

# CAR TALK

## CAR SHOWS AND EVENTS?

Have you checked out a car show lately? The season's almost over, ya know. You say you'd like to go spend a few hours looking at some cool cars, eating a hot dog and maybe hearing some good ol' surfin' music? But you don't know if anything's going on around you?

Well, show a little initiative! There's tons of car shows and car events happening all around you pretty much every weekend, and even some during the week.

Sit down at your computer for a few minutes (you're probably there for a couple of hours a day anyway) and take a look at one of these two great websites:

[Californiacarshows.org](http://Californiacarshows.org)

[Socalcarculture.com/events](http://Socalcarculture.com/events)

Both of these sites give you an exhaustive listing of all kinds of car shows and events. Get out and enjoy our hobby! You'll be glad you did.

And then come back and tell us about it; good, bad or whatever.

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Put this show on your calendar! The **2019 CLASSIC AUTO SHOW**. I visited the 2018 Classic Auto Show and told you what a great time I had this year. This is the show where you not only get to drool over some amazing cars (classic cars, muscle cars, movie cars, all kinds of cars), but you also get a chance to meet a variety of TV Show personalities and celebrities.

So the 2019 show is scheduled for March 16 and 17. This show will exhibit over 1,000 awesome cars including rarely seen, museum-quality classics, celebrity builds, hot rods, lowriders, Japanese classics, vintage off-roaders, women builds and hundreds of favorites from local car clubs representing all the domestic and foreign marques. There will be live restoration and auto detailing demos, as well as a vendor marketplace showcasing memorabilia and the parts, products and services you need to restore and care for your cars.

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So, that's the 2019 CLASSIC AUTO SHOW on Saturday and Sunday, March 16-17, at the Orange County Fair and Event Center using the indoor and outdoor areas. Show times are 10:00 am to 8:00 pm on Saturday and 10:00 am to 6:00 pm on Sunday. Sounds like it will be bigger and even better than last year.

I'll be sure to remind you of this show as we get closer to the dates.

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## WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE CORVETTE WORLD?

Those hardcore Corvette fans in the group probably know that for the last 20 years the National Corvette Museum has held a Birthday Bash to give Corvette lovers a peek at next year's models. This year the big news was the unveiling of the 2019 ZR1 coupe and convertible. As in previous years, a large number of the GM engineers, designers and plant production folks from both Michigan and Kentucky were on hand to explain the model year changes.

Corvette Chief Engineer Tadge Juechter and Corvette Product Marketing Manager Harlan Charles detailed the design, performance, options and pricing for the new Corvette supercar.

The ZR1 is available in two trim levels - 1ZR and 3ZR - and every new ZR1 customer receives a free Ron Fellows Spring Mountain two-day driving school certificate. The 1ZR is available with black interior only and the base price for the coupe is \$119,995 and \$123,995 for the convertible. The 3ZR option is available with any interior color and is base-priced at \$129,995 for the coupe and \$133,995 for the convertible. The LT5 engine produces 755hp and 715 lb-ft of torque, pushing the ZR1's top speed above 214 mph with the low rear wing. Performance is, as you can imagine, amazing: 0-60 in 2.85 seconds, 0-100 in 6.0 seconds and the quarter mile in 10.6 seconds.

For the glutens, there is the ZTK Track Performance Package, which lists for an additional \$2,995 and includes unique adjustments to the chassis and to the Magnetic Ride Control. Michelin Cup Tires, the high-downforce aero wing, front splitter with carbon-fiber end caps are also included. This option is not intended to add more top speed, but offers more precise handling on a road course.

Now if you really want to go all out, you also check the box for the ZLZ Sebring Orange Design Package. It adds another \$6,995 and gives you:

- Sebring Orange Exterior Tint
- Gloss black badges

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- Orange painted stripes on Carbon Fiber rockers and splitter
- Black suede with Orange stitching interior
- Orange seat belts
- Orange brake calipers
- Carbon Flash wheels
- Optional Jake hood graphics
- Interior bronze aluminum trim

Here's an interesting fact:

In 2018, Chevrolet really through their normal production scheduling out the window. 2018 Corvette production ended in January of this year. Building of the 2019 Corvettes began on January 29, for Stingray, Grand Sport and Z06 models. ZR1 production then began on March 5. This production schedule is nearly seven months earlier than previous model changeovers. (I remember when my uncle, who worked at the old South Gate Assembly Plant, used to be off work for three months each summer for the new model changeover.)

Two new Corvette colors were introduced at the Bash: Elkart Blue (which replaces Admiral Blue) and Shadow Gray (which replaces Watkins Glen Gray). In addition to these new colors, you can choose from Arctic White, Black, Torch Red, Ceramic Gray, Long Beach Red, Blade Silver, Sebring Orange and Racing Yellow. White and Black continue to be the most popular colors, go figure.

After my spiel last month about why it's so important to be able to shift your hot rod yourself, it appears that almost 80 percent of Corvette buyers are opting for the eight-speed automatic transmission. At this rate, don't be surprised if the automatic becomes the standard transmission and the manual only an option. And of course, as we mentioned last month, it looks like the C8 mid-engine Corvette will only be offered with an automatic.

For a limited time, customers can still visit the Performance Build Center (PBC) at the Bowling Green Assembly Plant to help construct their own Z06 or ZR1 engines.

If you've ever had a thought of going out to the Museum's Birthday Bash, definitely 2019 should be your year. There's a real good chance you'll be one of the few to witness the unveiling of the first ever production mid-engine Corvette. Think it over!

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## **CORVETTE PERFORMANCE IN 1978**

If you were into cars back in 1978, if you were even alive in 1978, you might remember that performance in cars was pretty much non-existent. So, what was a guy to do at that

time if he wanted a street car with gobs of get-up-and-go? Well, if you had gobs of cash, you could have done what Herb Orlowitz did. Herb was an entrepreneur in the corporate jet business. He had a chat with his friend Vince Granatelli, son of Andy Granatelli (of Indy 500 fame). Herb asked him to build him something that was "really fast". Vince told Herb he would sell him one of the turbine-powered Lotus 56s that they had prepared for the Indy 500 race in 1968. But Herb said no, that he wanted something that would be street legal.

So Vince Granatelli picked up a brand new 1978 Corvette and massively modified it to accept a Pratt and Whitney ST6B turbine engine. Plenty of power there. As you can imagine, this presented a few engineering challenges. One was what to do with the huge volume of air that would flow through the turbine. The exhaust of that engine had to go somewhere. It amounted to the same exhaust that would come out of eight turbocharged Indy Cosworth engines running at top speed. Another issue was that the turbine ran at 37,500 rpm. That's a little much for a car! That problem was solved by installing a Pratt and Whitney reduction gearbox on the back of the engine to bring the revs down to a more manageable 6,230.

The little turbine put out 880 horsepower and 1,161 lb-ft of torque. That was routed through a modified Turbo 400 transmission and a strengthened driveshaft and rearend. (I know, today you'd be able to get that kind of power out of a boosted V-8 engine, but not back then.) Even with the gear reduction, the Vette would accelerate to 60 mph with the turbine at idle. So they had to install massive, NASCAR-style disc brakes to be able to keep the car from running away. To drive the car around town meant leaving the engine at idle and riding the brake pedal most of the time. The throttle was used only on the highway and racetrack.

In trying to test the performance of this 1978 Corvette, they also ran into some problems. On their first acceleration attempt, they broke the driveshaft. Fixing that and then being more conservative with the gas pedal, they managed to run a 12-second quarter mile. On a good run, the car would leave a pair of parallel tire streaks down the racetrack for almost the full quarter mile. Their best 0 to 60 time was 2.5 seconds and the top speed was held down to 180 mph. On 1978 tires, that's probably fast enough.

In 1982 the car was purchased by a Texas car collector for \$500,000.

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### TRIVIA QUESTION:

What does "Chicken Tax" refer to?

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- A. The Renewable Fuels Standard Act of 2007 that requires corn ethanol to be blended into the US transportation fuel supply.
- B. A 25% tariff on imported light trucks imposed by President Lyndon Johnson in 1963 and still in effect.
- C. Accepting the cost of a speeding ticket rather than risking jail time, injuring others, death and other problems by trying to outrun the police.

The answer, of course, was a result of the 1960's trade dispute started with French tariffs on imported U.S. chickens.