



McLaren 720S is ready to roll

The first production model of the new **McLaren 720S supercar** has been completed at the automaker's Production Centre in Woking, England. But don't get your hopes up: All 400 units of the edition series' first run have already been sold. Better luck getting one of the next batch of 800 more expected to roll out later this year, or the 1,500 in 2018. Officially launched last month at the Geneva show, it's the second generation of McLaren's Super Series, superceding the 650S introduced in 2014, of which 7,000 have been sold. For what its worth, the new model's carbon emissions have been cut 10 percent from the previous. Oh, and it now sports a modified carbon chassis. The "720" refers to the horsepower of its four-liter V8 M840T engine, and McLaren brags it will go from 0 to 60 in 2.8 seconds, with a top speed of 212 mph.

The 720S will be priced from \$254,000.



If the Renault Alpine arrives in North America, it might wear an Infiniti badge.

Bienvenue, Renault Alpine?

That's a distinct possibility, according to our sources. Although the **Renault Alpine** name is well known in Europe as a successful rally and luxury model, it's mostly unknown in North America, except among a few die-hard fans.

Now a brand new version, christened the **Alpine A110**, is set to roll off a Renault-Nissan Alliance assembly plant in France for the 2018 model year. The mid-engine car will reportedly use a turbocharged 1.6-liter four-cylinder engine (similar to the one used in the Nissan Juke NISMO) mated to a seven-speed automated manual transmission. This should move the aluminum chassis and lightweight alloy body panels (total weight: 2,381 lbs.) along at a decent clip.

The aerodynamic car is the descendent of the sportster made by French maker Alpine from 1961-77, which was powered by a Renault engine.

The modern version of the Alpine A110 that would arrive here could possibly be sold through Infiniti dealers, and may even wear an Infiniti badge. A price is expected in the \$60,000-\$70,000 range.

TEST DRIVE

2017 Ford F-150

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Unless you see a lot of trail travel in your future, I wouldn't recommend the FX4 option. The F-150's stock suspension has the ride quality typical of leaf spring/straight axle design trucks. It's smooth on smooth roads, and jittery over road imperfections — particularly with a light load. With their coil spring, multilink suspensions, Ram trucks are the current leader of the pickup pack, in terms of ride smoothness.

F-150's are available in three cab configurations — regular, SuperCab (with smaller, rear-hinged back doors), and SuperCrew, which is fitted with four, full-size doors. The three cabs are complemented by three bed lengths: 5½ feet, 6½ feet and 8 feet. The longer two are offered on regular and SuperCab, while the shorter two are available on the SuperCrew. Regardless of size, the pickup boxes can be outfitted with a variety of options (covers, dividers, bins, tie-downs, tailgate remote, bed liner, ramps, etc.)

Passenger space in row two of the SuperCrew offers as much head and leg room as most luxury cars can muster. And when they're not being used for people, the seats can be folded (with one hand) to a spot on the back of the cab wall. The wide, flat floor allows you the option of inboard, locking storage. The space is sufficient to hold a big box (like, say, a wide screen TV), or roomy enough for a large dog to spread out. My dog gave it a thumb's-up (or he would have, had

he had thumbs). SuperCrew's row two design takes a back seat to no one in this segment.

Up front, controls are in easy reach and — in the great tradition of trucks — straight forward in design. The covered, center console is cavernous, and it's complemented by a brace of smaller storage spots, sprinkled about the interior. You sit high in a 4x4 truck. The side windows work with you in the Ford; they're large, and the bottom dips low as you near the rear view mirrors, to boost your downward visibility.

Onboard entertainment and information technology is here for the asking. My XLT was equipped with the Luxury Equipment Group 302A. Among the features added in this pricey (\$5,425) package is SYNC3; Ford's infotainment system. Accessed by an 8-inch touchscreen, SYNC is more user friendly than most touchscreen interfaces, and is compatible with Android Auto and Apple CarPlay, so your smartphone apps can be accessed on the touchscreen. With the newly available SYNC Connect (\$235 on XLT and higher), Smartphone users can use the FordPass app to lock and unlock doors, start your vehicle remotely, check fuel levels or — a shopping mall favorite — find out where you parked your truck.

A regular contributor to the Times Union for more than 25 years, Dan Lyons is the award-winning author of six books, and photographer of 180 calendars.

Rolls-Royce for ill kids

The famous luxury motorcoach maker has donated an kid-sized, electric-powered car built especially for youngsters awaiting surgery at the St. Richard's Hospital Pediatric Day Surgery Unit, nearby to the automakers factory in Chichester, England. The **little Rolls-Royce** will be used by kids to drive themselves to the operating room, instead of being wheeled there on a gurney. A 24-volt battery moves the little luxury car along at 10 mph. There are no plans to create more than the two already made.



This SRH electric-toy Rolls-Royce is used by children in a hospital nearby the automaker's factory in England.



This X-Trail Dog Edition is just one of the special canine-centric offerings from Nissan.

Nissan goes to the dogs

After a survey showed of 400 dog owners showed that 83 percent of them said it's just as important for their dog to be safe and comfortable in their vehicle, Nissan took paws. Sorry, pause.

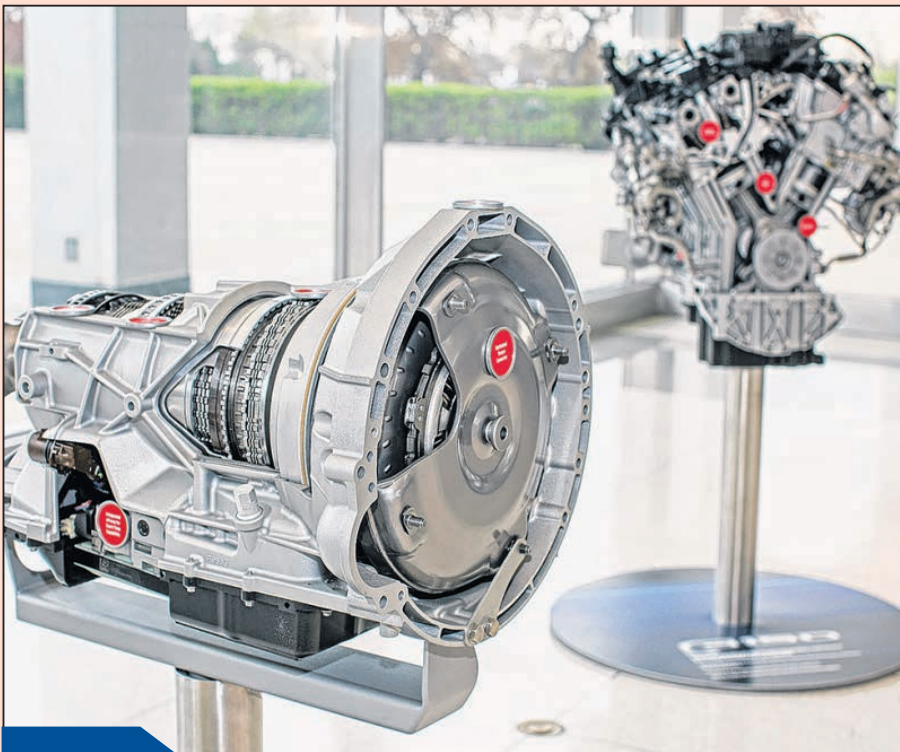
On the heels of its **Canadian X-Trail Dog Edition** canine-friendly Rogue SUV concept, the Japanese maker has now introduced the **Nissan Rogue Dogue Project Vehicle**.

The modified Rogue features complete with leather-padded rear cargo area, no-spill water bowl, treat dispenser, walk-up ramp and doggie-cam that allows the driver to monitor his four-footed passenger in back. There's also a dog-sprayer hose and blow-dryer to keep that passenger clean.

The project was shepherded to completion by dog-lover and "Fast & Furious" car coordinator Dennis McCarthy, and was displayed at this year's New York Auto Show, which wrapped up a couple weeks ago at the Javits Center in Manhattan.



Nissan's Rogue Dogue Project Vehicle includes a fold-out ramp access for four-footed passengers.



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518-489-5551 www.depaula.com

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