

ARIZONA DRIVER

THE ENTHUSIAST'S GUIDE TO LIFE BEHIND THE WHEEL

VOLUME 25 NUMBER 3
MAY-JUNE 2026

**AUCTION AND
CONCOURS NEWS**
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ADOT AND DARK SKIES
MOAB EASTER SAFARI WEEK
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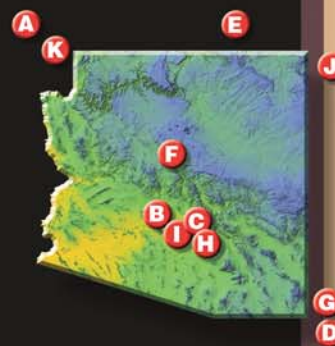
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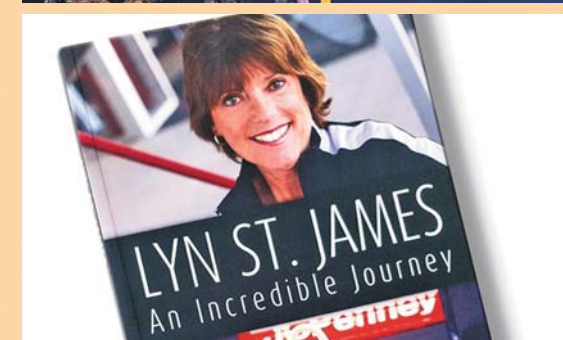
A Week With Special Event	2026 Alfa Romeo Tonale Veloce AWD12
A Week With Special Event	Pebble Beach Concours D'Élegance 2026 A15 Early info for the 75th running of this major summer event.
A Week With Special Event	2026 Lexus RZ 550e F Sport AWD .....16
Special Event	Mecum Auction Glendale 2026: results B .....18 March event sees over 1,300 vehicles cross the block, including multiple collections, for \$47 million in sales
Special Event	Arizona Concours d'Élegance 2027 C .....21 The dates are set for next January, Ferrari featured marque.
A Week With	2026 GMC Yukon 4WD AT4 Ultimate .....22
A Week With	2026 Subaru Outback Wilderness .....24
Book	Quarto Group: NASCAR Champions .....27 Every Cup Series Champion from 1949 to Today, by H.A. Branham and Holly Cain
A Week With Special Event	2026 Chevrolet Equinox EV RS .....28
Vehicle Brand Event	Barrett-Jackson Palm Beach 2026: results D .....31 April event in Florida achieves \$47 million at 100 sell-through rate, another \$1.635 million raised for charity.
ADOT	60th Annual Moab Easter Jeep Safari concepts E .....32 The namesake brand of this landmark off-road week always brings the goods, including an intriguing set of concepts.
ADOT	LED lighting project and Dark Skies Flagstaff F .....35 Dark Skies program calls into play special care and careful engineering.
ADOT	Public input sought on Five-Year Program .....35 ADOT wants to hear from you, on their latest Tentative Five-Year Construction Program.
A Week With Motorsports	2026 Mazda Mazda3 2.5 S Carbon Edition Sedan AWD .36
A Week With Corporate Philanthropy	Lyn St James: Motorsports Hall of Fame G .....38 Arizona's own Lyn St James will be inducted into the Motorsports Hall of Fame in Daytona in 2027.
Vehicle Brand Event	2026 Toyota RAV4 Limited Hybrid AWD .....40
A Week With Special Events	Hyundai and Banner Children's H .....43 Two organizations join forces to promote kids' car seat safety.
A Week With	Scout Motors visits Arizona I .....44 Scout Motors brings its latest concepts to town, to a record crowd of reservation holders and highly interested general public.
A Week With	2026 Volkswagen Atlas 2.0T SE w/Technology FWD .....46
A Week With	Barrett-Jackson Columbus and Las Vegas J K .....49 First-ever Ohio event and return of Las Vegas event.
A Week With	2026 Volvo XXC90 T8 AWD Plug-in Hybrid .....50

departments

- FROM THE PUBLISHER4
- AUTOMOTIVE NEWS UPDATE6
- THE INSIDE TRACK: BRIEFS & RUMORS52
- UPCOMING FEATURES58



COVER: Everything's better with a good dose of dirt. If, of course, it's built for it. The Subaru Outback Wilderness is built for it.



Notably different over the past few years in the automotive industry has been that after decades of constant, gradual evolution—dramatic over time but with continuity year-to-year—most resources seem to have shifted to taking an abrupt dive into the EV space. But why so abrupt? There have been significant evolutions before. Yet it seems when it's an EV, whether new from scratch or adapted and evolved, they have an urge to go well beyond the powertrain. Controls, features, interfaces, even doors and seats may be wildly different. Many do not even let the driver actively start, stop or lock them. It seems an EV basis has turned into a smartphone-on-wheels project 90 percent of the time, whereas lingering ICE vehicles have not, 90 percent of the time. Ironically, this often distracts from that core property, the EV powertrain itself. It can be harder to pay attention to that while battling features turning themselves on and off for their own reasons.

It's hard not to conclude they've inflicted all this upon the customer because they seem to think someone buying an EV is that different from any other person. And who knows—they have data, so maybe that's correct. Or is it simply a mindset, short on context?

At the same time, more conventional new model cycles in many cases had seemed to stagnate, which had seemed an opportunity lost (and which may affect perceptions of what's old and what's new for years to come). EVs have had dramatic restyling, so why has this less often made its way to ICE vehicles over the same recent years? They have the stylists, they have the ideas, they have a basis for all to be revolutionary at the same time. Had some just decided those were a fading cause, not worth investment?

Fortunately, a less obvious impact of EV mania cooling, for now, is that this seems to be shifting. You can see both paths reflected in a number of the vehicles driven in this issue—in EVs, as some continue to tie up the experience with interface battles, while with new interest being applied to ICE vehicles, notably in expanded hybrids and PHEVs.

As they say, what a time to be alive!

Joe Sage - Publisher/ Executive Editor



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AUTOMOTIVE NEWS UPDATE



Ferrari Monza SP2

▼ **Broad Arrow Auctions**, driven by Hagerty, will present a superb, low-mileage, rarely-offered-for-sale **Ferrari** Monza SP2 at its Concorso d'Eleganza Villa d'Este Auction from 16-17 May 2026. Unveiled in 2018 along with the Monza SP1, the Monza SP2 is part of Ferrari's highly exclusive and sought-after Icona series cars, inspired by icons from the illustrious history of the Maranello marque, including the famous 1948 Ferrari 166MM Barchetta, 750 Monza and 860 Monza. Unlike the SP1, the SP2 offers the distinct advantage of having two seats as well as a second headrest fairing for the passenger. Based on the 812 Superfast, the Monza SP2 pairs a carbon fiber barchetta body with a sonorous 6.5-liter normally-aspirated V12 engine from the 812. It was Ferrari's most powerful naturally-aspirated engine when it was launched, delivering 798 hp and 719 Nm of torque and capable of achieving a 0-100 km/h time of an astonishing 2.9 seconds. Chassis no. 261538 is the modern definition of a sports car, intended to take on legendary events such as the Mille Miglia. With no windscreen, it benefits from the ingenuity of Ferrari engineers who created the "Virtual Windshield," an aerodynamic design that channels airflow through the hood and out, ahead of the occupants—just one element of an extensive aerodynamic package dramatically enhancing both speed and downforce, ensuring that every drive in a Monza SP2 is a visceral experience second to none. Presented like new, having driven only 417 kilometers at

the time of cataloging, this superb example recalls the contrasting colors of some of Ferrari's most memorable racing liveries, with a two-tone scheme of Rosso California with a Grigio Coburn nose section and Argento Nürburgring accents. The cockpit features Jeans Aunde Blu fabric and Pelle Elmo Blue leather with the famous Cavallino Rampante embroidered on the headrests. The idea that the Monza SP2 is truly race car-inspired is further empha-



Hyundai Boulder Concept SUV

sized by four-point safety harnesses and two beautifully crafted, factory-supplied carbon fiber helmets by Berluti.

▼ The **Hyundai** Boulder Concept SUV made its surprise global debut at the 2026 New York International Auto Show. This design study previews the brand's first fully-boxed body-on-frame architecture, a new platform confirmed to underpin a produc-

tion midsize pickup to arrive by 2030. The Boulder Concept's stout, ladder-frame-style construction has long been favored by US buyers seeking trucks and SUVs capable of serious off-roading, towing and hauling. The Boulder Concept's construction and appearance are more than an indication of Hyundai's future design direction—it's a signal of the potential for rugged off-road capability and do-it-all utility that will define their future body-on-frame production vehicles. The concept's creation was led by the Southern California-based team at Hyundai Design North America, developed with a focus on catering to off-road enthusiasts with the goal of attracting new buyers to the brand. It's early days for Hyundai's body-on-frame platform development, but the company has already set some important ground rules for the vehicles that will ultimately reach dealer showrooms. The production models will be designed in America, developed for America and built in America, forged with Hyundai-produced US steel. While the Boulder Concept SUV remains a pure design study, its body-on-frame construction, bold pro-

portions, functional priorities and target audience all define the path for Hyundai's upcoming production midsize pickup.

▼ **Chevrolet** brings back a storied racing name with the 2027 **Corvette** Grand Sport, while adding a new legacy with the Grand Sport X. Both will mesh heritage-inspired styling with a next-gen V8 producing more torque than any other naturally

aspirated V8 before. It's a modern take on Grand Sport's traditional sweet spot in the lineup, blending performance, style and everyday drivability. Born in the early '60s as a limited run of five C2 Corvette race cars



2027 Chevrolet Corvette Grand Sport and Grand Sport X

to compete at tracks including Sebring International Raceway, Grand Sport has long stood for lightweight, track-focused Corvettes that look as fast as they drive. Road-going Grand Sports have added to the formula each generation, pulling features from the fastest cars in the lineup, while maintaining heritage colors, striping and fender hash-marks that have long served to tell the original race cars apart. Today's Grand Sport lineup reflects the best of what Gen Eight has to offer—a planted mid-engine stance, elevated cockpit design, choice of a removable-roof coupe or hardtop convertible, plus standard Magnetic Ride Control, available Performance Traction Management and more. The next-gen LS6 6.7L V8 is at the core of every 2027 Corvette Grand Sport and Grand Sport X, as this becomes Corvette's primary engine, powering the 2027 Stingray, as well. Launching GM's next generation of V8s, LS6 raises the bar for architecture upgrades that will soon benefit other V8-powered Chevrolets. Its 535 hp and 520 lb-ft of torque increase across the rev band. Larger 6.7L displacement (409 cu in), a 13.0:1 compression ratio, a 95-mm throttle body and tunnel ram intake with high-velocity ports all unlock additional power. New lubrication, forged pistons and rods, and revised exhaust manifolds ensure durability in extended high-load, high-temperature environments. An eight-speed dual-clutch transmission sends it all to the wheels. GM's Flint Engine Operations in Michigan will assemble the LS6 with US and globally sourced parts, return-

ing production to the city where the first Corvette V8s were built in 1955. Chevrolet's renowned capacity for V8 technology has advanced with time and experience: LS6 represents the start of the sixth gener-

ation of small block V8s, extending a legacy more than 70 years in the making.

▼ **Dodge** celebrates America's 250th anniversary this summer by introducing a 2026 Dodge Durango America250 (A250) edition, infusing Dodge American muscle with special-edition content celebrating power, heritage and patriotic grit. Dodge took the wraps off the 2026 Dodge Durango GT America250 at the New York Inter-



Dodge Durango GT America250 edition

national Auto Show—the first production version to be thus shown to the press and public, as part of Stellantis's US brands' official partnership with America250, a non-partisan organization charged by Congress to lead the commemoration of the signing of the Declaration of Independence and the celebration of the 250th anniversary of the United States of America. For the first time on Durango GT, the A250 edition

introduces premium interior touches typically reserved for higher-performance trims, including Black Laguna leather seats with exclusive blue perforation, a flag embossment and red-and-white accent

stitching, along with a tricolor-stitch steering wheel, seat belts in Demonic red, and forged carbon-fiber appliques. Bold new exterior elements, such as star-pattern dual stripes with blue tracer accents, America250 fender decals and badging and 20-inch Black Noise wheels underscore the look. The Durango GT A250 edition will be available on three trim levels: Durango GT Plus AWD (295-hp Pentastar V6); Durango GT HEMI Plus AWD (360-

hp 5.7L V8 HEMI; and Durango GT HEMI Premium AWD (added top-spec content and convenience features). Orders were scheduled to open in early April for the Durango GT A250 edition (from \$49,590 to \$54,270 base). Dodge Durango is built at Stellantis Detroit Assembly Complex—Jefferson (DAC) in Detroit.



▼ A key component of the new **Mercedes-AMG GT 4-Door Coupé** is AMG Race Engineer, a system of coordinated hardware and software aiming to deliver a par-



ticularly dynamic driving experience via individual adjustment of response, cornering and slip behavior, for precise handling tailored to both personal driving style and the driving situation. Prior to release, the car ran through final winter tests on the frozen lakes and snow-covered roads of the AMG test site in northern Sweden, where everything revolves around perfect traction, power distribution and vehicle control. This is not just about winter driving—snow and ice testing can explore a vehicle's limits faster and more safely, optimizing control systems in detail. The new system's control unit has three driving dynamics rotary controls (dials) to tune the car even more finely and individually. **Response Control** coordinates the electric motors to accelerator pedal commands, in turn depending on a selected driving program, from comfortable or harmonious to excessively sharp—to bring abundant power to the road situationally, maximizing agility and traction, while at the same time with exemplary safety for any level of driving skill. **Agility Control** changes agility around the vertical axis and thus cornering behavior (only in driving programs S/S + /Race with ESP off). Variable, adaptable power distribution allows for perception of a shorter or extended wheelbase, for completely different driving behavior, from slight understeer, to neutral, to controlled oversteer. **Traction Control** influences intervention of slip in nine stages (only in S/S + /Race with ESP off). This feature has already proven itself in the AMG

GT R and AMG GT Black Series. During dynamic cornering, for example, rapid control of drive force distribution to the inner rear wheel creates a defined yaw moment around the vertical axis for spontaneous

and precise turn-in, while the outer wheel is primarily crucial for agility, although the precise interaction between the inner and outer wheel is decisive for optimal feel, from extremely stable to highly dynamic. The three controls allow experienced drivers to experience a new level of driving dynamics on closed-off tracks.

▼ A **Lamborghini Urus SE Widetrack** by Urban Automotive, latest in a range of lux-



ury vehicle enhancements, made its global debut simultaneously at its UK design and carbon fiber production facility in Milton Keynes and in Las Vegas. Combining the launch in the UK and US marked a significant milestone in Urban Automotive's ongoing international expansion. Home of the SEMA Show and sharing bold car culture with Los Angeles, Las Vegas was a natural venue for the vehicle's American de-

but—in a distinctive Inozetek Gloss Pearl-escence Pearl Marigold Orange premium wrap. Urban Automotive, used an OEM+ philosophy to comprehensively reimagine Lamborghini's performance SUV, from the ground up. Attention to detail in Urban's process took 10,000 hours of design and development time, including subtle references some revered models in Lamborghini's history. Exterior surfaces have been refined and enhanced with bespoke carbon fiber components designed and produced exclusively by Urban Automotive. Up front is a three-piece carbon fiber splitter with canard end planes; above it, a carbon fiber replacement hood with an exposed, functional 'bull nose' vent design directly inspired by the legendary Lamborghini Aventador SVJ, with 3D-printed vent inlets and outlets finished in Lamborghini's iconic Hex pattern. Six-piece carbon fiber widetrack wheel arch extensions have exposed carbon accents and broadened the Urus by 40mm for more road presence. Carbon fiber side panels have 3D-printed UA logo inlays within the Lamborghini Hex pattern. Exposed carbon fiber sill extensions paying homage to the legendary Miura, and so on, right on through to quad billet exhausts. At launch, the vehicle will ride on Urban-Vossen UV-1R wheels, proportioned to fill the space cre-

ated by the widened wheel arches. Full details can be found at urban-automotive.com or urbanusa.com.

▼ **Unplugged Performance** introduces Goldmember, a new purpose-built autonomous Pikes Peak International Hillclimb car based on the upcoming Tesla Cyber-

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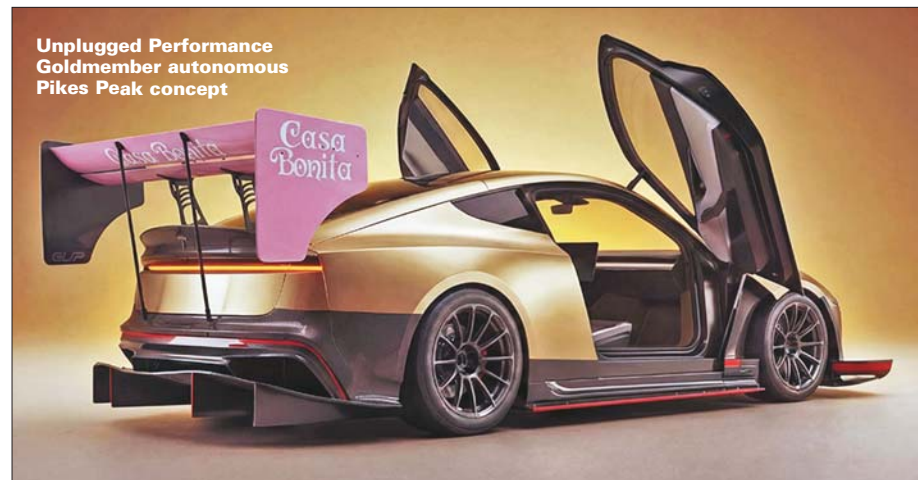
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cab (Robotaxi) platform, aiming to reach the summit faster than any autonomous vehicle in history. Given that the field of autonomous competitors for the event currently stands at zero, the bar might sound



Unplugged Performance
Goldmember autonomous
Pikes Peak concept

low, but they aren't just chasing a technicality—they want to achieve a time that would be competitive against human drivers. Unplugged has spent years running Teslas on demanding race courses. From a sub-10-minute Pikes Peak run with Dark Helmet—their Model S-APEX race car—in 2023, to lap records at Laguna Seca, Buttonwillow and Willow Springs, the Hawthorne, California company has built one of the most credible motorsport programs in the EV space. After sitting out Pikes Peak in 2024 and 2025, they are returning for 2026—but this time, with no driver. Dark Helmet in 2023 had one of the most aggressive aerodynamic packages ever fitted to a Tesla. Goldmember transplants that entire program onto the compact Cybercab chassis—massive carbon-fiber rear wing and dual-plane endplates, front splitter assembly, full carbon diffuser, canards—all tuned to the new platform. A tri-motor powertrain produces 1,020 hp, 1,050 lb-ft of torque, and a claimed 0-60 time under 1.5 seconds, for one of the quickest purpose-built EVs on the planet. While the car needs to battle a daunting 19-mile uphill course, its downforce nearly equals its 4,200-lb curb weight at 150 mph, meaning the car is effectively doubling the force pushing the tires into the tarmac. At altitude, where thinner air robs both power and aero efficiency, that is critical, and it's the direct legacy of the Unplugged Dark Helmet program. Despite no driver to protect, sanctioning bodies require safety systems, so everything from structural rollover

protection to onboard FIA-compliant automatic fire-suppression is fully developed. The car runs an independently redundant top-spec SuperLight carbon ceramic brake system, already repeatedly proven under

the sustained high-heat braking of Pikes Peak's descent. The idea isn't just novelty. Unplugged Performance sees autonomous racing as a testing ground for full self-driving technology, with Pikes Peak's blind corners, elevation changes, rapidly changing surface conditions and grip as an argument for FSD readiness on public roads.

▼ An all-new 2027 **Subaru** Getaway EV was unveiled at the New York Internation-



Subaru Getaway EV

al Auto Show. The most powerful production Subaru, Getaway is aimed at a rapid road trip getaway with room for the whole family. The fourth EV in Subaru's portfolio, the 420-hp Getaway offers seating for up to seven (with second-row bench seat, or six with standard second row captain's chairs, depending on trim level), standard all-wheel drive from electric motors on the front and rear axles, and available range

of over 300 miles. The Getaway name highlights family-friendly versatility and utility, with 8.3 inches of ground clearance, generous interior cargo capacity and convenience features ready for nearly any excursion. All that, and 420 horsepower from dual electric motors and exceptional driving dynamics. Exceptional headroom and legroom promises comfort for six-footers in all three rows. One-touch second-row folding seats provide easy access to the third row, and a power-folding third row brings cargo capacity to 45.6 cubic feet, from a trunk-competitive 15.9 cubic feet with all seats up. An X-MODE dual-mode system with snow/dirt mode, deep snow/mud mode, grip control and downhill assist control add to off-road capabilities. Subaru Getaway is also rated to tow up to 3,500 pounds. The Getaway will be powered by a high-capacity, long-range 95.8-kWh lithium-ion battery rated for an available range of more than 300 miles on a single charge. A standard NACS charging port offers convenient charging at more than 25,000 Superchargers across North America, with charging speeds up to 150 kW that can replenish the battery from 10 to 80 percent in about 30 minutes. Standard on-board battery preconditioning ensures charging performance doesn't lag in cold weather, even at 14°F. Family-friend-

ly features inside include cup and bottle holders for every seat, three-zone climate control, dedicated third-row vents, USB-C charging ports in every row, and customizable ambient lighting. A panoramic moonroof is available. For 2027, Subaru Getaway will offer a standard-range model with a 77.0-kWh lithium-ion battery and AWD, with more details available closer to market launch. in late 2026. ■

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Alfa Romeo Tonale has three versions, two of which share the top spot. In fact, all three are close. The very few differences between our Veloce and the same-price Sport Speciale include wheels (19s on ours vs 20s on Sport Speciale) and leather on Veloce (black or, as on ours, new red) vs black-and-white Alcantara on Sport Speciale.

More significantly and more surprisingly, they have different suspensions, with an adaptive dual-stage valve system on the Veloce. That suspension, however, is available on Sport Speciale for just \$350. We're guessing it may be done this way to make up for the difference in wheel cost, as by that point perhaps their product planners, too, had become intrigued with matching the prices, so people could choose almost purely by flavor.

Differences in the base Sprint trim (just \$4,500 less) are also few—forgoing that suspension even as an option, a cloth interior, 18-inch wheels (with no option for 19s or 20s), and a couple of details

available only in packages (e.g. ambient interior lighting or hands-free power liftgate).

All have the same 268-hp 2.0-liter turbo-four, 9-speed automatic and AWD, all hit zero-to-60 in 6.5 seconds, and all are rated 21/29/24 mpg.

Now that we have you looking at prices, you see the most significant thing of all—this distinctively sexy Italian compact SUV is surprisingly affordable across the board. (Tonale shares its stable in the US with Alfa Romeo Stelvio, a bit larger, pricier and more powerful, while also delivering high value.)

Tonale has standout styling, in the very definition of the term—it stands out from the crowd, its sporty Alfa cues go back way into their particular history, and it comes together very distinctively.

Despite its compact size designation, the interior is roomy, with solid headroom (almost 39 inches up front, almost as much in the rear) and ditto legroom (almost 42 inches up front, 38 in the rear).

Best of all, we had a great time driving it.

We're sort of funny about modes, with a general philosophy that anything should be, well, perfect out of the box, no need for a variant. Factors such as fuel economy, or town versus open road, however, are grounds for their existence. While we often skip them, or just try them for the sake of a complete experience, the Alfa Tonale has such a sporty visual personality, we couldn't help but feel we actually wanted to get into modes, figuring this one was likely to have some additional characteristics we would enjoy unlocking.

And that was a solid idea. Unlike many, there are just two—D or N (no, not for Drive and Neutral, as familiar from shifters, but for Dynamic and Normal)—accessed by a prominent and convenient DNA dial. Best of all, characteristics are great both ways. (The A in DNA turns out to be a feature we'd been looking for in more conventional spots, auto start-stop defeat. The dial also has a center indicator for adaptive suspension status.)

Whichever mode we were in, it's quick enough, not inappropriately racy among our fellow travelers, a quick kick in the pants when the light turns green, and bears a humble little growl that's about the same whether accelerating or just driving (not the type that adds something artificially overdone).

Steering makes a 90-degree turn accurate and enjoyable, including from a dead start at the same such light. Any suspension is vital for two major roles—cushioning and steering geometry—and this generally did quite well with both.

D=Dynamic mode basically took us from feeling we could probably pretty well keep up with anything else on our highly pedigreed streets, to being certain of it. And the more we used it, the better it felt, especially launching onto the quickest streets or competitive freeways—delivering power, control, quickness and agility, along with acoustics.

As usual, we had specific comments on features, a handful of interface decisions we would have done differently. Of note were "smart" selection of the wrong media and its volume upon restart; mirrors that do not dip in reverse; headlight

high beams accessible only certain ways, no matter how urgent; certain driver assist features we hate to turn off but that were overdone or sometimes mistaken (fighting freeway ramp merges, for example); a rear wiper we had to park to turn off; basically a list of things like these. Some can be seen as personality tradeoffs—huge shift paddles blocking the stalks, or its engine start-stop button, cool and purposeful in style, prominently within the steering wheel, but due to rotation, likely not to be where you need it when you need it.

That DNA dial turned out to be a focal point. It can make everything just subtly tighter (enough so that we wished we had track conditions for a more specific back-to-back). But everything feels really precise in Dynamic mode.

Given the lovefest we felt while out and about, we started calling it our PDA dial. P could be performance or precision, D regular drive, and A as is. It could stand for performance drive alternatives, public display of affection, or both. A fun idea, but either way, Alfa Romeo Tonale's distinctive style will turn heads and put a smile on your face. ■



SPECIFICATIONS

ASSEMBLY	Pomigliano, Italy
SEATING CAPACITY	five
ENGINE/TRANS BUILD	Italy / USA
PARTS CONTENT	Italy 46% / US/Can 16%
ENGINE	2.0L inline-4 turbo
HP/TORQUE	268 hp / 295 lb-ft
COMPRESSION RATIO	na
TRANSMISSION	9-spd auto / paddles
DRIVETRAIN	AWD
0-TO-60 / TOP SPEED	6.5 sec / 140 mph
SUSPENSION	F: MacPherson strut; R: Chapman strut
STEERING	elec power
BRAKES	Brembo: F: 13.53; R: 12.08
WHEELS	19x7.5 black aluminum
TIRES	235/45R19 99V M+S (ours: Falken ZIEX CT60 a/s)
GROUND CLEARANCE	6.1 in
TURNING CIRCLE	37.95 ft
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	178.0 / 103.8 in
HEADROOM (F/R)	38.8 / 38.2 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	41.7 / 38.0 in
CARGO CAPACITY	27.0 / 54.7 cu.ft
WEIGHT	3715 lb
TOW CAPACITY	(1500 kg) 3307 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY .....	.91 oct prem unl / 13.5 gal
MPG	24/29/21 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE	\$36,995
CUSTOMER PREFERRED PKG 23H (VELOCE): ambient lighting pkg, veloce alum door sills, pwr liftgate, Veloce dark fender badge, Tonale dark badge, glass-black window moldings, dual mode active suspension, 19x7.5 black alum wheels, alum paddle shifters, gloss red brake calipers w white script, hands-free power liftgate	4500
ACTIVE ASSIST PKG: auto-dim side mirror, active driving assist system, surround-view cameras, front/rear/side ParkSense	1250
POWER MOONROOF	1500
BLACK ROOF .....	.95
PREMIUM AUDIO: Harman Kardon	750
DESTINATION CHARGE	3250
TOTAL	\$48,430

2026 ALFA ROMEO TONALE LINEUP

Sprint	\$36,995
Veloce	▼ 41,495
Sport Speciale	41,495

PDA in its DNA

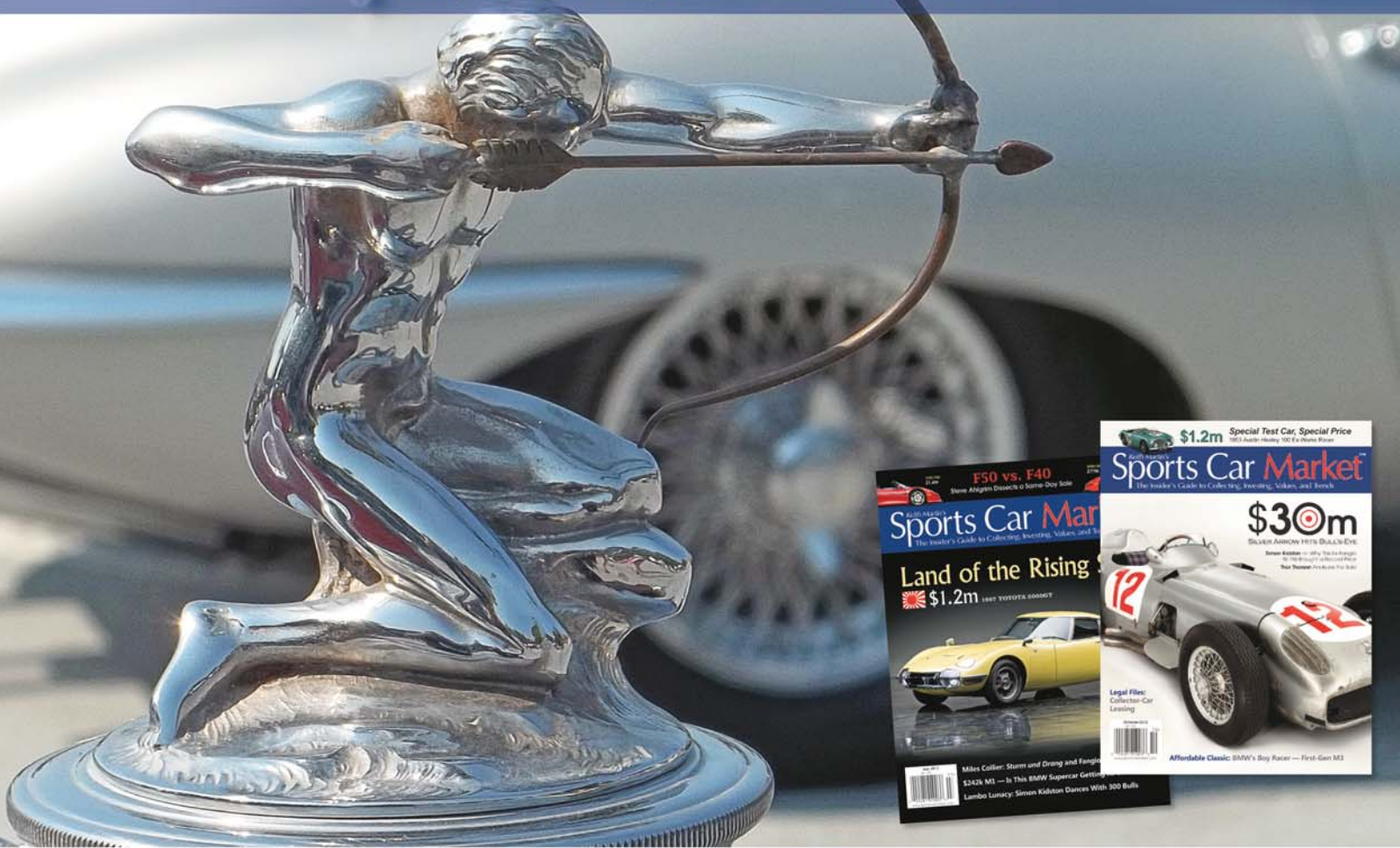
Love flows wherever it goes.

BY JOE SAGE



“Hats off to you. Keeping up the great effort to produce the best car magazine each month is no small feat.”

— E.M., Northbrook, IL, subscriber since 1998



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Stovebolt Special returns to Pebble Beach decades after historic run in last road race

HWM race car made first road racing use of a Chevy V8

At the drop of the green flag, in what was to be the very last road race at Pebble Beach (although no one knew that then), two-time past winner Bill Pollack jumped into the lead in a highly modified car that would come to be known as the “Stovebolt Special”—a 1950 HWM fitted with experimental disc brakes and the very first Chevy V8 to be used in road racing.

The date was April 22, 1956.

For a brief time, the car led the Ferraris of Phil Hill, Carroll Shelby and Ernie McAfee, as well as every other car in the race. It was powered to win—and might have done so, but for the many tight corners of the tree-lined course, which the just-completed Special struggled to navigate, since its handling was not yet dialed in.

Ultimately it finished sixth overall—a fine achievement in a field comprising the top sports racing cars and drivers of the day.

Although the Stovebolt Special now resides in England with renowned auto journalist and current owner Simon Taylor, it will return to Pebble Beach in August for the 75th Pebble Beach Concours d’Elegance,

an event that began in tandem with the Pebble Beach Road Races in 1950.

The HWM had already lived a long and storied life when it raced at Pebble Beach. In original form, as a works race car bearing a four-cylinder two-liter Alta engine, it served as the steed for Stirling Moss in his first paid competition. He raced the car for HWM throughout much of the 1950 season, recording several fine results including a third-place finish behind the Alfas of Giuseppe Farina and Juan Manuel Fangio in the Bari Grand Prix. With Johnny Claes at the wheel, the HWM won the Grand Prix des Frontieres. It was also driven by Rudi Fischer and Raymond Sommer.

A few years later, the car was sold to 20th Century Fox to be used in the film *The Racers*, starring Kirk Douglas—and was crashed in accordance with the script.

It was Tom Carstens who bought the wreck and resurrected it for Pebble Beach, not simply rebuilding it, but doing all he could to improve the chassis, transmission, and body. The new Chevy V8 was bored and stroked to just under five liters by Bobby Meeks at Vic Edelbrock’s shop and then was fitted

in the car by Eddie Kuzma, who managed this by repositioning the firewall and fabricating new rear bodywork. Ted Halibrand’s shop added a quick-change rear axle and the disc brakes. The finished creation was called the Stovebolt Special by *Sports Cars Illustrated* magazine—and the name stuck.

The return of the Stovebolt Special to Pebble Beach is made possible thanks to Simon Taylor, as well as the American Hot Rod Foundation (ahrf.com), particularly founder Steve Memishian and foundation manager David Steele.

The 75th Concours will pay tribute to its historic ties in racing as well as the many “first-ever” gatherings of cars that have made it famous. The former road racers will be showcased in two special classes, one focusing on cars that raced in close-to-original form as made by their manufacturers and the other focusing on specials that were much modified.

The 75th Pebble Beach Concours d’Elegance will be on August 16, 2026. The event will also feature cars ranging from early American speedsters to Ferraris and Japanese race cars, and the latest new creations and dream cars will be displayed on the Concept Lawn. For more information and for tickets, visit pebblebeachconcours.net. ■



Delivering high performance via reasonable all-around balance, Lexus has moved past the eye-popping numbers of many EVs. Lexus RZ is offered with three powertrains—165, 230 or 300 hp, the lowest with FWD, the others with AWD, with zero-to-60 times from 7.1 to 4.9 to 4.1 seconds and recharging range running from 229 to 301 miles.

Lexus is going a long way in correcting or redirecting key perceptions of EVs. Early visions had centered on small cars—grocery runners or train station shuttles. Somewhere in the madness, too many pushed toward 1,000 hp, 8,000 lb, \$120,000—or even more on all counts.

Our sample, the 2026 Lexus RZ 500e F SPORT AWD, is the top spec version in an overall six-trim lineup—the most powerful and quickest, but with the shortest range. Even this top spot is also quite

attainable, with the full price range spanning just about \$10 grand, and the entire lineup running between upper \$40s and upper \$50s—stellar performance at about half the price of ludicrous specs with ultimately similar real world performance.

Lexus achieves all this by rebalancing the equation, starting with size and weight that make more power available for more than just toting its own battery around. Its tidy package combines excellent maneuverability and handling with a spacious and well equipped cabin and cargo area. It adds up to a winning formula of common sense and thrills.

All this sport also comes with utility. With almost eight inches of ground clearance, 24° departure and a more moderate 15° approach angle due to styling (an easy target for customizers?), the RZ is certainly adventure-ready and a likely candidate

for the rally circuit. And a just-over 36-foot turning circle makes it a champ in town.

As a dual-motor all-wheel-driver, ours has top power (402 hp system), noting on our first dive into a typically aggressive frontage road, holycow! Not only is this a rocket, it's an accurate rocket. All-wheel drive contributes, but its precision in holding a turn, with lack of torque steer, rates tops. As in any EV, 100 percent of torque is available immediately (a big factor in making ludicrous horsepower numbers borderline pointless, and the Lexus RZ is here to prove it).

Timing is everything, and as EV sales have recently plunged in the US, for a convergence of reasons political, financial and practical, along comes Lexus RZ to suggest that EVs will have a place carrying into the future, seizing an opportunity to see

where they can go on their own merits.

Toyota-Lexus is in an interesting position, having taken a cautious approach to the EV push. This seems well-deserved, as they had already led the world for decades in mastering alternative powertrains and clean internal combustion efficiency. They had little to gain by a sudden course change as the rest of the world leapt on command into the EV channel, and they had engineers worth keeping. Their more considered approach is now reaping benefits in line with actual market interest. And meanwhile, they've basically solved or improved a whole lot of what the bleeding edge developers and early adopters could have done better.

Lexus RZ brings size, weight and style far more in line with the original idea, and they've arrived there without the wasteful detour. They have also avoided the slippery lump look often used by others to telegraph presumed airflow friendliness. Toyota-Lexus has also long mastered incorporat-

ing aerodynamics into more dramatic style, having shown us for years how they can apply tiny effects to totally transform and control drag coefficients.

With all that in mind, this was one of the flat-out most enjoyable drive experiences we've had, regardless of its EV nature. It's fun to drive, easy to handle, powerful and quick. The Lexus RZ can easily please any EV enthusiast, while making any doubter find themselves saying, hey, this EV thing is pretty cool, I could buy one of these.

Of course it can handle duties in town. Can it handle a road trip? Our high-powered one is on the cusp for Flagstaff or Tucson round-trip from the Valley, though introduction of access to the Tesla Supercharger network should be a game-changer for recharging while there. Or maybe that's a vote to check out the lower model with more range (but less power and no AWD). We're definitely curious to see how that one feels, since this one has already been more than the sum of its numbers. ■

Everything but ludicrous

Power, style and utility at a real world price. BY JOE SAGE



SPECIFICATIONS

ASSEMBLY	Toyota, Aichi, Japan
SEATING	five
MOTORS	dual permanent magnet synchronous motors
TOTAL SYSTEM OUTPUT	300 kW / 402 hp
TORQUE	(F/R) 198.1 / 198.1 lb-ft
BATTERY	lithium-ion 76.96 kWh
ONBOARD CHARGER	NACS 11 kW
DRIVETRAIN	AWD
TRANSMISSION	1-spd automatic
ZERO-TO-60 / TOP SPEED	4.1 sec / 112 mph
SUSPENSION	F: MacPherson strut; R: dbl wishbone
STEERING	electric power steering
BRAKES	F: 12.9-in vented, dbl-piston caliper; R: 12.48-in vented, single-piston caliper
WHEELS	20-in alloy w aero covers
TIRES	F: 235/50R20 104V; R: 255/45R20 105V
	ours: Dunlop SP Sport Maxx
APPROACH / DEPARTURE	15.0 / 24.0°
GROUND CLEARANCE	7.87 in
TURNING CIRCLE	36.8 ft
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	189.17 / 112.2 in
HEADROOM (F/R)	39.88 / 39.69 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	42.11 / 37.52 in
CARGO CAPACITY	34.1 cu.ft
WEIGHT	4663 lb
RANGE	est 229 miles
MPGe	102/88/95 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE	\$57,000
BLUE BRAKE CALIPERS	500
COLD AREA PKG: headlight washers, windshield wiper de-icer	200
LUXURY PKG: digital key (req subscrip, trial incl), traffic jam assist (ditto), advanced park w remote park, digital rear mirror, Mark Levinson premium audio	2600
CARPET CARGO MAT	140
PANO ROOF SUN SHADE	200
WHEEL LOCKS	90
DESTINATION CHARGE	1295

TOTAL **\$62,034**
Per our Monroney; latest pricing below.

2026 LEXUS RZ LINEUP

	FWD	AWD
RZ 350e	\$47,295	na
" Premium	49,495	na
RZ 450e AWD	\$50,795	
" Premium AWD	52,995	
" Luxury AWD	58,295	
RZ 550e F SPORT AWD	58,295	

If there's one thing we would change, it's the operation of the electric doors, which have elements of uncertainty and potentially security.

Mecum Glendale 2026 results

Mecum Auctions
Glendale 2026 Collector Car Auction
 Tuesday, March 17 - Saturday, March 21, 2026
 State Farm Stadium, 1 Cardinals Drive, Glendale AZ 85305



For five exciting days at Mecum Auction Glendale, held at State Farm Stadium in March, more than 1,300 vehicles crossed the block—including multiple collections—with sales totaling \$47 million, at a 70 percent sell-through rate. (With Mecum's Bid Goes On program still working on deals beyond those days, the numbers were expected to climb even higher.)

Vintage roadsters dominated the lineup, highlighted by the Select Vehicles from the Petersen Automotive Museum collection, featuring a range of rare hot-rodded 1930s-era Fords.

The auction's crown jewel was a striking red 1966 Shelby 427 Cobra Roadster, Serial No. CSX3355, which commanded \$1,842,500. Not far behind, a 1970 Lamborghini Miura P400, one of only six produced in Verde Miura, sold for \$1.705 million. A 1959 Mercedes-Benz 300SL Roadster rounded out the top three highest-dollar sales at \$907,500.

The entire Petersen collection brought in over \$400,000, with the top lot, the 1933 Ford Roadster known as "Impact," hammering for \$106,700. Other standout roadster sales included a 1953 Chevrolet Corvette Roadster at \$368,500 and a 1965 Shelby Cobra CSX4000 Series Roadster that sold for \$330,000.

TOP 10 SALES AT MECUM GLENDALE 2026:

1. 1966 Shelby 427 Cobra Roadster
Lot S161\$1,842,500
2. 1970 Lamborghini Miura P400
Lot S130\$1,705,500
3. 1959 Mercedes-Benz 300SL Roadster
Lot S188\$907,500
4. 2018 Ford GT
Lot S155\$770,000
5. 1969 Chevrolet Camaro Custom Convrtbl
Lot S272\$517,000
6. 1965 Shelby GT350 Fastback
Lot S104\$396,000
7. 1953 Chevrolet Corvette Roadster
Lot S131\$368,500
8. 1969 Dodge Daytona
Lot S143\$330,000
9. 1965 Shelby Cobra CSX4000 Series Rdstr
Lot S268\$330,000
10. 1969 Ford Mustang Boss 429 Fastback
Lot S120\$297,000

For complete auction results, for details on upcoming auctions, to consign a vehicle, or to register as a bidder, visit Mecum.com. ■

1. 1966 Shelby 427 Cobra RoadsterLot S161\$1,842,500



2. 1970 Lamborghini Miura P400Lot S130\$1,705,500



3. 1959 Mercedes-Benz 300SL RoadsterLot S188\$907,500



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ARIZONA CONCOURS

SAVE THE DATE: SUNDAY, JANUARY 24, 2027

FERRARI'S 80TH ANNIVERSARY TO BE FEATURED MARQUE

The date has been set for the 2027 Arizona Concours d'Elegance. The acclaimed showcase of automotive excellence from the past and present will take place on Sunday, January 24, on the grass at the Scottsdale Civic Center. Professionally judged and curated, the 9th edition of the Concours will be conducted under the theme *The Art of Elegance at Speed*, with more than 100 rarely seen dream cars and high-value collector vehicles on display and competing for awards.

Ferrari to be featured marque

The featured marque will be a great one, Ferrari, celebrating its 80th anniversary, which means a significant number of the legendary Italian race cars and sports cars

will be present for up-close viewing.

The Concours is held in the atmosphere of a stylish garden party, designed to impress and excite not only dedicated car lovers but anyone who appreciates beautiful design and fine engineering.

Related activities—the Saturday seminars and a Monday entrants' event—will extend the three-day Concours weekend from January 23 to 25.

The collector cars and motorcycles arrayed on the Scottsdale Civic Center lawn vie for awards in their respective classes, culminating in the coveted Best of Show awards—one for pre-WWII and the other for post-WWII. The Concours committee is currently working on the class list for 2027, with an announcement to follow.

Scottsdale Arts and Make-A-Wish

Proceeds from the Arizona Concours, held in partnership with Scottsdale Arts, sup-



port the Concours' longtime beneficiary, Make-A-Wish® Arizona, the founding chapter of the national organization that grants wishes for children facing life-threatening medical conditions.

Tickets—entries—sponsors—volunteers

Tickets for the Arizona Concours d'Elegance at the Scottsdale Civic Center will be available starting July 1.

For a stunning video recap of the 2026 Arizona Concours, visit the event website.

Information about tickets, vehicle submissions, sponsorships and volunteer opportunities will be found on the website:

ArizonaConcours.org



Photo: Patrick Darby

The 2026 GMC Yukon has not one but two Ultimate builds—the more luxury-oriented Denali Ultimate and the more dirt-oriented AT4 Ultimate (though each bears plenty of the other).

On a parallel plane, there are two kinds of AT4—regular (\$76,600) or Ultimate (\$97,900).

A third parallel plane brings us any of the above in a choice of either standard Yukon or Yukon XL length (Chevy Tahoe or Suburban equivalents). All have three rows of seating.

Our standard-length AT4, as an Ultimate, has a 420-hp 6.2L V8. (Lower trims have a 355-hp 5.3L V8. A high-torque turbo-diesel option is also arriving later for any and all.)

Denali Ultimate is known for fancier finishes, AT4 Ultimate for going more rugged places and doing more rugged things (and it also costs a little

less). All that said, we're pretty sure no country club is going to turn away a handsome AT4 Ultimate. It's (ultimately) all up to you, which one rings your bell and opens your doors.

That may be all the deciding you'll need to do. The vehicle category (officially Large SUV, bigger than full-size) is largely self-sorting, with most just identifying it by brand name, as these dominate it.

This build delivers the commanding performance you would expect, even just from appearances—power-to-weight is ample with the larger V8 that is standard on this trim. This in itself is a vote for the higher trims (standard on either Denali, standard on AT4 Ultimate, optional on non-Ultimate AT4). And it handles superbly, belying its size.

Odds are good that you're not buying into this group with the tightest parking lot maneuvers in

mind, but there are nonetheless rocky trails and ranch corrals to conquer. That said, the Yukon XL is 15 inches longer than this one, with the turning circle increasing from 39.4 to 43.3 feet (or a little more with 24-inch wheels). Also, tow capacity of 8,400 lb in the standard length drops to 8,200 in the XL, as its own additional body weight is subtracted. That may be two votes for standard length. However, trailer or not, the additional interior volume of the XL means a place to toss in some saddles and tack, even with three rows of seats up.

One thing did catch our attention throughout our week. The brakes of course never failed to effectively stop us, but we'd love a firmer feel. (Digging into this, there's some indication it may indeed just be feel, not performance, from an electronic Brake Assist feature, perhaps a candidate for

an e-update—worth further digging, if shopping.)

Size is also reflected inside. As you would expect, this includes generous leg- and hip room, but also a huge center screen loaded with functions, while seeming right-sized in its environs. Three rows of headrests also bring a camera-based center rearview mirror (as well as a real one).

We're familiar with people who always buy a Denali, be it an SUV or pickup. Punto. They can see, touch, feel and brag every material and surface particular to that build with their eyes closed.

For a person open to comparison, the AT4 Ultimate, with its stitched leather instrument panel and seats, along with many other touches, should be more than luxurious enough and an overall very similar experience—clean, high-stylish, thoroughly well outfitted, fully featured and then some.

The difference is that this is Arizona, where perhaps 98 percent of the surface area (or so it may seem) is rocky and/or forested wilderness.

And with the AT4 or AT4 Ultimate, you are always ready to confidently access and enjoy it all.

It's really that simple. There are no defensible downsides to having the AT4's capabilities, if you even just might need them. Ride, comfort and features arguably all deliver just as generously as in a Denali. If it seems like trading off some specific nominally luxury material to have some tougher material with its own impressive level of luxury, well, most people would never even miss it.

There are some people who buy the top trim, interpreted as the most expensive one, because it seems it automatically carries the most prestige. GM has kept prices close enough to preempt that, one might hope—"this is the top one but a serious off-roader" seems an ambiguously valid boast.

Neither of the two top models should generate badge envy from buyers of the other. Differences may be superficial or functionally substantial, but either scenario should negate any debate. ■

Speaks for itself

BY JOE SAGE



SPECIFICATIONS

(Some info 3rd-party sourced; check w dealer)

ASSEMBLY	.....Arlington, Texas
ENGINE/TRANS BUILD	.....USA / USA
PARTS CONTENT	...US/Can 38% / Mexico 36%
ENGINE	.....6.2L Ecotec3 V8, 16v OHV, VVT, dir high-pressure fuel inj w Dynamic Fuel Mgmt, cast alum/cast alum
HP/TORQUE	.....420 hp / 460 lb-ft
COMPRESSION RATIO	.....11.5:1
TRANSMISSION	.....10-spd automatic
DRIVETRAIN	.....4WD
AXLE RATIO	.....3.23
SUSPENSION	....(opt) 4-corner Air Ride Adaptive Suspension, Magnetic Ride Control
STEERING	.....elec pwr-assst rack & pinion
BRAKES	.....Duralife rotors front/rear: F: 13.5x1.2 vented; R: 13.6x1.0 vented
WHEELS	.....20-in Talos bronze metallic
TIRES	.....275/60R20
	ours: Goodyear Wrangler Territory A/T
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	.....210.5 in / 120.9 in
GROUND CLEARANCE	.....8.0 in
TURNING CIRCLE	.....(20-in wheels) 39.37 ft
HEADROOM (F/2/3)	....(sunrf) 40.4 / 37.5 / 38.2 in
LEGROOM (F/2/3)	.....44.5 / 42.0 / 34.9 in
CARGO CAPACITY	.....(max) 122.9 cu.ft
WEIGHT	.....(base) 5602 lb
TOW CAPACITY	.....8400 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY	.....reg unl / 25.89 gal
MPG	.....14/18/16 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE	.....\$97,300
NIGHT VISION	.....2000
ENHANCED TRAILERING TECH PKG:	trailer camera provisions, trailering assist guides
BLACK GMC EMBLEMS (dealer install)	.....295
DESTINATION CHARGE	.....2595

TOTAL.....\$102,190

Pricing above per our Monroney; manufacturer pricing n/a; public website info below.

2026 GMC YUKON LINEUP

(Chevy Tahoe equivalent size/format)

	.....RWD	.....4WD
Elevation	.....\$69,600	.....\$72,600
AT4	.....--	.....76,600
Denali	.....--	.....83,400
AT4 Ultimate	.....--	.....\$97,900
Denali Ultimate	.....--	.....103,900

2026 GMC YUKON XL LINEUP

(Chevy Suburban equivalent size/format)

	.....RWD	.....4WD
Elevation	.....\$72,600	.....\$75,600
AT4	.....--	.....79,600
Denali	.....--	.....86,400
AT4 Ultimate	.....--	.....100,900
Denali Ultimate	.....--	.....106,900

EVOLUTION ATOP EVOLUTION

BY JOE SAGE



For public lands, distinct from National Parks and Monuments and such, a Wilderness designation means no roads. For Subaru, Wilderness means any and all roads, with a special emphasis on off-pavement, while some of the cleverest engineering in the lineup means a Wilderness is also a standout in paved performance.

We recently drove the new-for-2026 generation Outback (in our previous issue), a significant evolution, while at the same time familiar, a "lane change" sure to remain beloved with the brand's devoted base. The whole lineup has become more rugged, capable and aggressive, which had made us curious to see the new Wilderness, the version that has always been more rugged, capable and aggressive. And as you might guess, it is moreso than ever. It also has the bigger engine, a 260-hp turbo, which we'd been wanting to try (our other was a base 180-hp), while MPG remains pretty close between the two.

We took it straight out for a spirited run on dirt roads, tough trails, rocks, ruts and

swales. Atop more ground clearance (9.5 inches) than the standard Outback (8.7 inches), with bigger approach, departure and breakover angles and an inch wider track (and of course 17-inch beefy-sidewalled all-terrain tires), Wilderness has X-MODE options for a variety of more challenging surfaces, from dirt to ice and snow. A big piece of the magic, though, is a new electronically controlled real-time suspension damper system that also upgrades on-road performance. Acceleration triggers what Subaru describes as a "skyhook" feel, minimizing sway and maximizing stability not only in the dirt, but on the open highway and in town. This mitigates the fact that the Wilderness floats higher, revealing none of this in its cornering and handling. It really is a pretty amazing job.

We spent the balance of our week in town and on the freeways, where this Outback variant is powerful and accurate, handling its high-rise distinction superbly. Being over the top is pretty much the whole point of the Wilderness build. And it will no doubt broaden the model's appeal.

2026 SUBARU OUTBACK LINEUP

Premium	180-hp	25/31/na	\$34,995
Limited			41,715
Touring			45,395
Limited XT	260-hp turbo	21/29/na	44,365
Wilderness		21/27/23	44,995
Touring XT		21/29/na	47,995

OUR BUILD

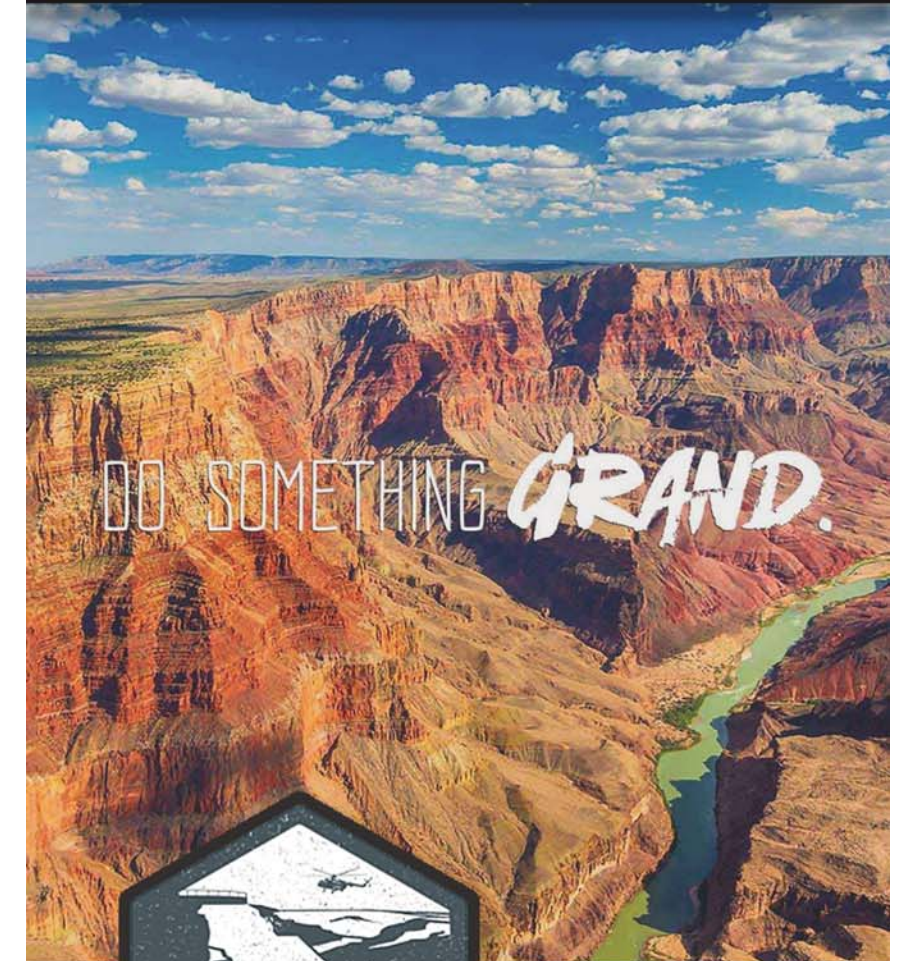
BASE PRICE	\$44,995
OPTION PKG 23: 12.1-in multimedia/nav, pwr moonroof, surround view monitor syst, black Nappa leather w copper stitch, vented front seats, 12-way pwr driver seat w 4-way lumbar & leg ext, 8-way pwr front passenger seat, black pwr-fold heated mirrors	4090
DESTINATION CHARGE	1450
TOTAL	\$50,535

You have likely noticed that Subaru, with already one of the most loyal buyer-owner groups in the industry, has been expanding its presence rapidly. While still delivering everything that "makes a Subaru a Subaru," general restyling is so strong now through the whole lineup, and engineering so carefully considered, they are all worth a look. And being even tougher than the rest, the Wilderness is certainly worth a special look. ■

SPECIFICATIONS

ASSEMBLY	OTA, Gunma, Japan
ENGINE/TRANS BUILD	Japan/Japan
PARTS CONTENT	Japan 85% / US/Canada 0%
ENGINE	2.5L 4-cyl Boxer 16v, twin-scroll turbo/intercooler, DOHC, chain-driven cams, DFI, electronic throttle control, dual active valve control syst intake/exh, alum/alum
HP/TORQUE	260 hp / 277 lb-ft
COMPRESSION RATIO	10.6:1
TRANSMISSION	CVT w 8-spd man mode, paddles
DRIVETRAIN	Symmetrical AWD
MODES	Wilderness-exclusive X-MODE features snow/dirt (under 25 mph), deep snow/mud (under 25 mph); low speed/low ratio gradient automatic on steep gradients shifts to CVT low ratio w lower transfer ratio & lower first ratio
SUSPENSION	4-wheel independent, raised; Wilderness addtl raised from 8.7 to 9.5-in ground clearance, electronically controlled dampers front & rear. F: MacPherson-type struts; lower L-arms, coils, dampers, stblzr bar, hydraulic eng mounts; R: dbl wishbone, coils, dampers, stblzr bar;
STEERING	elec pwr asst rack & pinion (dual pinion); (Wilderness 13.0:1 instead of 13.5:1)
BRAKES	F: 12.4 vented; R: 11.8 vented
WHEELS	(Wilderness) 17x7 matte black alum alloy
TIRES	225/65R17 102T A/T, raised white letters
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	191.7 / 108.1 in
GROUND CLEARANCE	(Wilderness) 9.5 in
APPR / DEP / BRKVR	(Wilderness) 20.0 / 23.6 / 21.2°
TURNING CIRCLE	36.49 ft
HEADROOM (F/R)	40.2 / 40.5 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	43.0 / 39.5 in
CARGO CAPACITY	34.6 / 80.5 cu.ft
WEIGHT	(Wilderness) 3973 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY	reg unl / 18.0 gal
MPG	21/27/23 (city/hwy/comb)

TRAVEL SITES TO BE SEEN



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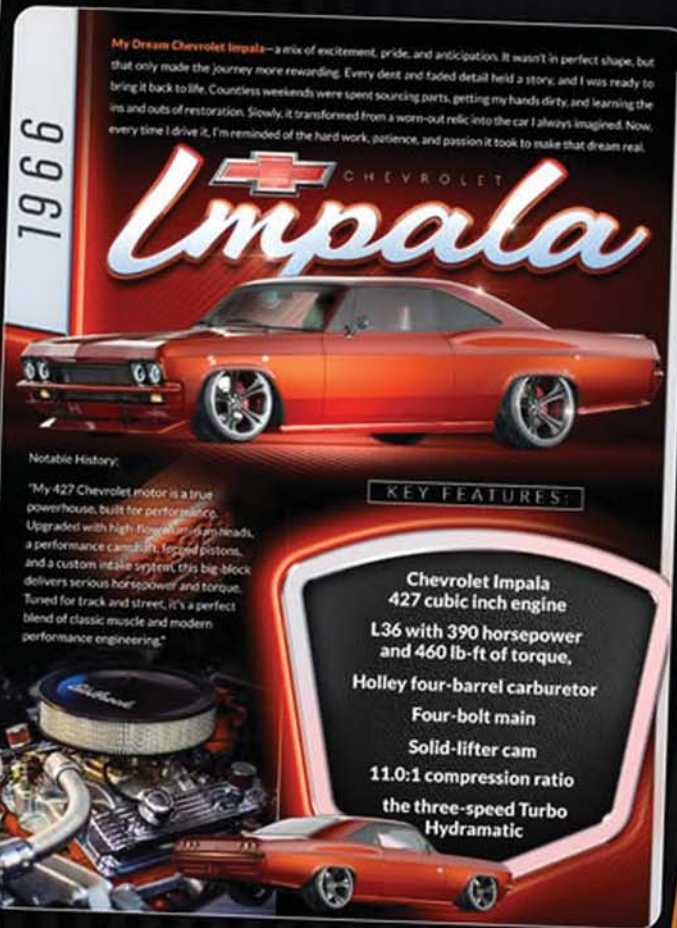
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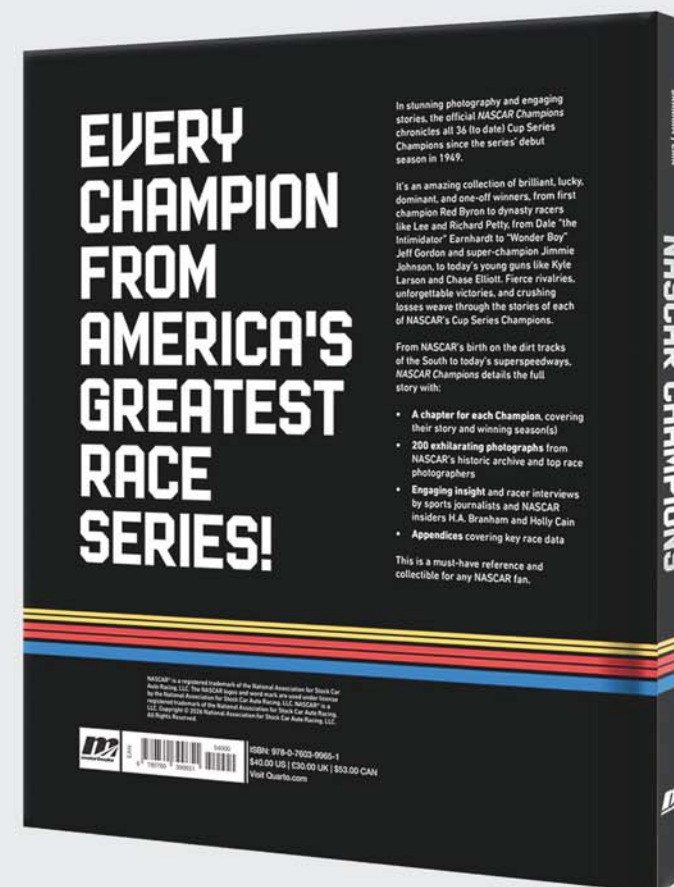
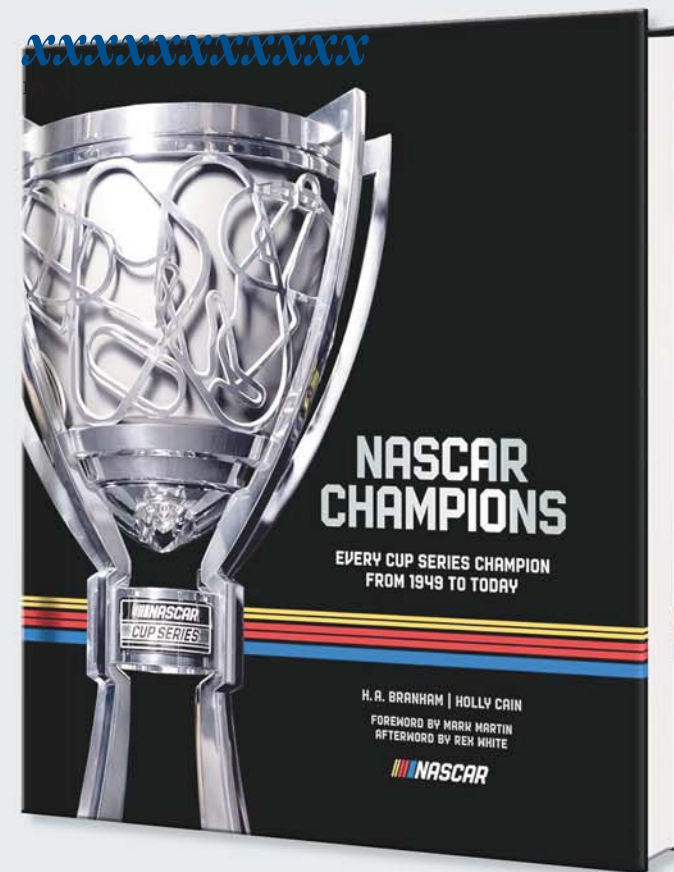
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BOOK : NASCAR CHAMPIONS: EVERY CUP SERIES CHAMPION FROM 1949 TO TODAY



New from Quarto Group

NASCAR Champions

Every Cup Series Champion from 1949 to Today
by H.A. Branham and Holly Cain

DISCOVER WHAT IT TAKES to be a NASCAR Cup Champion!
This officially licensed and stunningly illustrated volume chronicles story of every Champion in the series' history.

Over the decades, NASCAR's top drivers have achieved legendary status. Winners like Lee and Richard Petty, Dale "the Intimidator" Earnhardt, "Wonder Boy" Jeff Gordon, and super-champion Jimmie Johnson have etched their names in the record books, each contributing to NASCAR's ongoing evolution. Fierce rivalries, unforgettable victories, and crushing losses weave through the stories of each of NASCAR's Cup Champions.

From NASCAR's birth on the dirt tracks of the South to today's superspeedways, NASCAR Champions: Every Cup Winner from 1949 Today details it all with:

- A chapter for every Champion, covering their story and winning season(s), beginning with the first, 1949's Red Byron
- 200 exhilarating photographs from NASCAR's historic archive and top race photographers
- Engaging commentary by sports journalist and NASCAR insider H.A. Branham, who knows many of these winning drivers personally
- Sidebars covering topics like greatest races, key seasons, milestone moments, and more

This is a must-have reference and collectible for any NASCAR fan.

H.A. BRANHAM worked in the communications departments at NASCAR and Daytona International Speedway for nearly two decades. Prior to that, he worked as an editor and writer at the *Tampa Tribune* (Florida) for 21 years. He is the author of *Big Bill—The Life and Times of NASCAR Founder Bill France Sr.*; *Bill France Jr.—The Man Who Made NASCAR*; *The NASCAR Family Album*; *The NASCAR Vault*; and *NASCAR Mavericks*. Branham, a graduate of the University of South Florida, is a native of Indianapolis, Indiana. He lives in Ormond Beach, Florida, with his wife, Catherine.

HOLLY CAIN, a veteran sports reporter, has covered all forms of auto racing for more than three decades—from Richard Petty, Dale Earnhardt, and A.J. Foyt, to Jeff Gordon and Jimmie Johnson, to today's stars such as IndyCar's Scott Dixon, NASCAR's Kyle Larson, and Formula 1's Max Verstappen. Cain has worked at major newspapers in Tampa, Dallas and Seattle, and numerous online publications such as AOL Fanhouse, CBS Sports, NASCAR.com, and the NASCAR Wire Service. She is the author of *Rusty's Last Call*, chronicling NASCAR racer Rusty Wallace's farewell season. She makes regular appearances as a racing analyst on SiriusXM NASCAR Radio along with Tampa-based television stations. Cain, a graduate of the University of South Florida, has two children and lives in her hometown of Lakeland, Florida.

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Quarto www.quartoknows.com

The 2026 Chevrolet Equinox EV falls in a niche we appreciate, not bearing a thousand horses for a hundred thousand dollars, but with realistic horsepower that feels as good as those do, in the real world, at prices from just the mid-\$30s (even with EV incentives now gone). Ours, a front-drive RS, has 220 hp. AWD versions have 300 hp. While always tempted by AWD, our 220 feels comfortably powerful, and range is 319 miles, vs 285 for AWD. We detected no meaningful torque steer, and acceleration is strong, as with any EV, with full thrust from first touch of the pedal—two classic FWD areas, both solved in this by its battery basis.

Speaking of the pedal, Equinox EV's "killer app" has to be its one-pedal mode—one of the best. We first experienced this with Chevy, when the Bolt EV was new, and took to it right away. If not your cup of tea, it can be left off. Its high setting is quite extreme, while normal (our favorite) is fully functional, meaning its range-extending regenerative qualities will also bring you to a full stop without use of the brake pedal. It's like a magician raising and lowering a magic wand. Not all one-pedals are set up to achieve this, just close, but this one is masterful. The system also has just the right speed and strength for cornering on an enthusiast level.

We had a consistently enjoyable drive experience, not lacking for anything—power, performance, precision, predictable and accurate control. Beyond that, we were often focused on feature interfaces, not uncommon in this era. Some controls are unconventional, especially those that try to decide and execute basic functions for you. One notable area involves powering the vehicle on and off, as well as locking and unlocking it, based on its own logic as you come and go. This is a trend in EVs lately, not only potentially disquieting and uncertain in its own right, but we can easily imagine safety and security exposures with it.

But in Equinox EV's case, we soon discovered that, unlike most (if any) others, Chevy provides mitigating alternative paths. To start, sit down and put your foot on the brake, as would be recommended in anything, anyway. And to be sure it's shut off, there is a two-step button that provides a tangible alternative to just walking away and hoping.

These ultimately simple discoveries changed our overall perception significantly. We went from feeling like the problem-solving crew of Apollo 13, to the delights-around-every-bend Lewis and Clark Expedition. Even its odder innovations ended up putting a smile on our face, as we reached our

2026 CHEVROLET EQUINOX EV LINEUP

	FWD	AWD
LT1	\$34,995	\$38,295
LT2	41,795	45,095
RS	44,095	47,395

understandings with each other. For anyone who prefers, there is still automated trust-level locking-unlocking. But for us, the do-it-ourselves, parallel-redundant options changed the game.

"We meant to do that!" A running joke in the early days of Silicon Valley—as the latest gear was often rushed to market, to be first, if not perfect—was that something was "not a bug, it's a feature!" We were reminded of this often, recalling the earliest days of desktop computing, when anyone trained on specific command code lines soon learned that the genius of, say, Steve Jobs was in addressing intuition—there is usually more than one way to accomplish a task.

This is vital, as, while many will claim things are intuitive, intuition varies from user to user. And this seems to be what GM has recognized here, producing increasingly common (if arguably bearing downsides) automated systems—but applying the wisdom or thoughtfulness to back them up with something concrete. ■

Trail of discovery

Interplay of mystical and physical interfaces is the key BY JOE SAGE

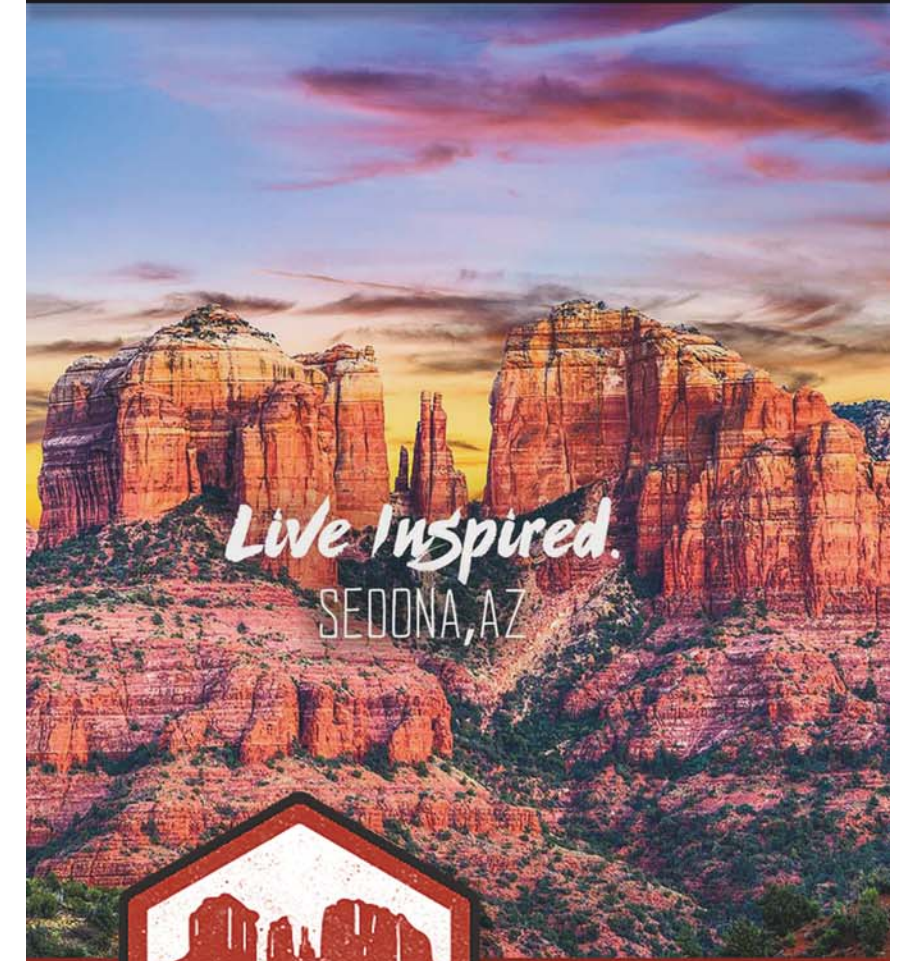


SPECIFICATIONS

ASSEMBLY	Ramos Arizpe, Coahuila, Mexico
ENGINE/TRANS BUILD	South Korea / China
PARTS CONTENT	US/Canada 43% / China 18% / S Korea 17%
MOTOR	(FWD) single perm magnet, bar wound
HP/TORQUE	(FWD) 220hp / 243 lb-ft
BATTERY	lithium-ion NCMA cathode, blended graphite anode
DRIVETRAIN	FWD
GEAR RATIO	(front) 11.59:1
SUSPENSION	F: indep MacPherson strut, stblzr bar; R: multi-link, stblzr bar
STEERING	rack electric power steering
BRAKES	F/R: disc / disc, 17-in OD rotor
WHEELS	21-in alum
TIRES	275/40R21 AL3-S Continental
TURNING CIRCLE	38.06 ft
APPROACH / DEPARTURE	17.8 / 23.3°
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	190.55 / 116.3 in
HEADROOM (F/R)	39.15 / 38.49 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	41.65 / 38.0 in
CARGO CAPACITY	26.4 / 57.2 cu.ft
GROUND CLEARANCE	6.4 in
WEIGHT	na
TOW CAPACITY	(w accessory receiver) 1500 lb
RANGE	Level 2 AC: 36 mi range per hour charge DC Fast Charge: up to 150 kW, ±77 mi range in 10 min
CHARGING	(FWD) est 319 miles
MPG	MPGe (EV) / 117/100/108 (city/hwy/comb)
BASE PRICE	\$44,200
PAINT: Radiant Red Tintcoat	495
ACTIVE SAFETY PKG 3: Super Cruise equipped (3 yrs OnStar, one w SuperCruise), enhanced auto parking asst	3355
CONVENIENCE PKG II: vented front seats, psngr 6-way lumbar, driver seat/mirrors memory, heated outer rear seats, rear cam mirror/washer, heads-up display, dual zone climate, universal home remote, LED headlamps w animation, LED uplevel taillamps, heated wiper park	2495
DESTINATION CHARGE	1395
TOTAL	\$51,940

Per our Monroney; consumer site pricing in chart, including notably higher destination charge.

TRAVEL SITES TO BE SEEN



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SPECIAL EVENT : BARRETT-JACKSON PALM BEACH AUCTION 2026 : RESULTS



Barrett-Jackson Barrett-Jackson Palm Beach 2026 Thursday-Saturday April 16-18 2026

South Florida Fairgrounds, 9067 Southern Blvd, West Palm Beach FL 33441

BARRETT-JACKSON celebrated record-breaking sales, celebrity appearances and heartwarming charity moments at this year's Palm Beach event. With a docket of 610 collectible vehicles and a record 1,617 bidders, the auction realized over \$47 million in vehicle auction sales with 100 percent sell-through.

Additional sales included charitable vehicles and automobilia (see below).

The top vehicles sold during the 2026 Palm Beach Auction included:

1. 2016 Paganu HuayraLot #747\$3,190,000
2. 2025 Ferrari SF90 XX Stradale.....Lot #751.1\$1,870,000
3. 2020 Ferrari 488 Pista.....Lot #756\$819,500
4. 2021 Mercedes-Benz AMG GT Black Ser Proj 1 EdLot #742\$770,000
5. 2024 Porsche 911 S/T.....Lot #755\$665,500
6. 2024 Porsche 911 GT3 RS WeissachLot #739\$495,000
7. 2025 Porsche 911 GT3 RS WeissachLot #729\$401,500
8. 2024 Porsche 911 GT3 RS WeissachLot #745\$385,000
9. 1979 Ferrari 308 GTS Targa "Magnum PI"Lot #716\$379,000
10. 1970 Dodge Hemi Challenger R/TLot #758\$368,500



Philanthropic efforts included four vehicles sold for a total of \$1.635 million to benefit charity, bringing the total that Barrett- Jackson has helped raise for non-profits to over \$171 million. The charity vehicles included:

- 2026 GM Defense Infantry Squad Vehicle-Utility (ISV-U)...Lot #3003\$1,000,000
Benefiting the Medal of Honor Foundation
- 1979 Porsche 911 SCLot #3002\$100,000
Donated by Florida State Senators Tom Wright and Jason Pizzo, benefiting Space Coast Honor Flight
- 1988 Chevrolet Corvette 35th Anniversary EditionLot #3001\$285,000
From three bids: \$135,000 from Jeanette and John Staluppi, as well as \$75,000 each from Nicholas Mastroianni and the winning bidder
- 1955 Chevrolet Bel Air Convertible.....Lot #3000\$250,000
Benefiting the Ellis Island Honors Society

In addition to these funds, NASCAR Champion Kyle Busch and his wife Samantha donated a portion of the proceeds from the sale of her 1957 Ford Thunderbird convertible (Lot #457) to the Samantha and Kyle Busch Bundle of Joy Fund, which is dedicated to infertility education and awareness.

During the three-day event, Barrett-Jackson also sold 264 pieces of authentic automobilia for over \$1.5 million, for total auction sales topping \$48.5 million.

Next up for Barrett-Jackson is their Inaugural Columbus Ohio Auction, Thursday-Saturday June 25-27, 2026.

www.barrett-jackson.com



Celebrating decades of trail-built toughness

JEEP® AND JPP CONCEPT BUILDS PAY HOMAGE TO JEEP'S ROOTS WHILE DEFINING THE FUTURE OF OFF-ROADING



(LEFT, TOP TO BOTTOM):
 Jeep® Gladiator Red Rock,
 Jeep Wrangler Anvil 715,
 Jeep Wrangler Laredo

(RIGHT, TOP TO BOTTOM):
 Jeep Grand Wagoneer Commander,
 Jeep XJ Pioneer,
 Jeep Wrangler BUZZCUT

At the 60th Easter Jeep Safari in Moab (late March into early April), tens of thousands of Jeep enthusiasts found fresh ways to engage with the brand's latest innovations, via the latest set of highly capable concept vehicles from Jeep brand and Jeep Performance Parts (JPP) by Mopar. Official home base returned to Walker Drug, with expanded consumer activations, immersive hands-on vehicle interactions and community-focused events.

As part of their ongoing commitment to land stewardship and responsible off-roading via maintaining and protecting Moab's local trails, Jeep and JPP volunteers once again partnered with Red Rock 4-Wheelers and the Bureau of Land Management to complete a trail restoration project, cleaning up miles of trash and debris, repairing and building rock walls and fencing, and restoring areas along the route.

JEEP AND JPP CONCEPT VEHICLES

Jeep Wrangler Laredo is pared back to its core, then amplified. Built on a Willys base, it highlights simplicity, mechanical feel and classic Jeep attitude, with subtle cues that nod toward how the Laredo line might evolve.

Jeep Wrangler Anvil 715 is a purpose-built vision of what an overland-focused Wrangler can be: capable, intentional and thoughtfully engineered without unnecessary bulk.

2026 Jeep Gladiator Red Rock was purpose-built as a donation to the volunteer-run Red Rock 4-Wheelers club, in honor of their trail stewardship and preservation efforts.

Jeep Grand Wagoneer Commander combines full-size premium and real off-road function into a stealth-leaning machine built equally for standalone capability and the strength to tow a dedicated trail rig.

Jeep XJ Pioneer marks the moment the original 1984 Cherokee changed the SUV landscape, tying its legacy to 85 years of Jeep heritage and the Cherokee nameplate's 2026 return.

Jeep Wrangler BUZZCUT by JPP blends compact, sporty two-seat design with extreme capability and expanded storage for longer adventures.

JEEP BADGE OF HONOR

The Jeep Badge of Honor program expands in celebration of the brand's 85th anniversary, adding 11 new Core Trails for a total of 85 nationwide Core Trails, plus three new Moab and Grand Junction-based Limited trails, and introducing a limited-edition 60th Easter Jeep Safari badge that was available with event check-in on a Badge of Honor mobile app. ■



Jeep® Wrangler Laredo concept



Jeep Wrangler Anvil 715 concept



Jeep Gladiator Red Rock (special)



Jeep Grand Wagoneer Commander concept



Jeep XJ Pioneer concept

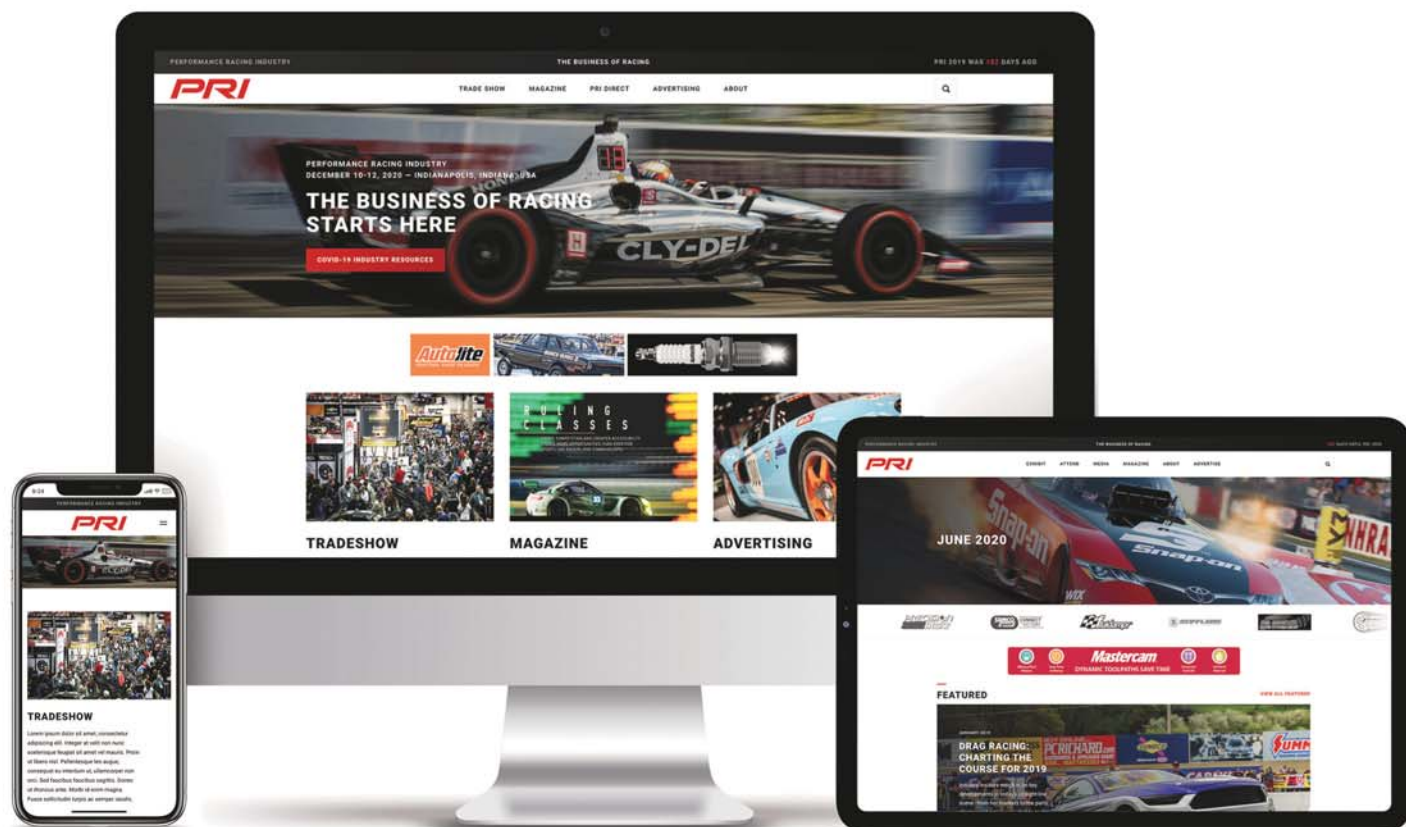


Jeep Wrangler BUZZCUT concept



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ADOT : FLAGSTAFF DARK SKIES LED LIGHTING PROJECT

ADOT's LED lighting project in Flagstaff supports Dark Skies 'Groundbreaking project' developed in partnership with community

The Arizona Department of Transportation has initiated a project to upgrade lighting fixtures on existing routes in and around the Flagstaff area, with plans shared during International Dark Sky Week (April 13-20).

The project supports roadway safety within Flagstaff's internationally recognized commitment to dark skies.

Flagstaff, home to Lowell Observatory and the US Naval Observatory, is recognized as the world's first International Dark Sky City. Last year, the city received the Dark Sky Place of the Year award from DarkSky International.

ADOT for decades has used fixtures and shields in Flagstaff and elsewhere to limit the upward projection of highway lighting.

Developed in partnership with the community, including the Flagstaff Dark Skies Coalition, the project will install amber LED lights to replace more than 370 outdated high pressure sodium light fixtures in locations under ADOT's jurisdiction. Results from ADOT test locations show amber LED lights effectively reduce impacts on the brightness of the night sky.

Lighting will be converted at all I-17 and I-40 interchanges in Flagstaff, including the large interchange connecting the two interstates. Lighting also will be converted along stretches of Historic Route 66, US 180 and US 89, including Milton Road and Route 66 (Santa Fe Boulevard) near and in the downtown Flagstaff area.

The project cost is \$2,400,000. Work is scheduled to begin in early summer 2026, with completion anticipated during this summer. More information is available at: azdot.gov/FlagstaffLightingProject. ■



Amber LED lighting on US 89 in Cameron AZ.

Public input sought on ADOT's tentative Five-Year Construction Program

The Arizona Department of Transportation is seeking public input on its tentative Five-Year Transportation Facilities Construction Program. The program includes \$9.85 billion in funding to be allocated for projects across the state for the next five years.

ADOT's five-year program is developed from a compilation of regional allocations from the State Transportation Board, along with funding streams that include federal grants, legislative appropriations and contributions from local governments. It is the result of working closely with local governments, regional transportation planning organizations and tribal partners to prioritize projects that are ready to build or design. The State Transportation Board is expected to consider formal action on the program at its June 19 meeting.

Provide your comments

The public can provide comments on the tentative Five-Year Program in the following ways through 5 pm on May 22:

- **ONLINE COMMENT FORM:** Complete an online comment form at: azdot.gov/5yearcomments
- **PUBLIC HEARING:** Attend at 9 am on May 15. Info: aztransportationboard.gov
- **EMAIL:** fiveyearconstructionprogram@azdot.gov
- **PHONE:** Call the bilingual line at: 855-712-8530
- **MAIL:** Attn: Nancy Becerra
ADOT Communications
1655 W Jackson, Room 179, MD 126F
Phoenix AZ 85007

The ADOT FY 2027-2031 tentative Five-Year Transportation Facilities Construction Program, with an overview of major expansion projects identified in it, is available at azdot.gov/tentative5year. ■



While many manufacturers have seemed to step away from that collection of categories broadly thought of as “cars” (in favor of SUVs and crossovers), Mazda does a solid job of populating the segment. Miata, a rarity itself, of course qualifies. And then there’s Mazda3, a wide lineup in its own right, so diverse that it offers not only a choice of 186-hp S or 250-hp Turbo powertrains, some FWD, some AWD, most of them automatics, but with a manual also in the mix ... then building two distinct body types, sedan and hatchback, all in one premium-grade yet affordably priced range of six trim levels. There are a total eleven versions from \$24,550 to \$37,890. Not only does Mazda offer you a car, but you can pick your lane.

Driven here is a standard-engine, top-trim, AWD sedan, with only a top-trim-only turbo above it, yet sitting firmly at mid-price. This is already a deal.

While about eight inches longer than the hatch, the sedan has the same wheelbase and turning circle—not only curb-to-curb, but even wall-to-wall—magical packaging for gaining a lockable trunk.

All-wheel drive, simple in concept but varying in implementation, is an attribute we often favor, when done well. Attractive for lossless grip across all wheels, AWD is often a pavement performance build, without deep snow clearance as on a big 4x4, though still carrying a degree of winter capability and advantage in its back pocket.

Mazda3 definitely has one of the notably better implementations, with a high level of acceleration, road hugging, handling precision and overall performance, at a fraction of the cost of, say, Europeans with generally comparable drivetrains.

Mazda3 has just two trims with AWD (Carbon Edition with the base engine or Premium Plus with the turbo)—times two, for sedan or hatch. This puts standard-engine AWD in your hands for just \$5,660 more (sedan) or \$5,900 more (hatch) than the least expensive base trim in a tight price walk—very reasonable for AWD *plus* four trim levels’ worth of added features. And we marveled at the performance from this, the less powerful engine.

Among the AWD versions, the price bump from

standard-engine Carbon Edition (only) AWD—as we’re driving here—to Premium Plus (only) turbo AWD is \$6,530 (sedan) or \$6,440 (hatch). We’re also fans of horsepower, but if you have to choose, starting from base trim, the bang for the buck for staying with the standard engine while moving to AWD may well be of more significance than the move to the turbo—and it’s a smaller price difference. This seems a win-win, or at least a solid rationalization, if you can’t swing top-top.

Of course, if you don’t much care about AWD (we’d like to drive them back-to-back, suspecting both are top performers), you can go with the one and only 6-speed manual, which is front-drive-only (a somewhat common scenario) and also a hatch only (which is a good fit, with its own distinct appeal, and also shaves some more off the price tag).

Now, if you’re an audiophile, you can add one more apple-and-orange factor. As is typical for us, we deep-dove audio settings in pursuit of perfection, with an impressive set of controls and equalizers we continued to fine-tune. You can save your

Choices and more choices, some forcing tradeoffs. Sedan or hatch. Two engines. Two transmissions. FWD or AWD. Then we get into Mazda’s famously cool paints, including Machine Gray Metallic and Soul Red Metallic (as shown on the Mazda3 Sedan and Hatchback at right), Polymetal Gray Metallic (on our Carbon Edition below) and a few more, but with not all paints available on all versions. Fun!

audio profile(s), so it’s easy to continue perfecting some more. Ours has a Mazda Harmonic Acoustics 8-speaker system, but our attention also drifted to a 12-speaker Bose system only available in Premium and Premium Plus. And right there, the tail of audio variables wags the multiple dogs of drivetrain, transmission, power and even body form.

We would want AWD, but we would wish for the manual (only available with front-drive).

We are ambiguous on sedan versus hatch—in so many specs the same, but with such different personalities (okay, so one of each?).

And the balancing points between the five-level standard engine lineup and the sole turbo level speak for themselves. The turbo has more power, but the base engine is already very responsive. The turbo has a higher cost at purchase and a bit higher cost for gas, ongoing (2-3 points lower MPG



across the board), although the latter is baked in the cake, and the real world has ways of leveling things out, anyway. Again, they need to be driven back-to-back (and bank balance doublechecked).

It’s a game of 5D chess, but the good news is, every possible combination is a winner.

There’s something about a sedan that can seem sort of mainstream, but a counterpoint can be made in an era where they’ve become rare. There are rumors that more manufacturers, notably Detroit and Germany, may be considering getting back in to this segment. But why wait? This is a great option right now, with all systems proven. ■

SPECIFICATIONS

ASSEMBLY	.....Hofu, Yamaguchi, Japan
ENGINE/TRANS BUILD	.....Japan / Japan
PARTS CONTENT	.....US/Can 0% / Japan 85%
ENGINE	.....SKYACTIV-G 2.5L 4-cyl DOHC, 16v VVT, adv dir inj, alum alloy/alum alloy
HP/TORQUE	.....186 hp / 186 lb-ft
COMPRESSION RATIO	.....13.0:1
TRANSMISSION	.....SKYACTIV-Drive 6-spd auto w manual shift mode, sport mode
DRIVETRAIN	.....i-ACTIV AWD
ASSIST	.....hill launch assist and auto hold; off-road traction
SUSPENSION	.....F: Macpherson strut, stblzr bar; R: torsion beam; twin-tube shocks
STEERING	.....elec pwr-asst rack & pinion
BRAKES	.....F: 11.6 vented; R: 10.4 solid
WHEELS	.....18x7J alloy, black metallic finish
TIRES	.....205/60 R16 all-season
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	.....183.5 / 107.3 in
GROUND CLEARANCE	.....5.5 in
TURNING CIRCLE	.....37.4 ft
HEADROOM (F/R)	.....(mnr) 37.6 / 36.7 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	.....42.3 / 34.4-35.1 in
CARGO CAPACITY	.....13.2 cu.ft
WEIGHT	.....3283 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY	.....reg unl / 12.7 gal
MPG	.....26/34/29 (city/hwy/comb)
BASE PRICE	.....\$30,210
DOORSILL: illuminated trim plates	.....575
NAVIGATION: SD card	.....500
DESTINATION CHARGE	.....1235
TOTAL	.....\$32,520

All-wheel drive adds 172 pounds to the sedan or 130 pounds to the hatchback. On top of that, the AWD turbo adds 130 pounds to the standard-engine AWD sedan or 170 to the hatch.

What’s not to like?!

Mazda3 is proof that the sedan can still be a packaging tour de force

BY JOE SAGE





Lyn St James to be inducted into Motorsports Hall of Fame of America

2027 Class announced at Acura Grand Prix of Long Beach, with formal Induction in Daytona Beach next March

The Motorsports Hall of Fame of America (MSHFA) announced its 2027 Induction Class at the 51st running of the Acura Grand Prix of Long Beach in April.

An unsuspecting representative of the Class of 2027 was Lyn St James, who was attending the press conference as cofounder and past president of WIMNA (Women In Motorsports North America), but instead found herself as one of the announced inductees, in the At Large category.

MSHFA president Daren Lucas was joined by INDYCAR president J Douglas Boles and IMSA president John Doonan in making the Class of 2027 announcement and lauding some of next year's incoming inductees. The three combined to surprise St James with the news, then inviting her to join them at the podium and head table.

As the first woman to win Indianapolis 500 Rookie of the Year, in 1992, St James, who lives in Arizona, built on the work of inductees Janet Guthrie, Denise McCluggage and others to open doors for women at the highest levels of American racing. St James won numerous sports car events, including IMSA GTO victories at Sebring in 1990 and the Rolex 24 At Daytona in 1987 and 1990. Her best GTP finish was third at Watkins Glen in 1984 with Howdy Holmes. She also competed at the 24 Hours of Le Mans. St James made 16 Indy car starts (1992 - 2000), with a career-best eighth at Walt Disney World in 1996. She qualified sixth for the 1994 Indy 500 (224.154 mph) and was the first woman to lap an oval at over 200 mph in 1985, later upping her women's closed course speed record to 227.32 mph. One of the foremost female drivers of her era and an inspiration to others, St James was named one of the *Sports Illustrated* Top 100 Women Athletes of the Century.

The full Class of 2027 includes Gary Bettenhausen (Open Wheel), Ron Capps (Drag Racing), Rob Dyson (Sports Cars), Dale Earnhardt Jr. (Stock Cars), Herb Fishel (Business), Harry Hartz (Historic), Steve Hinton (Aviation), Angelle Sampey (Motorcycles), Lyn St James (At Large), and Robert Yates (Stock Cars).

St James and Sampey are the first women inductees since late sports car driver and journalist Denise McCluggage (At Large) was enshrined in 2022. In 2021, an all-time class high of three women were inducted, an illustrious list including Judy Stropus (Sports Cars), Fran Muncey (Power Boats) and the first woman to race in the Indianapolis 500, Janet Guthrie (Open Wheel). Including Sampey and St James, a total of 13 women will be Motorsports Hall of Fame of America inductees.

The ten Class of 2027 honorees will be formally brought into the Hall during the 39th Annual MSHFA Induction Celebration presented by Toyota Gazoo Racing, to be held in the Hall's home of Daytona Beach next March.

The Induction Ceremony will be preceded the night before by the traditional "Heroes of Horsepower" reception and strolling dinner at the MSHFA Museum, on the grounds of Daytona International Speedway. (Honda presented this year's Heroes of Horsepower reception.)

The event culminates on the final night with a traditional black-tie gala—the crowning event of the two-day, multi-function MSHFA induction event.

Through last month's Class of 2026 induction, 314 "Heroes of Horsepower" are currently in the MSHFA, a number that will grow to 324 with the 39th Induction Class, in 2027. ■



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There's a lot to unpack on the new generation-six 2026 Toyota RAV4 lineup, with thirteen variants across seven trim levels, three powertrains and even a few front-drivers, then three distinct styling treatments—Core, Rugged and Sport—each with a very different flavor.

Fundamental specs are boosted for the new gen—horsepower is up, fuel mileage is up, range on the plug-in hybrid is up. The full lineup runs from about \$30k to about \$50k. Ours is a Limited, only available in the hybrid group and with AWD.

Our particular Limited Hybrid AWD came with a whole list of add-ons, still just about \$2,000, pushing our total price higher than the otherwise line-topping GR Sport base price and higher than the top plug-in (though that is not as high a grade as our Limited, the highest hybrid). And we could live without some of the add-ons on ours, if need be.

Our first impression was how big it is, perhaps recalling RAV4's diminutive size at birth, perhaps seeing our new one next to the larger Highlander. But in fact, it has been the same for some time—it's almost exactly the same length as 10 years ago with just about an inch longer wheelbase (though turning circle is almost identical). It apparently just appears more substantial, a pretty good trick in itself, in the bang for the buck department.

Cabin dimensions are quite generous for both humans and cargo, and we were wowed by over-the-shoulder visibility through ample glass.

Behind the wheel, we took to it right away. Power is good and acceleration feels strong (no spec is given). Its very well engineered transmission—an

electronic CVT with sequential shift—does its job seamlessly, with no hesitation. Steering and handling are very accurate and neutral. You feel road connectedness and pavement details, as you should, but all with smoothness—like wearing rugged but soft leather gloves, on even the roughest surface. The RAV4 has the attributes of something more complex and more expensive, which in its price range certainly telegraphs value.

We had a volume of notes about ever-expanding driving assistance and other tech features, some of which seemed unusually invasive. Some may be overthought. Some were arguably humorous (if still irritating), such as unfounded “driver inattention” warnings that ironically would require you to take



Core, Sport and Rugged style treatments shown here on the RAV4 Limited, GR Sport and Woodland.

your eyes off the road to see what the urgent message is. The key to these, of course, is to deep dive, assess and make some choices. (Since many are in the name of safety and security, we try to leave all or most on, since it's not our vehicle.)

Toyota are masters of size, efficiency and variety. With a complex SUV lineup overall, you can easily see where everything falls and what suits you perfectly. The new RAV4 is a case in point. In fact, we are highly intrigued by the variety and diversity of powertrains and styling within its own lineup and look forward to trying them all. ■

2026 TOYOTA RAV4 LINEUP

	FWD	AWD
Hybrid LE	\$31,900	\$33,300
Hybrid SE	34,700	36,100
Hybrid Woodland	--	39,900
Hybrid XLE Premium	36,100	37,500
Hybrid XSE	--	41,300
Hybrid Limited	--	43,300
PHEV SE	--	41,500
PHEV Woodland	--	45,300
PHEV XSE	--	47,200
GR Sport	--	48,500

SPECIFICATIONS

ASSEMBLY	Toyota Takaoka, Aichi, Japan
ENGINE	A25A-FXS (Atkinson Cycle) 2.5L Dynamic Force 4-cyl hybrid, 16v DOHC, direct ignition, VVT-i by elec VVT-i on intake cam & VVT-i on exhaust cam, alum alloy block/head,
COMPRESSION RATIO	14.0:1
HORSEPOWER: ENGINE	183 hp
TORQUE: ENGINE	163 lb-ft
MOTOR GENERATOR MG2 (front/regen brake)	perm magnet synchronous 134 hp
MG2 TORQUE	153 lb-ft
MAX VOLTAGE	DC 600V
REAR MOTOR TORQUE (MGR) (AWD)	89 lb-ft
HYBRID BATTERY PACK (sealed lithium-ion)	NOM VOLTAGE / CAPACITY 247.5V / 4.1 Ah
HP: NET COMBINED	(AWD) 236 hp
TRANSMISSION	electronic CVT (e-CVT) w sequential shift mode
DRIVETRAIN	electric on on-demand AWD
SUSPENSION	F: indep MacPherson strut w 25.4mm stblzr bar; R: multi-link w 23.2mm stblzr bar
STEERING	elec pwr-asst rack & pinion, rack-mtd parallel-type
BRAKES	F: 12.0 vented; R: 11.1 solid
WHEELS	(std Limited) 18-in alum alloy
TIRES	235/60R18
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	181.0 / 105.9 in
GROUND CLEARANCE	8.1 in
APPRCH / DEPART	19.0 / 23.0°
TURNING CIRCLE	36.9 ft
HEADROOM (F/R)	(w moonrf) 37.9 / 39.5 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	41.0 / 37.8 in
CARGO CAPACITY	37.8 / 70.4 cu.ft
WEIGHT	(Limited) 3920 lb
TOW CAPACITY	(Limited AWD) 3500 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY	reg unl / (hyb) 14.5 gal
MPG	43/37/41 (city/hwy/comb)
BASE PRICE	\$43,300
HEADS-UP DISPLAY	600
MATS: carpeted floor mats, cargo mat	339
DOOR SILL PROTECTORS	199
WHEEL LOCKS	90
REAR HATCH CARGO LAMPS	425
MUDGUARDS	160
ROOFTOP CROSSBARS: low profile	320
DESTINATION CHARGE	1450
TOTAL	\$46,883

Variety lineup

Why we have 3-car garages

BY JOE SAGE



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HYUNDAI AND BANNER CHILDREN'S CONTINUE PARTNERSHIP TO IMPROVE CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY IN ARIZONA

\$25,000 Hyundai Hope donation expands Banner Children's Car Seat Safety Program

Hyundai Motor America is extending its commitment to child passenger safety in Arizona through a second-year partnership with nonprofit Banner Children's at Desert. The \$25,000 donation to Banner Children's Car Seat Safety Program will further expand access to car seat safety education and installation services for East Valley families. The contribution is part of Hyundai Hope, a corporate social responsibility initiative of Hyundai Motor America, dedicated to improving health, safety and overall community well-being. Since the partnership began in 2025, Banner Children's has ex-

panded the Car Seat Safety Program with caregiver classes at the hospital and extended outreach into schools to help families use car seats correctly. Banner Children's has also collaborated with a local adoption agency to promote safety education and access to car seats for caseworkers who transport children. This year's funding will help the hospital continue outreach to Title I schools and additional community agencies.

Child passenger safety depends not only on having the right car seat, but also on using it correctly. The National Highway Traffic Safety Admin-

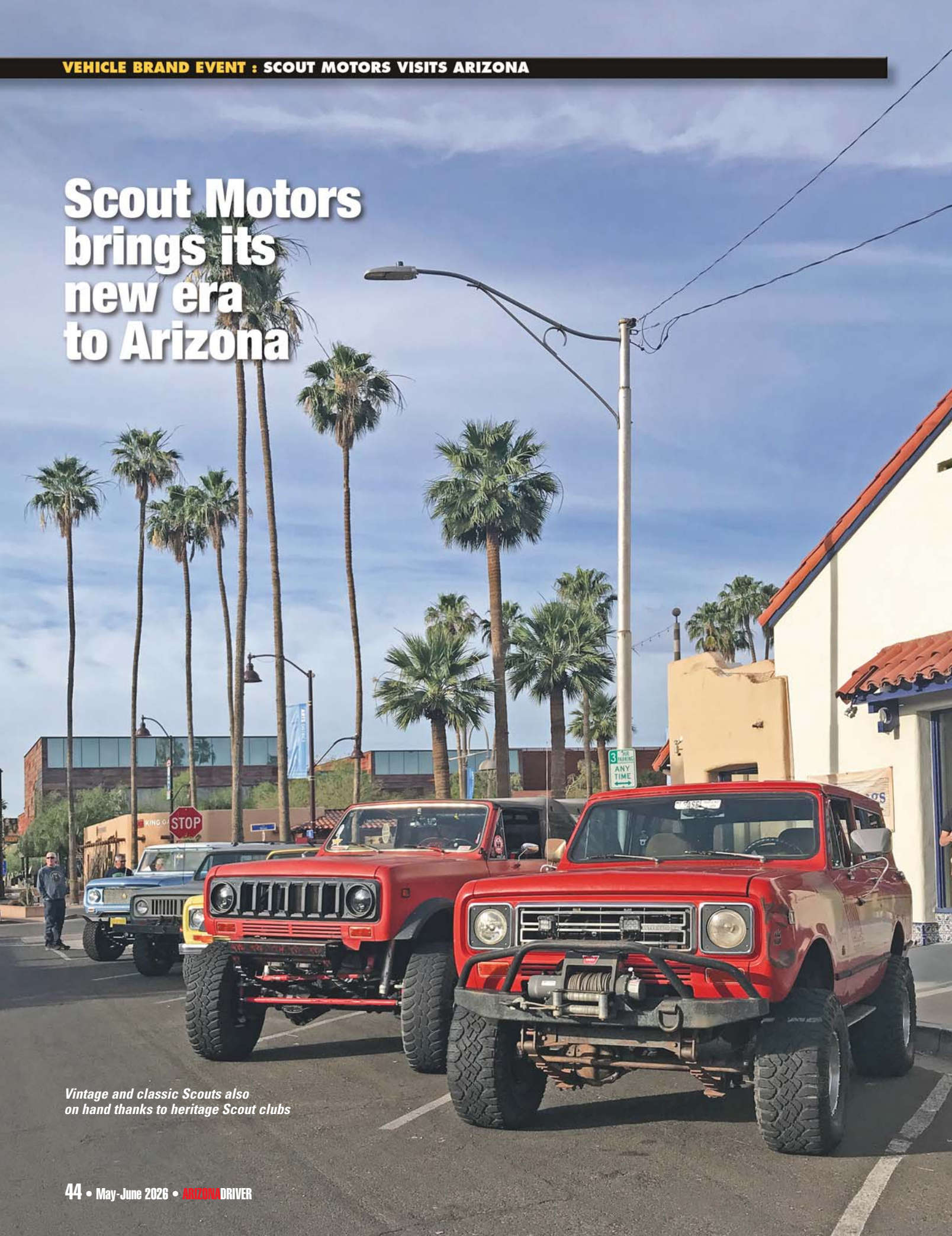
istration (NHTSA) reports that nearly half of all car and booster seats are not used correctly, often due to improper installation. Banner Children's Car Seat Safety Program addresses this challenge through an education-first approach that supports proper use and provides car seats to families in need.

Banner Children's first implemented the Car Seat Safety Program in 1998 as part of its injury prevention efforts, among the first organizations in the nation to offer this training.

The program provides classes for families to learn about the effects of collisions, different types of car seats, and proper installation and use in their vehicle. Through trusted safety advocates and hands-on guidance, the program helps caregivers make well-informed decisions that support safer environments for children of all ages. ■



Scout Motors brings its new era to Arizona



Vintage and classic Scouts also on hand thanks to heritage Scout clubs

(Top to bottom) Scout Traveler SUV; Scout Terra truck; crowd in Scottsdale checks out the concept builds of both, fresh from the LA Auto Show. Overheard: "Well, I think they're on to something!"

Scout Motors had over 1,000 people—thought to be their biggest crowd at any such event to date—attend a *Scout Motors Driven by Community Cars and Coffee* Saturday morning event in old town Scottsdale at the end of April, in partnership with FourTillFour coffee shop. Here, enthusiastic fans and reservation holders could take a look at the Scout Traveler SUV (in its new White Cap paint color) and Terra truck concept vehicles, while also checking out the Scout Motors merchandise truck, itself a custom-equipped heritage Terra truck. Showgoers enjoyed FourTillFour's custom-blended coffee compliments of Scout Motors, while also checking out a range of heritage off-road adventure vehicles along with the new Scout Motors concept vehicles.

Key highlights for the new vehicles include:

- Multifunctional gathering spaces, earning the nickname the Connection Machine™
- Body-on-frame chassis, solid rear axle, and front and rear mechanical lockers deliver robust capability and off-road performance
- Projected towing: over 7,000 pounds for Scout Traveler, over 10,000 pounds for Scout Terra, both with nearly 2,000 pounds of payload
- Anticipated 0-to-60 mph as quickly as 3.5 seconds, made possible by an estimated nearly 1,000 lb-ft of torque in 4WD version
- Scout vehicle software to be built upon a modern zonal architecture, enabling over-the-air updates, remote diagnostics and increased lifetime customer value
- Fully electric models are anticipated to offer up to 350 miles of range. Extended range variants are projected to offer over 500 miles of range through a built-in, gasoline generator
- Exclusive Scout Motors sales and service network promises modern, seamless, customer-first direct sales to customers

Scout is targeting initial production in 2027, with customer deliveries expected to begin in 2028. The plan is to start production with Traveler SUV models powered by the EREV extended-range propulsion system, which represent more than 75 percent of reservations to date.

Scout Traveler SUV is currently slated to start as low as \$50,000 with available incentives, with retail starting under \$60,000, Terra truck as low as \$51,500 with available incentives, retail starting under \$60,000.

You can make a reservation to order your Scout Traveler or Scout Terra at scoutmotors.com ■



Future thinking

AN EYE ON AN IMMINENT NEXT-GEN WITH NEW INTERFACE, LIKELY UPGRADES TO THIS ONE BY JOE SAGE

Refreshed for 2024 and with a new 2027 being teased, the 2026 Volkswagen Atlas, by definition, represents the state of the art.

Ours, in next-to-base trim level called "SE w/Technology" (or SE w/Tech) and front-wheel drive, is a three-row SUV for just \$43,730, second up of five trims from \$39,310 to \$54,630 (\$455 for Pure Gray paint was the only option on ours).

Given a tight price walk, we could be easily motivated by more features in other trims. A base SE (not "w/Tech") is \$39,310, so from there, if choosing between the two, staying FWD but going with

Tech adds \$4,320, while staying at base SE while going to AWD adds only \$1,900. At those prices and for the actual driving difference, we'd choose AWD every time. The only SE w/Tech feature we'd miss having is keyless entry, but that's a big one.

So now we're considering the full range. Notes during our week had several areas of interest that AWD might erase. We did not particularly notice torque steer, classically common in front-drivers (VW cousin Audi was perhaps the first to cleverly engineer it out). But we had instances of chirping when losing adhesion—entering fast traffic from

a side road, a right turn with strong acceleration (a common scenario), and even when the light turned green. Adhesion is easily worth \$1,900.

The green light chirp surprises us, having also noted a general lack of power, although the chirp may be a compensatory symptom. Or it could be a symptom of the auto-start system, bothersome in most vehicles, but here requiring a dive into the screen, as almost everything does in this.

Our notes on features and interfaces in general were many—semi-universal signs of the times, often influenced by EV development, which has had the lion's share of attention in many cases. VW seems to be such a case, as its screen dependency and touch implementations are much the

same as in our recent ID.4. This is discussed online by many. But what's important is—VW knows.

While we had this Atlas, they revealed the next Atlas (see at right). It's coming fast, along with the promise of a concerted effort to move away from the hugely screen-dependent interface. (Many may be watching for a good deal now on a '26, then an update—over-the-air, perhaps, or maybe physical buttons could be integrated into a new wheel or, more comprehensively, new console stack.

Atlas is strikingly handsome, solidly packaged and priced favorably. News that week also named VW as Europe's biggest selling brand. Maybe this reflects different sensibilities, or maybe they have a different interface—and no auto start-stop. The answers lie less in our experience now, more in the changes we have learned are imminent. ■

Our Atlas has all-season tires, good approach and departure angles, but not much breakover and only 6.3 inches of ground clearance. If any off-road or rally customizers have their eye on the Atlas, theirs may be just begging for a lift.



Gen-two 2027 VW Atlas debuts at New York Int'l Auto Show

Just as we were experiencing the 2026 Volkswagen Atlas, VW was at the New York International Auto Show announcing—if not yet fully revealing—a new generation Atlas for 2027. As always, this will create opportunities for buyers of both the current and upcoming versions.

Here's what they had to say:

"When we first launched Atlas in 2017, we delivered the space and style the SUV market was missing; practical, well designed, and unmistakably Volkswagen," said VW of America president and CEO Kjell Gruner. "The all new 2027 Atlas brings more of what matters: a stronger design, smarter technology, increased power, and a premium feel where it matters most."

- Bolder design, smarter tech and new premium features
- All-new sheet metal
- A reimagined cabin, with real wood decor and ambient lighting standard
- 15-inch infotainment, Nappa leather and massaging front seats available
- Standard family-friendly features include power tailgate, rear sunshades, dual wireless charging and voice control
- New front center airbag
- Standard IQ.DRIVE driver assistance suite adds upgrades
- New MQB evo platform preserves spacious third row, generous cargo room
- Updated 2.0-liter EA888 Evo5 turbo-charged engine offers more power, with higher fuel economy anticipated

Stay tuned. ■

SPECIFICATIONS

ASSEMBLY	.....Chattanooga, Tennessee
ROWS/SEATS	.....three / seven
BUILD	.....unitary constr, bolt-on front fenders, two solid-mounted subframes
ENGINE/TRANS BUILD	.....Mexico / USA
PARTS CONTENT	.....US/Canada 59% / Mexico 32%
ENGINE	.....2.0L 4-cyl turbo/intercooled, DOHC, chain driven, 16v, mntnce-free hydraulic lifters, var intake-exhaust timing, var exhaust-valve lift, cast iron block, forged steel 5-bearing crankshaft, alum alloy crossflow head
COMPRESSION RATIO	.....9.6:1
HP/TORQUE	.....269 hp / 273 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION	.....8-spd auto
DRIVETRAIN	.....FWD
SUSPENSION	.....F: strut type w lower control arms, coils, telescopic dampers, anti-roll bar; R: multilink w coils, telescopic dampers, anti-roll bar
STEERING	.....elec pwr assist rack & pinion
BRAKES	.....F: 13.2 x 1.2 vented; R: 12.2 x 0.9 vented
WHEELS	.....20-in x 8J alum alloy
TIRES	.....255/50 R20 all-season
GROUND CLEARANCE	.....6.3 in
APPRCH / DEP / BRKOVER	.....20.8 / 21.3 / 17.8°
TURNING CIRCLE	.....40.0 ft
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	.....200.7 / 117.3 in
HEADROOM (F/2/3)	.....41.3 / 40.4 / 38.3 in
LEGROOM (F/2/3)	.....41.7 / 37.6 / 33.7 in
CARGO CAPACITY	.....20.6 / 55.5 / 96.6 cu.ft
WEIGHT	.....(FWD) 4317 lb
PAYLOAD	.....(FWD) 1102 lb
TOW CAPACITY	.....(FWD or AWD) 5000 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY	.....reg unl / 18.6 gal
MPG	.....20/27/23 (city/hwy/comb)
BASE PRICE	.....\$43,730
PAINT: Pure Gray	.....455
DESTINATION CHARGE	.....1475
TOTAL	.....\$45,660

2026 VW ATLAS LINEUP

	FWD	AWD
SE	\$39,310	\$41,210
SE w/ Tech	\$43,730	\$45,630
Peak Edition SE w /Tech		\$48,060
SEL		\$49,620
SEL Premium R-Line		\$54,630

2026 VW ATLAS CROSS SPORT

	FWD	AWD
SE	\$38,300	\$40,200
SE w/ Tech	\$42,720	\$44,620
SEL		\$48,610
SEL R-Line		\$50,560
SEL Premium R-Line		\$53,620

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Barrett-Jackson Columbus 2026

Barrett-Jackson Inaugural Columbus Ohio Auction
Thursday-Saturday, June 25-27, 2026

Ohio Expo Center & Fairgrounds, 717 E 17th Ave, Columbus OH 43211



Barrett-Jackson Inaugural Columbus Ohio Auction
Thursday-Saturday, June 25-27, 2026

Ohio Expo Center & Fairgrounds
717 E 17th Ave, Columbus OH 43211

BARRETT-JACKSON has added Ohio to their calendar for 2026, with three days of action-packed excitement planned for the inaugural Columbus Auction, Thursday through Saturday, June 25-27. You'll find hundreds of collector cars, an arena filled with bidders, and the auction site offering entertainment for the whole family—including a festival of food, a vast exhibitor marketplace, interactive sponsor displays and thrill rides.

The Ohio Expo Center & State Fairgrounds, one of the most dynamic event venues in the Midwest, has almost half of the nation's population within a 600-mile radius. The facility has just undergone a \$460 million renovation, completed this year. On a 360-acre campus in the heart of Columbus, the Expo Center features 19 buildings, 1.4 million square feet of event space under roof, and on-site parking for 14,000 vehicles.

▼ www.barrett-jackson.com ■

Barrett-Jackson Las Vegas 2026

Barrett-Jackson Las Vegas Fall Auction
Thursday-Saturday, September 10-12, 2026

West Hall of the Las Vegas Convention Center, 300 Convention Center Dr, Las Vegas NV 89109



Barrett-Jackson Las Vegas Fall Auction
Thursday-Saturday, Sept 10-12, 2026

West Hall of the Las Vegas Convention Center
300 Convention Center Dr, Las Vegas NV 89109

BARRETT-JACKSON will return to Las Vegas for a 2026 Fall Auction at the Las Vegas Convention Center (LVCC), on September 10-12. They held their first Las Vegas event in the fall of 2008 and held auctions through June 2023, drawing collector car enthusiasts from around the world.

The 2026 event returns to the Las Vegas Convention Center's spacious state-of-the-art West Hall, where they will entertain visitors with hundreds of collectible vehicles and authentic automobilia items, an Exhibitor Marketplace and a variety of dining options. Barrett-Jackson's host hotel is Fontainebleau Las Vegas, a vertically integrated luxury resort adjacent to the facility and just a short walk away—the only resort and casino in Nevada to receive the 2025 Michelin Guide's coveted One Key designation, recognizing its design, luxury amenities and accommodations.

▼ www.barrett-jackson.com ■

The XC90 is called Large (an NHTSA term for Suburban) by Volvo. But NHTSA calls it mid-size, oddly enough calling XC60 the same. Neither calls XC90 full-size, but we might, given its three rows and generally bold presence—not to mention how it sits in the 40, 60 and 90 lineup.

Does any of that matter? Yes and no. There are so many sizes now, even within individual brands, there is bound to be room for confusion. Some (like NHTSA) use strict measurements. Others use relativity. Some are probably pure marketing.

It interests us with the XC90 because our perceptions would change—in its own feel inside and out, as well as when randomly next to other vehicles, just as we might think we had it pinned down.

Rest assured, this is their biggest, and the best news is we think about it because it's so nimble.

The XC90 lineup offers three trim levels across a tight price range, times two powertrains with a wider price differential—the B5 Hybrid or the T8 Plug-in Hybrid (PHEV), the latter one driven here.

Long gone are the days when Volvo's powertrain numerics matched cylinder count. The T8 is now down to four cylinders, although while horse-

power is moderate, torque is quite high, and zero-to-60 time is quite quick.

PHEVs have long been considered a best-of-all-worlds powertrain by some. Economical like a hybrid, they can plug in to top off, and in a commuting scenario can run full-EV all the time. As the EV push has cooled and PHEVs have quickly become more common, questions remain the same. Is the purchase price worth it? Are there interior or tow capacity losses due to its components? Do they save that much on gas? Numbers are given differently for the two, but combined MPG is close—24 in the hybrid, 27 in the PHEV. Its 58 MPGe is largely theoretical and usage-dependent. Horses (184 for B5 vs 228 for T8) and torque (360 vs 400) need a hands-on comparison, though T8's zero-to-60 in 5.4 seconds, versus the B5's 7.7, is a tell.

Both powertrains are AWD—in-line mechanical in the B5, while the T8 PHEV uses electric motors at the rear. We thought this might be a wild card, an advantage for the B5, if it were full-time versus the known part-time setup in the T8 PHEV. But they are both on-demand systems, running in FWD unless called into action. We had gotten to thinking

2026 VOLVO XC90 LINEUP

B5 HYBRID	Core	\$62,445
	Plus	66,445
	Ultra	71,045
T8 PLUG-IN HYBRID	Core	\$77,595
	Plus	80,245
	Ultra	84,795

about this for a reason.

Our drive experience was good overall. We had sensed a mismatch between driver input and motion at first, thinking it might be related to settings for our optional active chassis and air suspension. But that passed as we became more familiar, our drive now feeling substantial, accurate and quick. We threaded our way through big weekend event freeway madness quickly and accurately.

But we did feel that default FWD at times, via noticeable torque steer when we would want it the least—in fast-accelerating, curving multi-lane freeway ramp scenarios—until the rear kicked in. Both being on-demand suggests any comparison is moot, but the engineering is different—rear isolated on the PHEV, integrated on the B5. This may also be worth a comparo, as it could point to the less expensive versions. ■

SPECIFICATIONS

ASSEMBLY	Torslanda, Sweden
ENGINE/TRANS BUILD	Sweden / Japan
PARTS CONTENT	Swed 40% / Fin 15% / US/Can 0%
ENGINE	2.0L 4-cyl transverse GDI, alum/alum
HP/TORQUE / ENGINE	228 hp / 400 lb-ft
COMPRESSION RATIO	10.3:1
BATTERY	Lithium-ion, 18.8 kWh nominal / 14.7 usable
ELEC MOTOR	107 kW / 309 Nm
DRIVELINE MAX POWER	±455 hp / ±335 kW / ±709 Nm
TRANSMISSION	8-spd automatic
DRIVETRAIN	AWD = FWD + rear electric motor
ZERO-TO-60 KM/H (62 MPH±)	5.4 sec
TOP SPEED	180 km/h (108 mph±)
SUSPENSION	(OURS: optional air suspension); (STANDARD): F: dbl wishbone, coils, hydraulic shocks, stblzr bar; R: integral axle w transverse composite leaf spring, hydraulic shocks, stblzr bar
STEERING	elec pwr assist rack & pinion
BRAKES	F: 18 or 19-in x 30mm R: 17 or 18-in x 20mm
WHEELS	21-in diamond cut
TIRES	275/40 R21 a/s (ours: Pirelli Scorpion Verde)
GROUND CLEARANCE	±8.07 - 8.5 in
APPRCH / DEPART / BRKVER	21.0 / 23.1 / 20.3°
TURNING CIRCLE	na
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	±194.9 / 117.5 in
HEADROOM (F/2/3)	±38.86 / 38.54 / 36.34 in
LEGROOM (F/2/3)	±40.87 / 37.01 / 31.93 in
CARGO CAPACITY	±11.16 / 35.15 / 64.13 cu.ft
WEIGHT	±4910 lb
TOW CAPACITY	±5290 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY	rec'd 95-98 oct unl / ±18.76 gal
MPG	elec 58 MPGe (comb) / gasoline 27 MPG (comb)
BASE PRICE	\$83,400
ULTRA INCLUDES:	Harman Kardon premium audio; graphical heads-up display; front seats: vented Nappa leather, 4-way pwr lumbar, side support, cushion extension, passenger seat memory, rear side sunblinds .....incl in Ultra
ACTIVE CHASSIS W AIR SUSP	1800
BOWERS & WILKINS AUDIO	3200
DESTINATION CHARGE	1295
TOTAL	\$89,695

BELIES ITS SIZE

by Joe Sage



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THE INSIDE TRACK: BRIEFS & RUMORS

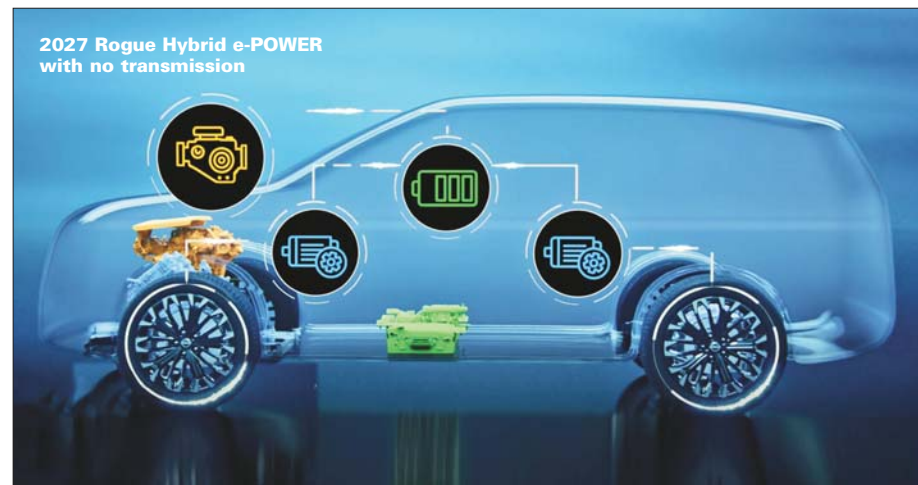


Porsche 935 anniversary
"Porsche Heritage Moments"

▼ Fifty years after the **Porsche 935** was homologated, in March 1976, the sports car manufacturer is marking the anniversary with a five-part series of "Porsche Heritage Moments" on the Porsche YouTube channel. Timo Bernhard, Le Mans winner and World Endurance Champion, guides viewers through the individual episodes, with former race engineer Norbert Singer sharing his personal memories. For the first time, Porsche brings together five key evolutionary stages of the 935:

- The one that started it all: the original homologated 1976 Porsche 935. Developed on the basis of the Porsche 911 and designed for the then newly introduced Group 5 category, it took shape precisely where regulations left room for interpretation
- The further-developed 935/77, with evolution of the twin-turbo technology aiming to conquer Le Mans, durability, aerodynamics, speed and time
- Compact, lightweight design for sprint races: the 935 "Baby" was all about the courage to simplify
- The radical 935/78 "Moby Dick"—episodes of extremes. For sprint and World Championship races, up to 845 hp were available, while power was deliberately reduced for Le Mans.
- In the fifth and final episode, Bernhard and Singer come full circle with a car that was never intended for championship glory yet made everything possible: the first: the 935/77 test car, an internal development prototype, later

used in a record attempt in cycling. These five cars demonstrate just how rapidly the concept evolved from year to year. This pioneering spirit reflects the brand's core identity. Finally, the race engineer looks back on all the evolutions of the 935. What remains true in the anniversary year of "75 Years of Porsche Motorsport" was already true back then: a racing car must be fast, but also reliable, intuitive, and robust. Only once it proves



2027 Rogue Hybrid e-POWER
with no transmission

capable of winning does it go to the customers. And they, in turn, went to score points on racetracks around the world.

▼ The next chapter of the electrification story at **Nissan** begins this year, in an all-new 2027 Rogue Hybrid e-POWER. While most hybrid-electric vehicles in the US use a parallel hybrid system, Nissan e-POWER is a next-generation series hybrid. Two

electric motors power the wheels directly, for instant torque and quick, smooth acceleration, while a gasoline engine serves as a generator for the battery and motors, providing convenient refueling just like a typical gas-powered car—there is no plug. In town, the gasoline engine runs infrequently, as speeds are lower and battery demand is modest. On highways or under heavy load, the engine runs more often, to maintain battery charge and supply sustained electrical power. Its lithium-ion battery stores energy captured through regenerative braking and from the engine. The engine, in turn, is connected to a generator instead of a transmission. This is Nissan's third-generation hybrid system, tuned for the North American market. Nissan e-POWER first debuted in 2016 on the Nissan Note. In the decade since, nearly two million vehicles with e-POWER hybrid technology have been sold in 68 countries. The new Rogue Hybrid e-POWER has additional benefits. Unlike traditional parallel hybrids, Rogue Hybrid e-POWER has no transmission—with electric motors driving the wheels directly for a smooth, quiet

driving experience. The 2027 Rogue Hybrid e-POWER will come with a dual-motor all-wheel drive system standard—going beyond traditional AWD systems by precisely managing power and braking at each wheel. Using dual motors and intelligent brake control, the system continuously calculates optimal distribution of driving force for turning, accelerating and slowing down—adapting instantly to driv-

er input and changing road conditions. During cornering, power is adjusted front-to-rear and side-to-side to maximize grip, helping to track smoothly and predictably. When the driver lifts off the accelerator,



Street League Skateboarding
and BMW M

balanced regenerative braking from both motors can reduce body pitch for flat, stable deceleration. In low-grip conditions, such as on snow-covered hills, the system constantly monitors wheel slip, fine-tuning torque and regenerative braking to help maintain control, with smooth, confident starts and enhanced traction. Finally, Nissan will reintroduce e-Pedal on this vehicle, enabling one-pedal driving in many situations, using just the accelerator pedal



New Mercedes-Benz EQS
introduces steer-by-wire technology

to both speed up or slow down. The 2027 Nissan Rogue Hybrid e-POWER will be available in the US in late 2026.

▼ Street League Skateboarding (SLS) and **BMW M**, the high-performance car manufacturer, have a new multi-year partnership, bringing together two global cultural pioneers on four wheels under a shared vision of "Owning the Streets." The part-

nership officially launched with the SLS Championship Tour event in downtown Los Angeles, a city renowned for its street culture, art, performance and style. In the wide-ranging partnership, BMW M aims to

deliver tangible value to the skateboarding community by positioning itself as not only a sponsor but a strategic partner, driving culturally relevant initiatives that highlight the parallels between skateboarding and racing. Beside logo presence, car integrations, athlete shuttles and initiatives like "Best Seats in the House," a main element of the partnership is the introduction of a new season-long BMW M Most Valuable Performance (BMW M MVP) Award, recogniz-

ed each season. The winners will be determined through a combination of an industry judging panel and fan voting. The partnership will also feature original content showcasing skateboarding culture and the characters that drive the lifestyle, both in competition and on the streets. SLS and BMW M will roll out content formats such as an all-new series "Skaters in Cars Scouting Spots," as skaters explore cities, local spots and skate culture around the world in BMW M vehicles.

▼ The new **Mercedes-Benz EQS** is introducing steer-by-wire technology, making it the first production vehicle from a German automaker available with this technology. Steer-by-wire fundamentally transforms interaction between the driver and vehicle with a completely new steering feel that they say offers a wide range of advantages in everyday driving—benefiting driving dynamics, maneuvering and parking. With steer-by-wire, steering effort required from the driver is reduced, as the driver no longer needs to adjust their grip on the steering wheel when turning. Vibrations from uneven surfaces, previously transmitted to the driver via the wheel, can be eliminated, while they claim a precise, intuitive characteristic Mercedes-Benz steering feel is maintained. Steer-by-wire

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sion specialists have adapted the steering ratio to different driving situations. Added to this is interaction with standard rear-axle steering—at higher speeds, the rear wheels steer in parallel to the front wheels



Genesis Inspiration Foundation media introduction

to enhance stability. The new steer-by-wire system has already completed over a million test kilometers (over 621,000 test miles) on test benches, test tracks, and in overall vehicle validation in road traffic. To ensure it meets the brand's strict safety standards, the design utilizes a redundant system architecture in addition to high-precision sensors and powerful control units. These two signal paths ensure steering capability is always guaranteed. Lateral control is also possible through rear-axle steering and targeted wheel-specific braking interventions via the ESP. In addition to the optional steer-by-wire system, the Mercedes-Benz EQS continues to be equipped standard with electro-mechanical steering.

▼ **Genesis** Inspiration Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization committed to supporting education through the arts, has announced it will award over \$3 million in 2026 to 91 youth arts organizations across the US, bringing the Foundation's total philanthropic giving to more than \$16 million since 2018. Established to expand access to youth arts education, Genesis Inspiration Foundation represents a long-term investment in creativity, helping ensure that young people have opportunities to explore, learn and express themselves through the arts, aiming to increase accessibility and foster creativity, regardless of background, especially within under-resourced communities. The Foundation states that arts play a critical role in

fostering creativity, confidence, and critical thinking—skills essential to shaping future innovators and leaders. A portion of revenue from every new Genesis vehicle sold helps fund youth arts education

through the Foundation, with additional support provided by Genesis Motor America. A complete list of grant recipients will be announced later this year.

▼ First official images of the new Caddy from **Volkswagen** Commercial Vehicles (VWCV) in Europe reveal changes that immediately catch the eye—a new bumper, new exterior paintwork, brand-new 16-to-18-inch alloy wheels. A favorite vehicle of



Volkswagen Caddy

tradespeople, small business owners, families and hobby-lovers alike is getting an update, having already won over 500,000 customers worldwide and topping the table of VWCV's most successful individual models with over 110,000 vehicle deliveries in FY 2025. Refreshed as an urban delivery van or family leisure car, its numerous variants include cargo and passenger car models, normal or long wheelbase

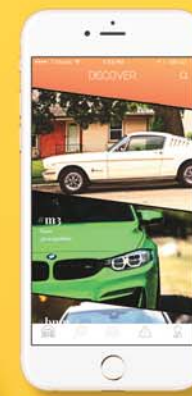
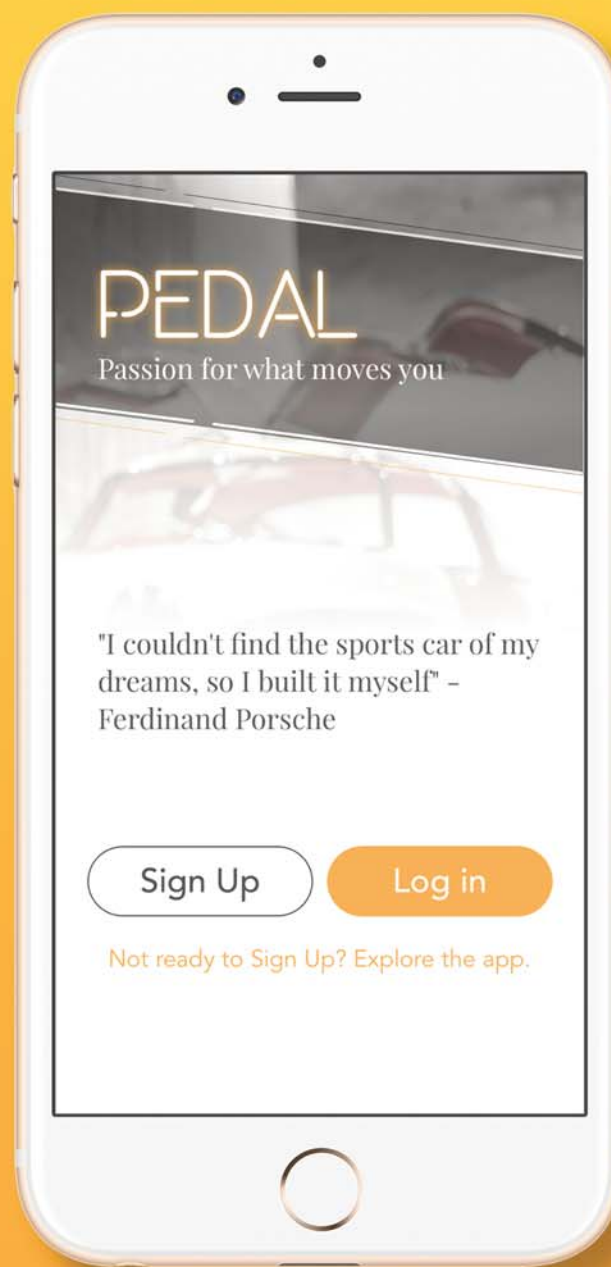
(Maxi), basic, Edition or California models, and versions with the Life or Style package, as well as Caddy Flexible or special conversions. Tradespeople and small business owners have been just as impressed by the cargo van versions of the Caddy, as taxi companies or families with children have by the passenger car versions. Of special interest, the Caddy Flexible turns a five-seater passenger car into a two-seater van with partition wall—or vice versa—in just a few simple steps. The model series (overseas) is also available with a gasoline, diesel or eHybrid drive system—the latter providing a range of over 385 miles, up to 76 miles of which can be achieved on electric power alone. Whether equipped with a trunk lid or wing doors, power closing systems as standard for the large sliding doors, a flexible seating concept or a large load compartment, the Caddy offers solutions for almost every application. It's also great for hitting the great outdoors—with bikes, surfboards, out with the dogs, or to spend the night in bed in the Caddy California, which is also available with an optional mini kitchen. The normal wheel-base offers five to seven seats, while the Caddy Cargo Maxi offers over ± 110 cubic feet of load compartment volume. Also a choice for people with disabilities, whether as active drivers or passengers, there

are an extensive range of conversion options for the high-roof van. Depending on the model, the Caddy can also tow up to ± 3300 lb with a tow bar. Comprehensive changes are also expected in the interior of the new Caddy, including a larger, free-standing central display. Pre-sales are expected to start in the middle of the year.

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▼ **Acura** marks 40 years since its debut in America on March 27, 1986, as the first Japanese luxury car brand, with the introduction of the Legend sedan and sporty



Acura Integra 40 Racer

Integra—a turning point in the luxury car market. In celebration, Acura hit its hometown race in April—the 51st Acura Grand Prix of Long Beach—with an Acura Integra 40 Racer, a first-generation Integra tribute build by Honda Racing Corporation US, honoring Acura’s first race car, the Comp-tech Integra No. 48, which won consecutive IMSA International Sedan Series Manufacturers’ and Drivers’ Championships from 1987 to 1990. In the early 1980s, American Honda had spotted an opportunity in the competitive marketplace, as core baby boomer customers in the US market increasingly turned toward performance-oriented luxury products, mostly European. Honda sought to intercept them. Vehicles at the high end of the market didn’t fit the Honda brand image, so a new division that would cater to luxury and performance—internally known as Channel 2—was officially born with a public announcement on April 1, 1984. American Honda commissioned NameLab of San Francisco to develop a new brand name that could embody its key goals—precision and quality. This resulted in “Acura”—derived from the Latin root “acu,” meaning sharp or precise. Launching the world’s first Japanese luxury brand was a gamble, but Honda felt they had a record of finding success by defying conventional wisdom. The bet paid off immediately. In its first year on the market, Acura grew its dealer network from a launch in an initial 60 dealers in the top 30 US markets, to 150 dealers by year’s end. By just 12 months later, Acura

had become the best-selling luxury-performance import brand in the US, silencing even the harshest critics and permanently changing the luxury market from slow growth among a handful of brands to

fierce competition among many. Competing Japanese brands followed Acura into the luxury market in 1990, while established European players realized that both their product and pricing would have to change to meet the new competition. With establishment of a major Honda R&D product development center in Ohio in 1993, US-developed Acura models began coming to market starting with the all-new 1997 CL—the first US-designed, developed and



Volvo Cars plant Ridgeville, South Carolina

manufactured model from any luxury import nameplate. Production of the stylish two-door CL coupe began in 1995, with sales starting in 1996. Now known as the North American Automotive Development Center, over the past three decades Honda associates in the US have led engineering and design of many of the most popular and innovative Acura models—its first mid-size SUV, the MDX (the first luxury SUV

with standard third-row seating, named as 2001 North American Truck of the Year), soon followed by the third-generation TL (the best-selling Acura sedan of all time), the all-wheel drive TLX sedan, the award-winning third-gen RDX, and the second-gen NSX—all designed and developed in the US and built in North America, using domestic and globally made parts.

▼ **Volvo Cars** and **Polestar** plan to consolidate production of Polestar 3 cars at Volvo’s plant in Ridgeville, South Carolina, outside Charleston, reinforcing its strategic role as a key manufacturing site. Polestar 3 is currently also produced in Chengdu, China. Volvo Cars’ global manufacturing footprint has locations in China, Europe and the US, enabling it to optimize for the highest efficiency. Volvo’s US plant is already a global production hub for the fully electric Volvo EX90 SUV, built on Volvo’s SPA2 architecture, which also underpins the Polestar 3. Apart from building Polestar 3 cars in the US, Volvo Cars previously announced that it will also introduce its best-selling XC60 midsize SUV to the South Carolina production line. Following the XC60, Volvo plans to add a new, next-generation hybrid model to the Ridgeville production line before 2030, a vehicle designed to meet specific demands of the

US market and reinforcing Volvo’s commitment to manufacturing in this country. Volvo Cars has invested \$1.3 billion in the South Carolina facility in the last decade, to prepare for the future. The plant currently has an installed production capacity of 150,000 cars per year. Together with its plants in Europe and China, the South Carolina plant is key to an increased focus on regional tailoring of products. ■

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