Beat: Automobiles

TEST DRIVE-CORVETTE Z06

DEMONIC ACCELERATION

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USPA NEWS - The Z06 package always has meant "power," and in the current version that's 650 horsepower and an equal amount of torque. Says so right on a plaque on the console, in case you forget.

That's in contrast to "only" 455 hp and 460 lbs.-ft. in the basic Corvette Stingray.
he high-performance Z06 setup “” revered by Corvette buffs “” was created by Corvette godfather Zora Arkus-Duntov as a competition package on the second-generation Corvette.
At launch in 1963 it was an $1,818 option, according to Corvette historian, expert and enthusiast Martyn Schorr “” an amount that would be $14,028 now, per the government's inflation formula.

Z06 starts $24,000 more than the base Stingray's price. Schorr said the original Z06 configuration was so race-oriented that it was a miserable daily driver and soon was discontinued. The metallic brakes, for example, were intended to work well when heated by the effort of slowing from three-digit speeds, but that made them numb and hard to apply when cold, as in normal driving.
Z06 was revived in 2001 and continues today as a more usefully integrated set of features. In fact, it satisfies a fantasy we bet a lot of auto enthusiasts have: It looks and feels like a race car slightly tamed for daily driving. That's an illusion.

A real racer would be take much more than modest taming to make it pleasant on the street. But it's a fulfilling illusion.
The latest Z06 stands out visually with more angles and scoops and spoilers than a conventional Corvette (if that's not an oxymoron). Test Drive usually would gag on such. But not this time. Gorgeous. Ferocious-looking but still inviting.
The 6.2-liter supercharged V-8 and special exhaust tuning combine for a frightening howl when you nail the throttle. It's an addictive sound and you'll need almost super-human restraint to avoid frequent repeat visits to the zone, thus courting the kind of traffic-law violation that's a jail sentence, not a mere ticket.

The Corvette Z06 isn't a casual car. You'll get plenty of stares, second-glances and even unwanted attention from people in uniform. But the deep satisfaction it delivers “” for those who like giddy-up machines “” is stunning.

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