

Chevrolet Camaro - One of the Most Popular Cars for Modification in the Automotive History

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The Chevrolet Camaro was a compact car introduced in North America by the Chevrolet Motor Division of General Motors at the start of the 1967 model year as competition for the Ford Mustang.

Although it was technically a compact (by the standards of the time), the Camaro, like the entire class of Mustang competitors, was soon known as a pony car.

Though the car's name was contrived with no meaning, General Motors researchers found the word in a French dictionary as a slang term for "friend" or "companion." Ford Motor Company researchers discovered other definitions, including "a shrimp-like creature" and an arcane term for "loose bowels"! In some automotive periodicals before official release, it was code-named "Panther".

Four distinct generations of the car were produced.

Generation 1

1967

Sharing mechanicals with the upcoming 1968 Chevrolet Nova, the Camaro featured unibody structure. Chevrolet offered the car in only two body styles, a coupe and convertible. Almost 80 factory and 40 dealer options including three main packages were available.

* RS Package included many cosmetic changes such as RS badging, hidden headlights, blacked out grill, revised taillights and interior trims.

* SS Package included modified 5.7 L (350 in³) V8 engine (first 350 in³ engine ever offered by Chevrolet), also L35 396 in³ "big block" was available. SS featured non-functional air inlets on the hood, special striping and blacked out grill. It was possible to order both - RS and SS packages to receive RS/SS Camaro. In 1967 Camaro RS/SS Convertible Camaro with 396 in³ engine paced the Indianapolis 500 race.

* Z28 option code was introduced in 1966. This option package wasn't mentioned in any sales literature so was unknown by most of the buyers. The only way to order Z28 package was to order base Camaro with Z28 option, front disc brakes, power steering and Muncie 4-speed transmission.

Z28 package featured unique 302 in³ "small block" engine, designed specifically to compete in the Club of America Trans Am racing series (which required engines smaller than 305 in³ and public availability of the car).

Advertised power of this engine was listed at 290 hp (216 kW) while actual dyno readings rated it at 360 to 400 hp (269 to 298 kW). Z28 also came with upgraded suspension and racing stripes on the hood. It was possible to combine Z28 package with RS package. Only 602 Z28's were sold.

Generation 2

The larger second-generation Camaro featured an all-new sleek body and improved suspension. The 1970-1/2 Camaro debuted as a 2+2 coupe; no convertible was offered and would not appear again until well into the third generation.

Most of the engine and drivetrain components were carried over from 1969 with the exception of the 230 in³ (3.8 L) six cylinder -- the base engine was now the 250 in³ (4.1 L) six rated at 155 hp (116 kW).

The top performing motor was a L-78 396 in³ (6.5 L) V8 rated at 375 hp (280 kW). (Starting in 1970, the 396 in³ big block V8's actually displaced 402 in³ (6.6 L), yet Chevrolet chose to retain the 396 badging.) Two 454 in³ (7.4 L) engines - the LS-6 and LS-7 - were listed on early specification sheets but never made it into production.

Besides the base model, buyers could select the "Rally Sport" option with a distinctive front nose and bumper, a "Super Sport" package, and the "Z-28 Special Performance Package" featuring a new high-performance 360 hp (268 kW) 350 in³ (5.7 L) cid V8. 1972

The 1972 Camaro suffered two major setbacks. A UAW strike at a GM assembly plant in Ohio disrupted production for 174 days, and 1100 Camaros had to be scrapped because they did not meet 1973 Federal bumper safety standards.

Some at GM seriously considered dropping the Camaro and Firebird altogether, while others were convinced the models remained marketable. The latter group eventually convinced those in favor of dropping the F Cars to

reconsider, and Chevrolet would go on to produce 68,656 Camaros in 1972, the lowest production numbers for any model year.

Generation 3

1982

The 1982 model introduced the first Camaros with factory fuel injection, four-speed automatic transmissions (three-speed on the earlier models), five-speed manual transmissions (four-speed manual transmissions in 1982, and some 83-84 models), 15 or 16-inch rims, hatchback body style, and even a four-cylinder engine for a brief period (due to concerns over fuel economy).

The Camaro Z28 was Motor Trend magazine's Car of the Year for 1982.

1985

In 1985 Chevrolet introduced a new Camaro model - the famous IROC-Z, called after popular racing series. IROC-Z Camaro featured upgraded suspension, special decal package and Tuned Port Injection system taken from the Chevrolet_Corvette Third generation Camaros also had a suspension system that was more capable in corners than the previous generation.

The Camaro IROC-Z was on Car and Driver magazine's Ten Best list for 1985.

Engines

* 1978-1981 5.7 L (350 in³) Small-Block V8 * 1982-1985 2.5 L (151 in³) Iron Duke L4 * 1982-1984 2.8 L (173 in³) LC1 V6 * 1985-1989 2.8 L (173 in³) LB8 V6 * 1990-1992 3.1 L (191 in³) 60 Gen II V6 * 1982-1992 5.0 L (305 in³) Small-Block V8 * 1985-1992 5.7 L (350 in³) Small-Block V8

Generation 4

1993

1993 began the fourth and last generation of Camaros, lasting through the 2002 model year. Production of the fourth and final generation was moved from GM's Van Nuys, California assembly plant to one in Ste. Therese, Quebec in 1993.

Though the car would no longer be produced in the US, the new design which incorporated lightweight plastic body panels over a steel space frame, and a better suspension, further improved upon the Camaro line.

From 1993 to 1997 the Camaro was available with the LT-1 engine, the same Generation II small block V8 used in the Corvette, although in slightly de-tuned form.

In 1996, the long-discontinued "SS" option was resurrected and in 1998, the all-new LS-1 engine Generation III small block was offered on the SS and Z28 Camaros, marking the end of the Generation I small block V8 that had its roots in Chevrolet's 265 in³ engine of 1955. Unfortunately, sales were below expectations, and production of the Camaro ceased in 2002. 1998

1998 saw a new head light design for the Camaro. The new design removed the previous recessed-light design present in the 1982-1997 Camaros. The faux air intakes on the hood were also eliminated. In addition the LT1 engine was removed and instead an LS1 in its place. Engines

* 1993-1995 3.4 L (208 in³) 60 Gen III V6 * 1995-2002 3.8 L (231 in³) 3800 Series II V6 * 1993-1997 5.7 L (350 in³) LT1 V8 * 1998-2002 5.7 L (350 in³) LS1 V8

2002

2002 marked the last year of the Chevrolet Camaro and was also the 35th anniversary for the Camaro. This milestone was celebrated with a special anniversary car modified from the factory by SLP. The anniversary package was only available on the SS (Super Sport).

Engine modifications were available in addition to the 325 hp (242 kW) engine which all Super Sports produce. Silver racing stripes down the hood and trunk lid made the car more noticeable than ever—especially against the Bright Rally Red paint (the only color available with the anniversary package).

The car also had the slogan attached to it "Leave a Lasting ImpreSSion" and had the logo embroidered in the seats. The car was only available as a convertible or with T-Tops. 3,000 Camaros with the anniversary package were produced for the United States and 152 for Canada.

Though production Camaros were never as fast as the flagship Corvette, the car cost less than half as much and was

easily modified. If its frequent inclusion in automotive enthusiast magazines is any indication, the Chevy Camaro is one of the most popular cars for modification in the automotive history.

Throughout its history, the Camaro shared its internal body and major components with a sister car - the Pontiac Firebird. chevy camaro - Take advantage of information on this prestigious car brand. Learn about its rich heritage, about chevrolet & the importance of this brand for GMC. Details on its technicalities have been dealt with in detail.