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JUNE/JULY 2010

DIRECT MAGAZINE



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20

CONTENTS JUNE / JULY 2010

12

MARUSSIA

Russia's first sports car does not disappoint

20

COVER: WHEELSANDMORE

Bentley Continental Ultrasports 702

28

FERRARI F430 SCUDERIA

See how WTW Inc. President, Diko Sulahian, rolls.

40

ZAGATO - ALFA ROMEO TZ3 CORSA

A race car honoring 100 years of races and victories

48

LEXUS LFA NURBURGRING PACKAGE

Build on the track-ready Lexus supercar

56

FERRARI 599 GTO

First photos and information on Ferrari's new release

64

MURCIELAGO LP670-4 SUPERVELOCE

Special edition for China, production limited to ten

70

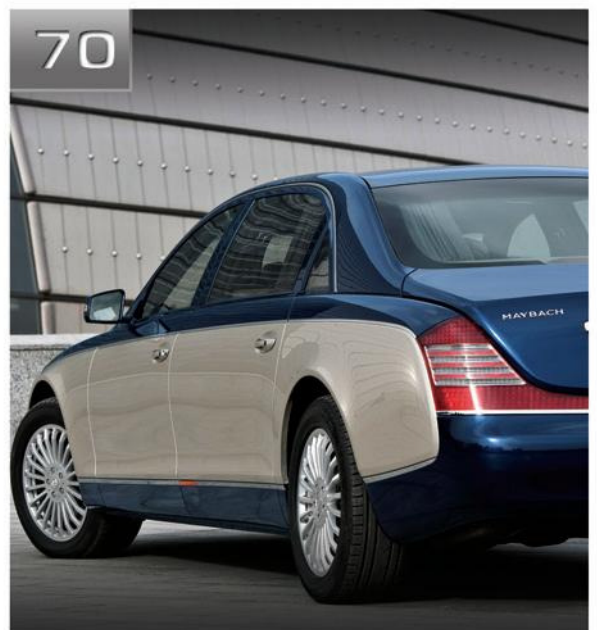
MAYBACH 62

The evolution of an automotive masterpiece

12



70



48



Ferrari



599 GTO

Ferrari has released the first photos and information on the new 599 GTO, an extreme V12 berlinetta developed to a specific performance-oriented brief. The 599 GTO is, in fact, the company's fastest ever road car. It is an exclusive limited edition special which, in true Ferrari tradition, is a completely new concept, albeit inspired by a production car. In fact the 599 GTO is based on the 599XX, the advanced experimental track car, and can be considered almost a road-going version.

The 599 GTO is reserved for just 599 clients who seek the maximum expression of high-performance driving. The 599 GTO benefits directly from the technological transfer from racing and set a record lap time at Fiorano in 1'24".

The Fiorano lap time provides just one indication of the potential of this car. Just as significant are the technical specifications – 670 hp in a 1495kg car represents a weight-to-power ratio of just 2.23 kg/hp, and ensures a 0-100 km/h acceleration time of just 3.35" as well as a top speed of over 335 km/h.

Fundamental to the GTO's performance is the innovative approach to chassis development which, for the first time on a production car, saw the integration between a handling set-up tuned for a level of responsiveness that is close to the limit and highly sophisticated electronic controls. The result is the almost complete absence of understeer and a truly communicative chassis.

As is Ferrari's policy, every new Ferrari features new solutions for a road car. Thus the 599 GTO is equipped with the latest, second-generation carbon-ceramic brakes which are lighter and offer better performance, new aerodynamic innovations, such as the wheel doughnuts which increase aerodynamic efficiency as well as improve brake cooling, and the Supersport tyres developed by Michelin include a wider front tyre for greater roadholding. The driver-car interface is also new with the adoption of the Virtual Race Engineer (VRE) which provides the driver with instantaneous information on performance.



The 599 GTO's more aggressive character is also apparent in a number of styling elements that recall the 599XX and from the powerful sound of the V12. The GTO (Gran Turismo Omologata) moniker instantly calls to mind two Ferraris that have entered the collective imagination as symbols of performance. After the 1962 250 GTO, which swept the boards in GT racing categories in the 1960s and is now a highly prized collector's car, came the iconic 1984 GTO, which basically invented the entire modern supercar genre.

The web special includes photos, videos and interviews on the new car, while an exclusive preview for a small number of Ferrari clients will be held on April 14th at the Military Academy in Modena. The public debut of the 599 GTO will instead be at the Beijing International Motor Show at the end of April.

The 599 GTO's engine is directly derived from the 599XX unit implementing, however, the necessary modifications for road-going homologation. It thus complies with Euro 5 and LEV 2 standards. The 5999 cc 65-degree V12 engine punches out 670 CV at 8250 rpm with maximum torque of 620 Nm at 6500 rpm and there is a smooth, constant rush of power all the way to the redline with no loss of flexibility even at medium and low revs. This result was obtained by working on the fluid-dynamics and components to reduce internal friction and by adopting, amongst other things, the 599XX's redesigned crankshaft. The car also has a racing-type intake system with a new manifold with diffuser-type intake geometry and short inlet tracts designed to improve power delivery at high revs and reduce losses.



To maximise volumetric efficiency per cylinder, a connection between the two plenums at the front compensates for variations in the volume. This is how the engineers managed to achieve maximum performance at high engine speeds. The engine sound inside the car is carefully controlled to balance the intake sound with the exhaust, which features a 599XX-derived 6-into-1 manifold. The 599 GTO features the same, lower 60 ms shift times and the possibility to make multiple downshifts as on the 599XX.

One of the most significant innovations on the 599 GTO is the close correlation between the chassis set-up, which is close to the handling limit, and the input from the electronic controls which are developed to increase overall levels of performance.

Since the very earliest states of the two cars' development, Maranello's engineers worked to ensure that these two areas of the car would be seamlessly integrated thus pushing responsiveness to the limit. The result is, of course, superlative driving involvement as well as faster lap times. Apart from new springs and a stiffer rear anti-roll bar, the car also features a second generation magnetorheological suspension control system (SCM2). The suspension works in tandem with the VDC (Vehicle Dynamic Control) and latest-generation F1-Trac traction control. This makes the car extremely responsive to driver inputs - thanks in part to the adoption of a very direct steering ratio - but also very stable under braking, sharper on turn-in, more precise in cornering and quicker out of corners.

The difference in size between the front and rear tires has changed. The GTO's front tires are now 285/30 on a 9.5" channel with 315/35 on an 11.5" channel at the rear. The 599 GTO has 20" rims. Roll rigidity is greater at the rear to minimise understeer. These solutions guarantee improved lateral grip and quicker turn in.

The 599 GTO inherits much of the development work - using the same principles as employed in F1 - that went into making the 599XX such an extreme performance car. Reducing weight was a vital objective and the result was the widespread use of composites and components manufactured with technologies more akin to racing specifications. The areas involved include the bodywork and greenhouse (with thinner gauge aluminium and thinner glass), the brakes, transmission and exhaust system. The result is a dry weight of 1495 kg and a weight-to-power ratio of just 2.23 kg/hp, a very significant figure that underlines the GTO's performance potential.

More photos and information on this article available at www.luxuryautodirect.com. •

