

The Ferrari 360 Modena

By Mark Russo for Angel's Share

THE PRANCING STALLION-FERRARI'S 360 MONDENA



"If you have the means, I highly recommend picking one up." - Matthew Broderick in "Ferris Bueller's Day Off"

Sure it has four wheels and a windshield. But should the Ferrari 360 Modena really be called a "car?" Cars are about transportation, getting to grandpa's house, hauling around groceries and the kids--they're a necessity like food or HBO. But the Ferrari 360 Modena F1 has little to do with transportation, and precious little to do with necessity. It's a 395-horsepower, \$155,000 rocket-powered toy that goes v e r y fast. It's meant purely for pleasure, looks and speed. Period.



Oh sure, it'll get you to granny's, quickly. It's just not the reason why you own such a machine. You own a Ferrari 360 Modena F1 because you want to. Because you can. Because everyone wants one and you have one.



Still, the 2004 Ferrari 360 Modena F1 is as close to a real car, a traditional car, a usable car, as the fabled Italian car maker has ever produced. For the first time, Ferrari has addressed such things as interior space, basic ergonomics and overall comfort, not to mention an automatic transmission, which makes this the first of the brand's mid-engine supercars that can truly be driven everyday.

Model Lineup

The Ferrari 360 comes in two body styles; the Berlinetta (hardtop) and the Spider (convertible). Both are offered with either a conventional 6-speed manual or a trick semi-automatic 6-speed transmission. Cars with the semi-automatic gearbox get their own model designation, F1, because shifting is controlled with two paddles mounted on the steering column similar to those used by Michael Schumacher in his gazillion-dollar Formula 1 race car.



Technically, there are four distinct models, the 360 Modena (\$144,620), the 360 Modena F1 (\$154,550), the 360 Spider (\$161,475), and the 360 Spider F1 (\$171,185).

Each comes with a long list of standard features including the ubiquitous air conditioning, power windows, locks and mirrors. (At these prices, they better.) Leather seats and a AM/FM stereo with CD player are also standard. Spiders get a standard power top. Standard safety equipment includes ABS, traction control and dual airbags.



Driving Impressions

It's no exaggeration to say this machine is one of the fastest cars you can buy, and with the exception of the Porsche 911 Turbo, it's the quickest car available with an automatic transmission. This car will blast from a standstill to 60 mph in a tick over 4 seconds and rip through the quarter mile in 12.8 seconds at over 112 mph. There are only a few cars on the market, besides other Ferraris, that accelerate quicker. They are the aforementioned Porsche, the Lamborghini Diablo, the Chevrolet Corvette Z06, the Lotus Esprit V8 and the Dodge Viper. These are also the only cars that can rival the 360's 180+ mph top speed.



During our day with the car in and around San Francisco, we never approached such velocities, but we did explore the Ferrari's off-the-line punch, which will strain your neck muscles, and sampled its handling around Marin County's winding mountain back roads.

It only takes a few corners to realize that the fishtailing tendencies of its predecessors are history and the 360 Modena is one of the finest handling cars ever built. Thanks to its tuned aerodynamics, four-wheel independent suspension, ABS brakes and excellent traction control system, the 360 can make Ray Ramano look like Mario Andretti.



Such road holding is usually at the expense of ride comfort. Not in this case. The 360's around town ride, while firm, doesn't shake your eyeballs loose, even over rough pavement. Don't misunderstand, this is no Cadillac. We gave it the coffee test, and have the stained pants to prove it.

Problems found during real world use include the 360's low front end, which scrapes itself free of paint on most driveways. There's also that constant engine wail coming from just over your right shoulder. Those with sensitive ears won't last long, plus the cops hear you coming from a mile away.

Angel's Share feels the semi-automatic gearbox, which adds \$10,000 to the cost of the car, could shift smoother. It often snaps your neck on upshifts, and bucks hard off the line. But the transmission does have its good points. First, it makes changing gears completely fool proof. The transmission is controlled with two paddles behind the steering wheel. You pull the one on the right if you want an upshift, the one on the left for a downshift. It's really that simple. You don't even have to take your foot off the gas and there's digital readout to tell you what gear you've just chosen. And second, it has a full automatic mode.



Once you're comfortable with the whole paddle thing, you can click off upshifts with the flick of a finger, even with the engine wailing away at 8500 rpm. Fun? Like Disneyland. It's as close to racing Formula 1 as we'll ever get. If things get out of hand, the 360's brakes are at the ready. Stopping distances from 60 or 80 mph are among the shortest in the world. The ABS system works perfectly, and the 360's brake pedal never gets soft even after miles of abuse. Steering is just as impressive. It's quick but never darty, with an effort level that doesn't require the arm strength of Arnold, and the road feel is incredible. It's as if the driver's hands are directly connected to the front tires.



Summary

This is truly *one helluva car*, and probably the best everyday driver Ferrari has produced yet. An **Angel's Share LIFESTYLE Best Pick**. Its performance is breathtaking. The style, unequalled. Engineering, truly world class. To quote Ferris Bueller, "If you have the means, I highly recommend picking one up." Interested in a test drive? Talk to our Angel's Share Ferrari contact, Evan Shone At Ferrari/Maserati of San Francisco 415 380 9700/ email cshone@ferrariusa.com



360 Modena Specifications

Model lineup

360 Modena (\$144,620); 360 Modena F1 (\$154,550); 360 Spider (\$161,475); 360 Spider F1 (\$171,185)

Engines

395-hp 3.6-liter dohc 40-valve V8

Transmissions

6-speed automanual

Safety equipment (standard)

ABS, traction control, front airbags

Safety equipment (optional)

N/A

Basic warranty

3 years/unlimited miles

Assembled in

Modena, Italy

Specifications As Tested**Model tested (MSRP)**

360 Modena F1 (\$154,550)

Standard equipment

power windows, mirrors and door locks, air conditioning, leather seating surfaces, AM/FM stereo/CD, adjustable shocks, xenon headlights, traction control

Options as tested (MSRP)

N/A

Destination charge

(\$1350)

Gas guzzler tax

N/A

Price as tested (MSRP)

\$155,900

Layout

mid-engine/rear-wheel drive

Engine

3.6-liter dohc 40-valve V8

Horsepower (hp @ rpm)

395 @ 8500

Torque (lb.-ft. @ rpm)

275 @ 4750

Transmission

6-speed automanual

EPA fuel economy, city/hwy

11/16 mpg

Wheelbase

102.3 in.

Length/width/height

176.3/75.7/47.8 in.

Track, f/r

65.7/63.7 in.

Turning circle

35.4 ft.

Seating capacity

2

Head/hip/leg room, f

36.5/NA/46.5 in.

Head/hip/leg room, m

N/A

Head/hip/leg room, r

N/A

Cargo volume

8.0 cu. ft.

Payload

N/A

Towing capacity

N/A

Suspension, f

Independent

Suspension, r

Independent

Ground clearance

4.2 in.

Curb weight

3291 lbs.

Tires

P215/45ZR-18 / P275/40ZR-18

Brakes, f/r

disc/disc with ABS

Fuel capacity

25.1 gal.