

1996 Corvette: Two Special Additions And New 330-HP LT4 V8 Highlight America's Favorite Sports Car



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WARREN, MI - 1996 is going to be a vintage year for Corvette aficionados and Chevrolet performance enthusiasts. Two very special Corvettes - the Grand Sport and Collector Edition - will add to the marque's legendary mystique. A new optional 330-horsepower 5.7 Liter LT4 engine, available on all Corvette models, raises the revered small block's performance level to a sensational new height.

The return of the Grand Sport evokes memories of the five special lightweight Corvette race cars constructed from 1962-63 under the direction of Zora Arkus-Duntov. This handful of ultralight machines - three coupes and two roadsters - became the most recognizable Corvette race cars of that era. With their special tubular frames, thin fiberglass skins, wheel flares, louvered hoods, and all-aluminum 377-cu.-in. small block engines, the Grand Sport earned a place in Corvette history. Legendary racers such as Roger Penske, Jim Hall, Dick Guldstrand, Dick Thompson, Augie Pabst and A. J. Foyt drove the Grand Sport in competition.

The 1996 version of the Grand Sport evokes memories of its predecessors with its exclusive Admiral Blue Metallic paint, white stripe, and red "hash marks" on the left front fender. Chromed "Corvette" emblems on hood and fuel door, 17" five-spoke black aluminum wheels, black brake calipers with raised bright aluminum "Corvette" lettering, and perforated Sport bucket seats available in Red/Black combination or Black options with embroidered "Grand Sport", distinguish the Grand Sport for 1996. Grand Sport Coupes are outfitted with P275/40ZR-17 (front) and P315/35ZR-17 (rear) tires, and special rear fender flares cover the extra-wide rear rubber. Convertibles roll on P255/45ZR-17 (front) and P285/40ZR-17 (rear) tires. There will be limited production for Grand Sport models, each carrying a unique serial number.

The 1996 Corvette Grand Sport has the horsepower to support its racing heritage. A new 330-horsepower LT4 small block V8 is standard on Grand Sport (optional on all other Corvette models). A further development of the powertrain technology introduced on the LT1 V8 for 1992, the muscular new LT4 has the performance advantages of high-flow aluminum cylinder heads, larger hollow-stem valves and higher load springs, a more aggressive camshaft profile, revised pistons with a 10.8:1 compression ratio, a new fuel injector that increases fuel flow, and friction-reducing roller rocker arms. The LT4 engine assembly is bolstered with an undercut and rolled fillet cast iron crankshaft, steel camshaft and water pump gears driven by a roller chain and premium head gaskets.

The LT4 stands out from its small block siblings with unique appearance features, including a red inlet manifold, red spark plug and coil wires, red "Corvette" lettering on the manifold covers and red "Grand Sport" lettering on the throttle-body cover. Models equipped with the LT4 engine have an 8000-rpm tachometer with a 6300-rpm redline. The High Output LT4 is available only with a 6-speed manual transmission.

The new "Collector Edition" model celebrates the final year of production for the fourth-generation Corvette. This eminently collectible Corvette model is distinguished by its exclusive Sebring Silver paint, chromed "Collector Edition" emblems, 17" five-spoke aluminum wheels painted silver, P255/45ZR-17 (front) and P285/40ZR-17 (rear) tires, and black brake calipers with raised bright aluminum "Corvette" lettering. The cockpit-style interior features perforated Sport seats with "Collector Edition" embroidery available in Torch Red, Black or Light Gray. Coupe and Convertible Collector Edition models are available with either the standard 300-horsepower 5.7 Liter LT1 V8 (with 4-speed electronically controlled automatic overdrive transmission) or the optional 330-horsepower LT4 (with 6-speed manual transmission).

1996 also marks the introduction of a new Selective Real Time Damping system, which is optional on all Corvette models. Selective Real Time Damping employs sensors at each wheel, to measure movement. The data retrieved from each individual wheel and the PCM (Powertrain Control Module) are processed by a special electronic controller which calculates the damping mode that will provide optimum control of the vehicle. This sophisticated driver-adjustable Delco ride control system adjusts the shock absorbers in "real time" - 10 to 15 milliseconds.

A new optional Z51 Performance Handling Package, available exclusively on Corvette Coupe, is tuned for the autocross and gymkhana enthusiasts. The package features Sport Suspension ride and handling, new Bilstein shock absorbers, stiffer springs, front and rear stabilizer bars, high-rate bushings, 17" x 9.5" wheels, and P275/40ZR-17/N tires. (Grand Sports have 17" x 11" wheels and P315/35ZR-17 tires in the rear.)

Corvette has long been a showcase for leading-edge technology. Its sophisticated standard systems include Passive Keyless Entry (PKE), PASS-Key II theft-deterrent system, and Bosch ABS/ASR anti-lock braking and Acceleration Slip regulation. Goodyear Extended Mobility Tires (EMT) which permit the vehicle to be operated with out air at 55 mph for up to 200 miles, as well as a

low-tire-pressure warning system are available on Corvette Coupe and Convertible. Corvettes equipped with EMT tires can be ordered without a spare tire.

Corvette has a lengthy list of standard equipment, including dual air bags, 4-wheel independent suspension, 4-wheel anti-lock disc brakes, power windows with driver's Express-Down and door locks, dual electric heated outside rearview mirrors, cruise control, rear-window defogger, 17-inch aluminum wheels and high-performance Goodyear Eagle GS-C tires.

Corvette isn't just an automobile - it's an American institution. Corvette doesn't simply compete in the sports car market, it defines it. With two new special edition models and a more powerful small block V8 option, Corvette continues its reign as America's favorite sports car.

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