

Fiat 124 Spider Abarth

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the adjustable thigh support for an adjustable lumbar support. The optional Recaros may be so equipped, but here again, it may be a moot point for you. Reasonable backs may differ.

Seats aside, the Spider interior layout mirrors the Miata's in many respects. Both offer a fine-driving position, afterthought cup holder placement and decidedly minimal storage space. I would expect that the two cabin designs will become more differentiated as they evolve over time. Trunk space is 4.94 cubic feet. Packing light is mandatory; soft, squishable luggage is recommended.

The manual convertible top can be quickly and easily raised or lowered, and you can do so without leaving your seat, thanks to the spring assist mechanism. With windows up and the rear, between-the-seats deflector deployed, wind flow and noise in the cabin is very manageable. Conversations can be carried out at highway speed without shouting. Unless, you know, you feel like shouting.

Controls are generally easy to reach and use. The infotainment system isn't compatible with Android Auto or Apple CarPlay at this point; a ding for some smartphone users. Scanning the option list, blind spot monitoring and cross-path detection are only available as part of a \$1,495 package, but as in most convertibles, you should have this for safety's sake. A Bose premium, nine-speaker sound system is bundled with GPS navigation for \$1,295.

Since GM's downsizing drove the Pontiac Solstice and Saturn Sky into extinction, the Mazda Miata has had the two-seat, open sports car segment literally to itself. Particularly in Abarth trim, the Fiat 124 Spider makes a strong case for itself as a classy alternative. While the two share common bones, there are just enough differences in just enough areas to make the choice interesting.

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.



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car show calendar



PHOTO: MARK FREEDMAN

THIS 1958 WILLYS PICKUP showed up at 2017's Cruisin' for the Cure classic car show in Windham, NY. This year's event takes place tomorrow (June 24) at Windham Mountain Resort. A bonus for truck lovers: A charity raffle will give prospective puttees who make a hole in one the chance to win a brand new GMC Canyon.

Saturday, June 23, 11am-3pm — Open Car Show, Bethlehem Area YMCA, 900 Delaware Ave., Delmar, NY. Registration: \$15. Trophies for top 30 cars, registration givebacks. Spectators: \$2 (kids free). DJ Andy Narzynski, food and beverages under the pavilion, family fun, bounce house, face painting, 50/50, vendors. Contact Bill at oldcorvettes@gmail.com.

Saturday, June 23, 5pm — Cruise-in, Chuck Wagon Diner, 653 Western Tpk., Duaneburg, NY. All makes and models. Raffles. Contact (518) 357-2500 or Mike Bendetti (518) 495-0240. Every Saturday through September.

Saturday, June 23, 7pm — Pep Boys Cruise-In, Pep Boys, 1795 Central Ave., Albany, NY. American muscle cars only; more than 100 cars. Giveaways, 50/50, swap meet until 11pm. Sponsored by Tri-City Muscle. Weather permitting. Every Sat. through October.

Sunday, June 24, 10am-4pm — 2nd Annual Cruisin' for the Cure Windham Classic Car Show, Windham Mountain Resort, 19 Resort Drive, Windham NY. Registration: \$20. Spectators: \$5. 100% of proceeds go to the Prostate Cancer Foundation. Highlights include hole-in-one putting contest for chance to win a 2018 GMC Canyon pick-up truck, display of new exotic cars, food and beverages and live DJ. Spa available. Contact (518) 734-6600 or visit www.windhamclassiccarshow.com.

Sunday June 24, 2018 10 am-3 pm (rain or shine) — Capital District Chevrolet Club 36th Car, Truck and Motorcycle Show, new Location at Cook's Park, Lincoln Ave., Colonie, NY. All

Makes, models or years vehicles (car, trucks, hot rods, custom and motorcycles from 1900 to 2018). Registration: \$12 (9am-12:30pm). Spectators: \$3, Children and Seniors free. Free parking, vendors, DJ, and food and drink. 40 trophies given out with 2 Best of Show. Contact Phil at (518) 429-0203.

Wednesday, June 27, 6-9pm (weather permitting) — Leadfoot Lucy Cruise-In, Kohl's Plaza, 1814 Central Ave., Colonie, NY. Street rods, antiques, muscle cars, classic. Special parking for participants, 50/50, door prizes. Contact Ken Malette (518) 487-0996. Every Wednesday through Sept.

Thursday, June 28, 5-8pm (weather permitting) — Cruise the Harbor at the Harbor House Restaurant, 1742 Rt. 9, Clifton Park, NY. Door prizes, raffles. Music by DJ Andy Narzynski. Every Thursday. Contact (518) 371-3813.

Thursday, June 28, 6-9pm — Taste Treat Cruise-In, 2070 New Scotland Rd., Slingerlands, NY. 10% off for drivers and families. \$50 cash giveaway. Contact (518) 475-1373. Every Thursday through Aug. 30.

Saturday, June 30, 10am-3pm — Hot Rod Palooza at Lanzi's on the Lake, 1751 Rt. 30, Mayfield, NY. Registration: \$10 (starts at 9am). Goodie bags for first 75, dash plaques to all registered cars. Trophies for top 20, best of show, best paint, people's choice. Bits & Pieces nitro funny car fire-up. 6th Annual Sacandaga Lake Fun Run departs Lanzi's at noon. Free to all spectators. Contact (518) 661-7711.