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ISSUE TWO



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DRIVEN

LEXUS GS 250/350 <
INFINITI FX 37/50 <
VOLKSWAGEN CC <
BMW 335i <



01 // Joel Tam

Managing Editor & Photographer

Joel started sister publication Burnpavement.com, and in 2 years, garnered 150,000 unique readers the world over with 5 million overall hits. He is an art director, active commercial photographer and father of three boys. Although he drives an STI now, he claims the EVO 9 GSR to be the best car money can buy.

02 // Azfar Hashim

Associate Editor

With almost 10 years of automotive journalism under his belt, Azfar has been in the industry long enough to have his 'COE' renewed. A hard-core driver, he is our default travel and drive-trip guru, and is looking to purchase himself something that can cover long distances faster.

03 // Dr Kevin Co

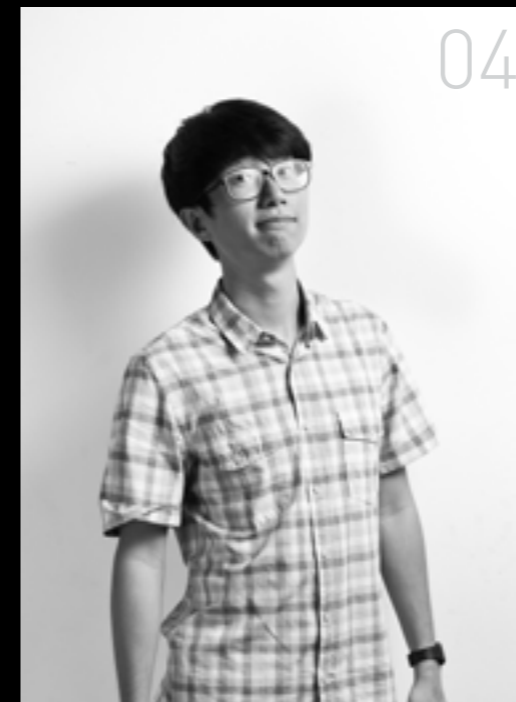
Contributing Writer

As an avid car enthusiast, Kevin is the perfect person to review cars for his consortium of fellow dentists - now his stories will be read by their customers as well. He may look meek, but our doc's ride packs a whopping 600 Nm. Don't play play.

04 // Low Fai Ming

Photographer

He doesn't look it, but Fai is truly one of the industry's best photographers. With a keen eye that stems from a passion for cars, he is able to see things us normal folk can't. He hopes to be able to pack his equipment into a Suzuki Swift Sport one day.

**QUALITY COMES AT A PRICE.**

Stuff that don't work are cheap, and cheap stuff don't work.

How many of us know that, but still often opt for the cheaper alternative? I admit, I am like that sometimes.

But that said, I have a rule. If what I spend on is going to - directly or indirectly - make me money, I WILL NOT go cheap. It just doesn't make sense to do so. It may breakdown on me, or the results won't achieve the desired effect. Either way, it will be money down the drain for me. So if I want something done well, I'd pay for it.

Where am I going with this?

Well, it is actually a preface to the big THANK YOU I want to extend to our clients. In recent months, we have begun to do commercial automotive photography for some of the biggest names in the industry. Our work has been repeatedly published in the national paper, magazines, websites, brochures, catalogues and even plastered on buildings.

Our clients know quality when they see it, and they are willing to pay for it - you know who you are. For that I humbly thank each and everyone of you for your support.

Now that the N.GINE is running, we've spent many sleepless nights to make sure that what you receive is top-notch. But we love doing it. Because we know you love what we do.

Come to think of it, I may have to retract what I said, there is one piece of quality work that doesn't come at a price to you! It's N.GINE!

Managing Editor
Joel Tam

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PORSCHE LAUNCHES NEW BOXSTER WITH THE PERFECT BACKDROP

By Azfar Hashim | Photos by Low Fai Ming

For the first time, a car launch took place at the Marina Barrage, an iconic landmark in Singapore that Porsche picked to symbolise the open concept of the Boxster.

The new Boxster clearly distinguishes itself from the previous generations in terms of looks; comprehensive changes have been made to produce a more elegant and sportier appearance, especially from the rear.

The open-top two-seater now has a completely new lightweight body and revamped chassis. The considerably lower weight, longer wheelbase, wider track and larger wheels significantly enhance the mid-engine sports car's driving dynamics, supported by the new electro-mechanical power steering. The new Boxsters are also up to 15 percent more fuel efficient.

Both models are powered by flat-six engines with direct petrol injection, of which the efficiency is

further enhanced by electrical system recuperation, thermal management and start/stop function. The base model's new power unit delivers 265 hp from a 2.7 litre displacement – ten hp more than its larger displacement predecessor. The 3.4-litre engine of the Boxster S now delivers 315 hp, which is five hp more than before. The Boxster sprints from zero to 100 km/h in 5.7 seconds, the Boxster S in 5.0 seconds.

Porsche also offers the Sport Chrono Package as an optional extra for the Boxster, featuring dynamic transmission mounts for the first time. Also new in the Boxster is Porsche Torque Vectoring (PTV) with mechanical rear axle differential lock.

The basic list price in Singapore will be SGD 218,210 for the Boxster and SGD 258,182 for the Boxster S. Prices include a 5-year free maintenance and warranty program, market-specific equipment, GST but exclude COE. **N.**



IT'S HERE! TOYOTA LAUNCHES THE 86!

By Joel Tam | Photos by Low Fai Ming

From our first impressions, the Toyota 86, as it will officially be known here, is a splendid driver's car. Nimble, adjustable and light on its feet. Quite simply - NICE!

Our readers are a smart lot, so all of you are aware of the history linkages with the AE86, GT2000, yadda yadda, so we won't bore you with that. What's important to note is that there will be two main models. The base S-model will be available in 6-speed manual and 6-speed automatic, both at the same price of \$183,988. The GS-model will have Smart Entry, Smart Start, HID lights, paddle-shifters for the automatic transmission, frameless rear-view mirror, digital speedo, amongst other things. A GS specced 86 will require you to fork out \$10,000 more.

Early birds get a free upgrade to the full TRD bodykit you'll see in the following pages. A bit fussy we admit, but we like it nonetheless! Want the full TRD goodie pack? Drop by Borneo Motors for more information on their the top-of-the-range TRD Performance package.

Oh, did we forget to mention that Toyota wants you to take this out for a test-drive? Because even if you can't own one now, they'd be happy for you to pin up the lovely shots from their brochure to remind yourself to aspire towards owning one in the near future.





>> Opposite page, clockwise from left.

- '86' badge give the car a bit more identity than it's Subaru sibling.
- Interior is sporty and well-made, but not the most inspiring.
- Redline at 7,400 rpm, we'd like to really dial this one up!
- TRD wheels and brakes really bring it up a notch.
- 86 in GS spec. Red is NOT dead!
- Button on the far left needs to light up if you want to even attempt to get the tail out.
- TRD bodykit is a tad fussy, but sexes up the car a whole lot!



AN 86 SEDAN?

Don't rule that out! As N.GINE talks to Yoshinori Sasaki, Assistant Chief Engineer of the Toyota 86.

By Azfar Hashim | Photos by Low Fai Ming

Building an affordable sports car is not an easy task in this era. With emission standards to comply with, differing demands for different markets, plus pricing and packaging to keep it justifiable for the company, building one from the ground up suddenly sounds like rocket science.

That seemed to be the case for Toyota – the Japanese carmaker most car enthusiasts considered 'soul-less' ever since their focus shifted to mass-production cars.

But with the arrival of the new Toyota 86, things will change for the company. After all, it's a highly anticipated car the world over. Even its twin, Subaru's BRZ, hasn't gotten this much anticipation and attention.

In an exclusive media launch at the Changi Exhibition Centre of the Toyota 86, we met one of the brains behind this car to clear some burning questions.

N.GINE (NG): Explain the design language of the 86.

Yoshinori Sasaki (YS): The design brief given to the designers was simple: get the feel of the 2000 GT.

NG: How long did the entire development, from drawing board to final production, take?

YS: The entire process took five years; studies into this model alone took two years to complete.

Mr. Akio Toyoda (currently the President of Toyota Motor Corporation) was back then Assistant Vice-President and also in-charge of the brand's marketing. In one of the board director's meeting, he insisted Toyota needed to have more 'emotional' cars in their line up. At that time, the MR-S has already ceased production, and there was no more sports car from the brand.

He then formed a department within Toyota that focuses only on sports cars. Then, he got Tetsuya Tada (Chief Engineer of the 86) to study this new sports car project – that was the start of it all.

Tetsuya went on research after research, and after much study, he concluded that this new sports car has to be (a) lightweight and (b) affordable; it has to be like the AE86. After all in Japan, the AE86 still appeals to young drivers – so he knew this new sports car need to have the spirit of the AE.

We then studied the viability of working together with Subaru at producing this sports car; one with a low centre of gravity. Initially, there were some issues that needed sorting out – Subaru had a different direction, they wanted to make this car fitted with all-wheel drive and a turbocharged engine. But after more studies, both Toyota and Subaru agreed to build this sports car with a naturally-aspirated engine, no turbocharger, and rear-wheel driven.

It also took awhile before a design was produced. And it also took a few prototypes before deciding on this particular set-up – in the end, we feel this type of sports car has a big potential.



NG: What other variants will be made available later on? Is there going to be a sport / special edition 86?

YS: We are studying many ideas; even a four-door variant. Of course, this is just an idea! But one thing's for sure is that there will never be a turbocharged or all-wheel drive version: there's just not enough space within the car to accommodate either or both.

However as we speak right now, we are developing a sports suspension system for a sporty version. That's as far as we will go, for now. We'll also include better tyres for this version.

We're also very sure that very soon, many aftermarket parts will be available for the 86.

NG: Why did Toyota chose a 2.0-liter naturally-aspirated engine over a, say, 1.6-liter turbocharged or supercharged engine?

YS: Manufacturer's studies unfortunately deny a turbocharged engine due to the space constraint. We also needed space for the car's safety features.

Well we did considered a 1.6-liter engine too; but we felt there's not enough power to match the character of the 86. In the end, it's the 2.0-liter engine that we found most suitable.

NG: How many units have been sold globally to date?

YS: We have manufactured 8,000 units so far – 4,000 units for Japan, and the other 4,000 units for the international market. However for international markets, I do not have the allocation breakdown.

In Japan alone, we have received 13,000 orders. We also projected 1,000 units to be sold in Japan each month.

NG: Do you consider the 86 Toyota's halo car?

YS: Yes. This is a model that will contribute to the overall elevation of the Toyota brand globally.

NG: What is the GT86's biggest strength?

YS: A person who enjoys driving will definitely enjoy what the 86 offers. This car will remind you that driving can still be both enjoyable and fun – not only as a mode of transportation.

Through the 86, it will also remind people that Toyota is still capable; that Toyota is not only associated with eco cars like the Prius.

NG: Last words for our readers who are considering one?

YS: Simply test-drive to enjoy it. This is one car that the driver can both drive and control... all by himself.

Yoshinori Sasaki
Assistant Chief Engineer
Toyota 86



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Way of Life!

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FIRST DRIVES

Lexus GS 350 Luxury



THE TIME IS NOW

After years of pursuing the hallowed luxury-car class, Lexus has reached perfection. *Joel Tam* gets behind the wheel of the new GS 250 and GS 350.

Photography | Joel Tam

18 | 19

FIRST DRIVES

Lexus GS 350 Luxury



"...the new car features three driving modes, ranging from fuel-conserving ECO to Sport S, and Sport S+ which will put the luxury sedan in its edgiest personality."



The first thing that hits you as you walk up to a new GS, is how it looks like nothing the Japanese marque has ever produced before. While some might find it over-styled. Yours truly is liking every bit of it. Especially in F-Sport trim. What we have here with us today is the Luxury spec though, and while it's not really tugging at my boy-racer heartstrings, it is still making an impact on the more 'mature' side of me.

Powered by a V6 engine linked with a six-speed automatic transmission, the new car features three driving modes, ranging from fuel-conserving ECO to

Sport S and Sport S+ which will put the luxury sedan in its edgiest personality, with transmission and engine throttle settings at their sharpest, as well as suspension damper and steering adjustments. The chassis has been redesigned, overall weight reduced, and unsprung mass has been reduced by way of employing aluminum for all its suspension components.

The signature spindle grille with its trapezoidal contours is not purely for show. It integrates into the aggressive front bumper to allow for efficient airflow. Look at it from any angle and there's no denying the chiseled

styling has been well utilised in every corner of the car. The end result is a handsome, albeit a bit boxy, profile.

This is further enhanced by the paint technology Lexus has developed to make subtle bodylines more noticeable. Even glass flakes have been used to add a high level of brilliance to the paint! Finished with a new coating technology that will make the paint appear more radiant, defining sharp highlights on the car even more.

Step into the cabin and the attention to detail continues. The 'obiang' (Singlish for 'out of fashion') rosewood found

in Lexus cars of old is gone. Classy wood panels with modern grains have been meticulously fitted together with aluminum inserts, and fine leather abound.

The interior also features the industry's largest high-resolution display screen measuring in at 12.3 inches. The front redesigned seat frame in the Luxury model is powered with 18-way adjustability and audiophiles will enjoy the 17-speaker Mark Levinson system too. Even rear passengers get to toggle with the tech-goodies, as the rear centre armrest has an integrated command centre. Talk about luxury!

20 | 21

FIRST DRIVES

Lexus GS 350 Luxury

"I'm certain Lexus has won over many buyers who used to have either a star or a propeller on their key fob. After all, "L" is for Luxury..."

Even before I drive it, the car has impressed me a good deal. But it is in the drive that this deal is really sealed.

The 3.5-liter engine pushes 306 bhp and 375 Nm of torque. Lexus says the 0-100 km/h is dispatched in 5.7 seconds. While the car feels a tad too heavy to make that really believable, the speedometer indicates otherwise. The car simply pulls strongly and before you know it, the needle is pointing to the far right of the dial and the legal speed limit is breached beyond license-revoking levels. It makes all the right noises too. The V6 is just smooth and creamy from anywhere in the rev range.

In Comfort mode, the car feels exactly that, plush and soft. But flick the knob on the drive mode selector to Sport S+, and the car is instructed to give it all it's got. Admittedly though, the difference in drive modes are not as pronounced as what you would find in an Audi, for example. So in my opinion, use it S+ all the time, the car is still cushy enough.

With a wider track and 14% increased rigidity, the new car handles impressively too. Despite the weight, the GS 350 was able to power out of turns with remarkable poise and surprising speed. The adaptive suspension system was effective in sorting out those same bends with very minor body roll, making the car predictable and giving the driver confidence.

Overall, the GS 350 is an extremely convincing package for this segment. It has made buyers shopping for an E-Class and 5 Series think twice. With more than 200 orders when it was first launched, I'm certain Lexus has won over many of these buyers who used to have either a star or a propeller on their key fob. After all, "L" is for Luxury. **N.**



22 | 23

FIRST DRIVES

Lexus GS 250 Luxury

You have to hand it to Lexus. Just look at the new GS inside and out. Every part of this car can hold its own against its teutonic competitors. They did it. They made an 'European-like' mass market Japanese car!

Even in the bread and butter model, the GS 250, you won't be short of stuff to strut around when you next meet someone with a German premium sedan.

In fact, I like the GS 250 better than its bigger brother. You really wouldn't know unless you drive them back to back, like we did.

In Luxury spec, the features are highly similar in both the 250 and the 350. So it really comes down to the engine, and the difference is surprisingly minimal.

The lighter 2.5 V6 in the 250 actually makes the front end more direct. Both engines are V6's so the growl from the 250 is just as sonorous, albeit a tad harsher.

With 60 kg less, it is light on its feet too and definitely feels more potent than the unit found in the IS250, although technically they are the same. It kinda makes you wonder where the extra 100 bhp in the GS 350 went.

It may not be as creamy and smooth as the 350, and it even looks quite a bit slower on paper, but the GS 250 is all you need. **N.**

OMG! ONE MINUTE GLANCE

Max Power: 303 hp @ 6200 rpm
Max Torque: 371 Nm @ 3600 rpm
Max speed: 233 km/h
0-100 km/h: 5.9 seconds
Transmission: 6-speed Sequential automatic
Kerb Weight: 1,740 kg
CO²: 225 g/km

GS 350

Max Power: 206 hp @ 6400 rpm
Max Torque: 254 Nm @ 4800 rpm
Max speed: 229 km/h
0-100 km/h: 8.6 seconds
Transmission: 6-speed Sequential automatic
Kerb Weight: 1,680 kg
CO²: 209 g/km

GS 250



24 | 25

FIRST DRIVES

Infiniti FX50 V8



TAKE MY BREATH AWAY

Before you say "sorry, you're late" in bated breath to Infiniti, the FX might surprise you in more ways than one – *Azfar Hashim drives this top end V8.*

Photography | Low Fai Ming

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FIRST DRIVES

Infiniti FX50 V8



"The FX50 might have been a little late entering our market, but at a time where luxury cars still have their appeal, it still has its advantages."

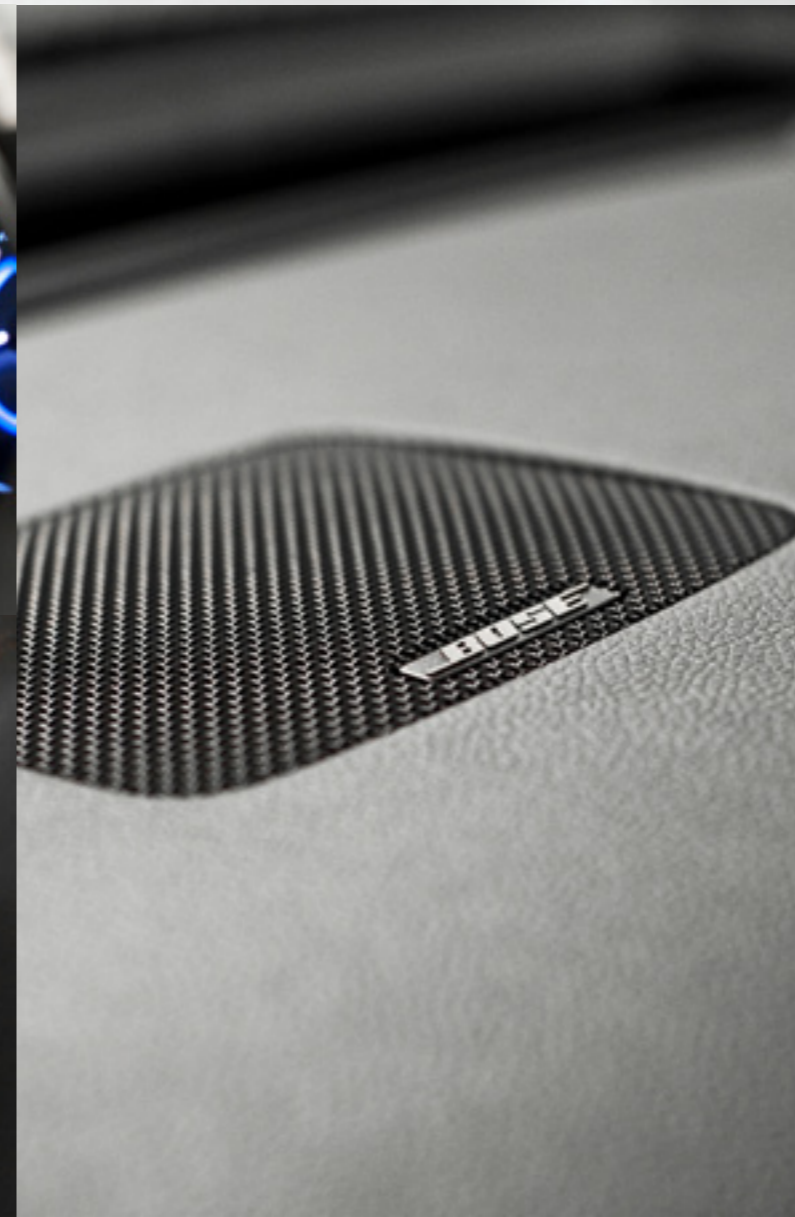
The default choice, when it comes to luxury SUV, would usually be German - think Porsche, BMW and Audi. Then there is also the Japanese Lexus.

That is why you see Cayennes, X5s, Q7s and RXs roaming our roads in droves. After all, driving a premium SUV is making a statement - that you have arrived in life. It oozes class too...

So banking on that appeal and idea, Infiniti also jumped onto the bandwagon. But here's the interesting bit though: they gave their rendition a more slender and sexier body.

The FX50 might have been a little late entering our market, but at a time where luxury cars still have their appeal, it still has its advantages: to begin with, it's a splendid alternative to the usual suspects.

Like all things, there are rules of design. But like all rules, they are there to be broken. It's how they're broken, that's the crucial bit. In so many ways, the Infiniti FX50 stands separate from its nearest rivals, the BMW X5 xDrive50i and Porsche Cayenne S. Dimensionally speaking, it is longer but stands shorter than the X5 and Cayenne S; despite that, the FX50 still has more road presence than the other two.



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FIRST DRIVES

Infiniti FX50 V8



Perhaps the large grill and wide stance, plus that rule-breaking coupe-like silhouette made it money on wheels. Those 21-inch alloys, wrapped in 265/45 R-21 rubbers, sum it all up perfectly. Side air vents, just after the front tyres add more visual drama.

But it doesn't just trounce the X5 and Cayenne S in terms of exterior aesthetics. Even in terms of pricing, the FX50's \$360,000 sounds like a bargain compared to the Bee Em's \$426,800 and the Porker's \$395,938.

Interior wise, Infiniti seemed to have put in a lot of effort – which is appropriate, considering the league it's in and the competition it has to compete with.

Build quality is an all-time high, with every gaps near invincible to the naked eye. Even the plastics used, although we know how some bits came off the Nissan Murano / Teana, seemed a notch higher when touched. So far so good.

The dashboard is cleverly designed towards the driver, which is added convenience considering he doesn't have to take his eyes off the road ahead just to adjust the air-con temperature (so thoughtful those Japanese). There are more useful controls - cruise and audio controls - on the nicely sized steering wheel itself; come to think of it, you could probably run an entire country just by staying in the cockpit...

Those leathered seats are beautifully crafted, and so comfortable - even if you're slightly bigger-sized than usual. Best part is, you also get butt-coolers for the front two seats as standard items – useful touch for a humid country like ours.

Rear passengers are equally pampered. Like the front two, the rear seats provide enough space for three average-sized adults. Leg and headroom also deserve compliments – although being in this space feels rather uncannily similar to being in a Murano. Practicality rates highly here as well, with the foldable backrest ensuring you can actually load up bulkier items when you need to.



Infiniti FX50 V8

For audiophiles, a Bose 11-speaker audio system also comes standard. Blast it in all its glory and be prepared to be the centre of attention (if your windows are down).

When you think about V8 engines in excess of four litres, you can't help but wonder how fast they can take you. The 5.0-litre V8 engine powering the FX50, mated to a 7-speed automatic transmission, whips out a rather glorious amount of power: try 390bhp and 500Nm.

It may seem a tad little when you compare it to the X5's 407bhp and 600Nm, and the Cayenne S's 400bhp and 500Nm – but it makes a nice sound while accelerating to 100km/h, sounding throatier than its German counterparts. Oh by the way, the FX50 only needs 5.8 seconds to do so; a respectable feat considering it weighs in at 2,120kg.

At this level, you're bound to expect an engine that is smooth and progressive in its power delivery, provide plenty of torque, automatic transmissions that move almost imperceptibly from ratio to ratio, with a manual mode to let you drive like Vettel. Well, I'm glad to report that the FX50 is all of the above.

Some might perceive SUVs to be soft, wallowy, acutely prone to understeer and generally no fun at all. But for

a car like this, the FX50 sits low, dropping the centre of gravity. Also, its springs are taut with damping very well controlled.

This leads to a distinctive handling capability – by which we mean a ride that's just on the enthusiast's side of comfortable, plus levels of grip and cornering ability that the average driver will probably never fully explore or exploit. Having a unique Rear Active Steer (the rear two tyres will tilt to compliment the front's) also helps – the FX50 does feel sharp when driven down a series of bends at speeds. Controlled body-roll then ensures your occupants don't get thrown about like ragdolls.

When the nose does start to go wide in a corner, the Vehicle Dynamic Control will cool everything down. With sufficient information coming through the steering wheel, the whole experience is tidy and in no way inferior to the Germans.

The Infiniti FX50 displays a different set of appeal in this big-engined luxury SUV class. So it may need a little more time for buyers to warm up to the brand, but with what it can offer, they might be at the losing end for not getting acquainted with this model soon enough. Stylish, highly equipped and a brilliant performer for an SUV, you will even forget it's an upscaled Nissan. **N.**



Infiniti FX37 V6

Text & Photography | Joel Tam

Let's face it. Infiniti will not sell as many cars as Lexus, and I don't think they mind it at all.

The whole point of a car like the FX, is not to have mass appeal. A car like that is reserved for those who can appreciate it's unconventional good looks, amongst other things.

One of those other things, is the engine. As the entry-level FX, the FX37 is powered by a 3.7-litre V6 that pumps out a heady 316 bhp and 360 Nm of torque. It sounds great and is rather quick too. While it may not have the same top-end power as the FX50, it is certainly sufficient. The century sprint is dispatched in an impressive 6.8 seconds, although 7.5 is probably more realistic.

Wearing 20" Enkei shoes, the car rides noticeably smoother than the FX50 that is on 21"s, while still filling up the wheel arches quite nicely.

Everything else is pretty much the same - rad interior, 7-speed gearbox with paddle-shifters, sunroof, aircon/ heated seats. It even has the surround camera so parking is a cinch (yes, even for the missus).

\$70,000 less than the FX50, less weight in front (110kg overall), and less road tax to pay - the FX37 is starting to look like good value. The few features that are missing (like the adaptive suspension found on the FX50) you won't really need, so yes, the FX37 is a better deal. **N.**

OMG! ONE MINUTE GLANCE

Max Power: 390 hp @ 6500 rpm
 Max Torque: 500 Nm @ 4400 rpm
 Max speed: 250 km/h
 0-100 km/h: 5.8 seconds
 Transmission: 7-speed Automatic
 Kerb Weight: 2,020 kg
 CO²: 310 g/km

Max Power: 316 hp @ 7000 rpm
 Max Torque: 360 Nm @ 5200 rpm
 Max speed: 233 km/h
 0-100 km/h: 6.8 seconds
 Transmission: 7-speed Automatic
 Kerb Weight: 1,912 kg
 CO²: 284 g/km

FX50

FX37

STYLE AND SUBSTANCE

Volkswagen's sexiest sedan gets a refresh and five seats. *Joel Tam* takes it out for a spin to see if style can really be bought.

Photography | Low Fai Ming



Let's rewind. When Volkswagen first introduced the Passat CC four years ago, it was a handsome sleek coupe-like sedan that won over buyers who couldn't quite afford a Mercedes CLS. It looked unlike anything else on the road and was a surprisingly daring move for a normally 'safe' Volkswagen.

Truth be told, I never quite liked the first Passat CC. As a designer myself, I felt the rear lamps were not cohesive with the overall styling of the car. When lit up at night, the round tail lamps looked out of place and bordered on looking contrived.

Fast forward to 2011. I'm in front of my computer, about to view photos of the new Passat CC that was just launched in Europe. Only one thought ran through my head, 'Lose the tail lamps!'. They did.

Fast forward again, this time to the present, 2012. Volkswagen has dropped the Passat name, moving towards branding the CC on its own. A bit like how

Mercedes does it with the CLS (it's actually an E-Class underneath!). Well I'm happy to say that the CC does not look like the regular Passat at all. It is gorgeous, and yes, the new tail lamps are faultless. When lit, the distinctive LED L-shaped lights look classy and elegant. The front too, looks less fussy, with a clean and angular-shaped pair of head lamps, flanking a bold grill that is detailed in both matt and gloss finishing. Very modern and very nice.

The rest of the car looks the same though. Not that it's bad. In fact, Volkswagen got it spot on. They fixed the things that needed fixing, and retained the elements we like. A good example of this is on the inside, where the rear center console is now a seat. You can still opt for the 2+2 configuration though. Get in the driver's seat and the two-tier dashboard we know and love is still there. Granted, it is getting old, but that said, it still looks thoroughly modern, especially in this colour combination and brushed aluminum panel finishing. Just look at the photos and tell me you would rather have a Nissan Teana.





"...it still looks thoroughly modern, especially in this colour combination and brushed aluminum panel finishing. Just look at the photos and tell me you would rather have a Nissan Teana."

FIRST DRIVES

Volkswagen CC

As for how the CC drives, it's pretty much the same as before, which again, is perfectly fine. Power delivery from the 1.8-litre turbocharged unit is linear and you hardly feel any turbo lag. It just feels like a 2.5-litre car. While not blisteringly quick, it is never short of power. Capable of sprinting to 100 km/h from standstill in 8.5 seconds, the rather strong 250 Nm of torque is sufficient for most daily situations. The power junkie in me would yearn for more though, and for that, there is the option of the more powerful 2.0 TSI Sport with a substantial 50 bhp but rather modest 30 Nm more. Those wanting a taste of 'R36' power can bring in the 3.6-litre V6 with 300 bhp.

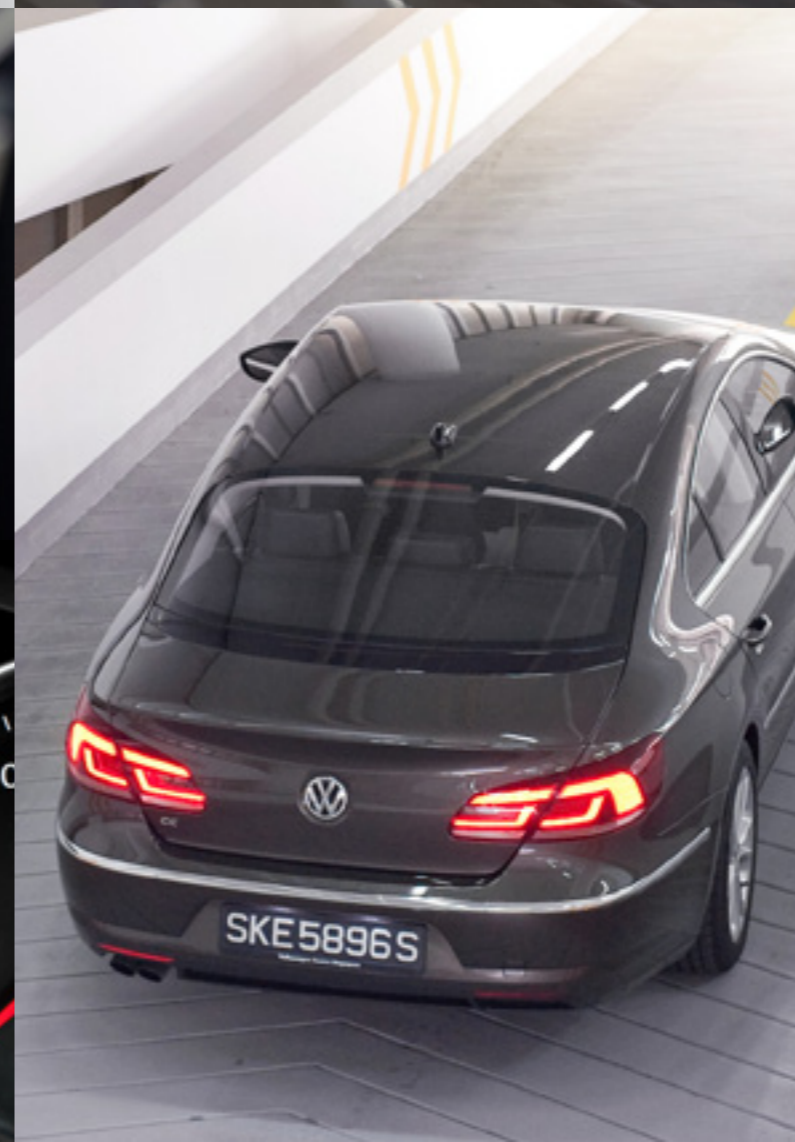
It goes without saying that the 7-speed DSG gearbox is lightning quick as always, although Volkswagen's competitors have closed the gap in this area, it is still something I always look forward to using when I get into a car from this marque.

Aside from the usual rear-view camera, sat-nav, auto climate control, the additional option our test-car had was the park assist system. I must admit, the first time I tried using it, I almost died of a heart attack. If you're new to park assist systems, remember one thing, you need to forget your instincts and trust the system - even though you think the car is getting way too close to the objects around you. I found myself repeating the line "I wouldn't have gone that close." in my head. That said, it's a cool feature and it even 'locates' lots for you.

It's stylish and it's got all the attributes that you'll need in a car that looks this good, and at less than \$200,000 it's also reasonably priced in these times. So if you're in the market for a premium sedan that's not of the usual choice, drop by the Volkswagen showroom, because this is one stylish car that has the substance to match. **N.**

SIGHT C-ING.

I cruise up north with the family in tow and see how well the CC measures up as a family car. Can style and practicality co-exist? Lookout for our first exclusive travel report next month!



OMG! ONE MINUTE GLANCE

Max Power:	160 hp @ 5500 rpm
Max Torque:	250 Nm @ 1500 rpm
Max speed:	224 km/h
0-100 km/h:	8.5 seconds
Transmission:	7-speed DSG Automatic
Kerb Weight:	1,505 kg
CO ₂ :	165 g/km

40 | 41

FIRST DRIVES

BMW 335i

A 3 IS KNOWN BY ITS FRUIT

The new 3 Series has grown up, but it still remains a sports sedan through and through.

Joel Tam drives the range-topping 335i.

Photography | Low Fai Ming & Joel Tam



For now, this is the most powerful new 3 Series (F30). Utilising the same 3-litre, twin-scroll turbocharged engine as the previous 335i, it produces a whopping 306 bhp and 400 Nm of torque. I can assure you, if you're not into late night drag racing, this is more than enough. But as usual, I get ahead of myself.

Let me start from the beginning.

The 3 Series is a bread and butter car for BMW. It has been since it was first launched in 1975. For years it has been the benchmark for many midsize luxury sedans, and across the world and even here in tiny Singapore, the 3 Series remains a revered piece of machinery.

Now in its sixth generation, the 3 Series carries a heavy load on its shoulders. It doesn't have to be strikingly good-looking, but it can't be ugly. It doesn't have to be spacious, but it can't be cramped. It doesn't need to be utilitarian like an MPV, but it has to be practical enough. It doesn't have to drive like a Porsche, but it must have excellent driving dynamics. Basically, a fantastic all-rounder. No pressure.

So is it? Well, from the outside, I can safely say that it won't scare any children. The wide and squat posture is rather striking and the headlights now extend up to the frame of the kidney grille, merging the headlights and grille and adding further emphasis to the car's broad stance. Some friends have commented that the sloping bonnet and lower kidney grille looks odd, but I personally see nothing wrong with it. Great, it's not ugly.

Next, is it spacious? Before we answer that, the interior is a marked improvement over the spartan outgoing model. However, it must be said that the materials used are not consistent. Some sections feature nice leather-wrapped panels, while other parts (the rear centre compartment for example) is made of hard and cheap plastics. That aside, the car is bigger this time, you don't have to look at the spec sheet to confirm it, it's quite visibly clear. It's longer by 93 mm, with a stretched wheelbase by 50 mm. This means that rear passengers can now enjoy extra legroom. To be precise, 15 mm of additional legroom and 8 mm of extra headroom. Excellent, it's not cramped either!



44 | 45

FIRST DRIVES

BMW 335i

Is it practical? The new 3 now offers 480 litres of boot capacity, 20 litres more than the outgoing model. You can even access the boot from inside the car. If the optional Comfort Access is specified, the boot can be opened hands-free without the key. Just move your foot in a slow kick motion underneath the bumper to trigger the opening mechanism for the boot lid. Plus, there are new compartments for your odds and ends, and the 40:20:40 split rear backrests offer unbeatable versatility. Awesome, it's actually practical too!

Last but sure as hell not least - does it drive well? Yes, yes, yes! Three times for good measure. The power delivery is beefy and the wave of torque that accompanies every jab of the throttle is oh-so-meaty! Mated to a new 8-speed gearbox with quick shifting paddle-shifters, the engine is creamy and refined, the twin-scroll turbos working in perfect unison with the direct injection VALVETRONIC six-cylinder. 0 to 100 km/h is covered in just 5.3 seconds, while top speed is limited to an electronically governed 250 km/h.

Despite having electric steering, the steering is still direct and well-weighted, if a tad bit artificial. Toggling between the drive settings, I couldn't really feel much difference in the suspension damping, but the throttle response definitely sharpens up in Sport mode. Once you get into the flow of how the new 3 behaves, it's almost impossible to catch on any road. It's just so quick and it handles beautifully too.

So it ticks all the boxes and passes with flying colours. I just wished they'd use better materials inside and that the suspension would firm up more in Sport mode. If they did, I'd gladly give it full marks. But for now, this 3 is certainly known by its fruits, and they are sweet to the core. **N.**

OMG! ONE MINUTE GLANCE

Max Power:	306 hp @ 5500 rpm
Max Torque:	400 Nm @ 1200-5000 rpm
Max speed:	250 km/h (limited)
0-100 km/h:	5.5 seconds
Transmission:	8-speed Sports Automatic
Kerb Weight:	1,520 kg
CO ₂ :	169 g/km



5 FOR FIGHTING

Like the rock band that sang about a 'regular' man who could fly, BMW's new M5 is a supercar clothed in regular sedan looks. *Joel Tam* takes flight.

Photography | Low Fai Ming



48 | 49

FIRST DRIVES

BMW M5



Aside from that, the car is cushy, well-insulated and relaxed. In other words, you really feel like you're flying!

It's not all straight-line speed though. The new BMW M5 will carve corners rapidly and convincingly despite its huge mass. Fly into a corner and adjust the nicely weighted steering wheel while you throttle steer the car out of the corner. It's pretty damn amazing.

It's no wonder, the M5 is fitted with electronically controlled dampers, M-specific Servotronic steering, a stability control system with M Dynamic Mode and some serious high-performance compound brakes. All this developed on the back of racing expertise and matched perfectly to that monster of the powerplant.

So it's fast and capable everywhere, but where does that leave you, the driver?

In one word - disconnected. The new M5 boasts an array of chassis gizmos to babysit the driver. Cornering Brake Control (CBC), Dynamic Brake Control (DBC), Brake Assistant, Fading Compensation, Brake Drying function and Start-Off Assistant are some of them, and they all work well, maybe too well.

You probably already know in detail what the latest M5 has by now, so we'll just go right into and tell you how it drives.

Well, maybe just a quick recap on the main ingredients that went into this dish first. Bear with me.

Gone is the 5.0-litre V10. A newly developed, high-revving V8 engine with twin scroll turbochargers, direct injection and Valvetronic replaces it. This translates to a whopping 560 bhp and a peak torque of 680 Nm between 1,500 and 5,750 rpm. The 'all-important' 0 - 100 km/h is achieved in 4.4 seconds.

Done. Let's go straight to the drive.

It's stupendously quick. One moment I am driving down the AYE past Jurong Town Hall, and I'm thinking about how long it might take to get me to North Bona Vista, the next instant I'm braking hard so I don't fly by the speed camera beyond 80 km/h. BMW wants to market this as a fast car, don't bother, just market it as a teleportation device. Jurong to Katong in 60 seconds. This car will warp time and speed in a way you've never experienced, and it will do it in a manner you won't expect either. There are no loud noise normally associated with supercars. Just a low bassy exhaust note to accompany the thundering V8 roar.



"Fly into a corner and adjust the nicely weighted steering while you throttle steer the car out of the corner. It's pretty damn amazing."

50 | 51

FIRST DRIVES

BMW M5



The result is car that feels like it is doing everything. Turning off the traction control did result in some epic tail-out action, but alas, we didn't have the space to take it faster or further. Most of us wouldn't risk turning it off during our daily commute anyway, so you'd need a track setting to really feel like you're back in control of the car, on most days though, it will feel like the other way round.

But I'm guessing most of us won't have a problem with that. After all, who can't appreciate speed coupled with safety, and blistering performance matched with a snug and plush interior?

Inside the M5 cabin, sports seats, an M leather steering wheel, M gearknob and an M instrument cluster make this car feel that bit more special than a regular 5 Series. Our test car even had two headrest-mounted LCD screens for the rear passengers. For the first time, two M Drive buttons have been fitted as standard for you to call up the ideal car set-up. You can now configure, your suspension, steering and engine response and save it into the two M Drive settings. Very handy and very cool.

Without a doubt, the M5 is an awesome car. It is weapons-grade stuff and with its flared wheel arches, 20-inch forged rims, huge six-piston callipers, and hallmark M gills, it's pretty cool to pose in too (admit it, we all want to look good sometimes).

But with all that capability, I kinda feel left out. I don't want to feel involved on trackdays only, I want to be involved everyday. So great as it is, I did wish the M5 was less... super. I guess Five For Fighting sang it right, indeed, "it's not easy to be me". **N.**

"For the first time, two M Drive buttons have been fitted as standard... You can now configure, your suspension, steering and engine response and save it into the two M Drive settings. Very handy and very cool."



OMG! ONE MINUTE GLANCE

Max Power:	560 hp @ 6000 rpm
Max Torque:	680 Nm @ 1500 rpm
Max speed:	250 km/h (limited)
0-100 km/h:	4.3 seconds
Transmission:	7-speed M DCT Dual-clutch
Kerb Weight:	1,945 kg
CO ₂ :	232 g/km

52 | 53

FIRST DRIVES

Ferrari California HS

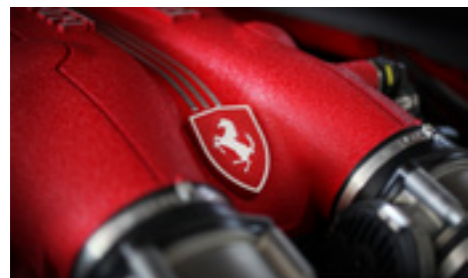
SUPERCALI FRAGILISTIC EXPIALIDOCIOUS

Mary Poppins sang this song
after winning a horse race.
Dr Kevin Co rides a winning
horse of a different kind.

Photography | Joel Tam



Ferrari California HS



"The 4.3-liter V8 engine now produces 490 bhp, an increased of 30 bhp and the torque is now 505 Nm. All thanks to the new exhaust manifold and ECU tuning."

With all the excitement with the new F12 Berlinetta, it is easy to overlook the other car Ferrari launched at 2012 Geneva Motor Show- The new version of the California.

The Ferrari California was first launched in 2008 as a 2+2 hardtop convertible. It is supposed to be your entry-level, daily drive kind of car. So the California has a generous boot space with the top up, enough for your weekend getaway up north and yes, the golf bag can actually go in there! As you can imagine with that much boot space plus a folding metal roof, the California has a mid-front mounted V8 engine instead of the iconic mid-rear configuration that modern Ferraris have.

The California is a 2+2 only as the back two seats are strictly reserved for kids. The only time you can squeeze adults in is with the top down but you still run the risk of breaking their legs. You can actually order a Ferrari Baby seat to be attached, nice.

In the looks department, current Ferrari owners will complain that it has a 'softer' appearance. It definitely still is a beauty, but just less as aggressive and flamboyant compared to the rest of the cars in the current Prancing horse's stable (let's leave the controversial FF out of the equation). It still has the commanding presence like any Ferrari.

From the global figures, 70% of the California buyers are new to the brand so Ferrari, like most sports car makers are trying to reinvent itself to attract a new profile of customers. However, in Singapore the story maybe slightly different, due to the high taxes imposed on cars, the Ferrari California is going to cost you a cool \$800k, so it is unlikely it will create a sudden increase in sales volume. I guess 'entry level' has a different meaning when used to describe a Ferrari, as you clearly need pretty deep pockets to own this daily drive.

The fact is that this 'mid-life facelift' as some would call it has no real exterior changes at all other than a few minor color accents. The main changes are in the inner details.

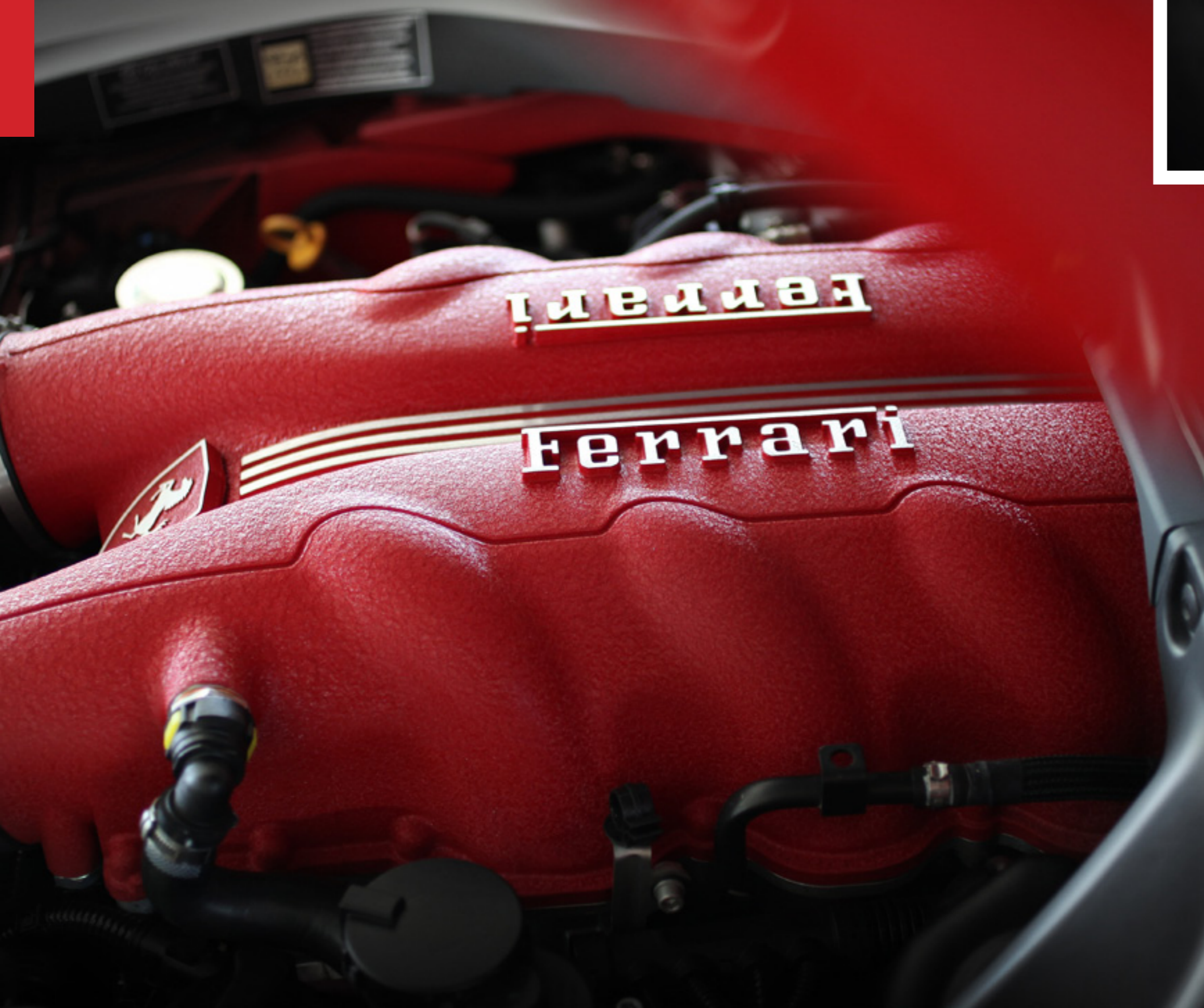
The 4.3-liter V8 engine now produces 490 bhp, an increased of 30 bhp and the torque is now 505 Nm. All thanks to the new exhaust manifold and ECU tuning. The car is also 30 kg lighter due to the new manufacturing technology for the aluminum chassis. Therefore, the 0-100 km/h acceleration time is now only 3.8 seconds down from the previous 4 seconds. Although 0.2 seconds doesn't sound very impressive, Ferrari engineers are quick to point out that the California is as quick as they want it to be. So the California is targeted at customers who want a dynamic but not overly extreme driving experience.

The seven-speed dual-clutch F1 automatic transmission and carbon ceramic brakes come standard. Ferrari has taken manual gearboxes totally off the table for all the current models. Some may be disappointed, but here's an interesting fact, only two out of the 8000 Californias sold for the past 3 years have been specced with the six speed manual gearbox!

How's the drive? Well for starters (pardon the pun), there is no keyless start for the Ferrari, it has to be done the old school way, which I must admit gives a sense of occasion and satisfaction.

The steering is sharp and responsive, although a heavy car at 1700 kg, the steering is surprisingly light. In automatic mode, you hardly notice the gear changes as they are buttery smooth, but if you feel like using the manual shift pedals, the F1-style steering wheel has integrated shift lamps to prompt you for upshifts. The ride is exceptionally comfortable during cruising for a high performance sports car and it can tackled humps on the road without any hassle.





If you want a more engaging and spirited drive just turn the Manettino switch on the steering wheel to Sport, and the California becomes a very entertaining B-road and track machine. Of course, there is that 'Launch' button serving as a reminder that you are driving a car that has 'racing' inscribed into its DNA.

With the roof down, you can really enjoy the sound of the V8 and the howling quad exhaust; it's really music to the ears.

Even though it is rather wide, the width of the car is almost similar to a Mercedes S-Class, maneuvering the California for parking poses no major issues even in multistorey car parks. The turning radius is small enough for most U-turning junctions. Ferrari has designed this car with a lot of thought for the practical issues.

The test car that I drove is fitted with the optional 'HS' package. The "Handling Speciale" package includes Magnetorheological dampers controlled by an even faster ECU (~50% response time). The package also features stiffer springs for more precise body control combined with a comfortable ride. Lastly, the California benefits from faster turn-in with smaller steering wheel angles thanks to a new steering box with a 10% quicker steering ratio.

So what do all these enhancements do in real life? It definitely makes the car better overall, especially when pushed to its limits. Current Ferrari owners looking for a convertible will probably still not be convinced and go for the more purebred 458 Spider instead, that is if they can talk their wallets into parting with another 150k.

But for the everyday commute, the car without the 'HS' package is still a superb drive. Making the Ferrari California one of the most elegant and brilliant GT cars money can buy. **N.**

58 | 59

FIRST DRIVES

Ferrari California HS

OMG! ONE MINUTE GLANCE

Max Power: 490 hp @ 7750 rpm
Max Torque: 505 Nm @ 5000 rpm
Max speed: 312 km/h
0-100 km/h: 3.8 seconds
Transmission: 7-speed Dual-clutch
Kerb Weight: 1,700 kg
CO₂: 299 g/km



LUXURY LINERS

Luxury sports sedans are big, expensive and not very fun to drive. But when our readers bug us for an answer, we have to find them one. *Joel Tam* drives the cars in question.

Photography | Low Fai Ming

Audi A7 3.0 TFSI

Power: 333 bhp @ 5,250 rpm
Torque: 440 Nm @ 2,900 rpm
0-100 km/h: 5.5 seconds
Top speed: 250 km/h
CO₂: 190 g/km

Porsche Panamera S Hybrid

Power: 380 bhp @ 5,500 rpm
Torque: 580 Nm @ 1,000 rpm
0-100 km/h: 5.5 seconds
Top speed: 270 km/h
CO₂: 159 g/km



Audi A7 vs. Porsche Panamera

It all started when a banker and a paper merchant asked me the same question. "Which would you choose, an Audi A7 or a Porsche Panamera?"

My answer was swift. Panamera hands down. Audis are beginning to be driven by rich yuppies who think they own the roads, and I'd like to avoid being labelled as one as far as possible please.

This is no personal grudge by the way. It is a sentiment shared by many people I know, my wife being one of them. Just the other day, in the presence of some car enthusiast friends, we overheard two men talking about how one of them was being 'pushed' from behind on the ECP by an A6. The chap ended the conversation with some expletives that I find hard to spell, so I won't try.

"Just the other day, in the presence of some car enthusiast friends, we overheard two men talking about how one of them was being 'pushed' from behind on the ECP by an A6. The chap ended the conversation with some expletives that I find hard to spell, so I won't try."

Anyway, it was the banker who threw me the question over dinner one night, then coincidentally, the paper merchant asked me the same thing two days later. Porsche Singapore would be happy to know that my answer to them both, was the Panamera. But it got me thinking, just how good is the A7? That it was even considered to be a rival against a saloon created by the ultimate German sports car company? I had to find out.

A couple of calls later, the Audi A7 3.0 TFSI with 333 bhp and a spanking new Porsche Panamera S Hybrid with the same engine, but strapped to an electric motor with 47 bhp more (making a total of 380 bhp), was at our doorstep.





In our comparison stories, we don't pull our punches. Our team starts out each feature story out by taking an oath. An oath to be honest and completely impartial to any brand, and most importantly, to not accept money or advertising revenue in exchange for a favourable result (not that any of the car companies offer anyway). We swear to be truthful in the presentation of the facts and promise to drive the cars very hard (on your behalf of course). So read on and enjoy, nothing is sugar-coated here (if you don't see another issue of N.GINE, at least you'll know why).

I get into the Porsche first, yes, I'm biased that way. The well-appointed interior is both classy and sporty, the generously leather-swathed seats and panels feel really good, doing a good job of reminding you of why you emptied that part of your bank account. The looks definitely don't do it much favours. Although I wouldn't call it ugly, I must say that it needs a bit more work.

Starting the car up, I'm reminded that this Panamera is not a purebred, because at its heart lies an Audi engine. Oh how I detest sharing sometimes.

Well at least this Hybrid is unique and while it has 333 horses churned out by the supercharged 3.0-liter V6 engine, it's got another 47 bhp from its electric motor. An eight-speed automatic is appropriately used for this fuel-saving model, and with regenerative braking, the nickel-metal hydride battery is constantly being charged when you retard the car.

On with the drive. The car is expectedly torquey, with all 580 Nm accessible from a low 1,000 rpm. The car pulls strongly from anywhere in any gear. But where the car

"That said, this is the sportiest Hybrid I've ever driven, and with CO2 emissions at 159 g/km, come 2013, the government will even give you \$5,000 for buying one! How cool is that? If money is no object, this remains the best hybrid money can buy."

really shines, is in its handling, despite its size, it is still a Porsche. The steering is direct, and body movements are controlled very well, again despite its hefty dimensions.

On that note, the Panamera is still a heavy car, so make no mistake, it's no 911. The brakes need to warm up before they can excel in bringing this large saloon to a stop.



Being a luxury ship, sorry, I mean car, also means that even in its sportiest suspension settings, the car will still roll and pitch about a bit. That in essence, is the downer, because the soft set-up just doesn't make you feel like pushing it.

That said, this is the sportiest Hybrid I've ever driven, and with CO2 emissions at 159 g/km, come 2013, the government will even give you \$5,000 for buying one! How cool is that? If money is no object, this remains the best hybrid money can buy.

But we have company today, and there's an A7 breathing down my back. It's funny how I can't seem to shake him too. Those LED DRLs are beginning to irritate me, and I can understand why many people feel that there is a arrogant aura that surrounds the brand.

"After lunch, I get into the Audi and immediately, I feel like throwing up. The interior is an awful mix of kidney brown leather, juxtaposed against a rather old-fogeyish woodgrain and grey panels. Who specced this car?"

After lunch, I get into the Audi and immediately, I feel like throwing up. The interior is an awful mix of kidney brown leather, juxtaposed against a rather old-fogeyish woodgrain and grey panels. Who specced this car?

However, all is forgiven once you mesh the throttle. The A7, even with 47 bhp less, feels more alive! The S-tronic gearbox heightens the experience too. In the Porsche, you feel like you're cruising most of the time, the steering buttons, though robust with a very firm action, discourage you from really using them. The paddle-shifters on the A7 on the other hand are super quick and egg you on to finger them through every gear, be it up or down.

At more than 200 kgs lighter than the Porsche, the A7 is also clearly more agile and tidier around the bends

despite being almost 5 metros long. Needless to say, the A7's performance and dynamic abilities caught me by surprise. Pushing it harder, the V6 growl is also audibly angrier, which makes the driving experience a lot more fun.

While the interior may not appeal to me, the overall build quality and tactility of the controls are premium-grade. They're also less fussy than those found in the Panamera, making it a tad more user-friendly.

I step out to evaluate my experience with two cars. Gazing upon both black beauties, it becomes clear to me which is the handsomer car. The A7 strikes a sleeker pose, and coupled with its flamboyant 20" wheels and rear LED tail lamps, the Audi is without a doubt, the better looker.



70 | 71

FEATURE

Audi A7 vs. Porsche Panamera

"While the interior may not appeal to me, the overall build quality and tactility of the controls are premium-grade. They're also less fussy than those found in the Panamera, making it a tad more user-friendly."



"This is where the Porsche gains some points, its interior is just superb. The next closest competitor would be a Continental GT, I mean it. The interior from Stuttgart just feels special."

"...the A7 has revealed to me some of its merits that I cannot ignore. Yes, even if it means that I look like a rich arrogant yuppie."



The interior, while very well-made, still left much to be desired. For me, it's the yacht-style layered oak or nothing. This is where the Porsche gains some points, its interior is just superb. The next closest competitor would be a Continental GT, I mean it. The interior from Stuttgart just feels special.

Unfortunately, other than that, plus the fact that it is a highly commendable effort at making a luxury hybrid, the Porsche doesn't have anything that clearly outshines the A7. On its own, it's the best there is, and

I'd still highly recommend it to anyone (who can resist the thought of the government 'giving you money' to buy a Porsche?).

But in this company, I'd have to say the A7 is the better drive. It has the best balance of luxury and performance. Both cheaper to buy and to maintain (not that money is a problem if you're considering either), the A7 has revealed to me some of its merits that I cannot ignore. Yes, even if it means that I look like a rich arrogant yuppie. **N.**



NEW THINKING.
NEW POSSIBILITIES.



Which side are you?



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MODIFIED

Nissan GTR 35

WHITE
HOT! MOD
SPECIAL!

WHITE WINGS

This GTR has wings, and it will 'fly' too! *Joel Tam* drives this 600 bhp monster.

Photography | Joel Tam





"...the last time I experienced a GTR, I was pretty impressed, to say the least. So when I got into this white one, I was really looking forward to seeing how fast my world could blur again. It did not disappoint."

We all know how awesome Nissan's GTR is. Here is a car that can match supercars twice its price. Yet since its launch, there have been many aftermarket parts available for the Gozilla - as it is famously known - to make it go even faster!

The last time I experienced a GTR, I was pretty impressed, to say the least. So when I got into this white one, I was really looking forward to seeing how fast my world could blur again. It did not disappoint.

Before we get to the drive, let's talk about how it looks. Some will feel that the stock GTR is handsome enough, admittedly I'm with that camp. I feel that the car from the factory is wide and aggressive enough to scare children - so don't touch it! But that said, some owners like personalising their cars, so fair enough. What we have here is a widebody rear kit from WALD

International. It features a mildly wide add-on fender and a rear bumper that sports a beefier diffuser.

Up at the front, a huge AJRC front lip has been added to collect more air for some additional downforce. It looks like it will collect scratches and nicks more than anything, but surprisingly it didn't prove a problem around car parks and humps the whole time I had it.

What's a bit different about this car though, are the huge wings that it's got, and I'm not talking about spoilers. This GTR has a set of LSD Doors (did you know that LSD doors is from Germany and is a brand of KW Automotive, the suspension company?), and while it may seem a little over-the-top at first, I must admit the angular shape of the GTR does suit this type of lambo-styled opening. Some cars look plain silly with vertical doors, but I think it is rather appropriate for the GTR, after all the car does 'fly'.



80 | 81

MODIFIED

Nissan GTR

Where performance is concerned, 80mm intake pipes and a HKS Limited Edition titanium exhaust system now promote better airflow, while a Cobb AccessPORT takes over part of the ECU's job. With the AccessPORT, the car can now be reflashed to various settings depending on how aggressive you want the car to be. It already comes with pre-installed maps that will still maintain a high degree of safety, with some added power and torque. This GTR is running approx 550 bhp and 640 Nm.

Driving this car is like piloting a guided missile, the car just pulls effortlessly from any point in the rev band. See a pocket in the next lane? Floor it and fill it instantly. See a straight road? You'll cover it in no time. The HKS exhaust also does its job in provided a deep throaty V6 growl to make every throttle jab a hair raising one.

I did find the steering rather light though. This is probably an issue with the factory steering, nonetheless, it must be said that for a car this potent, a more weighted steering would be ideal. I like to feel my car throughout the time I'm driving it, every millisecond if it.

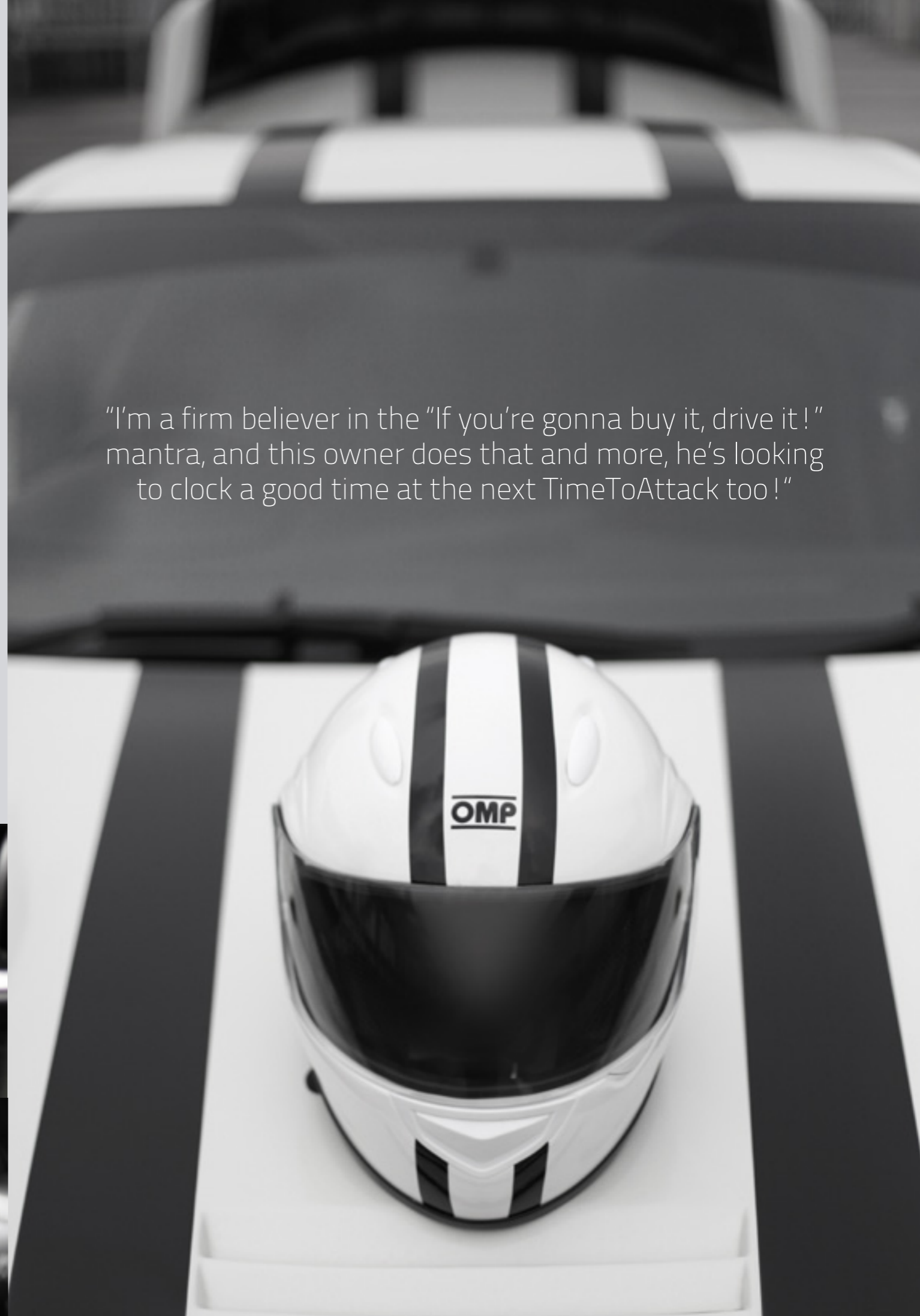
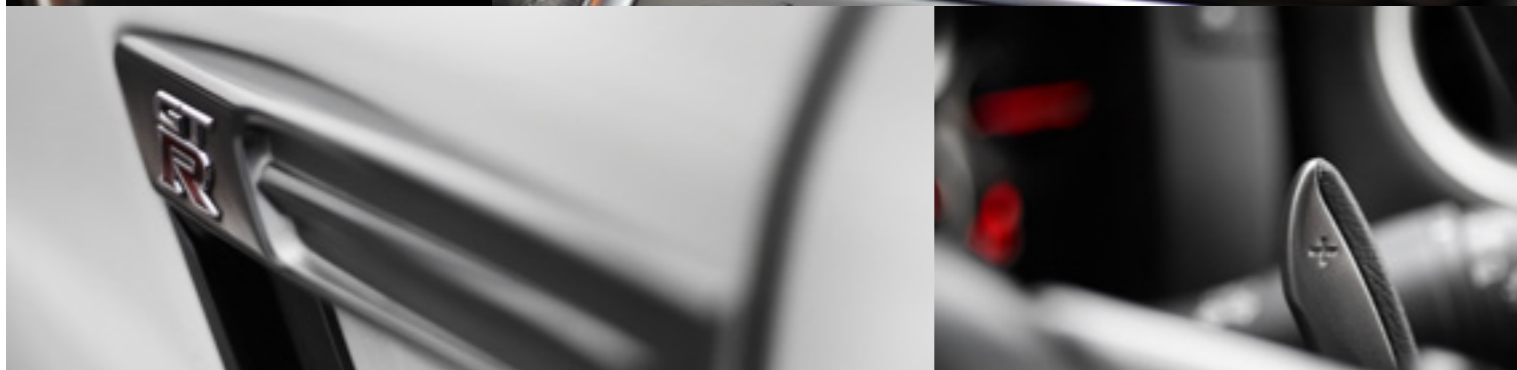
Other bits the car has been strapped with are intercooler hard pipe kit, HKS Blow Off Valves (yes plural, it's a twin turbo remember?), water and engine oil thermostat.

The car also gets extra bite from high temperature brake pads from Endless, which are matched to the stock Brembos. They work flawlessly well in bringing the flying car to a grounding halt.

I just got an update from the owner as this issue is about to go live, that he has gotten a new transmission to replace the infamous stock gearbox that has been known to go bust. A new Dodson gearbox now does the work of shifting all 640 Nm of torque between the gears.

Overall a pretty neat effort, if not to everyone's tastes. Personal preferences aside, I'm a firm believer in the 'If you're gonna buy it, drive it!' mantra, and this owner does that and more, he's looking to clock a good time at the next TimeToAttack too! So kudos to a job well done and to an owner who knows how to enjoy his car! **N.**

"I'm a firm believer in the "If you're gonna buy it, drive it!" mantra, and this owner does that and more, he's looking to clock a good time at the next TimeToAttack too!"



82 | 83

MODIFIED

Nissan GTR

"Driving this car is like piloting a guided missile, the car just pulls effortlessly from any point in the rev band. See a pocket in the next lane? Floor it and fill it instantly. See a straight road? You'll cover it in no time."



84 | 85

MODIFIED

Subaru WRX

WHITE
HOT! MOD
SPECIAL!

WHITE GOLD

As a WRX owner himself, *Joel Tam's* arms are always wide-open to cars that play to the boxer beat. Especially this sweet white scooby.

Photography | Joel Tam





"To finish the look, a Subaru WRC front bumper replaces the stock bumper for a stronger front face, while keeping the similar lines from the car flowing through. A pair of Chargespeed bottomline sideskirts finish the job."

Subarus have gotten quite a reputation for themselves haven't they. Unfortunately, it's not a good one. Like the Honda Civics of the 90's (of which I had one as well), they were an easy target for the ROV-ing enforcers.

Usually highly and illegally modified, approved parts were not so easily available. Times have changed though, and the WRX has a wide range of aftermarket parts that are LTA-compliant. The list of exhaust systems alone is, er, exhaustive!

This unit we have here is truly a fierce looking example, but it is also quite the LTA magnet. With it's wide wheels, high GT-Wing and bassy exhaust system, it's just the kind of car the men in white are looking for. But they'd be disappointed though, because this car may be loud on the outside, but it's pretty tame on the inside.


Looks are the owner's primary concern, so he swapped the original headlamps to STI JDM ones. Also from STI is the rear apron, matched with a replica HKS Kansai Rear Diffuser.

Carbon fibre was a must to add to the racy vibe, so a Seibon carbon fibre bonnet was sourced and a custom carbon rear boot as well. This was topped nicely with a replica Voltex Type-5 GT-Wing.


To finish the look, a Subaru WRC front bumper replaces the stock bumper for a stronger front face, while keeping the similar lines from the car flowing through. A pair of Chargespeed bottomline sideskirts finish the job.

To squeeze a bit more power from the car, the owner chucked the stock turbo and fitted a IHI VF34 Turbo instead. STI Intercooler and Injectors were installed too.





"...shod with 9.5" wide Rota IK-R 18"s with an aggressive offset of +38. The rims are wrapped in Michelin Pilot Sport 3 with a 235/40 width and profile for that streeetch look!"

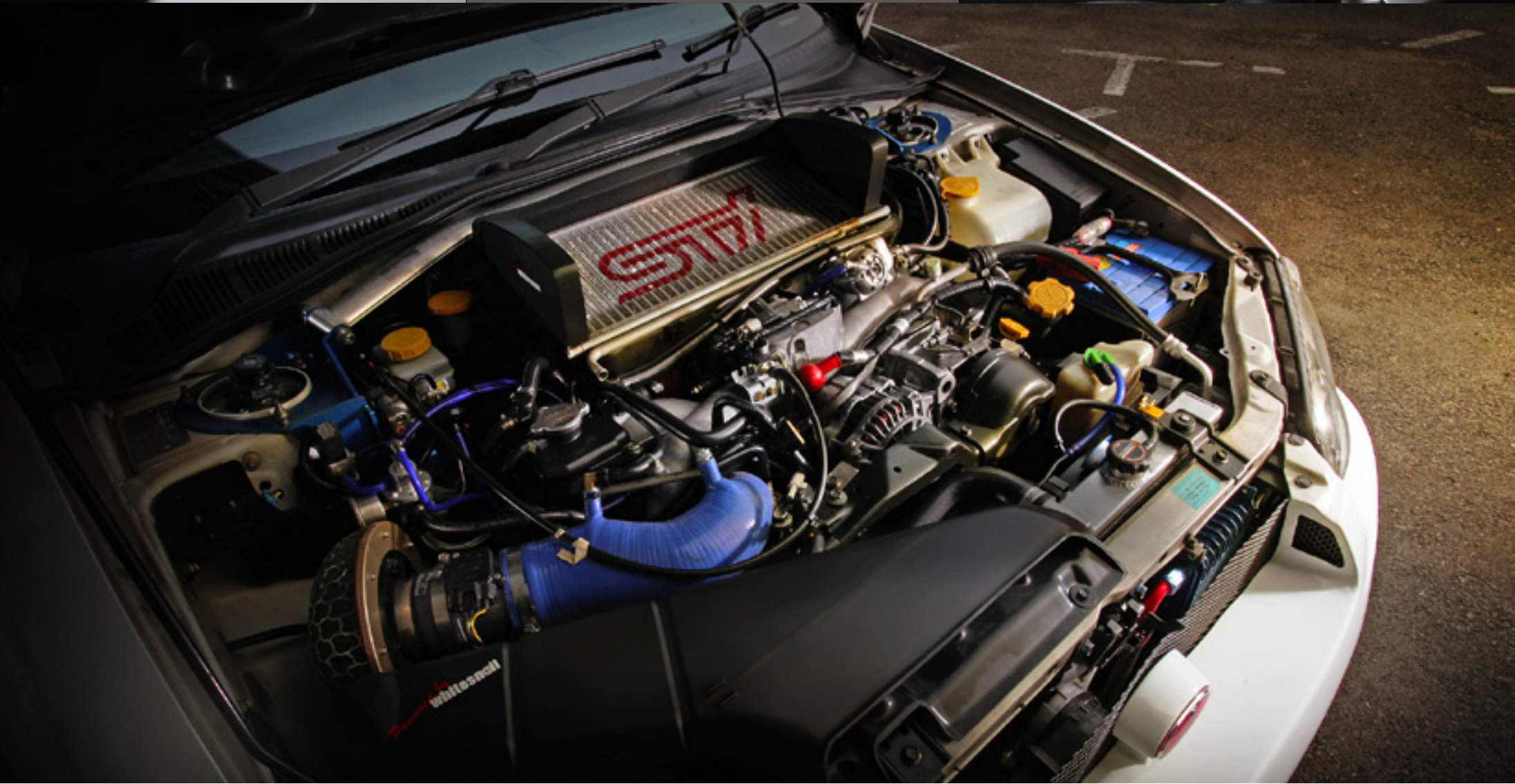


To ensure sufficient flow of gas, a Sard fuel regulator and Walbro 255L fuel pump were bolted on. Airflow was not neglected and a Fujitsu Legalis-R full catback exhaust system and a HKS suction kit run through the windpipes of this car, enhanced by a custom heatshield and wind-splitter. Other bits include a Sard R2D2 blow-off valve, Greddy Oil Cooler and Mishimoto Aluminium Radiator for better cooling.

With all that power, the car has to handle and behave well round the corners too. So Tanabe Sustec Pro 5 coilovers with Cusco front and rear strut bars were fitted. The car is also shod with 9.5" wide Rota IK-R 18"s, with an aggressive offset of +38. The rims are wrapped in Michelin Pilot Sport 3 with a 235/40 width and profile for that streeetch look!

Runstop 4-Pot calipers with 330 mm rotors up front and 340 mm rotor at the rear are left to handle the job of stopping this 'rex'.

The interior too, is mildly decked-out with Defi gauges, an Apexi AVCR boost controller and an STI titanium gear knob. Of course no 'ricey' car is complete with out a nice ICE system. A Clarion headunit, 4-Channel Amplifier and 6.5" component speakers work nicely to compliment this white beauty. **N.**



90 | 91

MODIFIED

Subaru WRX



"With its wide wheels, high GT-Wing and bassy exhaust system, it's just the kind of car the men in white are looking for. But they'd be disappointed though, because this car may be loud on the outside, but it's pretty tame on the inside."

92 | 93

MODIFIED

BMW 525i

WHITE COLLAR TIME

WHITE
HOT! MOD
SPECIAL!

This pristine white E60 525i might have been done up with a mix bag of parts, but the result is a tastefully clean ride. *Joel Tam* celebrates the joys of a naturally-aspirated Bavarian straight six.

Photography | Joel Tam



94 | 95

MODIFIED

BMW 525i

The one thing I thoroughly enjoyed about this car, was getting to drive the good ol' BMW six-cylinder powerplant again. The N52B25 2.5-litre is the last of its kind. With 218 bhp, its pure natural power was produced without the aid of turbochargers found in newer BMWs.

The owner of this car is a big fan of the straight sixes that come out from the Bavarian company too. To replace this car, he chose to opt for the 528i (F10) with the 3-litre N52B30 in-line six that pushes 240 bhp. More of that rare sweet ride in the near future.



Back to this one. The owner had his car repainted white, not just any white though, this is a colour code unique to Lamborghini. What's this with Lamborghini anyway, the earlier car had Lambo doors, now Lambo white. It's better than Chery QQ white I guess.

The front bumper is from a Kerscher kit, but instead of sticking to the full kit, a cleaner and less fussy pair of M-Tech side skirts and a matching M-Tech rear bumper finished with a Hamaan rear diffuser, complete the dress-up.

Some other detailing bits come from yet more tuning companies. A Lumma roof spoiler has been added on, a set of M5 side vents with carbon fibre inserts, M5 side mirrors and a M5 trunk finisher also add a racier look overall.

The front and rear lamps have received a LCI (Life Cycle Impulse) conversion with LEDs, while a pair OEM dark kidney grilles give the nose a no-nonsense look.

96 | 97

MODIFIED

BMW 525i

The E60 is a huge car, so it has to roll on no less than 19" wheels. A set of original M6 wheels solve that issue, wrapped in Toyo T1 Sport rubber, they grip really well when all 218 bhp is pushed in the corners.

To stop this weighty Bavarian at high speed, a full Brembo big brake kit with 6-pistons up in the front and 4-pistons at the rear with cross drilled rotors do the job very well. No brake squeal or grabby action, just pure stopping power.

Here's another car we have that is on KW suspension. I just love them. These Street Comfort coilovers are just so, er, comfortable on uneven roads, yet they cope with the weight of the car in corners so well. Racing Dynamics front and rear anti-roll bars also do their job well to keep bodyroll in check, coupled with a Kelleners Sport strut brace wrapped in carbon fibre.

As always, no modification is complete without some added juice. A Powerbox tuned for local conditions and driveability went in, as did a set of AC Schnitzer mufflers, with a stage 2 AFE open pod air intake.

Step inside and more customisation awaits. An M5 steering wheel with a customized flat bottom replaces

the stock one, it also has working paddle-shifters and carbon fibre inserts. A truly beautiful piece of work.

Down in the center, an M3 gear knob is sprayed in piano black, with a complimentary black carbon fibre gear shift plate. The dash panels are replaced with those finished in M cube aluminum, and the full interior has been rewrapped in black leather. M Power door sills line the side steps on the car.

To top it all off like icing on a sumptuous cake, the full sound system has been reworked by professionals using an Alpine 502 head unit with an Alpine 701 processor. Micro-precision Z-series tweeters, Z-studio midrange and 7-series midbass speakers pump the music, while Mosconi AS 300.2 amp, Mosconi AS 200.4 amp and Mosconi AS 200.2 amp back it up. Added bass is via Morel Ultimo 12" subwoofers, all boosted by a Bolder Technologies F600 SecureSound audio booster.

So there you have it, no stone was left uncovered. Despite its clean looks, this is one truly modified machine inside and out. **N.**

(We understand that the car has since been sold at time of this magazine's launch)



98 | 99

MODIFIED

BMW 525i

"So there you have it, no stone was left uncovered. Despite its clean looks, this is one truly modified machine inside and out."



100 | 101

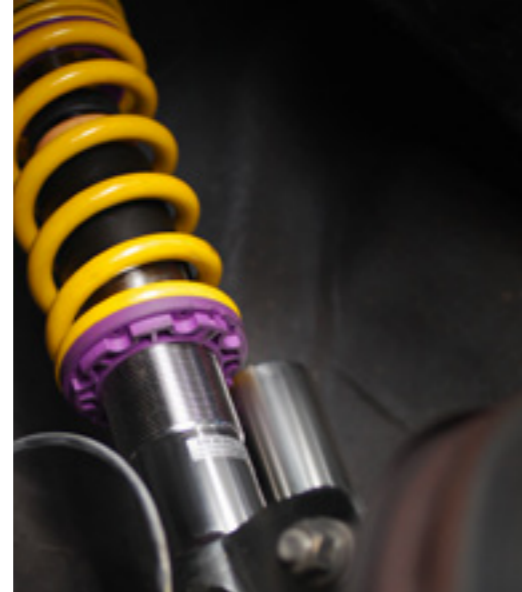
OUR CARS

Subaru WRX

Model: 2006 Subaru WRX (STI)

Acquired: Jan 2012

\$pent this month: Don't ask



Let me bring you up to speed. We got this car about 5 months ago, with the intention of documenting our ownership experience and sharing it with you! However, it spent most of its time in the workshop - quite frankly, due to a blown engine. It happened one morning as I was pulling the car in 2nd gear, and the engine just gave way. One of the conrods decided to 'break free' and made a hole in the engine shell.

Since then, a new JDM STi EJ20 has been plonked in. But the oxygen sensor went haywire, so instead of spending \$450 to fix that, we slapped an Autronic SM4 to manage the whole car. Worked perfectly.

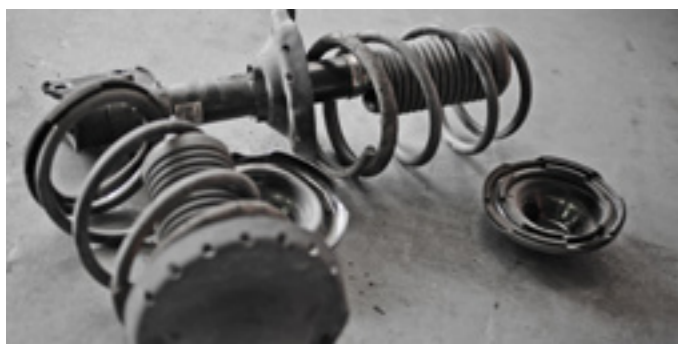
That's not all though, the suspension began to behave abnormally and made a worrying noise everytime it was asked to work. So we got our friends at AutoVox to bring in a set of KW V3s for us. 3 weeks later, our car was up on the hoist, ready to get a new set of shocks. Lest I forget to mention, a new set of suspension mountings had to be ordered as well, as the screws on one of them broke during the installation. On closer inspection, the mounting showed heavy wear and corrosion on the metal joints, so it was no fault of the installers. In fact the job was excellent! The guys at AutoVox made sure I understood the installation process every step of the way. Thumbs up!

I'll have to share more on how the car rides and handles later though, because now, I have to find out why the darn aircon isn't working... **N.**

THE LOW DOWN

Our ride gets a new engine and suspension system. Not because we wanted to, but because we HAD to! The ownership experience for this WRX has been a rather challenging one for us so far...

Photography and report
by Joel Tam



N.GINE highly recommends these vendors who worked on our car (NOTE: no sponsorship was extended, all services were duly paid for).
[Autodynamac Performance](#) | engine installation • [Velocity Tuning Works](#) | engine sourcing and tuning • [AutoVox](#) | KW suspension import and installation

102 | 103

OUR CARS

Jaguar XFS

Model: 2011 Jaguar XFS Diesel

Acquired: March 2012

\$pent this month: Very little. Diesel only.



It has been a difficult past 10 years for Jaguar as old, mediocre products and poor marketing have placed the brand in the shadows. In the past, everyone wanting to own a Jaguar would buy a BMW instead. However, in the last few years things have changed dramatically. All thanks to Ian Callum the genius behind the new Jaguar design. He also previously directed the design for Aston Martin, which explains why the XF's rear looks so familiar.

Most people would agree that the XF saloon is stunning in appearance. The gorgeous lines, the original 1968 XJ inspired grill, the aggressive styling... it totally defies the traditional Jaguar profile.

As you slide into the driver seat, the flawless leather with twin-needle stitching greets you. The red pulsating start/stop button makes the car feel alive, especially with the opening ceremony of the textured aluminum concealed air vents and the rising of the rotary shift knob from the centre console. The stylish user-friendly instrument panels with a 7-inch full color touch screen display complete the interior look. The overhead cabin lights are controlled by touch, which can be too sensitive sometimes. The boot is big enough for golf bags and baby prams fit easily.

At the heart of the XFS is a 3-liter twin turbocharged V6 unit with 600Nm of torque capable of accelerating from 0 - 100 km/h in 6.4 seconds. Just by looking at these figures, it made me wonder how many trips to the petrol station I would need to make in a week.

However, it is a diesel engine! Therefore, despite its size, weight and performance, the diesel delivers an amazing combined 10 L/100 km fuel economy figure. The savings are even more significant as the prices of diesel are much lower than petrol. A handsome luxury saloon fast enough to put sports car to shame, with the fuel consumption of a Toyota - what more can you ask for? More next issue. **N.**

CAT'S IN THE CRADLE

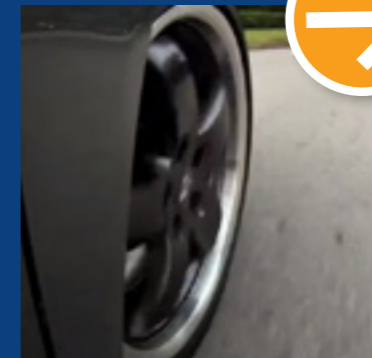
In a return to form, Jaguar's XF is growing up to have the same desirability and traits as its forefathers. Our doc buys one!

Photography Low Fai Ming
Report by Dr Kevin Co



WHEN THE RUBBER MEETS THE ROAD

ALL TYRE MAKERS CLAIM THEIR PRODUCTS ARE GREAT. BUT THE TRUE JUDGES ARE THE CUSTOMERS THEMSELVES. WE PARTNER GOODYEAR TO FIND OUT WHAT THEIR CUSTOMERS THINK.



Every major player in the tyre-making business has some form of a history. Some can even boast of having racing and motorsports background and research under their belt.

Goodyear has all of that and more. Yet when it came to marketing their new range of tyres, they chose to work not with their accolades (of which they have many), but instead, with their customers. Many brands have laid claim that their tyres are the grippiest, the quietest, and the most fuel efficient. But who really knows best?

It's none other than the customer, after all, they're paying good money for that new set of tyres, and they're the ones running them day in, day out.

The drivers Goodyear chose are not just men in the street though. These guys and gals know how to drive and are active in both their car clubs and their circle of like-minded friends. So they really know what they're talking about!

We've interviewed not one, not two, but 20 customers who were sourced from a combined database from Goodyear and Burnpavement.com, and caught everything on video.

Goodyear is not stopping there, they are giving away a Seiko Flightmaster Chronograph to three lucky winners each. All you have to do is watch the first four videos and answer the questions on the right.



Visit the link below to view the videos!
<http://www.youtube.com/NGINEMAG>

HERE'S HOW YOU CAN WIN A SEIKO FLIGHTMASTER CHRONOGRAPH

It's easy! Simply watch the videos at <http://www.youtube.com/NGINEMAG> and answer the following questions:

Question 1: What are three good points the reviewers experienced with the Goodyear Eagle F1 Asymmetric 2?

Question 2: Which Goodyear tyre won 'First Place - Auto Express Tyre Test' by Auto Express Automotive Magazine (UK)?

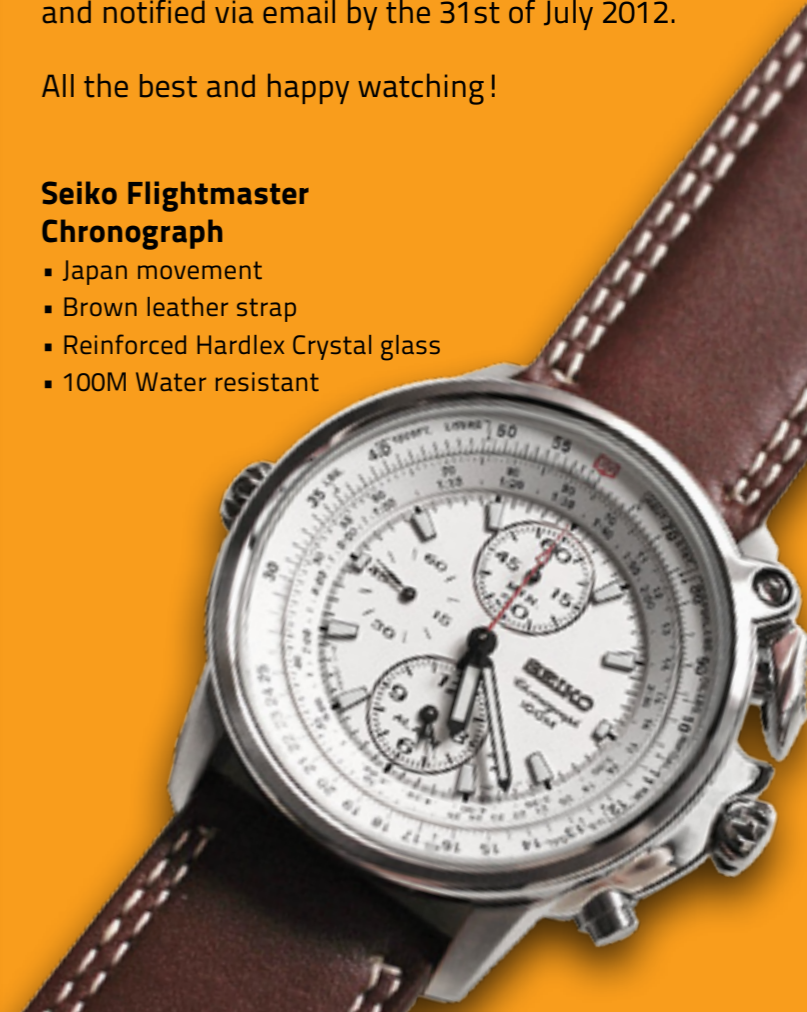
That's it! Of course, we always love to hear from you, so while you're at it, tell us how you like N.GINE, or drop us some suggestions to improve!

Email your answers to joel@interpage.sg by 6th July 2012. THREE winners will be picked and notified via email by the 31st of July 2012.

All the best and happy watching!

Seiko Flightmaster Chronograph

- Japan movement
- Brown leather strap
- Reinforced Hardlex Crystal glass
- 100M Water resistant



CASIO EDIFICE TIMEPIECES CONTEST RESULTS

OUR
WINNERS!



QUESTION

Casio EDIFICE is the official Watch partner for which F1 team?

ANSWER

RED BULL RACING

WINNERS

1. Gideon Sim
2. Yi Zhan

Kindly reply our notification email to arrange the pick up of your watches by 22nd June.

WE'D REALLY LIKE TO THANK YOU FROM THE BOTTOM OF OUR HEARTS FOR ALL THE ENTRIES THAT CAME IN. HERE ARE JUST FIVE OF THE MANY EMAILS THAT MADE OUR DAY!

"I love that it's free - and environmentally-friendly! Brilliant photography and articles. Love that you're homegrown, with an international exposure." - Gideon Sim

"I love N.GINE because of its enthusiastic reviews of the cars we all love plus the quality of the photographs and articles are truly world class." - Peter Ochman

"Pictures speak a thousand words, and it's so nice to see great pictures of great cars. Another good thing, there are no racequeens/babes! Which is great! I buy car mags for the cars! If I want the babes, I am better off with FHM!" - Edwin Ang

"N.GINE is the most impressive and informative online car magazine that I've ever seen. I like the pictures and detailing which is always well taken from every angle." - KS Tan

"It's free, interesting to read, and downloadable, which is easy to save, read and share anytime and anywhere I've been! One of the best magazines I've ever read and the best online magazine in the world. Keep up the good work N.GINE!" - Syafiq Suhaimi

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WHERE CARS ARE MORE THAN A TO B

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