

Lamborghini car stars

We have it on good authority that a long-rumored movie based on the life of **Ferruccio Lamborghini**, the man who founded Automobili Lamborghini back in 1963, will soon begin production, backed by the Ambi Media Group. The film, based on a book written by Lamborghini's son, Tonino, will focus on Ferruccio's longstanding rivalry with Enzo Ferrari. **Antonio Banderas** will star in the lead



Antonio Banderas



Alec Baldwin

role, while **Alec Baldwin** has been tapped to play Enzo. Ambi apparently intends to show the movie (working title *Lamborghini: The Legend*) at the 2019 Cannes Film Festival in France. The Lamborghini flick will join two similar productions on the life of Enzo Ferrari with Hugh Jackman and Robert De Niro as respective stars. Both those films are due to begin production this year.

Honda fanboys will most likely not be disappointed by the new Civic Si.



2018 Civic Si packs a punch

We recently checked out Honda's small-but-mighty **Civic Si** coupe and sedan. This is the first Si powered by a turbo — in this case, a non-VTEC turbocharged 1.5-liter four-cylinder engine cranking out 205 horsepower and 192 pound-feet of torque. And while the sheer power hasn't increased since the last edition, the lighter weight and higher torque make for a great ride. In addition, the Si's specially-tuned suspension, bigger brakes, revised shift linkage for the six-speed manual transmission and other performance and visual mods (including a rear wing), make the car a blast to drive, which is kind of the point for a vehicle like this. Additionally, the \$25,000 price tag is reasonable. Although there are still many traditionalists who love to shift their own gears, we fear the Si's lack of an automatic-transmission option could be a deal breaker for many youthful buyers raised on two pedals instead of three.



2018 Chevy Silverado

Will the Silverado follow the F-150 into the aluminum business?

Our sources have spotted a camouflaged version of Chevrolet's light-duty **Silverado** pickup that's expected to go on sale in about a year's time as a 2019 model. All indications are that, to reduce weight (and help fuel economy), the hood, doors and fenders will be made of aluminum, but the bed will stick with steel construction.

A revised frame is expected to shed a few more pounds. By contrast, the current **Ford F-150's** entire body is aluminum. Chevrolet's current V-6 and V-8 powerplants will likely carry over, but a new 10-speed automatic transmission will replace the current six- and eight-speed automatics.

A more aggressive grille and bumper, plus a revised dashboard with a significantly larger touch-screen are also expected.



The new Ford F-150 broke the ice in acceptance for aluminum bodies. Will the Silverado follow suit?



2018 Alfa Romeo Stelvio

Alfa Romeo's sporty wagon

These peach-colored pages see an uphill battle for Fiat Chrysler Automobiles (FCA) as it enters the utility-vehicle category dominated by the BMW X3, Audi Q5, Mercedes-Benz GLC-Class and others.

However, the new **2018 Stelvio** has a number of positives going for it, other than being the only Italian model in the category. The standard turbocharged 2.0-liter four-cylinder engine produces 280 horsepower and 306 pound-feet of torque. That makes the Stelvio a powerhouse, relative to the others. The turbo is matched to an eight-speed automatic transmission.

Following the initial launch, the **Stelvio Quadrifoglio** (Italian for four-leaf clover) arrives with a potent 505 horsepower and 443 pound-feet of torque generated by a twin-turbo 2.9-liter V-6.

TEST DRIVE

2017 Volkswagen Golf TSI

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lane departure warning and park assist are no longer offered.

In the post-emissions settlement era,

Volkswagen's diesel engines have assumed a low profile, and the company has no current plans to offer TDI's in the U.S. market this year. The sole engine choice for Golf is the 1.8L TSI four-cylinder.

The turbocharged, direct-injection engine makes 170 horsepower @ 4,500 r.p.m. Torque ratings are 199 lb. ft. @ 1,600 r.p.m. (automatic)

and 184 lb. ft. @ 1,600 r.p.m. (manual).

A five-speed manual transmission is standard on the base, S model, with a six-speed automatic offered for \$1,100.

The torque converter automatic fitted in gas powered models (like my tester) is less entertaining to drive in manual mode than VW's dual clutch automatics are, owing to the time lag between shift request and shift response. But, in full-auto mode, it works just fine with the 1.8T, and you have the option of using manual mode to hold the car in specific gear if you wish. The 1.8T is



The Golf TSI's cabin design is straight forward, with controls logically placed. The 6½-inch touchscreen is modestly sized, by current standards, but it follows the car's function-first theme nicely. The system is compatible with Android Auto and Apple CarPlay.

overall a very enjoyable mix of economy and performance. It's comfortably quick (mid-7 second range from 0-60). There's enough torque on tap at low rpm's to get up and go briskly (and lag free) — unusual, for a small four-cylinder.

The engine cruises easily at highway speeds and never sounds taxed, even when you put the boot in. My test drive netted 27 miles per gallon, which is in line with EPA estimates (25 mpg's city, 36 highway (manual), 25/35 (automatic)).

This generation Golf was the first VW to be built on the company's MQB architecture. Those seeking the

maximum, hot hatchback expression on that platform will gravitate to the GTI — one of the founding fathers of the breed — and the Golf R. That said, the Golf is no slouch in the handling department.

The suspension setup (struts in front, coil springs/multilink in back) is tuned here in a satisfying blend of cornering and — particularly if you stick with the 15 or 16-inch wheels, rather than the optional 18's — ride comfort.

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.