

COLLECTOR'S
EDITION

NEW ROADS



A MAGAZINE FOR PEOPLE
WHO WANT TO DISCOVER MORE



THE 2020 MID-ENGINE CORVETTE



CORVETTE COVER PHOTO: GREG PAJO / THIS PAGE: DW BURNETT, COURTESY OF TOP GEAR



“This mid-engine move is revolutionary for Corvette. The engine is the fundamental heart of this vehicle; it is the foundation.”
— Tom Peters, director of Design, Chevrolet Performance Cars

This is a story about movement.

For more than 65 years, the Corvette has moved through our lives. America’s sports car has sparked our collective imagination: on posters on bedroom walls, on middle America’s Main Streets, on racing weekends.

A remarkable engine moves the newest version of this advanced machine. A Corvette must be fast, and this Stingray is as powerful and capable as they come. Moving the engine from the front toward the rear of the car not only expands the performance envelope, but it plants the crossed flags firmly in supercar territory.

New Roads exists to bring you to unexpected places in surprising new ways. In this Collector’s Edition, that job falls solely on the shoulders of an all-new Corvette, whose legend—and countless new technical achievements—makes easy work of filling pages.

The world is excited about the new Corvette. In addition to the details of the car, read on for the voices of people who’ve built it, love it, and are already recognizing it with accolades. Prepare to be transported.

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C8.R

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DW BURNETT, COURTESY OF TOP GEAR



“

OK.
FASTEN YOUR SEAT BELT.
LET’S GO.

”

*ZORA ARKUS-DUNTOV,
FORMER CHIEF ENGINEER, CORVETTE*

GEN 1: 1953–1962



GEN 2: 1963–1967



MOVING THROUGH HISTORY

THE CHEVROLET CORVETTE HAS BEEN ONE OF AMERICA’S MOST REVERED AUTOMOTIVE NAMEPLATES GOING ON EIGHT GENERATIONS NOW. HERE’S THE STORY OF HOW WE GOT HERE. BY JERRY BURTON

IT ALL BEGAN AT 1 O’CLOCK ON A COLD FRIDAY AFTERNOON IN 1953 when America got an eyeful of a sexy, windswept sports car at the Waldorf Astoria New York ballroom. It was called Corvette, named after a class of small, fast, maneuverable warships. The occasion was the 1953 General Motors Motorama, a precursor to today’s auto shows.

GEN 1: THE GODFATHER
A true marriage of Chevrolet Design and Engineering, the first Corvette was an inspired idea. It was crafted largely with components from the full-size Chevrolet car, including a straight-six engine, a two-speed automatic transmission, and a solid-axle rear end. Performance was at least comparable to other sports cars of its day, and its looks absolutely stopped traffic.

The crusade to help the Corvette go as fast as it looked was led by engineer Zora Arkus-Duntov, who was so moved by the sight of the Motorama Corvette that he applied for

a job at GM just to work on it. One of the biggest single improvements was the addition of an optional small-block Chevy V8 in 1955. Fuel injection would be offered two years later, providing one horsepower for every cubic inch of displacement, a major milestone.

GEN 2: THE STING RAY YEARS
While Arkus-Duntov’s enhancements created an increasing demand for the Corvette, it would be almost 10 years before he got the chance to engineer a car that was truly all his own. Influenced by the mid-engine machines he raced in Europe, he started sketching out engineering designs for a mid-engine Corvette as early as 1957. But a new front-engine Corvette design called the Sting Ray racer was the inside favorite. The work of Design staff’s Bill Mitchell, it looked like it was going 200 mph standing still.

Indeed, it would set the mold for the new-generation Corvette, also called the Sting Ray. For the first time, the Sting Ray came in

two body styles—the standard convertible and a new fastback coupe with a controversial split rear window. For Arkus-Duntov, an engineer and racer who prized functionality, the split window was a superfluous add-on, hampering rear visibility. He went to war with Mitchell over the split and lost—with Chevrolet chief engineer Ed Cole ruling in Mitchell’s favor, at least for the first year.

Despite Arkus-Duntov’s misgivings, the overall shape made everything around it look 20 years older. The Gen 2 Corvette was also noteworthy for its new ladder-style frame and an independent rear suspension that significantly elevated its road performance. The result was high demand: 1963 model year sales increased by 33 percent over 1962.

In 1965, Chevrolet added the first big-block to the Corvette lineup—a 396-cubic-inch, 425-horsepower engine nicknamed the Porcupine Head, based on the splayed angles of its valve stems. That same year, four-wheel disc brakes became standard equipment.

GEN 3: 1968–1982



GEN 3: THE SHARK YEARS

Model year 1968 brought on a flamboyant new Corvette design, inspired by a Bill Mitchell show car called Mako Shark II. Gen 3 also saw the debut of a powerful, solid-lifter small-block engine, the LT1, which put out a healthy 370 horsepower while costing an additional \$447.60—a lot of money in 1970. By 1973, Corvette performance had peaked, and the combined effects of a gas shortage and stricter emissions standards served to curtail Corvette performance. By 1975, Corvette was down to two engine options—a 165-horsepower V8 and a 205-horsepower V8.

Even with the performance decreases, Corvette production ramped ever upward.

The 25th anniversary Corvette and the Indy pace car from 1978 were both hot sellers, and by 1979, Corvette production reached an all-time high of 53,807 units. Gen 3 culminated with a Collector Edition Corvette in 1982.

GEN 4: EIGHTIES TECH SHOWCASE

After 15 years of Gen 3 production, an all-new Corvette hit the streets in 1983 (with the convertible returning in 1986) that had the world buzzing. It featured a wide clamshell hood showcasing an all-new chassis and a beautiful forged-aluminum double-wishbone suspension. It would be the best-cornering Corvette yet, with Z51 Performance Package models achieving 0.9 g on the skid pad.

Shortly after the Gen 4 hit the showrooms, rumors began to circulate about a new “King of the Hill” Corvette designed to beat the world’s best. The car would have a body that widened at the rear to accommodate huge rear tires and would be powered by Corvette’s first DOHC V8, developed jointly with Lotus.

The ZR-1, as it came to be called, was a superstar, capable of speeds exceeding 175 mph. Said chief engineer Dave McLellan at the time of the launch: “It’s a Corvette—only more so.” Unveiled to the media in Geneva, it was an instant sensation that electrified the motoring press, with the ZR-1 owning the cover of virtually every automotive publication in the world.

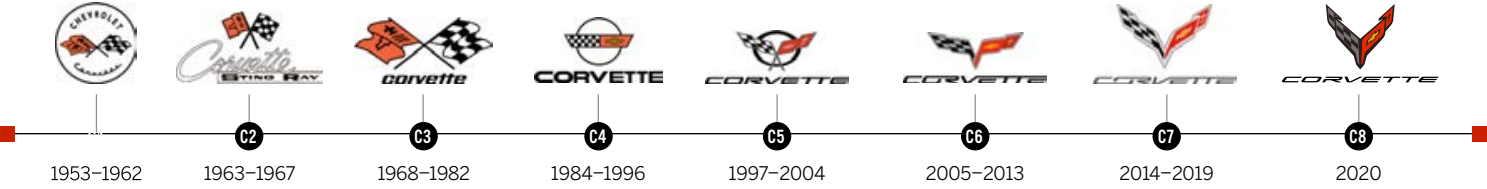
GEN 4: 1984–1996



GEN 5: 1997–2004



CROSSED-FLAGS EVOLUTION Criss-crossed representations of Chevy iconography and racing’s checkered flag have graced every generation of Corvette since the first. But, as with the car, the crossed flags never stay static.



GEN 6: 2005–2013



GEN 5: AN ALL-NEW ARCHITECTURE

Gen 5 debuted in 1997 after some uncertainty over whether GM would build a new Corvette. It employed a rear-mounted transmission and a new central-tunnel architecture surrounded by a hydroformed steel frame. As a result, Gen 5 was more than three times stiffer than its predecessor. It also enabled more advanced suspension tuning and resulted in a much more pleasing car.

Gen 5 was offered in coupe form in 1997, with a convertible added in 1998 and a fixed-roof coupe in 1999. The fixed-roof model was to be a lower-cost, entry-level Corvette. But modest sales caused Chevrolet to back away from the low-price concept and instead use the fixed-roof car as the platform for a new high-performance Z06 introduced in 2001. With 385 horsepower (later increased to 405), it provided ZR-1 performance for a fraction of the price.

GEN 6: FASTER AND LIGHTER

Breaking sharply with Corvette tradition since 1963, Gen 6 sported a new design with exposed headlamps embedded under clear

lens covers for better aerodynamics. Introduced in 2005, it perfected the good things about Gen 5 while adding 400 standard horsepower and 400 pound-feet of torque. A new Z06 model was introduced for the 2006 model year that contained a litany of racing technology, including the extensive use of carbon fiber and magnesium and an aluminum frame. With its 7.0-liter small block, the Z06 was capable of 505 horsepower and a top test-track speed of 198 mph.

Gen 6 also saw the reintroduction of the Grand Sport—modeled after a limited-production lightweight racing Corvette from 1963—as well as an even more powerful Z06 model. Topping off the sixth generation was the “Blue Devil” Corvette, officially known as the ZR1. With its supercharged 638-horsepower engine, abundant use of carbon fiber, and carbon-ceramic brakes, it set yet another new standard for Corvette performance.

GEN 7: A SUPERCAR FOR THE AGES

Gen 7, which debuted in 2014, would be the last hurrah for the front-engine Corvette. But what a hurrah it was, with the return of the

Stingray nameplate as the standard model. Said executive chief engineer Tadge Juechter: “This car had to earn the right to carry the Stingray nameplate.” And did it ever.

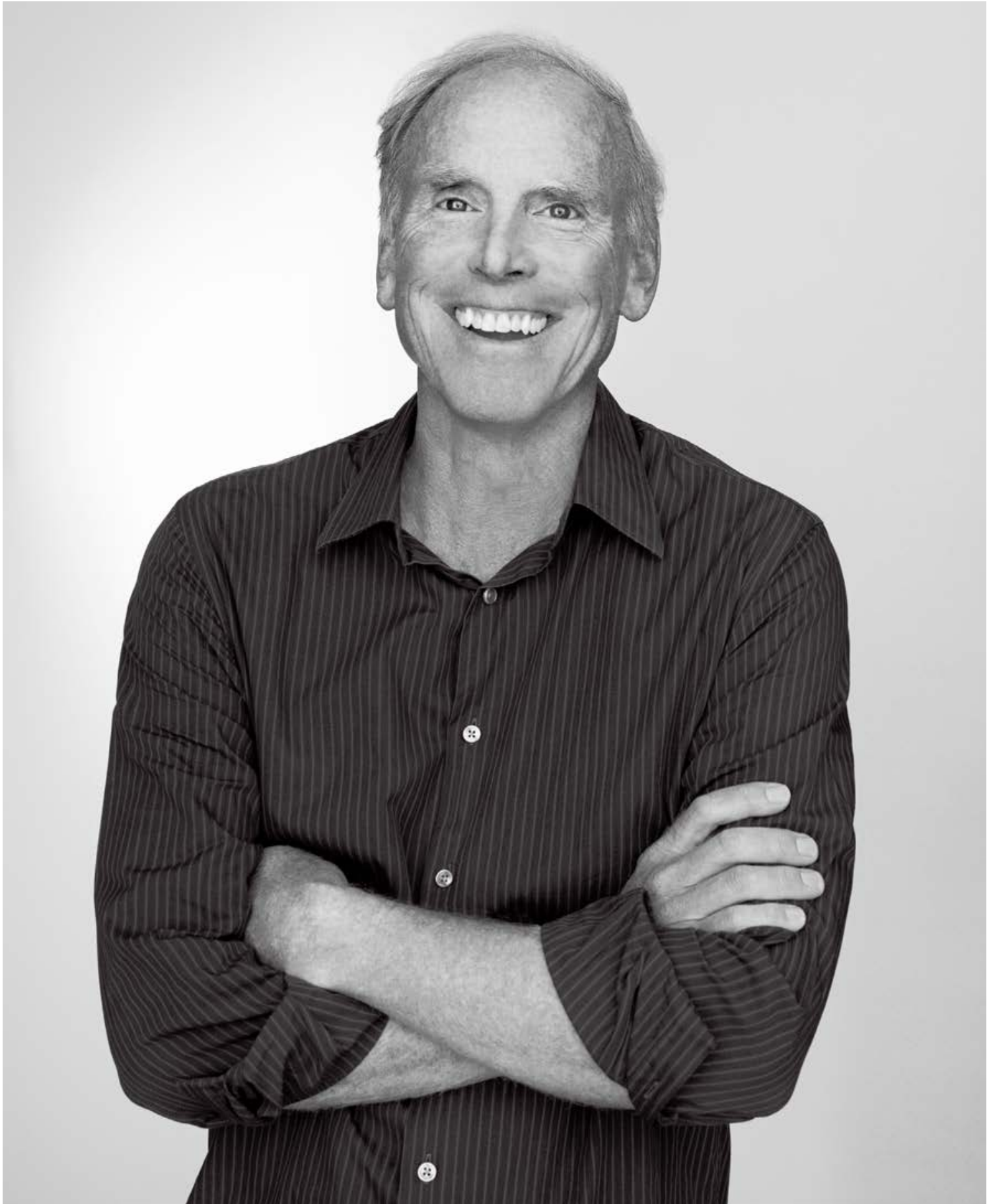
The Gen 7 design was more provocative than ever with its wide stance, graceful haunches, sharply defined lines, and a renewed focus on aerodynamics. The coupe featured a wider side window profile with the rear glass tapered to the center to echo the 1963 split-window coupe.

Topping off Gen 7 was the return of the Corvette ZR1, this time with a 755-horsepower supercharged V8 engine. Its available high rear wing, in combination with the front underwing, is capable of creating 950 pounds of downforce at speed. Needless to say, it’s the fastest production Corvette ever, with a top track speed of over 212 mph.

But there’s no such thing as too much horsepower. Remaining on top in today’s competitive sports car world requires steady progress. The eighth-generation Corvette provides a whole new foundation to build on, ensuring that America’s sports car will continue to enchant generations of enthusiasts.

GEN 7: 2014–2019





JAKE CHESSUM

“

FROM THE BEGINNING, WE HAD BIG
IDEAS ABOUT HOW THIS NEW
**MID-ENGINE ARCHITECTURE COULD
IMPROVE CORVETTE AND CREATE AN
EXOTIC DRIVING EXPERIENCE.**
THE KIND OF EXPERIENCE THAT DRIVING
ENTHUSIASTS **TALK ABOUT ALL THE TIME,
BUT FIND HARD TO DEFINE.**
NOW, WE'RE TAKING ANOTHER BIG STEP FORWARD TO
COMPETE WITH THE BEST IN THE WORLD.

”

*TADGE JUECHTER,
EXECUTIVE CHIEF ENGINEER, CORVETTE*

TEXT:
SEYTH MIERSMA
JAKE HOLMES
NATE ROGERS

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ELMAR STEWART

ILLUSTRATIONS:
CLINT FORD

THROUGH TIME:

CHANGING GRAVITY:

OVER GROUND:

INTO OUR LIVES:

M O V E M E N T



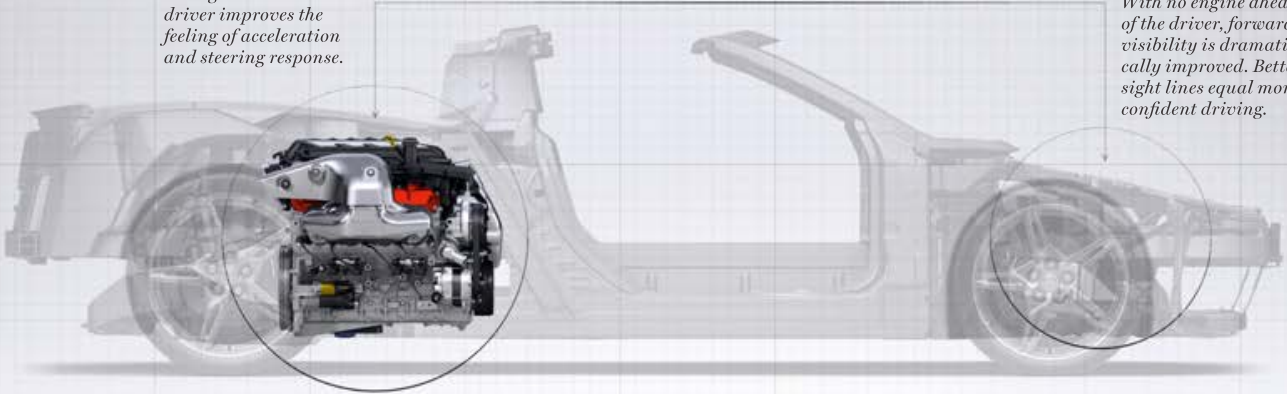


MID-ENGINE ADVANTAGE The Chevrolet Corvette has forged a reputation for balancing stunning performance with advanced design. But Corvette drivers also have a long-standing appreciation for driving the car, day in and day out.

Harlan Charles, product manager for the Corvette, reiterates that the sports car has always excelled: “The Corvette has a lot of strengths, some of which include value, attainability, practicality, space, a powerful V8, and an excellent power-to-weight ratio.”

The 2020 Corvette combines those core values with the exciting attributes of a mid-engine supercar. The car offers what Corvette executive chief engineer Tadge Juechter calls “a new exotic driving experience,” but without any of the sacrifices of comfort or amenities that people often associate with exotic supercars.

Positioning the LT2 V8 engine behind the driver improves the feeling of acceleration and steering response.



With no engine ahead of the driver, forward visibility is dramatically improved. Better sight lines equal more confident driving.

This radical rethink gives the Corvette exceptional weight balance; there's a reason race cars are mid-engined.



Corvette Accessory engine cover. Corvette Accessories are dealer-installed and covered by the GM 3-year/36,000-mile (whichever comes first) New Vehicle Limited Warranty when ordered with your new Corvette. See your dealer for details.

**6.2L LT2 V8
ENGINE**

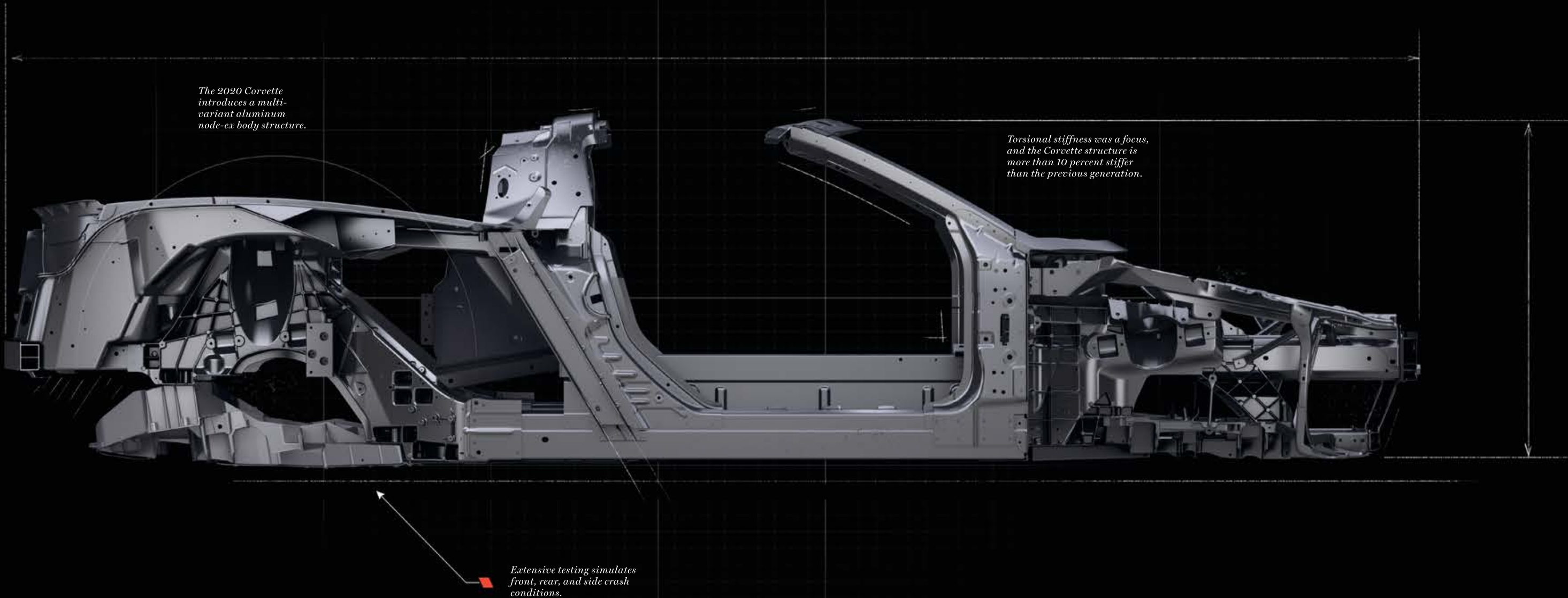
On display beneath a glass hatch of the coupe, the 6.2-liter small-block LT2 V8 catches your eye with striking valve covers and textured heat shields. Its performance commands even more attention—the engine develops an impressive 495 horsepower and 470 pound-feet of torque (available with the Performance Exhaust or Z51 Performance Package), making the 2020 model the most powerful production Stingray to date. From the driver’s seat you’ll feel the difference the engine placement makes, says executive chief engineer Tadge Juechter: “With more weight in the rear, you see an increase in traction and acceleration.”

**DRY SUMP
LUBRICATION**

The new Stingray’s lateral acceleration is so great that the LT2 engine comes standard with a dry sump oiling system. A dry sump uses an external oil reservoir and pumps to provide more consistent engine lubrication during extreme cornering. Because a dry sump engine’s oil pan is shallower, the engine can also sit lower in the car. That enables a lower center of gravity that contributes to the Corvette’s improved handling.

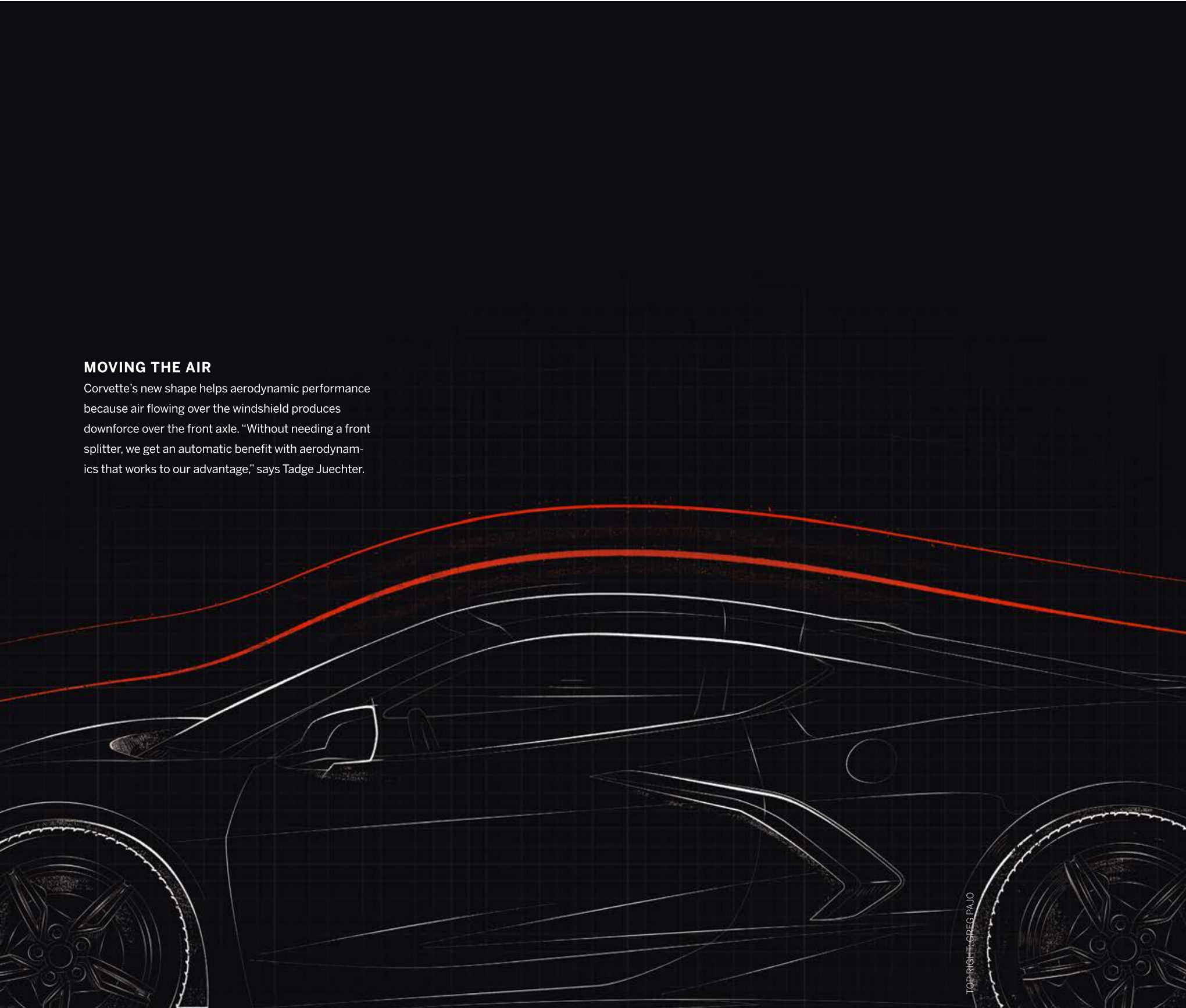
LIGHT, STRONG

The light but stiff aluminum-intensive body structure uses a center-tunnel design. This in turn allows for smaller rocker panels and easier cabin entry and exit. This structure, which is used for both the coupe and convertible models, contributes to improved ride quality and handling performance.



MOVING THE AIR

Corvette’s new shape helps aerodynamic performance because air flowing over the windshield produces downforce over the front axle. “Without needing a front splitter, we get an automatic benefit with aerodynamics that works to our advantage,” says Tadge Juechter.



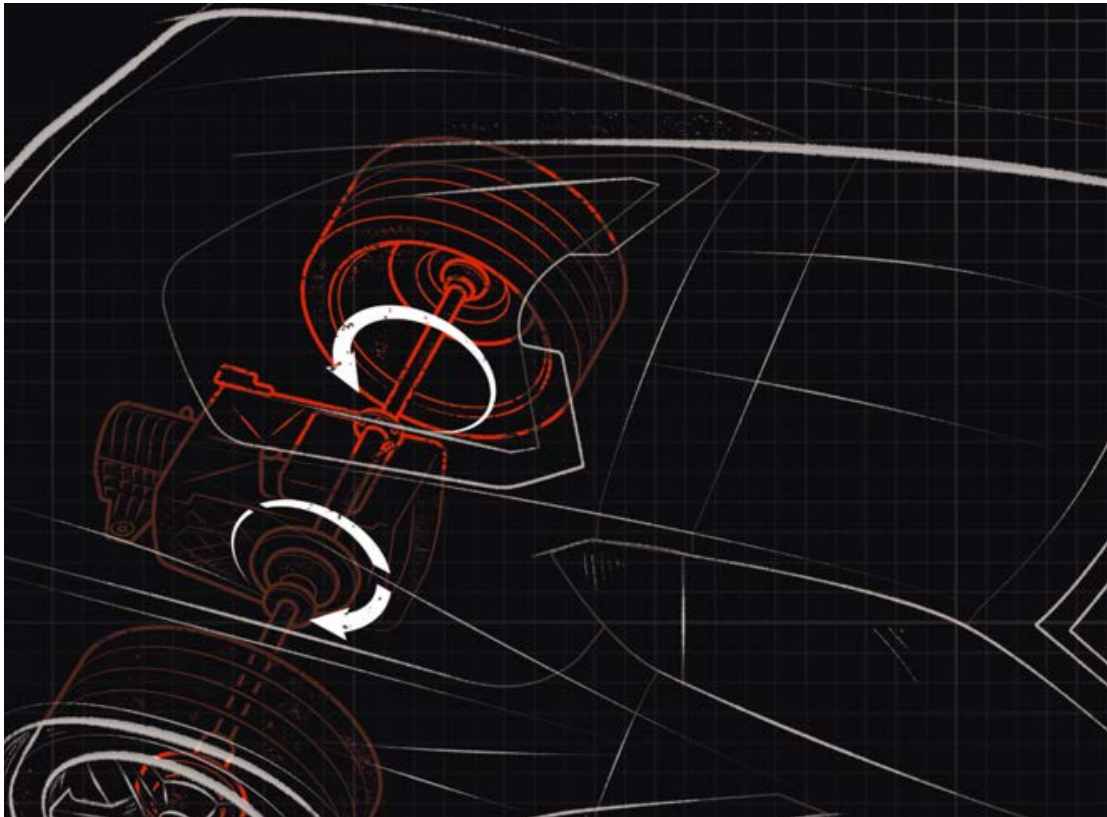
TOP RIGHT: GREG PALJO



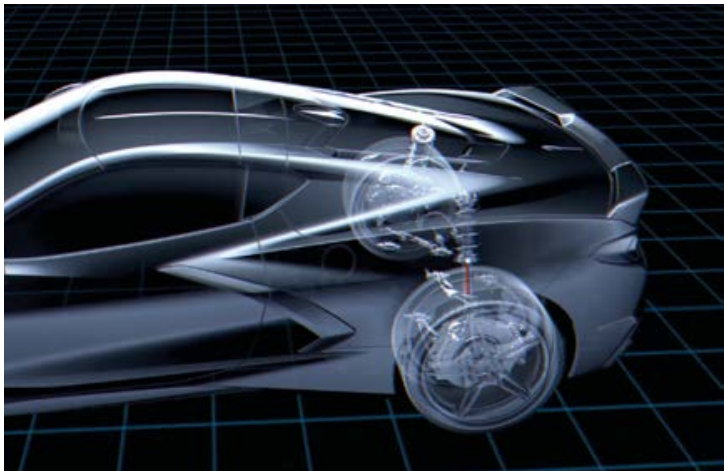
HIDDEN HANDLES Search as hard as you like, but there’s one thing you won’t see on the outside of the new Corvette: door handles. “One of the goals when we style a Corvette is a pure, beautiful sculptural exterior surface. It also wants to have minimal aerodynamic drag,” says Harlan Charles. “To do that, one of the things we did was to hide the hood, hatch, and door releases.” Instead of traditional handles, the Corvette team developed specially designed touchpads inside the side air intakes, which allow for opening the doors without an aerodynamic penalty. Similar hidden releases for the trunks are hidden in the car’s front and rear bumpers. It’s one of many small tweaks that add up to big aerodynamic gains.



REMOVE THE ROOF Every Corvette Stingray comes standard with the ability to go open-air, thanks to a removable roof panel that can be stored in the trunk. “It’s really the only car that I can think of that allows the customer to remove the roof, store it, and go,” says former Corvette executive design director Tom Peters. “It’s a Corvette heritage feature that we worked on for more than a year.” The panel is light enough that it can be removed by one person after releasing two latches under the sun visors, and it stores securely in the trunk. Buyers also can pick from a standard body-color roof panel, an available transparent panel, or even an available carbon-fiber panel with visible weave. An available cover from Corvette Accessories protects the panel when it’s in the stored position.



A SMARTER ELECTRONIC DIFFERENTIAL Think of the available electronic limited-slip differential (eLSD) as a clutch between the rear wheels, modulating torque between them to maximize grip and handling. “We’ve got this giant bandwidth there to tune and to make the car feel right in all these different conditions,” says Jason Kolk, performance engineer for eLSD Integration. Using data about acceleration, driver inputs, and even tire temperatures, the eLSD constantly optimizes power delivery to each wheel to help the driver get the most out of the Corvette on a racetrack. “Corvette should inspire confidence in the driver,” adds Kolk, “and that’s what we bring with our tuning of the differential—to make the driver comfortable, make the driver want to drive harder on the next lap and the next lap.”



MAGNETIC RIDE CONTROL Corvette offers an available magneto-rheological suspension, which uses dampers with an innovative suspension fluid containing metal particles that align and become rigid in an instant. Four sensors read road conditions every millisecond and, combined with information about driver inputs, adjust the suspension for optimum performance. That allows Corvette to deliver impressive ride quality and precise handling based on the driving situation and which driver mode is selected.

VOICES



Ilana Opatowsky of Lancaster, Calif., owner of a 2017 Corvette, on the 2020 model:
“The ability to lift the bumper—such a simple, useful thing—makes me think Chevy is really listening to customers.”

PERFORMANCE DATA RECORDER

The available Performance Data Recorder (PDR) uses a camera and onboard sensors to record your driving performance. The system can measure details like g-forces, acceleration, steering angle, and speed. The video and data can be exported so you can analyze your lapping performance later—just like the pros—or share footage of your track driving. But it’s not just for track use: The high-resolution, 1080p camera can also serve as a dash cam, turning on automatically when you start the car or only when the Corvette is in valet mode. And the PDR now allows you to create your own point-to-point road courses, for comparing your performance over your favorite street routes.

TOP RIGHT: ELMAR STEWART

Z51 PERFORMANCE PACKAGE
This rear spoiler and a new front splitter are part of the available Z51 package that elevates Corvette from thrilling road car to racetrack beast. It also includes:

- Performance exhaust
- Performance suspension
- Electronic limited-slip differential
- Summer-only performance tires¹
- Upgraded, larger brakes
- Front brake cooling ducts
- Enhanced cooling
- Specific axle ratio



¹ Do not use summer-only tires in winter conditions, as it would adversely affect vehicle safety, performance and durability. Use only GM-approved tire and wheel combinations. Unapproved combinations may change the vehicle’s performance characteristics. For important tire and wheel information, go to my.chevrolet.com/learnAbout/chevrolettires or see your dealer.



JAKE CHESSUM

“

PREVIOUS CORVETTES HAD A LOT OF STRENGTHS, INCLUDING VALUE, ATTAINABILITY, PRACTICALITY, SPACE, A POWERFUL V8, AND AN EXCELLENT POWER-TO-WEIGHT RATIO. **WITH THE NEW CAR, WE WERE FREE TO EXPLORE EXOTIC CAR ATTRIBUTES,** SUPERCAR PROPORTIONS, ADVANCED TECHNOLOGIES, UNPRECEDENTED PERSONALIZATION, **AND A WORLD-CLASS DRIVING EXPERIENCE OVERALL.**

”

HARLAN CHARLES,
PRODUCT MANAGER, CORVETTE



DRIVER-CENTRIC COCKPIT

Corvette is all about driving, so its interior is designed with everything wrapping around the driver seat. The cockpit-style layout places the electronic shifter and drive-mode buttons right next to the driver, with HVAC buttons shooting down from the dashboard. “This placement of controls is inspired by what you’d see inside a fighter jet,” says Tristan Murphy, lead creative designer, Corvette.

INTERIOR SPACE

Occupants of the 2020 Corvette will also enjoy a roomier cabin, thanks to the car’s new architecture. “People tend to think of mid-engine cars being cramped, with the engine located right behind the occupants,” says Tadge Juechter, but that’s not the case with Corvette. “One of the main things we wanted to improve upon was interior space.” There’s an inch more rearward travel for the seats and more recline angle, so drivers of many sizes should be able to find a comfortable position.



INTERIOR COLORWAYS

The 2020 Corvette offers more personalization options than ever before. That’s thanks in part to seven interior color themes—as varied as Adrenaline Red, Natural, Two-Tone Blue, and Jet Black—plus optional Yellow and Red stitching packages.¹ Mix and match those with 12 available exterior colors, plus pick between genuine aluminum or carbon-fiber interior trim pieces, and you’ve got a supercar that’s truly yours.

¹ Only available on black interiors.



ULTRA-FAST SHIFTING A high-performance engine deserves a high-performance transmission. In Corvette, that's a lightning-quick, eight-speed dual-clutch transmission (DCT) that delivers precise shifts that happen in less than 10 milliseconds, or one-tenth of a second. It's an advanced type of transmission worthy of Corvette. And, unlike a conventional manual, the DCT can actually keep 100 percent of torque applied during a shift.

Paddle shifters allow for driver engagement, too, while an electronic shifter frees up more space on the sleek console. The shifter features pull toggles for selecting Reverse and Drive and push buttons for Park, Neutral, and Low/Manual. "It's extremely intuitive," says Harlan Charles. At the same time, the toggles have a real, mechanical feel to them to satisfy drivers. "We wanted to make sure it didn't feel like anything else in the rest of the car," says Charles. "It should be its own special control the same way a regular shifter is on another car."

GREG PAJO

VOICES



Joel Reyes of Simi Valley, Calif., owner of a 2018 Z06, on the 2020 model:

"The interior is generations ahead. I've seen some nice interior design in exotic cars; this is on that level."

MULTIPLE DRIVER MODES

No two journeys are the same, which is why the 2020 Corvette offers driver modes to configure vehicle systems for different scenarios. Selecting from Tour, Sport, Track, and Weather—as well as the customizable My Mode and Z Mode—adjusts Corvette's suspension,¹ powertrain response, steering weight, brake feel, and engine sound. Enjoy relaxed commuting in Tour mode during the week, then dial it up to Track for maximum performance on the weekend.

¹ On vehicles equipped with Magnetic Ride Control.

TOP LEFT: ELMAR STEWART



Z MODE Push the silver "Z" button on the steering wheel when you're ready to take your Corvette experience up a notch. The Z Mode comes preset from the factory with a configuration that's designed for spirited, performance-focused driving—a mix of the standard Sport and Track modes. You can further customize Z Mode to suit your preferences, mixing and matching settings for all the Corvette's key components. And, unlike the customizable My Mode, which always uses the Tour powertrain settings, Z Mode allows for customizing engine and transmission¹ responses, too. Maybe you want sharper steering but softer suspension for that bumpy canyon road on your commute, or aggressive throttle response but a quieter exhaust sound for when you're driving home late at night. Whatever your tastes, Z Mode can help set up your Corvette perfectly for your driving style.



GT1
Optimized for comfort and support



GT2
Napa leather for ultimate comfort



Competition Sport
Extra support for track driving

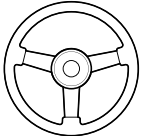
THREE SEATS Three options help Corvette buyers customize their in-vehicle experience. The GT1 is optimized for everyday driving comfort, while the Competition Sport seat is track-focused with durable performance textiles, carbon-fiber trim, and aggressive bolstering to help keep you in place during hard cornering or racetrack driving. New for 2020 is the GT2 seat, which blends the comfort of the GT1 with the appearance and carbon-fiber components of the Competition Sport seat, finished with leather inserts and bolsters.



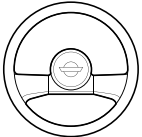
GEN 1



GEN 2



GEN 3



GEN 4



GEN 5



GEN 6



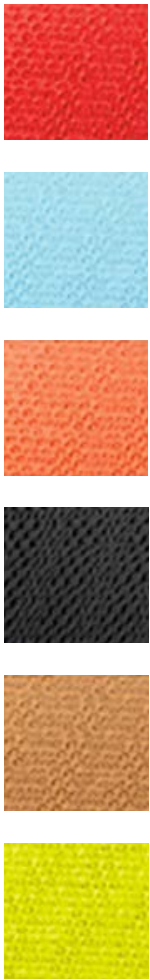
GEN 7



GEN 8

STEERING WHEELS

Corvette's steering wheel has evolved over eight generations.



**SEAT BELT
PERSONAL-
IZATION**

Who says seat belts have to be black? Buyers can personalize their Corvette even further by picking from six seat belt colors, from the elegant Natural to the racy Torch Red. “You can make this all-new Stingray have a race car feel or a sophisticated feel with so many different options,” says Brett Golliff, color and trim manager for Global Chevrolet.

DW BURNETT, COURTESY OF TOP GEAR



MORE COLORS THAN EVER BEFORE

The 2020 Corvette will come in 12 exterior colors, up from 10 in the previous generation. And that’s before you choose from four available brake caliper colors. Corvette’s latest exterior palette features the iconic Torch Red plus three all-new colors, including Rapid Blue, an exotic bright blue, and Zeus Bronze Metallic with its tonal, environmental vibes. The third, Accelerate Yellow, is a shade that Brett Golliff, Corvette color and trim design manager, calls “the most noticeable color that we’ve ever had.”

¹ Extra-cost color.



DUAL TRUNKS The Corvette team focused on overall utility, ensuring owners will have space to store luggage, groceries, or even sporting equipment. The front storage section (what’s more exotic than a front trunk?) is very deep. It’s intended to fit an airline carry-on bag or a laptop bag. The trunk in the rear is roomy enough to accommodate two bags of golf clubs or to stow the removable roof panel. It all adds up to plenty of cargo room for two people to go on road trips or pursue their hobbies without stressing about whether they can fit all their belongings on board.



VOICES
Jim Rij of San Diego, Calif., owner of multiple Corvettes, on the 2020 model:
“Here you have a mid-engine Corvette and a big space in the back for luggage. That was a big surprise.”



TOP LEFT: GREG PAJO / BOTTOM LEFT: ELMAR STEWART / CORVETTE: DW BURNETT, COURTESY OF TOP GEAR



DW BURNETT. COURTESY OF TOP GEAR



FRONT LIFT

An all-new available feature presents a way to avoid bottoming out when pulling into a driveway or driving over a speed bump. Just a push of a button on the center console raises the front end almost 2 inches (40 mm), and it can be operated at vehicle speeds up to 24 mph. Cooler still, you can use the GPS navigation to program specific locations where you know the front lift will be useful, so it happens automatically every time.

Use GPS to preset up to 1,000 locations where the lift will activate automatically.

The system lifts the nose by almost 2 inches (40 mm).

The nose can be raised or lowered at vehicle speeds up to 24 mph.

TOP RIGHT: ADOBE STOCK / BOTTOM RIGHT: FRANCISCO JAVIER DIAZ, SHUTTERSTOCK.COM





JAKE CHESSUM

“

MOVING THE DRIVER FORWARD AND
**PLACING THEM AT THE CORVETTE'S
CENTER OF GRAVITY**

IS A HUGE WIN FOR BALANCE AND HANDLING.
AND COUNTLESS HOURS SPENT ON THE EXECUTION
OF SURFACES AND DETAILS

HELPED BRING TOGETHER THIS EXOTIC DESIGN.
CORVETTE CONVERTIBLE WAS
INFLUENCED BY MODERN JET AIRCRAFT AND
RACE CARS, AND IT SHOWS.

”

KIRK BENNION,
EXTERIOR DESIGN MANAGER, CORVETTE



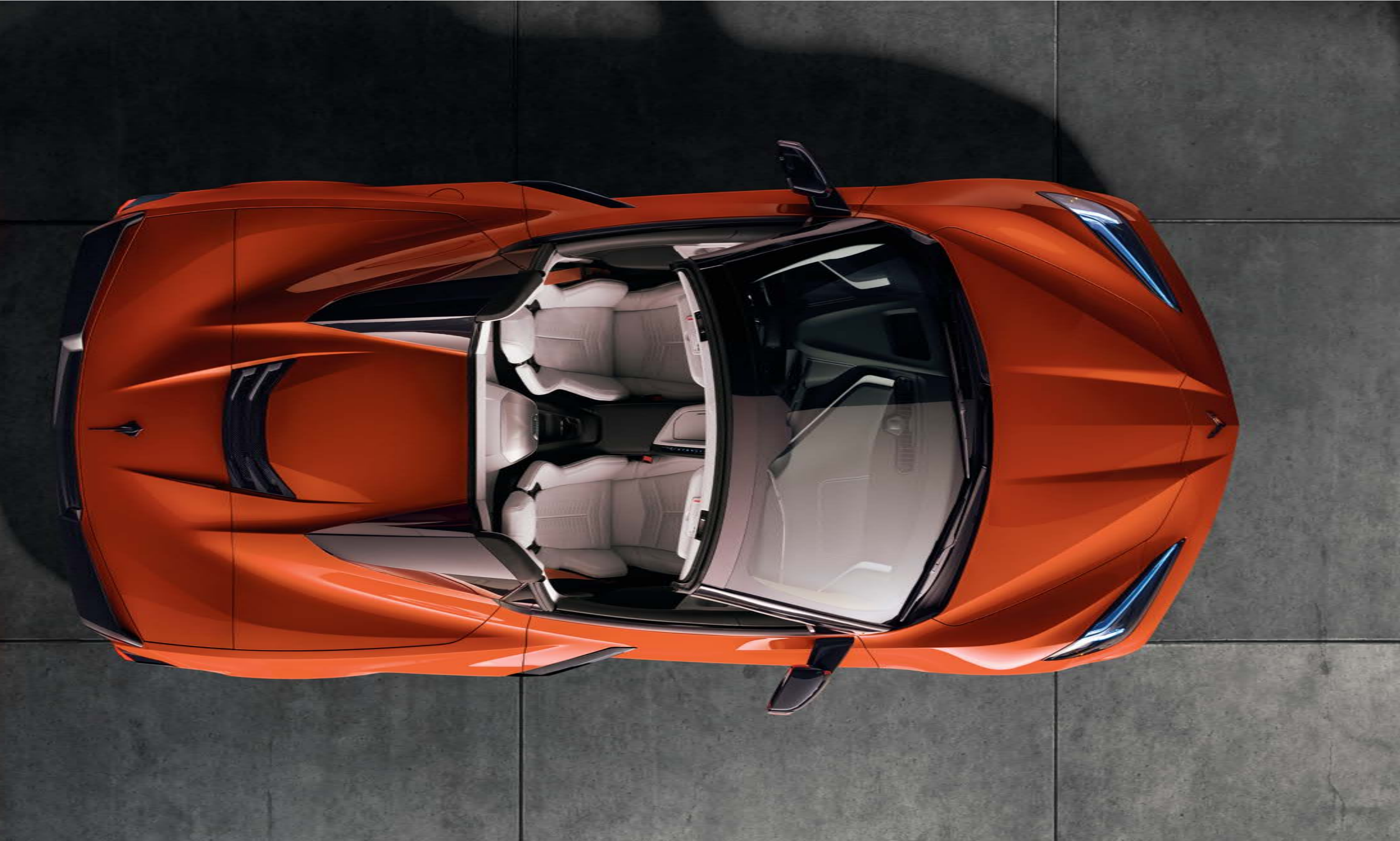
CONVERTIBLE IS HERE

Open-air driving has always been a part of the Corvette story. When the car debuted in 1953, it was offered only as a convertible, and since 1984, every Corvette coupe has featured a removable roof panel. Coupled with the continued popularity of the convertible body style with Corvette buyers, it's no surprise that the all-new Corvette Stingray will once again offer a convertible for drivers who enjoy that wind-in-your-hair experience.

The new Corvette Convertible uses a power retractable hardtop design for the first time. This allowed designers to retain the coupe's sleek styling and optimized aerodynamic performance—in fact, the coefficient of drag is identical between the coupe and convertible.

Advantages to a hardtop design include quietness of the cabin and vehicle security. And, of course, Corvette Convertible retains the coupe's impressive cargo capacity with a front storage area that's able to hold an airline carry-on bag and laptop, as well as the ability to stow two sets of golf clubs in the rear trunk with the top down.

"Our goal from the beginning was to make sure customers didn't have to sacrifice any functionality, performance, or comfort when choosing the hardtop convertible," says Josh Holder, Corvette program engineering manager.



**PRECISELY
ENGINEERED ROOF**

Six precisely controlled electric motors allow the top to retract in as few as 16 seconds at the touch of a button, even while moving at up to 30 mph. A body-color roof is standard, or customers can choose the available Carbon Flash Metallic nacelles and roof. There's also a power rear window that drivers can adjust, with the roof up or down, to vary how much wind and engine sound enters the cabin. The glass was designed to reduce wind noise to help make long journeys quieter.

When stowed, the sheet-molded composite roof is protected from the LT2 V8 engine by special heat shielding. Engineers also added a vent at the rear of the tonneau panel to make sure the engine can still receive plenty of cooling and intake air.

Because the mid-engine Corvette was engineered as a convertible from the outset, and because engineers specifically retuned the suspension springs and dampers for the convertible, the open-air version will offer similarly outstanding performance figures to the coupe. That means that whichever version you choose, the new Corvette will deliver a compelling blend of driving excitement and everyday practicality.



ROAD TO RACE Developed in tandem with the Corvette road car, the C8.R exhibits a deeper level of technology transfer between street and track than ever before. While the racing machine is wider and stiffer, as you'd expect, unique solutions for each vehicle were engineered concurrently. The C8.R's naturally aspirated V8 engine will be validated in the torture chamber of endurance racing, against the best competition in the world. And the same Michelin engineers who helped develop tires for the Stingray have worked to optimize tire compound and construction for the unique needs of a mid-engine race car. That's good news for every kind of Corvette driver.

Corvette's first clean-sheet race car since the C5.R, and its first-ever mid-engine GT car, the C8.R has all the tools to make Corvette Racing even more competitive in the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship. Versus the outgoing C7.R, the new machine has drastically improved aerodynamics. And with no need for the road car's front storage compartment, the Stingray's outboard radiators have been moved to the center of the vehicle to free up space for ultra-bright headlamps for greater night racing visibility. Catch the debut of the impressive C8.R at the Rolex 24 At Daytona, in January 2020.

CLEAR VIEW AHEAD

CORVETTE IS INTERTWINED WITH OUR PERSONAL HISTORIES. LET'S TAKE A LOOK BACK AND GET READY TO MOVE INTO THE FUTURE. // BY EZRA DYER

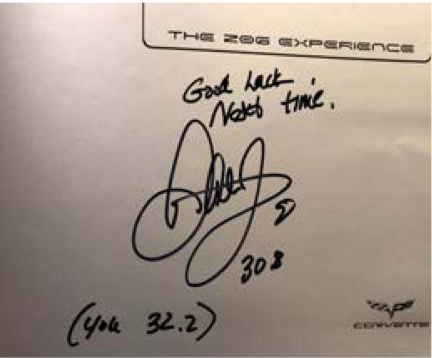
MY PRESS KIT FOR THE 2006 CORVETTE Z06 IS SIGNED BY DALE EARNHARDT JR. On the first page, he wrote, “Good luck next time. 30.8 (you 32.2).” He’s referencing our lap times around the short infield road course at Charlotte Motor Speedway, where we met for a little contest. The premise was that I’d drive the new C6 Z06, Earnhardt would drive a 200-horsepower Chevy Cobalt SS, and we’d see if the Corvette could serve as a 7,000-rpm talent equalizer. To my relief, it did.

But Dale Jr. is a competitive guy. He didn’t acknowledge the Corvette-to-Cobalt times. He wrote down our Corvette times. Then he gave a tutorial on the proper technique for ripping victory doughnuts while holding a checkered flag out the window. Fortunately, I didn’t have to drive home in that car, since I don’t think he left it with much in the way of tread on the tires.

When you write about cars, the Corvette pops in and out of your life on a regular basis. Chevy constantly chases more performance, and new models present ever-more-ridiculous story possibilities. When the 638-horsepower C6 ZR1 arrived, I realized that its 205-mph top track speed put it in league with actual race cars. So I arranged for a showdown at Atlanta Motor Speedway between the ZR1 and a NASCAR® Impala. It was all set to happen, but then, on the appointed morning: rain. Thus we don’t know what might happen if you entered a ZR1 in a NASCAR race, but I still think it’s a question worth answering—particularly now that the latest ZR1 has a top track speed of 212 mph.

The Corvette occupies a unique place in automotive culture because its essential character has been consistent for so long: two seats, big power—exotic performance without an exotic price. You could drive a 1963 split-window fuelie back-to-back with a 2019 Grand Sport and know they’re the same car—separated by decades and degree, but both delivering that frantic small-block V8 rush to

the horizon. Pick any given model year, and a Corvette is like a preview of the future of performance. Today, a four-second 0–60 is the signifier of a serious sports car. The Corvette was there 18 years ago. In fact, the 2002 Z06, which had 405 horsepower and hit 60 in first gear, was the first car I ever reviewed. I don’t remember the second, third, or fourth cars.



I’ve had a lot of fun in Corvettes. I brought a Christmas tree home on the roof of a silver 2005 Z06, earning a thumbs-up from an otherwise dour Boston cop. I was with my friend Steve when he ran his red C6 Z06 out of gas right in front of a summer camp in upstate New York, causing a minor sensation among the kids. (We’d been tracking his car at a road course a few miles away and having too much fun to pay attention to fuel.) I once took my mailman on his route in a C6 ZR1, literally hauling the mail. When the C7 debuted, I

drove it on GM’s diabolical road course at Milford Proving Ground, a track that’s designed to torture a car with every dynamic challenge you can throw at it. As Tadge Juechter, long-time executive chief engineer for the Corvette, told us, “You know it’s a tough track when the straightaway has a corner in it.” Which it does. He advised us to take it flat out.

More recently, I returned to Milford to catch a ride in Blackjack, the original Holden-bodied C8 development car, and talk to the team that developed the mid-engine car. Beyond the thousands of technical challenges involved in moving the engine behind the cabin, there loomed a broader question: Would a mid-engine Corvette alienate long-time fans? After focus groups with sports car owners who were shown generic front-engine and mid-engine designs, without knowing they were rendering a verdict on the C8, the Chevy team satisfied itself that Corvette owners would embrace a mid-engine car.

Even better, non-Corvette owners would, too. The advantages for traction and handling are clear, the 0–60 time is down to 2.9 seconds, and you get a cleaner look at the next apex, by dint of the short, low hood. Taking the mid-engine Corvette from Blackjack to Bowling Green wasn’t easy, but everyone agrees that it was definitely worth it.

As we ripped around the Black Lake test area in a camouflaged preproduction car, Juechter at the wheel, he told me that the C8 will defy expectations—not just in performance, but in its refinement and handling finesse. Then he pulled to a stop, stomped the accelerator and unleashed a righteous burn-out, the 495-horsepower V8 bellowing away behind us. Ahead, the view was clear.

Ezra Dyer is the automotive editor for Popular Mechanics and a columnist for Car and Driver. His first car was a 1985 IROC-Z, and that explains a lot about him.



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