



CAR CARE CORNER

The Lowdown On Looking After High-End Autos

by Tom duPont

(NAPSA)—As publisher of *Celebrity car* magazine, I see the specs for some of the world's most desirable automobiles. The celebrities that appear in the magazine know how to be seen, and nothing grabs attention like a high-powered vehicle. But owning a cutting-edge vehicle does more than add another accessory to a portfolio of luxurious items. It inducts you into an elite club, complete with the privileges and responsibilities of maintaining a vehicle that needs "special attention."

For celebrities and amateurs alike, here are a few expert tips to keep these beauties purring for years to come:

1. Preventive Maintenance.

Every month, check key fluids such as oil, coolant, power steering and transmission. Use high-quality products as recommended by the manufacturer for any top-up or fluid replacement. Also, make sure to follow proper OEM recommendations and visit a specialist for a tune-up, replacing spark plugs, changing oil and lubricating your engine as needed. Don't forget to regularly change your wiper blades, too. If Mother Nature rains down on your joyride, you want to be ready and safe.

2. Build a Relationship with a Good Mechanic.

You own a specialty car—it's time to find a specialty auto mechanic. Don't be afraid to ask your specialist about the causes of problems you notice, either. It makes you a better owner and helps build rapport.

Owners of classic cars especially need to do this. When parts that



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operate perfectly for 40 years begin to break down, it's vital that your mechanic is familiar with your golden oldie.

3. Use TOP TIER, High-Octane Fuel.

Pay attention to the gasoline your high-performance engine is burning. All gasoline available today should meet minimum detergency requirements set by the Environmental Protection Agency, but according to some automakers, that is not enough to keep critical engine parts free of carbon deposits. Recognizing that a cleaner engine performs better, BMW, GM, Honda and Toyota developed a TOP TIER Detergent Gasoline standard that exceeds the EPA standard and raises the bar on fuel quality. Fuels meeting this standard can enhance your engine's performance because they're designed to keep intake valves and fuel injectors free of deposits. Shell V-Power actually surpasses that standard with two times the amount of detergency required by the TOP TIER Detergent Gasoline standard. These cleaning agents actively clean carbon deposits that low-quality fuels leave behind, giving your car better performance.

4. Invest in Quality Tires.

Your tires are the only part of your car that touches the ground, so they're one of the best ways to give your car added performance. Every product has a class, from engines to gasoline, and tires are no different. Make sure your wheels have an optimum strength-to-weight ratio and minimal rotational inertia. Find a tire brand you trust and make sure the speed rating gives you freedom on the open road. Also, be sure you check the tire pressure on a regular basis in order to get the best performance and mileage. Improperly inflated tires can be dangerous. To find the proper pressure for your tires, check the number on the inside of the gas door or on the inside of the side door, not the number that appears on the tires themselves. Remember, your vehicle manufacturer always knows best.

5. Detail on a Regular Basis.

Last, but certainly not least, maintain the form of your car as well as its function. Having your beauty detailed regularly by an expert is a no-brainer. Like at the pump, the car wash is not the place to start being frugal. Protect your dashboard from sun damage with a sun shield or a protective polish, like Black Magic Pro Shine Protectant. Other motorists are watching, so make sure to give your car a good cleaning at least once every two months.

Whether you're a first-time high-end owner or a sharp-eyed collector, treat your ride right, because your high-performance automobile is a powerful machine that makes driving more adventurous and luxurious.