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TEST DRIVE

## Sounds of Summer

### 2018 Ford Mustang GT Convertible Premium

DAN LYONS | text and photos  
*Special to the Times Union*

**G**T has long been Mustang's mainstream, muscle model. Positioned between the entry level pony car and the track-minded specialty versions, it offers traditional muscle car virtues in a updated, tech-friendly package.

My test car this week was a GT Convertible, wrapped in a smooth-looking coat of Royal Crimson Metallic paint (\$395).

Mustang made a pit stop for a mid-cycle refresh before rolling out their 2018 models. Starting up front, the latest edition gets a lowered hood, revamped grille and a new front splitter. The rear view is highlighted by redesigned LED tail lamps, a new bumper and revamped quad exhaust tips. My test car had the standard rear deck spoiler deleted. I like this no-cost option. To me, the car has a smoother profile view without the wing. Overall, the styling of the latest



**THE 2018 FORD MUSTANG GT** is positioned between the entry level model and specialty track performance versions. Engine options include Ford's 2.3L EcoBoost turbocharged four-cylinder (310 h.p.) and the 5.0L V-8 (460 h.p.).

**2018 Ford Mustang GT Convertible Premium**  
MSRP: \$54,295 (base) · \$44,595 (Premium)  
As Tested: \$52,470

generation Mustang is aging very nicely; a blend of retro styling touches with a modern, muscle car vibe.

It's handsome in both hardtop and convertible forms, and the transition from top up to down in the ragtop is as simple as twisting the top header and holding a button. The top promptly folds into a tidy stack in back, making the molded boot unnecessary. Top down,



wind flow in the cabin doesn't exceed moderate levels, particularly with the front windows raised. Top up, it's a cozy cabin, with the rear, ¾ blind spots you would expect with a convertible. Blind spot monitoring and rear cross traffic alert are optional, and drivers should consider these mandatory safety features.

Top down is a great way to make the most of our too-short, fair weather months here in the Capital District. It's also the preferred listening environment for the soundtrack provided by the 5.0L V-8. (Warning: Musty Reference Ahead). I was just starting out as a driver at the end of the classic muscle car era in the early 1970s. Back then, the streets were still patrolled by flashy,

Flipping the switch to Sport mode removes the baffles and unleashes the rumble.

growing cars, dripping in horsepower. It was just before insurance and energy issues wrestled them off the stage, and replaced them with econoboxes. They rumbled past the gas stations where my buddies and I worked nights after high school, and the sounds they made imprinted on me.

Modern Mustang GTs carry on the sonic tradition, especially when outfitted with the Active Value Performance Exhaust (\$895). Flipping the switch to Sport mode removes the baffles and unleashes the rumble.

My hat's off to whoever did the exhaust tuning on the GT; this one option may well be worth the price of admission. And if you're worried about annoying those

*Continued on page 2*



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