

DEALS ON WHEELS Latest performance rims for your Muscle Car



Australian MUSCLE CAR

THE AGE OF HOMETGROWN HIGH PERFORMANCE



Issue 29

\$7.95 (incl GST)
NZ \$9.00 (incl GST)



LC TORANA GTR XU-1

How Holden downsized from V8 to hot six and changed the face of Aussie motor sport



PLUS! *WINDSOR V8: Ford's sensational small block celebrates 40 years Down Under*
PHIL BROCK: On Bathurst '83, Mad Max and life in the shadow of Peter Perfect
ITALIAN JOB: The European supercar that almost saved Ford's 351 Cleveland V8



DE TOMASO PANTERA GT5 COUPE

Story: Joe Kenninght
Pics: Brendon Thorne



Did Ford Australia keep manufacturing Cleveland 351 V8s after the Falcon V8 officially ended production in 1982? What happened to the engine tooling after Ford had finished with it? As JOE KENWRIGHT reveals in this ground-breaking report, these and other baffling Ford mysteries have finally been answered. The locally-assembled De Tomaso Pantera was an unlikely marriage of mid-engined Italian supercar and cast-iron Aussie V8. It resulted in not only one of Australia's rarest and most intriguing muscle cars, but was also responsible for sustaining Ford's 'secret' local production of the mighty 351 way beyond its use-by date.

AN AUSTRALIAN MUSCLE CAR

Turning the sexiest Italian mid-engined exotics into reliable everyday transport is always a 'work-in-progress' and none more so than the De Tomaso Pantera. Because Pantera development was somewhat abbreviated before release, Ford in the US was forced to undertake catch-up development after the model was sold through its Lincoln-Mercury division in the US.

When the partnership between Ford Motor Company and De Tomaso ended, De Tomaso's direct supply of Ford V8 engines was no longer a given. This created an opportunity for local De Tomaso agents to source their own engines from Ford Australia then export those Australian-built Cleveland engines back to De Tomaso for world production. It was an arrangement that slashed import duty on Australian-delivered De Tomasos, while generating significant Australian content in this Italian supercar.

Powered by Aussie Ford V8 muscle, with final assembly completed in Australia, the De Tomaso Pantera and a handful of other models from the mid-1970s through to 1986 qualify as some of the most unusual Australian muscle cars of all time.

THE PANTERA STORY

The relationship between Argentinian racing driver, Alejandro De Tomaso, and Ford had far reaching consequences that impacted on Ford cars worldwide. It started when De Tomaso's day job at Maserati led to a new road car, based on mid-engined race car principles, known as the Vallerlunga. It was

powered by Ford's four-cylinder Kent engine for which there was no shortage of hot-up parts, when it featured so prominently in open wheeler and sedan motor sport in the 1960s. The Vallerlunga was styled and built by world famous styling house Ghia; an ominous connection that would soon place Ghia under De Tomaso ownership by 1967, then Ford.

It was the Mangusta that followed which gained global attention. At a time when the Ford GT40 was starting to make its presence felt on the race track, De Tomaso delivered a mid-engined road car that was drop-dead gorgeous and powered by the same Ford 'Windsor' V8 mechanicals.

Although it was a fresh new design from Giugiaro while he was at Ghia, it featured a development of the Vallerlunga's race car-inspired backbone chassis and therefore relied on the Windsor small block V8 engine as a stressed member of the rear structure. Around 400 were built, several of which came here. Those customers who hadn't bottomed it out and crunched the drive-train were left to finesse the build and complete the development. De Tomaso's hype made sure the Mangusta didn't go unnoticed. Even the name was provocative. The Mangusta, or 'Mongoose' in English, was the Cobra's natural enemy.

Mangusta problems sounded warning bells, but they fell on deaf ears when no one could resist the Pantera, the Mangusta's replacement. There can be little debate that the Ghia-styled Pantera is one of the most enduring mid-engine shapes of all time, when it didn't rely on the weird or wacky. Even compared to the Ferrari Boxer, a rival Pininfarina design, it has excitement and flair

missing from early mid-engined Ferrari cars. The reason is Tom Tjaarda, who had an revolving doors of Ghia after completing enchanted period at another famous styling house, Pininfarina.

Prior to the Pantera, he is credited with Pininfarina's Fiat 124 Spider, another beautiful design that defies time. His Ferrari 330 GT, the one with the sloping quad headlight Pininfarina's first 2+2 coupe without a Ferrari nose. He also did the Ferrari 365 California, a sledgehammer of a design that would take your breath away. Study all the works and there is a common theme; either front or rear would have Tjaarda's signature raised corners, a theme that Buick introduced its 1959-60 models.

Tom Tjaarda, despite the exotic European name, was an American. He was the son of a Dutch immigrant, Joop Jan Tjaarda van Starckenburg, better known as John Tjaard. Ford tragics would recognise his father as a Briggs designer, who created the original for the Lincoln Zephyr; a low, streamliner that would influence the whole Ford range.

Although Tom Tjaarda was working in the US at the time, he was better placed than most to showcase the strong Ford DNA already running through De Tomaso's models up to this point. A visit by Ford boss Lee Iacocca in August 1969, to look at potential concept cars and projects, cemented the potential for a shared model with Ford.

The Pantera was a road car from the start, with a new but conventional sheet metal monocoque and pressed-steel shell engineered by former Lamborghini luminary, Giampaolo





Dallara. Powered by Ford's new Cleveland 351ci (5.8 litre) V8, topped with the 4V big port heads from the Boss 302 and bolted up to a ZF five-speed transaxle, the mid-engined Pantera was unashamedly conceived late in 1969 to capitalize on Ford's unbelievable succession of Le Mans GT40 wins.

After a half-hearted attempt at presenting a handful of GT40 Mark III road cars, Ford was stung by the harsh criticism of the compromises generated by the GT40's race car origins in the US. The Pantera, or 'Panther' in English, was carefully positioned and named by De Tomaso to join the European Ford Capri and Mercury Cougar in Mercury showrooms. For a handful of Mercury dealers in 1971, the opportunity to shoot an exotic sports car rival across the bow of the iconic Chevrolet Corvette was too good to miss.

Only a year after the Pantera was first shown as a design study, Ford suddenly found itself in the Italian supercar business and discovered what the familiar terms 'lack of reliability', 'heavy to drive' and 'poor ventilation' really meant. There were reports of Ford technicians armed with acetylene bottles travelling around the US, ready to repair welds and other failures as they occurred. At that point, Ford had no choice but to pull the pin and re-engineer the car. An incentive to keep the liaison alive was Alejandro De Tomaso's marriage to an American, who was a niece of one of the Ford family!

It was re-launched in late 1972 as the 'Pantera L' by Ghia, after Ford inherited Ghia late in 1970 in the process of marketing the Pantera. Although the Pantera quickly evolved into a much better car than thought possible, with improved air-conditioning, mainstream dash, better handling and improved fuel consumption, it was also

progressively undermined by exhaust emissions requirements and rubber-faced bumpers. It was later joined by a high-performance GTS version, of which 150 sold in 1974.

After about 4000 examples were sold in the US, Ford grew tired of the endless water leaks, premature corrosion, wiring glitches and inconsistent quality. When faced with the further demise of the Cleveland V8 engine under the next round of emissions laws and loss of sales with the first global fuel crisis, the company decided to pull the pin in 1974. This is where Australia would come into play.

According to Paul Halstead, who in 1984 stepped up Australian Ford V8 exports to Italy, Ford US had negotiated an exit deal with De Tomaso and paid him to maintain a parts supply for existing owners of a model that was no longer to be sold in the US.

De Tomaso's view on exactly what that arrangement meant was at variance with Ford's, so he returned to North America with the Pantera under his own name. For De Tomaso, the opportunity of marketing a Pantera, that had

benefitted from all this development by Ford Motor Company, was too good to ignore. Although Ford was in no mood to supply De Tomaso with more engines after the Cleveland V8 was removed from US production there were enough V8 engine parts still in the hands of third parties during this intermediate period to keep Pantera supplies trickling out at the rate of 100 per year.

When the shared Ford arrangement ended, the Pantera had evolved into a base 'L' model and a 'GTS' in European and US versions, followed by a Group 4 version known as the 'GT4'. The race car-inspired GT4 featured riveted fibreglass wheel-arch extensions and special 10-inch wide front/13-inch wide rear wheels, while the GTS featured special wheels, blackout panels and wild decals to mark a mild power increase over the L.

Although the first local examples of these Panteras were low volume imports, all of these models were later partially assembled in Australia during the 1974-80 period. The Group 5 'GT5' version (Group 4 and Group 5 were FIA race categories which started at Group 1 and worked up) then joined them in 1980 and continued into 1986, but more of this model shortly.



THE AUSTRALIAN CONNECTION

Because Ford Australia was making the Cleveland engine long after US production ended, it made sense to import partially-completed Panteras under reduced import duty then finish building them in Australia. This had a two-fold impact on costs. The major part:



that were missing, along with the local labour component still required for the final assembly, both reduced the dutiable value.

There was another factor. To import each car later in this period, an importer required 'quota' which was severely restricted at a time when the Federal Government was committed to a total vehicle import cap of around 20 percent - or the exact reverse of what it is in today's open market, where local models actually struggle to make up 20 percent. A car assembled in Australia, that met minimum local content requirements, would no longer be held captive under the quota regime.

The process of assembling 'CKD' (Completely Knocked Down) De Tomasos started after Sydney businessman, car enthusiast and race driver, Ken Matthews, took over the NSW De Tomaso franchise and formed De Tomaso Australia in 1974. His first step was to fly to Modena, Italy where he found De Tomaso struggling to source enough Cleveland V8 engines to maintain volume.

The initial discussions centred on how Matthews could import partially completed De Tomasos to Australia, then add the local Cleveland engine to the Pantera and complete engine/transmission units to the front-engined models, including the Deauville and Longchamp. This discussion rapidly expanded, after De Tomaso stripped down an Aussie Cleveland V8 and witnessed the much higher assembly standard and amount of hand finishing in the crankshaft, bores, heads and other components. By this stage, the Aussie Cleveland had evolved with the small-port 2V heads and partial emissions controls (but still with a four-barrel carburettor), which did not have the peakier 'mongrel' quality of the 4V Cleveland with its big-port heads derived from the Boss 302.

De Tomaso initially specified the Australian Cleveland engine for Swiss and French

deliveries, but after the word got out that these cars were smoother and felt more sophisticated than the earlier US engine (as owners of later XB Falcon GTs found), the Australian engine was progressively specified for other markets.

Then Matthews discovered by increasing local content he could sell his quota for full imports to other prestige importers, for more than he could make on each De Tomaso. This added further incentive to source cars ex-Modena in CKD kits.

Hence various De Tomasos were imported painted and trimmed but missing their suspension, brakes and steering as well as their engines, when all these parts could be easily installed while the drive-train was completed. In the front-engined De Tomaso models, there were further concessions, because local transmissions as well as engines could be installed. For the mid-engined Pantera, the ZF five-speed transaxle was a constant high-cost component for which there was no local alternative.

Ken Matthews set up a small assembly operation behind his Sydney showroom in Parramatta Rd, Haberfield. The next challenge was getting the required supply of fully-dressed Cleveland V8 engines, including air cleaners, air-conditioning compressors, fan, ancillaries and the correct pollution gear from Ford Australia, ready to plug straight into the Ford systems as

installed by De Tomaso. Not only did Matthew have to secure this supply for his final assembly of the Australian cars, but De Tomaso's demand for a global supply grew as left-over US parts began to dry up.

AMC enlisted the help of Ford Australia archivist, Adrian Ryan, to trace this engine supply line, so that we could provide engine numbers and other ID for genuine Australian-assembled and powered De Tomaso examples. Even though Adrian has virtually unrestricted internal access to the records of his former employer, he could find no trace anywhere within the company of Australian Cleveland V engines going to De Tomaso. It also came as something of a surprise to Adrian that this could even happen. As it turns out, he had every reason to be.

A chance remark from Ken Matthews about his dealings with Ford at the time unexpectedly shed some light on why Adrian Ryan, despite many years of research on the topic, has not been able to find any evidence of what happened to the stockpile of Australian Cleveland engines. As any Ford fan will tell you, Ford made a point of publicly recording the late Falcon V8 in November 1982. Who hasn't seen the PR photo of the desirable XE Fairmont G ESP 5.8 surrounded by smiling Ford plant workers and management, to mark what was probably the single most tragic move that Ford





Australia ever made? So how could Paul Halstead and De Tomaso still be building Panteras and other models, with Australian Cleveland V8 engines, as late as 1986?

Despite the smiles in the 1982 photograph, not everyone was happy about losing the Cleveland. For some time, there were those at the 'coal face' who knew that unless they found extra customers and applications for the Aussie Ford V8, it would face the same fate as the US version as soon as Australia went down the same emissions path. Unlike the smaller Holden V8, the Cleveland V8 was a big, heavy engine at a time when Aussie family cars were going in the opposite direction. Ford's very basic early manufacturing computer system could not cope with supplying complete engines ready for installation when nobody anticipated that anyone outside the Ford factory would want one, yet there were those within Ford determined to find a way around this.



According to Matthews, the only way the system could cope with a complete engine going to someone outside Ford was to divert an engine destined for a car on the production line. Under this bizarre system, Cleveland V8 engines heading for an existing car under construction would be spirited away from the assembly line, stockpiled and sent to De Tomaso Australia, ready for overseas export or locally-delivered kits. Ford's engine

guys would then send down a replacement engine, so the original car under construction could be completed.

This is an amazing revelation and it gets better from here. After Ford announced that it would end local V8 production in 1982, a wide range of Ford fleet customers realised what they were losing. Demand for 5.8-litre equipped LTI models suddenly spiked, especially special purpose models for the Federal Government.

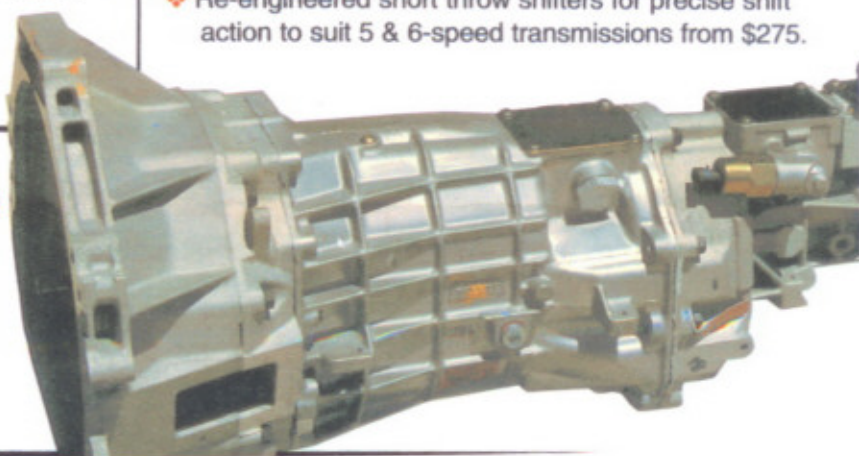
GEARBOXES

As an authorized sales agent, spare parts stockist and repairer for TREMEC 5 and 6 speed transmissions, Mal Wood Automotive can provide everything from advice to a complete conversion.

If you are considering installing a 5 or 6-speed transmission in your high performance or standard car, the TREMEC range should be your first choice. And if you are planning on upgrading your standard manual transmission, or a complete conversion from auto to manual, we have the components, experience and expertise to ensure a successful conversion.

We are constantly striving to develop upgrades for both the Holden and Ford ranges of cars using the TREMEC 5 and 6-speed transmissions, and we carry a large range of complete transmissions, flywheels, clutch kits, diffs, tailshafts and parts.

- ◆ New and reconditioned 5 & 6-speed gearboxes to stock
- ◆ Close ratio 5th and 6th gears for T56 Commodore
- ◆ Mainshaft upgrade to suit high performance applications
- ◆ Prompt reconditioning and repairs of all transmissions
- ◆ Clutch replacement upgrade for your specific application
- ◆ Exchange diff assemblies in standard and low ratios
- ◆ Obligation free advice on driveline design
- ◆ Re-engineered short throw shifters for precise shift action to suit 5 & 6-speed transmissions from \$275.



**MAL WOOD
AUTOMOTIVE Pty Ltd**

42 Lyons Street WARWICK Qld 4370

Phone: (07) 4661 3548

Fax: (07) 4661 3562

www.malwoodauto.com.au

Email: malwood@bigpond.net.au

As police departments around Australia also realised there wouldn't be any more powerful full-sized V8 police cars in the near future, they started pumping Ford for special build Falcon GL Interceptors equipped with the 5.8 engine. Matthews received a phone call and was asked if he minded whether his stockpile of De Tomaso engines could be diverted back to Ford's production line!

Because Matthews had anticipated that supplies would get tight and ordered extras for some time ahead, he agreed to the request but only on the basis that Ford would build and supply replacement engines as soon as the pressure was off. Ford was as good as its word. For the first time, we now have clear proof that the Aussie Cleveland V8 engine was actually built by Ford after the pin was pulled on its V8 passenger cars.

Throughout the years that this author has personally researched this topic, AMC has been aware of a particular 'Mercruiser' inboard-outboard marine unit revered in certain boat circles, because it supposedly featured the Aussie Cleveland 351 V8. Yet Adrian Ryan has never been able to find any internal evidence of engines going to Mercury either. The generally accepted view was that the last engines left in stock were simply shipped off to the US and snapped up by various hot car and racing fraternities, because the Aussie-made Cleveland was known for its finer internal finish and extra beef at the base of the block. The story is rather more complex than that.



Because AMC has also come across several late model XE police cars fitted with the Cleveland 351 V8 built as late as 1984, and certain special-build Federal Government cars from the post-1984 all-six cylinder XF/ZL Fairlane/FE LTD era that had also been fitted with Cleveland engines (without any mention of this on their build plates), there had to be another explanation. It now appears that these engines were still being built and sent out the door via the assembly line!

Enter Paul Halstead late in 1982. Older readers will remember Halstead, "two metres of geniality" as *Modern Motor* described him, as a pioneering Sydney computer whiz who channeled the spoils of his success into his passion for fast cars, then shared it.

The 1979 *Modern Motor* cover story, of a drag race between a RAAF Mirage jet and Lamborghini Countach, happened because Halstead owned the car. Five years later, he was offering to buy De Tomaso Australia from Matthews to support his dream of an exclusive automotive outlet called 'The Toy Shop'. According to Matthews, it was an offer he couldn't refuse, but he also recalls the deal was conditional on Ford supplying the outstanding Cleveland V8 engines. After Halstead confirmed that Ford would supply them, the deal, as history shows, went through.

It was these engines that powered at least 40 post-1984 Panteras and other local examples. Around 200 also went to Modena for global production for at least two years, or long enough



VETERAN VINTAGE AND CLASSIC VEHICLES

When it comes to Insurance, we'll take as much care of your Muscle Car

- NRMA Traveller Care Benefits
- Agreed Value
- Repairer of Your Choice
- Personalised Service

Coverage Throughout Australia

1800 646 605

388 George Street, Sydney, NSW, 2000



...as you do!

Insurance issued by Insurance Australia Ltd. ABN 11000 016 722AFS Licence No. 227681 trading as NRMA Insurance. An IAG company. When making decisions about the product you should read the Product Disclosure Statement available from NRMA Insurance



Peter Ruck with his sons, Mathew and Robert

PETER RUCK

1981 DE TOMASO PANTERA GT5 COUPE

Our thanks to Sydney's Peter Ruck for providing his GT5 for AMC's photo shoot. Manufactured in October 1981 and first road registered in March 1982, Peter's car had two previous owners before he purchased it in 1996. With only 74,000 kms recorded from new, this Pantera remains in its original factory specification as purchased from De Tomaso Australia, right down to its original set of fat Pirelli P7 tyres. He also has the original owner's manual and sales brochure.

A life long muscle car fan, Peter first became interested in the De Tomaso breed as a teenager. When Leanne Edelsten first hit Sydney's streets - and the headlines - in her bright pink GT5 in the mid 1980s, he started to learn more about these eye-catching cars with the intention of some day owning one.

"They look fantastic with the Italian styling, and they've got this great Aussie connection with the Cleveland V8," he told AMC. "You hear about exotics being troublesome and expensive to maintain, but the Pantera is quite practical and affordable in that sense. The ZF gearbox is indestructible; it's a super heavy-duty unit and combined with the simplicity of the 351 V8, it's a great combination that just requires regular servicing. I don't get to drive it much these days, but when I do it has an amazing effect on people. Most have no idea what it is."

Peter is interested in hearing from other owners of Australian-assembled De Tomasos, with the aim of starting a club for these unique Italian/Aussie supercars and displaying them at events like the Muscle Car Masters. If you're interested, contact him on 0419-566-466.

to win substantial duty concessions on the cars that Halstead sold here until early 1986.

The flexibility of final local assembly enabled Halstead to personally tailor an Italian exotic to well-heeled Australian tastes, the most notorious of which was the pink Pantera GT5 created for Leanne Edelsten, the young wife of the infamous Dr Geoffrey Edelsten, so it would match his pink helicopter! Ah yes, who could forget the 1980s.

Halstead remembers having to complete six Longchamp convertibles ordered under the Matthews regime, yet it was the Pantera in its base level, GT4 and later GT5 specifications, that he was particularly interested in. Halstead recalls Panteras in base and GT4 specification being sold during this period, often with local Simmons wheels. The Group 5-spec GT5 was introduced on Matthews' watch in 1980, first with extra flares bonded to the wheel arches which were later integrated into the guards like the early Porsche Turbo. The GT5 took over after 1983 as the main Australian model.

The Aussie cars were sent out for extra rust-proofing in later years and the engines were sometimes given a dress-up kit to make the cast-iron Aussie Cleveland look a little more exotic. Most buyers opted for extra engine work including forged pistons, roller rockers and bigger valves, while one NSW Ford dealer wanted to complete the final assembly in his own workshop.

After Halstead came on board, Matthews put together a business case to take over Australian Cleveland V8 manufacture, believing there was a big enough market in marine and stationary applications, US performance and racing

circles and De Tomaso supplies to keep it. To his dismay, he was too late. Ford informed him that all the Aussie Cleveland castings, tooling and dies had been broken up only day before! AMC suspects this occurred when Ford committed to building the new overhead cam versions of its six cylinder engines and couldn't afford any diversion of resources, what was a race against time to match Holden's first big Commodore.

For Halstead, this created an engine supply problem after 1986 with Australia's switch to unleaded petrol. At the time, Halstead hints he would be talking to Peter Brock but ultra this prompted the development of the Alfa Romeo-based 'Giocattolo' using the Pantera transaxle, later with the EFI Group A Holden. Halstead tried to interest De Tomaso in the engine for commonality across both cars. However, compared to the \$1900 purchase of the local Cleveland, the \$11,000 price tag the Holden engine didn't add up for De Tomaso. If successful, the Giocattolo might have changed the economies of scale.

As GT5 and later GT5S production ended in Italy in 1990, four years after the last Australian examples, De Tomaso launched the Nuova Pantera in 1991 with major styling changes by Lamborghini Countach designer Gandini and powered by the same EFI 5.0-litre Ford Windsor V8 launched in the E Falcon at that time. Although a shadow of the previous Cleveland-powered models, the smooth Nuova Pantera was a pretty car but was all over by 1993.





The Check before the Cheque

Body

Because there are so many low-cost sources of used Panteras riddled with rust, it is common to upgrade most examples to full GT5 specification during restoration and RHD conversion in some cases. Determining whether a particular Pantera is an original Australian delivery may take specialist identification by those who were there at the time, in the absence of any genuine documentation. However, the presence of a proper compliance plate and local registration history are a good start. Check all structural sections of the monocoque for rust and weld integrity.

Drivetrain

It would be unusual to find a genuine original Australian Cleveland V8 in ex-Ford Australia emissions specification that hasn't been upgraded in any way. Again, documentation that the engine has been with the car since new is useful. Although a Cleveland overhaul is straightforward in Australia, it is worth checking the engine carefully for evidence of oil starvation

and other abuse when wide, sticky rubber and the Pantera's mid-engine layout can generate extra cornering forces (hence oil surge). Heads will require upgrading to run on premium unleaded. Engine cooling is also a challenge, but a properly sorted example should not overheat. The ZF transaxle is a strong but big ticket item, so every aspect of its operation including gear shift, backlash, gear and bearing noises, synchros and limited slip differential needs to be checked carefully. Check all mechanicals for oil leaks and cracks.

Interior

Later cars had lashings of leather and in some cases wood inlays. Poor repairs and materials will detract from the car. Is the dash correct for the specification, as there were significant changes over the model life? Is there evidence of a poor conversion? There is little that cannot be rectified but nothing in a De Tomaso cabin including the Veglia gauges comes cheaply, so it is a matter of putting a figure on any flaws or damaged items. Have updated wheels and tyres knocked out the speedo calibration? Air-conditioning may be ready for an R134a upgrade.



1985 De Tomaso Pantera GT5 Coupe

Engine: Ford Cleveland 351/5.8 V8, pushrod overhead valves, cast iron block and heads, four barrel Carter carburettor. Big valve heads, forged pistons, roller rockers, upgraded valve springs, four barrel Holley (Sports opt).
Bore and Stroke: 101.6 X 88.9 mm
Capacity: 5763 cc
Compression Ratio: 8.9:1. 10.0:1 (opt)
Maximum Power (gross): 260kW/6000 rpm (opt)
Maximum Torque (gross): 468Nm/3800 rpm (opt)
Transmission: ZF five speed transaxle/LSD
Wheels: Alloy 10.0JX15 front/13.0JX15 rear
Tyres: Pirelli P7 285/40VR15 front/345/35VR15 rear
Brakes: Ventilated discs front/rear.
Final Drive: 4.22:1. 4.01:1 (opt).
Maximum speed: 255 km/h
0-100 km/h: 5.9 secs
Standing 400 m: 13.8 secs

Wheels and Brakes

Not all wheel and tyre upgrades will have improved the vehicle, especially if the alloy wheel style is no longer original. The original alloy wheel style was an important component of the Tjaarda design and varied according to model, although he later acknowledged there were compromises in rushing the design into production. His original wheel style has since gone into production exactly as he intended, as a retro-fit 8 x 17-inch front & 11 x 17-inch rear combination, which might be preferable to an aftermarket upgrade.

Prices

The very best genuine late model Pantera GT5 examples can fetch upwards of \$80,000, reflecting the huge restoration costs for the model. For anything less, it is a case of counting back what it will take to bring it up to showroom condition. For some Ford fans, it is the combination of ultimate Ford Cleveland V8 muscle and Italian supercar styling which have kept prices steady in recent times. AMC

Special thanks to Ken Matthews, Paul Halstead and Adrian Ryan for their valuable assistance with this story.