

When Supra was reborn four years ago, Toyota paid special attention to its inline-six heritage, sourcing its engine from BMW, which led in turn to other structural and component sharing (with the Z4) and the Supra's build in Austria. One notable evolution was that the new model would be a pure two-seater. Another is that it would be the first Supra available as an automatic only.

In its second year, the GR Supra (its full name, for Gazoo Racing) added a four-cylinder model—deviating from that original formula of six-cylinder purity, while also making its full name even longer, now either GR Supra 2.0 or GR Supra 3.0.

Through all this, there has also been the Toyota 86 (formerly Scion FR-S), an affordable four-banger (roughly \$15-25k lower in price) and nominally a

four-seater. Though smaller and less expensive, it drew our attention for its available manual transmission. We even contemplated whether it should have its profile raised by becoming a GR Supra 1.0, what with the six-cylinder standard already violated. Toyota seems to have thought along these lines, too, not renaming that model as a Supra, but at least as the GR 86.

Now the GR family had three sports coupes in a neat pricing stairstep (next compounded by the addition of a GR Corolla sedan.) But only the 86 offered that manual trans, making choices among them either easy or frustrating. Until now.

The big news for 2023 is the GR Supra 3.0 MT, with a six-speed manual—the variant we are driving here. Priced the same as the automatic, the

decision is easy, whatever your preference. Notably, GR Supra 2.0 remains automatic-only, avoiding maximum angst in the 86-to-2.0-to-3.0 matrix.

The new manual transmission is also German, a ZF unit modified to suit the Supra 3.0's high-horsepower powertrain as well as its high-end road handling, from a stronger clutch and friction plate assembly, to a tightened-up shifter to accommodate the tight space inside the Supra's cabin. Traction control settings are also refined to handle this build.

It's a great formula, though it includes one other feature that's becoming more common these days—blip-shifting (rev-matching), an arguably exaggerated goosing of the throttle to help the semi-initiated not miss a gear. We find these immensely annoying, both in performance and sound ef-

fects, and turn them off as soon as we can find a way, which in this car is via its Individual Mode.

We had our new Supra for a particularly stormy week—adventurous sports car weather! We took a cruise out the tight, winding paved portion of the Apache Trail, and we hit Valley freeways during torrential downpours, with limited visibility but traffic still at its usual healthy clip. It's fun to open it up on dry pavement, but tackling surfaces and curves in extreme wet conditions, when you really have to feel and work with your grip, raises the thrill factor and the enthusiast level.

Wet or dry, the manual-shift GR Supra 3.0 was powerful and responsive—we could do anything legal in just three or four of its six gears. The upper gears could maximize fuel mileage on a long high-

way cruise, though we hovered around 23 MPG (between its 21 and 27 combined and highway ratings) for our not-at-all-fuel-disciplined driving mix.

A long cruise could be fairly comfortable in this little coupe. Its clamshell roof design makes ingress and egress head clearance very tight if you're tall, but legroom is quite generous once settled in.

Superb in all conditions, the 382-hp GR Supra 3.0 MT has eclipsed our idea of a GR 86 as an alternative for the manual shift fan. That option now in Supra is a huge and overdue breakthrough. ■



SPECIFICATIONS

ASSEMBLY	.....Graz, Austria
SEATING CAPACITY	.....two
ENGINE	.....3.0L inline-6 twin-scroll turbo, 24v DOHC, chain drive, direct injection, variable valve timing
HP/TORQUE	.....382 hp / 368 lb-ft
COMPRESSION RATIO	.....10.2:1
TRANSMISSION	.....6-spd manual (8AT avail)
DRIVETRAIN	.....RWD
ZERO-TO-60	.....(MT) 4.2 sec (AT 3.9 sec)
SUSPENSION	.....F: dbl-joint type MacPherson strut, 23.5mm stblzr bar, lightweight alum braces from strut tower to radiator; R: multi-link 5-arm, 18.0mm stblzr bar
STEERING	.....elec power steering
BRAKES	.....F: 13.7 vented, Brembo 4-piston fixed caliper; R: 13.6 vented, Brembo single-piston floating caliper
WHEELS	.....forged alum: F: 19x9.0; R: 19x10.0
TIRES	.....Michelin Pilot Super Sport F: 255/35 ZR19; R: 275/35 ZR19
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	.....172.5 / 97.2 in
GROUND CLEARANCE	.....4.5 in
TURNING CIRCLE	.....34.1 ft
HEADROOM	.....38.3 in
LEGROOM	.....42.2 in
CARGO CAPACITY	.....10.2 cu.ft
WEIGHT	.....(MT) 3389 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY	.....95/91 oct prem / 13.7 gal
MPG	.....19/27/21 (city/hwy/comb)
BASE PRICE	.....\$55,650
DRIVER ASSIST PKG: Cruise control, blind spot monitor, rear cross traffic alert, parking sensors with alert	.....1195
PREMIUM COLOR: Stratosphere	.....425
DESTINATION CHARGE	.....1095
TOTAL	.....\$58,365

2023 TOYOTA GR SUPRA LINEUP

2.0	.....255-hp 2.0L I-4	.....8AT	.....\$43,540
3.0 Base	.....382-hp 3.0L I-6	.....8AT	.....52,500
	....." 6MT		.....52,500
Premium	....." 8AT		.....55,650
	....." 6MT		.....55,650
A91-MT	....." 6MT		.....58,345

Major shift for Supra

by Joe Sage

