver's seat and more advanced displays—the Integra Type S weighs in at only 31 pounds heavier than Civic Type R.

While high horsepower plus a manual transmission sounds glorious, the 320 horses in the Integra Type S are quite a lot for a front-driver. Even the most seasoned stick jockey may want to ease into their first clutch release, to gauge its feel, which may continue for several more shifts and turns. The power itself is welcome, able to easily come out tops on merging freeway ramps, though you may feel more front-drive torque steer than we've

encountered in awhile. This surely required more hands-on, feet-on management as paired with our otherwise favorite feature, its manual shift.

We generally turn off rev-matching, finding it may be helpful for a new manual driver but runs interference on a seasoned shifter. However, we hadn't particularly noticed it our first couple of days, not as over-the-top as some. It seems well calibrated "right out of the box," so that's to the plus.

We also accepted its default drive mode as delivered until, on a long drive in the countryside, we pulled over to investigate preferences—aiming to turn off rev-matching. We were already in Sport. We found the Individual map previously set to an odd mix of Sport+ and Comfort, so we changed all to Sport+ except one setting to Sport. Rev-matching is not part of these profiles, however. Instead, we found that in with driver assistance systems—lane keeping, collision warning, blind spot and so on. That in itself says a lot, reinforcing our thinking that it is indeed a helper feature, not a performance feature. We now had rev-matching OFF—no helping wanted, thank you very much.

We resumed our drive still in Sport—powering through and hugging our road's challenging hilly curves, with no torquiness here. And yet the pow-

ertrain still seemed to blip up and power down through shifts. Our change of settings was very focused, so we can only speculate that either there are other factors for this in the powertrain beyond the transmission, or it may just never totally give up trying to interfere with human intent.

Of note, we pulled off the road for photos at that point, set in Sport+, and it exhibited maximum front-drive torquiness again, reentering the road.

(Note that you cannot try different modes while driving, for immediate comparison—you must stop and put it in Park to access the settings.)

Despite having much lower fuel mileage ratings than the 200-horse Integras, Type S has the same 12.4-gallon tank. Ultimately, we found it neither wildly fuel-economical nor wildly thirsty, but the numbers indicate you'll experience the difference.

The car is surely the sum of its parts. While neither more-than nor less-than others in the broader Acura-Honda family, it's interesting to see how the parts—quite similar in some ways, distinctly different in others—fall together in each.

Acura Integra Type S is an enthusiast machine. We've concluded its intent is not to take over total control; rather, you will be applying it. And really, that's exactly what an enthusiast driver seeks. ■

(Below right) Comparisons are natural against the 2023 Honda Civic Type R (see our May-June 2023 issue) and the 2023 Acura Integra A-Spec with Technology Package and 6-speed M/T (see September-October 2022).

We've seen pearlescent white paints anywhere from the luster of an old styrofoam hamburger box to creamy off-whites, but our sample's Platinum White Pearl is a crisp, pure refrigerator white.



SPECIFICATIONS

ASSEMBLY	.....Marysville, Ohio
CONTENT	.....60% US/Canada / 15% Japan
ENGINE/TRANSMISSION	.....USA / Japan
ENGINE	.....2.0L turbocharged 4-cylinder, dir inject DOHC 16v VTEC
HP/TORQUE	.....320 hp / 310 lb-ft
COMPRESSION RATIO	.....9.8:1
TRANSMISSION	.....6-spd manual w rev match control
DRIVETRAIN	.....FWD
SUSPENSION	.....F: dual AXIS strut, 29.0x5.0mm tubular stblzr bar; R: multi-link, 20.5 solid stblzr bar
STEERING	.....var ratio EPS rack & pinion
BRAKES	.....F: 13.8x1.05-in vented, Brembo 4-piston alum calipers; R: 12.0x0.36-in solid
WHEELS	.....19x9.5J alum alloy
TIRES	.....265/30ZR19 93Y summer
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	.....186.0 / 107.7 in
GROUND CLEARANCE	.....4.0 in
APPR / DEPART	.....10.9 / 13.5°
TURNING CIRCLE	.....39.7 ft
HEADROOM (F/R)	.....38.6 / 36.4 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	.....42.3 / 37.4 in
CARGO CAPACITY	.....24.3 cu.ft
WEIGHT	.....3219 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY	.....93 oct prem / 12.4 gal
MPG	.....21/28/24 (city/hwy/comb)
BASE PRICE	.....\$50,800
PREMIUM PAINT: Platinum White Pearl	.....600
WHEELS: 19-IN COPPER ALLOY	.....2186
CARBON FIBER TAILGATE SPOILER	.....950
PREMIUM CARPET FLOOR MATS	.....240
DESTINATION CHARGE	.....1195
TOTAL	.....\$55,971

2024 ACURA INTEGRA LINEUP

Integra	.....200 hp / CVT	.....\$31,500
Integra A-Spec	.....200 hp / CVT	.....33,500
w Technology Pkg200 hp / CVT36,500
w Technology Pkg200 hp / 6MT36,500
Integra Type S320 hp / 6MT▼ 50,800

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FIRST LOOK : 2024 ALFA ROMEO TONALE

La Metamorfosi BY JOE SAGE

Stellantis recently brought the all-new 2024 Alfa Romeo Tonale PHEV—a premium compact SUV that's part of a radical evolution referred to as "La Metamorfosi"—to Arizona for us to see and briefly drive.

Presented by Alfa Romeo North American marketing manager Steph Goldstein, Tonale defines a new era of luxury, electrification and connectivity, along with a range of driver assistance systems, in pure Alfa form.

All US Tonale trims are plug-in hybrids (PHEVs), with 33 miles of pure electric range as well as best-in-class 285 hp and 347 lb-ft of torque, riding atop a rapid-response Frequency Damping Suspension (FDS) system.

Not only were we among the very first to see it, our visit also included a quick drive to whet our appetites, and whetted they were.

We can tell you right now it punches all the right buttons—from power and performance, to styling and that distinctive Italian flavoring.

Tonale joins the compact crossover market

segment, already well populated, but where Alfa Romeo recognized a need—and an opportunity—for a both premium and high-output entry just like this. While Italian supercar SUVs well into six-digit prices may be intriguing, this sporty all-wheel-drive crossover in the \$40s easily revealed the performance potential in the pedal beneath our feet, even in a tightly radar-controlled area of the Valley.

Three trim levels each have clearly defined missions and specifications. Tonale Sprint trim, the gateway to the Alfa Romeo experience, can be sported up via many options. Ti trim enhances Tonale's elegance. And Veloce hits the twin peaks of sport and luxury.

Alfa Romeo Tonale has already shot to the top of multiple quality and satisfaction indexes. Tonale joins Giulia and Stelvio (both also with Quadrifoglio versions) to complete the 2024 Alfa Romeo US lineup. The new Tonale now enters our press fleet, and we look forward to a full week with it soon. ■

SPECIFICATIONS

ASSEMBLY	FCA Italy S.P.A., Italy
ENGINE	1.3L turbo-4 PHEV
HP/TORQUE	285 hp / 347 lb-ft
ELECTRIC MOTOR	positions P1, P4
HP	121 hp
BATTERY	15.5 kWh Li-ion 306V nickel manganese cobalt graphite, prismatic cell, refrigerant gas cooling
BATTERY WEIGHT	276 lb
TRANSMISSION	6-speed auto w manual mode; paddles optional Ti, standard Veloce
DRIVETRAIN	AWD
0-TO-60 / TOP SPEED	under 6 sec / 125 mph
SUSPENSION	F/R: MacPherson strut
STEERING	elec power
BRAKES	Brembo calipers: F: 13.53; R: 12.08
WHEELS	18x7.5, 19x8, 20x8
TIRES	225/55/R18, 225/45/R19, 235/40/R20
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	178.3 / 103.8 in
GROUND CLEARANCE	5.6 in
TURNING CIRCLE	37.86 ft
HEADROOM (F/R)	38.8 / 38.2 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	41.7 / 38.0 in
CARGO CAPACITY	22.9 / 50.5 cu.ft
WEIGHT	4133 lb
TOW CAPACITY	2000 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY	TBA / 11.2 gal
RANGE	total 320 mi / pure elec 33+ mi
MPG	TBA (city/hwy/comb)

2024 ALFA ROMEO TONALE LINEUP

Sprint	\$42,995
Ti	44,995
Veloce	47,495



When ya gotta, ya gotta

BY JOE SAGE

Meet the 2023 GMC Sierra 1500 AT4X AEV Edition, almost the same as the AT4X we had just five months ago (in which we had a ball, as you can see in our March-April issue). Billed by GM as the “most off-road capable factory Sierra 1500 ever,” the AT4X AEV shares its fundamentals with the AT4X, already up-spec’ed from the non-X AT4—a 420-hp 6.2L EcoTec3 V8 and 10-speed automatic, selectable electronic differentials front and rear, one-pedal rock-crawling mode, 33-inch Goodyear Wrangler Territory M/T tires, two inches

of factory lift and three inches of increased ground clearance, and advanced dampers and springs for improved handling on all roads, even the roughest.

If the GMC AT4 is a Sierra 1500 on steroids, it follows that the AT4X is an AT4 on steroids, and the AEV Edition, in turn, an AT4X on steroids.

The \$6895 package that makes this an AEV Edition includes upgrades shown in the callout below. (The 33-inch Goodyear Wranglers—important as they are to the look and feel and the build itself—are included as a bragging point here, though they are also on the non-AEV AT4X.)

Conversely of note, though our AT4X last spring had noticeably different styling up front, the two

now look virtually identical, as the AT4X itself now includes the same bumper and winch prep as the upgraded AT4X AEV Edition.

But there’s still plenty else to distinguish the AEV build, much of which adds not so much new capabilities as additional armor on the trail.

The AEV Edition performs largely the same duty as the non-AEV AT4X, even if you plan to traverse a bit more hazardous terrain. Skid plates aren’t for the intent of bashing, after all—they’re for protection in case of bashing. But this can happen, and it’s always great to have more protection.

We took a long off-highway drive into the Four Peaks backcountry in the AT4X last spring, with a

bit less dirt and more ‘round town in the AEV Edition this time, not inappropriate, as even the most avid off-roader will likely do plenty of the same. As with our prior AT4X, it proved to be tops on power, performance and handling, surprisingly parkable and its cabin loaded with premium touches.

Last spring, the non-AEV AT4X had become the top-priced Sierra 1500, by just a hair above Denali Ultimate, after having been second-highest not long prior, also by just a hair. Add the AEV level to the AT4X, and this is now decidedly higher than the Denali Ultimate (though note that the AEV Edition seems to be presented some places as a separate trim level, others as an AT4X option package).

Thus the top builds—the AT4X pair (top tier off-roaders with a huge share of luxury) and the Denali pair (the inverse of that)—are highly interwoven. But Denali buyers know who they are, as do dedicated off-road buyers, so if your spirits are boost-

ed by having the neighborhood’s top dog driveway, you can’t go wrong with any of them.

In this neck of the woods, big-tired big-wheeled big pickups are a very competitive set, in both style and function. Most have long been custom modifications, but it’s great that you can now also get one from the factory, fully warrantied and serviceable, that keeps up with the best—and now with more features and another choice.

The fun is in deciding which version is the reference point and which is the variant. You can see this as an AT4X with AEV Edition as an add-on—or you can see the AT4X AEV Edition as the point of departure, from which you might strip off its extras. It’s a comparison that’s part specific need, part budget and surely part emotion.

Two versions of AT4X might seem at first to create a dilemma. But we’re thinking it offers more opportunities than ever. ■

AEV EDITION INCLUSIONS

- AEV stamped steel front and rear bumpers with heavy duty recovery points and front winch capability
- Five hot-stamped boron steel skid plates
- Race-inspired, laser-engraved 18-inch AEV Salta gloss black wheels with AEV recessed valve system
- 33-inch Goodyear Wrangler Territory M/T tires
- Updated front grille and fascia, gloss black door handles and black contrast inner tailgate
- Available off-road rocker panel protectors and optional bolt-on step assist when not off-roading



SPECIFICATIONS

ASSEMBLY	Silao, Guanajuato, Mexico
ENGINE / TRANSMISSION	USA / USA
PARTS CONTENT	33% US/Can / 38% Mexico
BUILD	crew cab / short box / 4WD
ENGINE	6.2L EcoTec3 V8 VVT DI with Dynamic Fuel Management, alum/alum, OHV 16v VVT, direct high-pressure fuel inj
HP/TORQUE	420 hp / 460 lb-ft
COMPRESSION RATIO ..(per 2022 specs)	11.5:1
TRANSMISSION	Hydra-Matic 10-spd auto
DRIVETRAIN	4x4
TRANSFER CASE	2-spd with e-locking front & rear differentials
AXLE RATIO	3.23
SUSPENSION	2-inch lift on AT4X, Multimatic DSSV dampers.
	F: independent coil-over-shock w twin-tube shocks; R: solid axle w semi-elliptic, variable-rate, two-stage multileaf springs, splayed twin-tube shocks
STEERING	elec pwr-assist rack & pinion
BRAKES	vented: F: 13x1.18; R: 13.6x0.79
WHEELS	18-in 12-spoke high gloss black aluminum
TIRES	33-inch LT275/70R18 Goodyear Wrangler Territory M/T
LENGTH / WHEELBASE ..(cc/sb)	231.9 / 147.4
GROUND CLEARANCE	11.0 in
APPR / BRKVR / DEPART	32.5 / 23.0 / 23.4°
TURNING CIRCLE	(AT4X) 47.3 ft
HEADROOM (F/R)	43.0 / 40.1 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	44.5 / 43.4 in
BED LENGTH	(short box) 5'8"
BASE CURB WEIGHT	(AT4X) 5780 lb
MAX GVWR	(AT4X) 7100 lb
BASE PAYLOAD	(AT4X) 1290 lb
TOW CAPACITY	(AT4X) 8700 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY	premium unl / 24 gal
MPG	14/17/15 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE (AT4X)\$81,700

AEV EDITION: AEV hot-stamped boron steel skid plates (front approach, steering gear, transfer case, fuel tank and rear differential); AEV stamped-steel rear bumper; 12-spoke high gloss black aluminum wheels w AEV center cap; rocker protection; AEV all-weather floor liners; AEV branded front head restraints and tailgate decal.....6895

PAINT: Deep Bronze Metallic495

(CREDIT); not equipped w steering column lock(50)

DESTINATION CHARGE.....1895

TOTAL\$90,935

NOTE: check for any more recent price changes.

2023 SIERRA 1500 VARIABLES

LineupPro, SLE, Elevation, SLT, AT4, Denali, AT4X, Denali Ultimate, AT4X AEV Edition

Engines2.7L turbo-4 high output, 5.3L V8, 6.2L V8, 3.0L I-6 turbo-diesel

Transmissions8-spd auto, 10-spd auto

Cabsshort 5'8", standard 6'6", long 8'0"

Beds(var. by cab) Regular, Double, Crew

Wheels17, 18, 20, 22-inch

TiresA/S, A/T, Goodyear Wrangler M/T

Tow capacity8,900 to 13,100 lb

Fuel capacity(var. by bed) 24.0 or 28.3 gal

Base price range\$37,200 to \$88,595



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Shown: Vintage Iron Speed Shop Clock / SKU: 09-BKG-VI

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Wrench-In-Hand Steel Tool Box / SKU: 10-BKG-WCL

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

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— Many thanks! Jackie B.

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



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

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

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All-new 2024 Can-Am Maverick R moves toward more immersive rider experience

Emphasis on power, suspension performance and dual-clutch transmission gearbox

BRP Inc. is changing the landscape of the recreational side-by-side vehicle (SSV or SxS) category with the all-new 2024 Can-Am Maverick R. Challenging the status quo and blasting through performance barriers, the Maverick R lineup is designed from the rider down, from engine and transmission to unrivaled suspension travel and a suite of enhanced technology.

ENGINE & TRANSMISSION: Maverick R has a 240-hp 999T Rotax 999cc inline-three-cylinder, four-stroke turbo engine with dual fuel injectors feeding each cylinder and the industry's first electronically controlled wastegate regulating turbo boost pressure. Putting the power to the ground is a first-ever Rotax off-road seven-speed dual clutch transmission (DCT)—automatic or optional supercar-inspired paddle-shift. Three drive modes in-

clude normal, sport and sport+.

CHASSIS & SUSPENSION: A high-strength dual-phase tube steel V-shape chassis and cage provide increased strength, rigidity and optimized vehicle performance, significantly reducing stress on bolted connections, including double-bonded front and rear bushings for a quiet, smooth ride. A 108-inch wheelbase and 77-inch width optimize stability and handling. A new heavy duty tall-knuckle suspension provides the Maverick R 25 inches of travel up front, 26 in the rear and 17 inches of ground clearance. Aerospace aluminum reduces stress on components, and improves bump absorption, torsional rigidity, and stability and handling.

TIRES-WHEELS-BRAKES: Maverick R has 32-inch Tenacity XNR ITP tires (32x10R16) mounted to 16-inch aluminum beadlock wheels with the in-

dustry's first six-lug, 139.7mm bolt pattern (standard for many automotive trucks), to handle its increased power and torque. Brakes are 265mm discs up front with 32mm hydraulic triple piston calipers, 255mm discs with 30mm hydraulic dual piston calipers in the rear.

RIDER EXPERIENCE & FEATURES: An immersive driving experience comes from precision ergonomics and a 10.25-inch digital touchscreen display with performance and driving stats, navigation via the BRP GO! app, music, phone connectivity and front/rear cameras. The Ergo-Lok cockpit has four-way adjustable driver and passenger seats with a low seating position and customizable support options. Storage includes a central sealed compartment for cell phones and an easy-to-reach passenger glove box. Sleek one-piece half-doors complement the interior as much as the exterior, its flush fit also finishing the bodylines of the vehicle.

FOUR MODELS INCLUDE the Maverick R, Maverick R X, Maverick R X rs and Maverick R X rs with Smart-Shox. For more info: can-am.brp.com. ■



We've always had a sweet spot for the original Chevy Trax, one of three microcar concepts shown at the 2007 New York Auto Show (see near upper right). One went into production, as the Chevy Spark, while the Trax name came to life, but as a Chevrolet relative of the tiny Buick Encore (far upper right) from 2013 to 2022. (More info below).

The concepts were quite outlandish at a time when you could still buy big land yacht sedans, but an era of quirky and often very cool little vehicles then joined the marketplace for a number of years. Fuel economy technologies and consumer tastes have rolled forward, though, and after a year off, Trax moves to generation two for 2024, becoming far more conventional in styling and size.

Chev currently has nine utilities, including the

2023 Bolt EV and Bolt EUV (which are on their way out) and the new Trax, already a 2024. The Bolts have been the smallest, but as EVs not the cheapest. The rest are Trax, Trailblazer, Equinox, Blazer, Traverse, Tahoe and Suburban. Blazer is much as Trax has become—the name reborn, but without much of the character of its forebears. Trax through Traverse largely form a tight stairstep of similars from about \$20 to \$35 grand (with Tahoe-Suburban, already in a world of their own, in the \$50s), with even some price range overlap among them.

The microcar concept may be lost, but much is gained. The gen-two Trax is 11 inches longer, two inches wider, has nearly six more cubic feet of cargo space and provides three inches more rear legroom. The only thing smaller is its engine, down

from a former 155-hp 1.4-liter four-cylinder.

With a 137-hp 1.2-liter Ecotec turbo-three, Trax is not the most powerful thing you can buy, and it's front-drive only, with a conventional six-speed automatic. But at 32 mpg highway, with five trims from just \$20,400 to \$23,900 tops, this little guy is likely to be a big hit. (Our top-trim ACTIV with significant add-ons was still under \$26 grand.)

Despite its horsepower and absence of any sort of hybrid electrification, the Trax seems to have a strong power curve. We gave it full pedal on a freeway ramp, thinking it would need it, and it was a rocket. Nice. We had noted front-drive torque at first, but not so much once acclimated. We would welcome an AWD version, as the prior generation had. Perhaps they had a mission to keep the entire



lineup under \$25,000. Or they may be watching its weight, as Trax is now already over 4,000 pounds, about 1,000 heavier than gen two (though AWD added only about 150 pounds and dropped just a point or two of mpg on the prior). Its simple torsion beam rear suspension (firm, even a little harsh) could also be a factor. Whatever the reason, AWD availability in the future seems likely.

But you get what you pay for and then some, by

a long shot—this little SUV is a tremendous bargain. It still fulfills its mission of economy and value, even relative size to a less radical degree than before. The new Trax is in line with the times, and it still falls into the lineup exactly where it did before, just more conventionally. And all this together is exactly what defines such evolutions. Compared to the original, there is some personal-ity lost. But much is gained. ■

CHEVROLET MICROCAR SHORT COURSE: The 2007 Chevy Beat, Groove and Trax US concepts have different origins and production histories around the globe. Beat came to market here as Chevy Spark, but had originated as a smaller European Matiz. The Groove (its concept arguably more like HHR in styling) has its name now in production, more recently applied to a small utility from China, also sold in Latin America and the Middle East. The Trax name in the US was applied to a near-twin of the tiny (for here) Buick Encore, before its other evolutions as covered additionally above.

Fresh tracks

Something lost, something gained

BY JOE SAGE



SPECIFICATIONS

ASSEMBLY	Changwon, Korea
CONTENT	55% South Korea / 21% Mexico / 3% US/Canada
ENGINE/TRANSMISSION	Mexico / S Korea
ENGINE	1.2L Ecotec 3-cylinder turbo, dir inject DOHC, alum/alum
HP/TORQUE	137 hp / 162 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION	Hydra-Matic 6T40 6-spd auto
DRIVETRAIN	FWD
SUSPENSION	F: MacPherson strut w coil-over spring, direct-acting stblzr bar; R: compound crank (torsion beam), coils, twin-tube shocks
STEERING	column-mount elec pwr asst rack & pinion
BRAKES	tbd
WHEELS	18-in gloss black aluminum
TIRES	225/55 R18 SL
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	178.6 / 106.3
GROUND CLEARANCE	7.3 in
TURNING CIRCLE	tbd
HEADROOM (F/R)	39.6 / 38.1 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	41.9 / 38.7 in
CARGO CAPACITY	25.6 / 54.1 cu.ft
WEIGHT	4145 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY	tbd / tbd
MPG	28/32/30 (city/hwy/comb)
BASE PRICE	\$23,900
PAINT: Cayenne Orange	395
SUNROOF PKG: power sliding glass sunroof with manual shade	895
DRIVER CONFIDENCE PKG: lane change alert w side blind zone alert, rear cross traffic alert	650
DESTINATION CHARGE	1095
TOTAL	\$26,935

2024 CHEVROLET TRAX LINEUP

LS	\$20,400
1RS	22,100
LT	22,300
2RS	23,900
ACTIV	23,900





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ENTHUSIAST ROAD RACE EVENT : SILVER STATE CLASSIC CHALLENGE : ELY NEVADA

Silver State Classic Challenge

Open-road race on closed public highway in Nevada

This information arrived too late for sign-up (by September 1), but if you're in the area, though not really a spectator event, perhaps you can catch some of the buzz, and it definitely is worth knowing about for next year. It's also a reminder that this is a great area to visit, with some great roads.

While most gearheads are not professional athletes, the Silver State Classic Challenge in Ely, Nevada—billed as The Ultimate Race—offers the opportunity to compete at a pro level. This year's event runs from September 14-17 and let anyone to compete in an open-road race on a closed public highway. Hosted by the non-profit Silver State Challenge Inc., the classic race runs on a one-way, 90-mile stretch along Route 318. "You just can't do something like this in any other sport," says White Pine County tourism director, Kyle Horvath. "Anyone who has the cash, a fast ride and a strong nerve can compete. You don't need to be a professional, but you do need to be safe."

There are several different driving class levels depending on the safety features of your vehicle, but participants do not need a race car to compete. The race has hosted all types of vehicles, from EVs to pickups. As long as the vehicle can average 95 mph or higher and meet safety requirements, any driver is welcome to register. Entry fees range from \$200 to \$1,045, depending on vehicle class. The fee includes admission to a weekend packed full of gearhead activities, including a welcome reception, a parade of vehicles and an awards banquet after-party in Ely. All rookie race drivers are also required to attend the event Driving School. For more event information, visit sscc.us.com

ELY, NEVADA: Located about 240 miles from Las Vegas or Salt Lake City, Ely is perfect for people who want to create their own adventures off the beaten path. At the eastern edge of "The Loneliest Highway" (US 50), Ely is a great base camp for some of the best outdoor recreation in Nevada, all year 'round, from mountain biking, climbing and hiking to hot springs. It's also just a short drive to Great Basin National Park, home of the magnificent Lehman Caves and ancient Bristlecone pine forests.

Ely was founded as a stagecoach station along the Pony Express, and its rich history is celebrated in a series of murals that decorate downtown. Visitors can also step back in time on the Nevada Northern Railway, which offers rides in an open-air car through the mountains. For more information, visit ElyNevada.net. ■



ELECTRIFYING BY JOE SAGE

Genesis has a small lineup—three sedans and three SUVs, by size—but it's not that simple. Among the sedans—G70, G80, G90—the G80 is available as either gasoline or a EV, the latter called the Electrified G80. The SUVs—GV60, GV70, GV80—may seem to follow suit, with a gasoline GV70 and an Electrified GV70 (an EV). But the GV60 is an all-new clean-sheet EV, though without any clue to its EV stature in its name (as of now).

Other than GV60, this underscores a cautious move into the EV space to date—and here they are not alone—via adaptation of gasoline models. “Electrified” seems a confusing term, though, as it is used more commonly by other automakers for hybrids, PHEVs, high-voltage boost systems and such, while EVs are generally specifically named.

Driven here is the Genesis Electrified GV70, the full-EV adaptation of the gasoline GV70.

We drove the gasoline GV70 in late 2021 and loved it, from styling to performance, also witnessing its wins in several comparo events. We then raved about driving the (EV-only) GV60 in late 2022.

We figured we'd love the Electrified GV70 (EV). But the comparison turns out to be more complex.

Differences overall are few or as expected. It has the GV70's same “Two Lines” styling, coupe-like yet with full SUV height for cabin and cargo. Basic dimensions are the same. The EV has 20-inch wheels instead of 21 and 0.4 inch less ground clearance. Battery space costs a little legroom, rear headroom and cargo capacity. Weight runs about 650-850 pounds higher for the EV. Tow capacity is the same, 3500 pounds, when equipped.

The interior, though, is not as distinctive as the

clean-sheet EV GV60 with its stunning future-is-now cockpit featuring ultramodern controls, interfaces and styling. The Electrified GV70 (EV) has a repurposing of the gasoline GV70's interior, without the “crystal sphere” dome of the GV60. Without both side-by-side, it's harder to compare, but we had praised the GV60 screen and setup, while the GV70's could use those updates. All of the above, though, suffer from two shift and interface knobs being essentially similar dials, by size and shape, one above the other, too easy to confuse in quick use without taking your eyes off the road.

We started out with positive performance notes—acceleration and power, tracking, steering and suspension are all very good. Its implementation of smart seat bolsters we might've shut off turned out to be smarter than expected, and we often enjoyed their decisions.

In slow speed turns—parking lot maneuvers—suspension could pitch us around a bit. And, probably for different engineering reasons, we encountered notable torque steer at times on surface street cornering, surprising in all-wheel-drive.

We discovered the brakes at our first intersection and experienced a few surprises. Full regenerative braking commonly makes itself known, as the transfer of energy back to power does give a different feel. In this, however, in a normal stop, with normal foot pressure on the pedal, the vehicle wanted to push forward a bit more, seemingly on its own. This repeated in many situations all week, not affected by drive mode experiments. We got used to figuring we'd just have to give the brakes a prompt second pump. It reminded us of the phenomenon of “dieseling” (pre-ignition or after-run) in a spark plug gasoline engine, where igni-

tion is triggered by residual heat, mimicking a restart. More than a little curious, we checked with colleagues who had recently driven the same vehicle in other parts of the country. Not only had they not noticed it, one told us he had noted that it had some of the best braking he has experienced.

But drive it for yourself (and the GV60, too). Fine points aside, the Electrified GV70 may be less a look at itself and more a look at the bigger picture. As the clean-sheet EV trend continues apace (see expansion and assembly in sidebar), this “Electrified” model will ultimately surely prove to be a transitional effort. Looked at this way, the unusual naming scheme starts to make sense (although we'd still suggest adding “EV” to the GV60 and any others now in the pipeline, at least until that's all there may be). ■

Our notes on the Electrified G70 were far longer and more detailed than usual, much more than we can present here. Ideally, we would follow up by driving additional copies of the same vehicle, to see whether any of this varies. Perhaps we'll have another crack at it at one of the upcoming press group comparos.



SPECIFICATIONS

ASSEMBLY.....	Montgomery, Alabama
MOTOR/TRANS BUILD.....	S Korea / S Korea
PARTS CONTENT.....	S Korea 85% / US/Can 12%
MOTORS.....	320 kW: F: 160 kW; R: 160 kW 10-sec boost mode = 360 kW
POWER.....	429 hp (boost mode 483 hp)
TORQUE.....	516 lb-ft
BATTERY.....	.697V lithium-ion polymer, 77.44 kWh, 394 kw output (discharged), 350 kw output (charged)
BATTERY WEIGHT.....	1063.3 lb
TRANSMISSION.....	gear reduction unit
DRIVETRAIN.....	AWD
SUSPENSION.....	electronic w road preview; F: MacPherson strut multi-link, strut-type gas shock; R: multi-link, gas shock
STEERING.....	rack-mtd pwr asst rack & pinion
BRAKES.....	F: 14.2 vented, 4-piston, Mando IEB boost; R: 13.6 vented, single-piston
WHEELS.....	20-in alloy
TIRES.....	265/45R20
LENGTH / WHEELBASE.....	185.6 / 113.2 in
HEADROOM (F/R).....	38.6 / 38.3 in
LEGROOM (F/R).....	41.3 / 36.6 in
TURNING CIRCLE.....	37.8 ft
GROUND CLEARANCE.....	6.9 in
CARGO CAPACITY.....	28.7 / 56.5 cu.ft
WEIGHT.....	4982-5038 lb
TOW CAPACITY.....	(w brake) 3500 lb
CHARGING TIME.....	AC std 120V / 12A ± 68 hrs 240V / 48A (10-100%) ± 7.9 hrs 50kW Rapid Charge (10-80%) 73 min 250kW Rapid Charge (10-80%) 18 min
RANGE.....	236 miles
MPGe.....	98/83/91 (city/hwy/comb)
BASE PRICE.....	\$65,850
PAINT: Saville Silver.....	575
PRESTIGE PKG: Nappa leather seats, leatherette upper instrument panel, microfiber suede headliner, 12.3-in 3D digital instrument cluster, heads-up display, Lexicon premium audio, active road noise control, heated 2nd row seats, heated steering wheel, manual rear door shades.....	6800
DESTINATION CHARGE.....	1125
TOTAL.....	\$74,350

2023 GENESIS GV70 LINEUP

GASOLINE	RWD	AWD
2.0T RWD/AWD.....	\$39,400	\$41,500
3.3T RWD.....	44,900	---
ELECTRIC		
Electrified GV70.....	▼ 65,850	

EV EXPANSION & US ASSEMBLY

Hyundai, Genesis and Kia have been investing in EV operations in North America. The best-selling gasoline Genesis GV70 is built in South Korea, while the GV70 Electrified is built in Montgomery, Alabama. Starting with MY 2024, all GV70s for the US will be made in Montgomery. A \$5.5 billion EV and battery Metaplant is under construction near Savannah, Georgia, to open in January 2025. Six models are planned for Georgia, at a capacity of 300,000 EVs a year or based on demand up to 500,000. Three are likely to be Genesis. Hyundai may also move Ioniq 7 to Georgia, and Kia and Hyundai midsize EV pickups aimed at the US market in late 2026 are both candidates for the Metaplant. ■

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Waymo autonomous expands further

Heads up, humans—the presence of self-driving vehicles on our roads continues to grow by volume, footprint and mission, in many ways.

SERVICE AREA EXPANDS AGAIN—AND AGAIN

In late spring, Waymo doubled the size of its fully autonomous Waymo One ride-hail service—with no human driver—to 180 square miles connecting downtown Phoenix with Chandler, Tempe and parts of Mesa and Scottsdale, becoming the largest contiguous autonomous vehicle service area in the world, also opening a second Sky Harbor International Airport pick-up and drop-off location at the 24th Street SkyTrain Station.

This summer, they added another 45 square miles of Metro Phoenix, now covering 225 square miles stretching further north in Phoenix, as far as Gainey Ranch in Scottsdale, south to South Mountain Village and east to more of downtown Mesa, including Camelback Mountain, McCormick Ranch, The Farm at South Mountain and various resorts.

They also continue to test vehicles on the freeways with employees and an autonomous specialist behind the wheel. Serving over 10 thousand trips per week to public riders (not including employees), they intend to hit 10 times that volume by next summer.

WAYMO-UBER PARTNERSHIP

Waymo and Uber have a new multi-year strategic partnership to make the Waymo Driver system available via the Uber platform, starting in Phoenix. Both companies were founded in 2009, each in its own ways revolutionizing access to mobility. They will now combine Waymo's autonomous technology with the massive scale of Uber's ridesharing and delivery.

This integration will launch publicly later this year with a set number of Waymo vehicles across their expanded operating territory, for both deliveries and ride-hailing. Uber users can access Waymo on Uber and Uber Eats apps, or directly through the Waymo One app.

WAYMO BIKE SAFETY FEATURE

According to the City of Phoenix, one of the most common collisions with bicyclists is when a vehicle's door opens into moving traffic, aka "dooring." Waymo has introduced new methods to reduce these incidents, employing the same sensing technology as the Waymo Driver autonomous system.

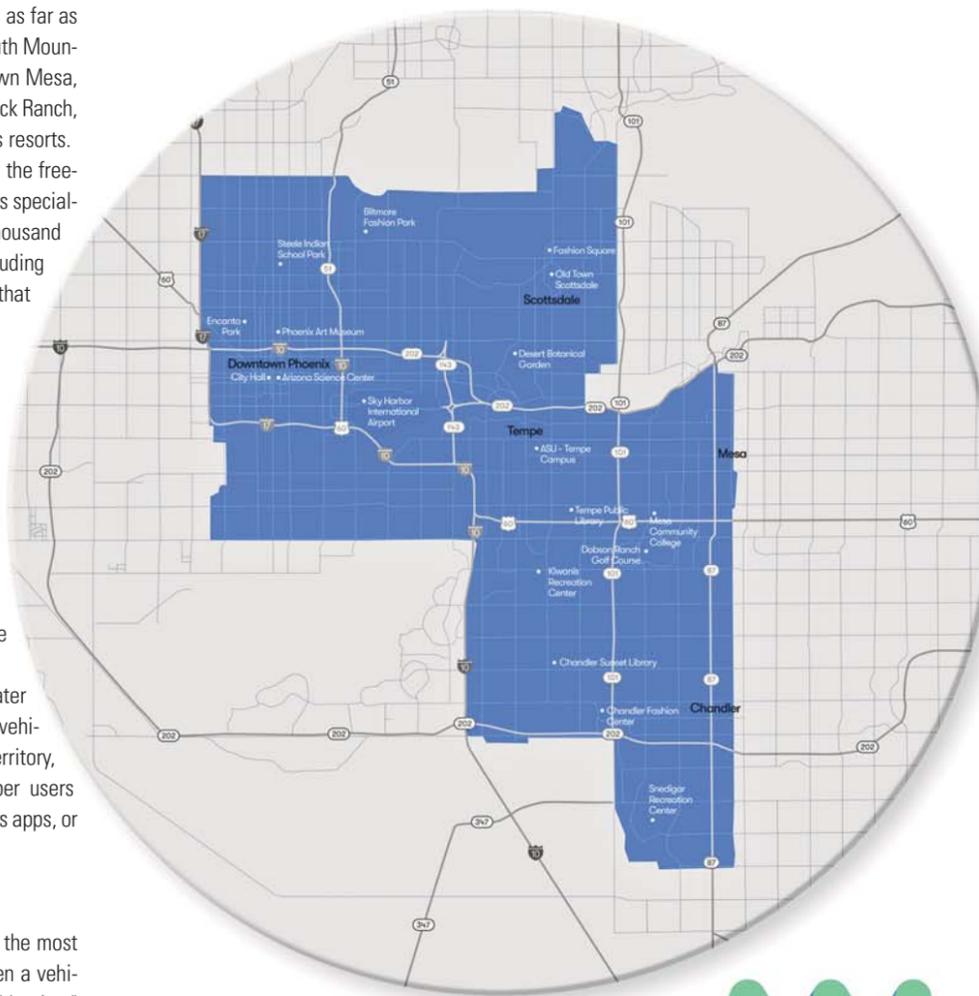
Waymo One riders are presented with audio

and visual cues that alert them if a cyclist (or other road user such as pedestrian, vehicle, scooter and more) is approaching as they exit the vehicle.

Easy-to-interpret iconography is also displayed on the lidar atop Waymo One cars to help alert other road users that a vehicle door might open and a rider might be hopping in or out.

WAYMO GOES ALL-ELECTRIC

Waymo has now deployed the Jaguar I-PACE and its fifth-generation Waymo Driver system in the East Valley and retired the previous-generation Chrysler Pacifica Hybrid platform from its service. This transition makes the Waymo One ride-hailing fleet all-EV in all of its service territories. ■



LONG LIVE THE KING

BY JOE SAGE

Range Rover heritage is long and storied—from products, badges and achievements to ownership, manufacture and geography. Now built in the Eastern, Western and Southern Hemispheres, the sun never sets on this empire, appropriate to its tight ties to British royalty throughout.

Always recognized for luxury and power, Range Rover is now adding alternative powertrains, with an increasing emphasis on mild hybrids (MHEVs) and PHEVs (plug-in hybrids) in the lineup. A new gen-five was introduced in 2022 as a 2023 model. With 2024 now in the mix, as well, the lineup has some evolutionary overlap (see info at right).

The consumer website says all 2024 PHEVs allocated to the US have already been reserved, suggesting you check with the dealer for any further availability. A full EV version is due in 2024.

Our sample is a 2023 in the base SE trim level, with the turbo-six, though upscaled with the more potent PHEV powertrain, bringing horsepower to

434, while providing a more-generous-than-typical 48-mile pure electric range, which they figure can handle about 75 of a typical person's needs.

The SE trim, suitable for routine royalty, had 104 pages describing materials, finishes and features in our comprehensive 128-page reference piece, before even getting to powertrains. SV trims from Special Vehicle Operations are hand-crafted in the best-of-the-best royal coachbuilding tradition and bring you toward the quarter-million-dollar mark. Autobiography builds for 2024 populate the otherwise wide open spaces between SE and SV.

All versions across the lineup include highly desirable all-wheel drive, all-wheel steering (which reduces the turning circle by 7.3 degrees) and electronic air suspension (which lowers the vehicle by 16mm at speeds above 65 mph while using weight sensing and eHorizon data to optimize the system for corners, bumps and even those height-reducing higher speed open stretches in advance).

Attention to detail abounds, as is appropriate for a royal. Our notes on its system setup were lengthy, but boil down to every feature or need being well accommodated, much of it more cleverly or at least distinctively than average, often using technology to new advantages, other times purely for show (as with a range of cabin lighting colors), occasionally perhaps to disadvantage (far-away glovebox latching could use a third hand). Door operation seems very regal, sort of a multi-stage electro-magnetic touch affair, patient and elegant, akin to a royal waiting for a subject to clear the way, though we would prefer they'd be quicker, e.g. if parked in a rough neighborhood. Our sample included an ISOFIX rear child seat system.

Power is ample for this six-cylinder Range Rover, even for its over 5,000-pound weight; proof is in the big beast's 5.7-second zero-to-60 time. Suspension exhibits what could be called classic characteristics, the sort of ride that you have not felt as often lately, though with benefits of adaptive air. The brakes can exhibit somewhat noticeable char-

acteristics, presumably hand-in-hand with their regenerative implementation.

We started in default drive mode. The shifter seemed uncooperative at first, but with the right effort forward and back and pressing the right options, we could verify it was in Drive, then move into Sport, the latter seeming to provide more stable steering and more power immediately on tap from a light. We did not have a chance to try for its stated 51 miles of pure-electric operation, and our casual readout of fuel mileage was in the 13s.

We logged a number of nitpicks, as we almost always do, though probably more than average. Of course many could be considered minor. Notes regarding powertrain response, ride, brakes, shifting and such seemed more significant, but often were mitigated in later notes as later adjustments or growing familiarity improved our perceptions.

We concluded that most such details will surely become somewhat transparent, with most owners probably summing up their experience either as "lovin' it" or at a minimum "(shrug) no complaints." We did our driving locally, though a distance trip may be its strong suit—a long beach trip, or a ski vacation north with proper tires, with

room for plenty of people and plenty of gear.

Some functions, such as a multi-step door lock or backup mirror sequence, seem purposely gracefully conceived. After all, the King could get anywhere more quickly if he just opened his own door to the castle and kept moving, but he would not be having the same overall regal treatment. All in all, the Range Rover treats you like royalty, something most people can easily get used to.

And as with royalty itself, some may find these vehicles too expensive, while for others they surely bear a gotta-have-it factor that proves irresistible. Brand loyalty for repeat owners (or lust, for new shoppers) reigns supreme.

Once you go ahead and get generally interested in the vehicle, head to the dealer for your own deep dive to absorb it all, especially as specific availabilities of different versions will be a factor.

If this is what you've had your heart set on, you will surely find yourself quite satisfied. If it's more of a random what-if, there is a lot you can look at for this kind of money or even quite a bit less. What that misses is the basic pride of brand and ownership you get with an aspirational vehicle such as this one surely is. ■

2023 brought PHEVs and a long wheelbase version of the PHEV SV (notably their first LWB five-passenger). Information for 2024 identifies MHEV, now has two LWB builds (two five-seat and three seven-seat versions). There are two engines in the US—standard a 523-hp 4.4L twin turbo V8 with 37 lb-ft more torque than the previous 5.0L supercharged V8, joined by a 355-hp 3.0L inline-six turbo.



SPECIFICATIONS

ASSEMBLY	Solihull, UK
ENGINE/TRANSMISSION	UK / Germany
PARTS CONTENT	US/Canada 5, UK 54%, Germany 15%
ENGINE	3.0L turbo inline-6 gasoline w plug-in hybrid electric motor
HP/TORQUE	434 hp / 457 lb-ft
COMPRESSION RATIO	10.5:1
TRANSMISSION	8-spd auto / paddles
DRIVETRAIN	AWD w twin-spd transfer box; Terrain Response@2 system w drive & off-road modes
0-60 / TOP SPEED	5.7 sec / 140 mph
SUSPENSION	air susp, active dynamics
STEERING	all-wheel elec power assist
BRAKES	F: 380mm vented; R: 355mm vented
WHEELS	21-in alloy
TIRES	275/50R21
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	194.7 / 118.0 in
GROUND CLEARANCE	(PHEV) 8.23 in; / off-road (PHEV) 10.75 in
WADING DEPTH	35.43 in
APPR/RAMP/DEPART	std 26.1 / 19.1 / 24.9°; off-road 33.0 / 24.5 / 30.0°
TURNING CIRCLE	4-wheel steering 35.9 ft
HEADROOM (F/R)	39.3 / 38.7 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	40.3 / 33.9 in
CARGO CAPACITY	22.85 / 52.65 cu.ft
WEIGHT	5159 lb
TOW CAPACITY	unbraked 750 / max 3500 lb
ROOF LOAD	220.5 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY	prem unl rec'd / 23.8 gal
MPG	51 MPGe elec+gasoline (comb) / 21 MPG gasoline only (comb)
CHARGING TIME (PHEV)	50kW DC rapid charge: up to 80% in under an hour
RANGE (ELEC ONLY)	48 mi

BASE PRICE	\$110,500
SEATS: heated/cooled massage front, heated/cooled executive class rear	4200
HOT CLIMATE PACK	2200
TECHNOLOGY PACK	2000
ADDTL OPTIONS: gloss grand black veneer 1300, black contrast roof 1000, Shadow exterior pack 1000, pixel LED headlights w signature DRL 550, black brake calipers 550, 21-in full-size spare 450, ebony Morzine headliner 400, heated steering wheel 300, wheel protection pack 190, illuminated seat belt buckles 100, emergency pack 70, handover pack 25	(totaling) 5935
DESTINATION CHARGE	1475
TOTAL	\$126,310

(Many specifications stated as Euro per available information and may vary slightly in US version.)

2023 LINEUP	SWB	LWB(5)
SE	\$104,900	
PHEV SE	110,500	
SV	186,850	
PHEV SV	193,100	228,300

First Edition avail in first year of production.

2024 LINEUP	SWB	LWB(5)	LWB(7)
SE P400 MHEV	\$107,400		\$113,400
SE P530	130,400		136,400
Autobiography P550e	141,100		
Autobiography P550e PHEV	166,400	170,400	168,400
SV P615	209,000		234,000

New full EV: VARIATIONS AND PRICING TBA

THE INSIDE TRACK: BRIEFS & RUMORS



▼ Solar EV manufacturer **Apera** entered the validation phase for its advanced aerodynamic shape at the world-famous wind tunnel of Pininfarina. This first step in its validation underscores a commitment to ultra-efficient transportation via the most aerodynamic vehicle possible—with three wheels, an efficient powertrain and a striking teardrop shape. Now Pininfarina, with its rich heritage and exceptional aerodynamic prowess, will be working closely with Apera to validate this unique shape. Pininfarina's legacy includes work with vehicles from such as brands Ferrari, Rolls Royce and Maserati. Apera's aerodynamic shape is key to its solar EVs' target of achieving an industry-leading range of up to 1,000 miles per charge, with the ability to drive up to 40 miles per day directly from the sun's rays. Correlation testing at the Pininfarina Wind Tunnel corroborated Apera's computational fluid dynamics (CFD) work and offered insights on the vehicle's shape, which Apera anticipates will have the lowest coefficient of drag of any production passenger vehicle. By integrating Pininfarina's insights, Apera hopes to set its aerodynamics on the path to providing consumers with the most efficient vehicle on the planet, requiring no charging for most daily use. The next validation step is to build Delta validation units, which will be continually tested in CFD, wind tunnel and real-world environments.

▼ **Mercedes-Benz AG** is now testing ChatGPT in production, accelerating the

use of intelligent tools in the MO360 digital production ecosystem, first introduced in 2020. GPT stands for Generative Pre-trained Transformer. Behind it are sophisticated neural networks trained to create texts, so-called large language models. The system answers questions, creates or summarizes texts, and can translate and even generate program code. To optimize production data analysis, ChatGPT will support employees as a universal, voice-

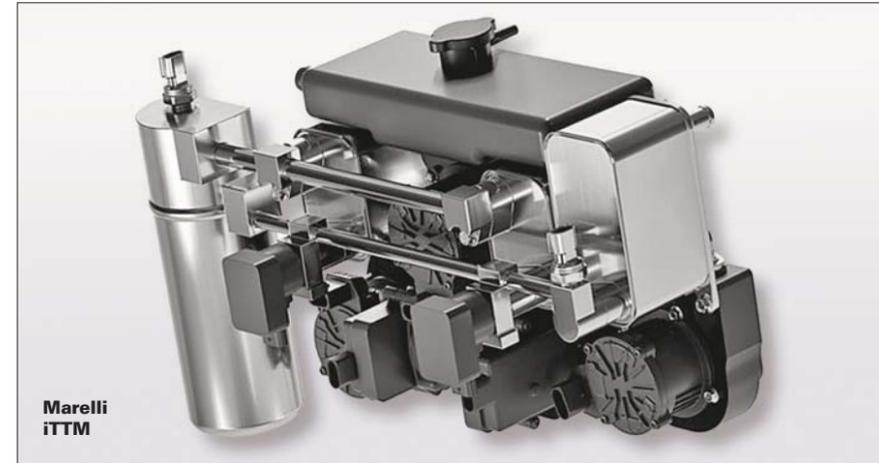


based interface. The use of artificial intelligence (AI) accelerates error identification and analysis, quality management, and process optimization. Integrated through Azure OpenAI Service, Mercedes-Benz is leveraging the enterprise-grade capabilities of Microsoft's cloud and AI platform. An automated analysis tool enables intelligent networking of quality data from development, customer experience and pro-

duction. Potential malfunctions can be identified and analyzed as quickly as possible. ChatGPT can additionally support quality engineers in identifying faults by clustering data. For example, with the help of ChatGPT, complex evaluation and presentations of production-relevant data and quality management are significantly simplified for employees. Instead of complex programming functions, queries are steered in a dialog, so not only engineers, but also employees without prior programming knowledge, can have the necessary data at their disposal. Questions are narrowed down further and further in the digital evaluation process in dialog with the chatbot, until a new level of detail is reached. The overview of daily production planning can be checked in real time, with flexibly adjusted as necessary. At this point, ChatGPT is intended to support strategic decision-making for the entire production chain within the shortest possible time. Thanks to democratization of all relevant data, every employee can use ChatGPT to make quick evaluations and derive next steps within the scope of his or her field of

work. Another area of focus is to provide employees worldwide with an AI-based digital contact person, with production employees communicating via a self-service portal available on any company device, including tablets, smartphones and laptops. This MO360 Support Bot is designed to take queries and clarify them in dialog with the employees. Mercedes-Benz uses the large-scale generative AI models in

combination with the enterprise-grade security, privacy and reliability capabilities of Microsoft via Azure AI. As for privacy concerns, Mercedes-Benz has sovereignty over the IT processes in background at all



times. Employees' voice inputs are processed anonymously in the Azure cloud, and production data stays in the MO360 Data Platform. In order to utilize the opportunities offered by artificial intelligence, Mercedes-Benz was one of the first automobile manufacturers to adopt principles including "responsible use," "explainability," "protection of privacy" and "security and reliability," the four guiding principles through which the company develops and uses AI. Mercedes-Benz is integrating ChatGPT in line with these principles while keeping an eye on potential risks, with the system to be continuously improved in the interests of all employees.

▼ **Marelli** has launched a new integrated Thermal Management Module (iTMM) for electric vehicles, which allows the efficient combination of the vehicle's different thermal circuits into one single component to shape a more efficient thermal management system, ultimately increasing driving range, safety and flexibility. Optimized thermal energy management is an especially key factor in EVs, as the cooling and heating needs of components and occupants of the car require high energy consumption. Greater efficiency can be achieved by properly managing and controlling the three systems that most affect energy usage: the e-powertrain, battery and the cabin thermal systems. While electric vehicles generally have a number of heat exchangers with one sole function, Marelli's integrated Thermal Management Module

modularizes water-cooled heat exchangers, such as the chiller or water-cooled condenser, with a smart valve arrangement. With this combined valve managing up to six channel combinations, the iTMM effi-

ciently exploits the synergies and shares components of those three thermal systems, reducing total system complexity, while ensuring ideal electric powertrain cooling, high safety and ultra-fast charging of the battery, and optimal thermal comfort within the cabin. Another improvement enabled by the iTMM is efficiency in severe weather and low temperature conditions, allowing an increase of the vehicle's driving range up to 20 percent when



coupled with a heat pump system in winter conditions. The integrated system has a reduced number of parts, with smaller size and weight, ensuring carmakers simplicity of assembly, architecture flexibility within the vehicle and competitive system cost. The module meets all the latest market requirements, such as ultra-fast charging with preconditioning and compliance with OBD (On-Board Diagnostics) standards.

Alongside this innovative technology, Marelli's Thermal Solutions division develops a full range of thermal systems to maximize vehicle durability and performance, both for internal combustion and EV powertrains.

▼ **SSV Works**, a company involved in powersports and off-road audio systems and accessories, announces the launch its new brand SWITCH Works. This includes a new Alpha12 weather-proof electronic smart switcher, a plug-and-play interface controlling 12 accessories—six high current and six low current—from fully programmable LCD touch-buttons, in a compact size allowing for multiple mounting options. The positive response displays are programmable for any accessory or combination of accessories for on-road and off-road applications in a variety of vehicles. Each Alpha12 unit comes with a Universal RAM Mount; optional vehicle-specific mounting kits will be available soon for seamless in-vehicle integration. If you need more than its 170 total amps, SWITCH Works allows you to easily connect a second brain while keeping a single controller; conversely, controlling one brain from a secondary location is an option by adding a secondary controller to one brain. Output configuration can be

UPCOMING FEATURES

Volvo XC90 Recharge T8 AWD



Mazda CX-30 Turbo



Sally McNulty - Arizona racer and race car builder



Lexus LS 500 F Sport



Barrett-Jackson New Orleans inaugural event results



Sandra Muñoz - Eating well while overlanding



January Arizona Auction Week information



TAWA Texas Truck Rodeo / NWAPA Run to the Sun



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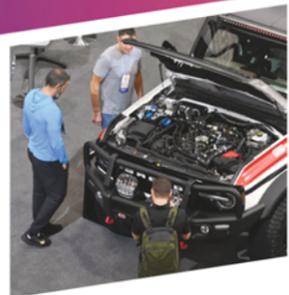
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