

F-body Advertisements

Half a century after their debut, we look at how Detroit's ad agencies presented the Camaro and Firebird in print ads

Smile when you call it Detroit iron

Oh, sure, Camaro is comfortable as all get-out and the heater works. But that doesn't mean it's a motorized marshmallow. It's a real driving machine without the old-fashioned sports car symptoms of chilblains, sore bones and sharp shooting pains in the wallet.

Camaro will make a believer out of you if you don't think so. It has what it takes, including engines up to an exclusive new 350-cubic-inch V8 you can order, handling that's just as pur sang as you could want, front disc brakes available and all the other earmarks of a real driving machine.

It has safety in mind, too, with items like GM-developed energy-absorbing steering column, safety door latches and hinges, padded instrument panel and back-up lights standard.

So smile, call it Detroit iron, enjoy the foam cushioning and quiet running, and go show those purists.



Command Performance

Camaro by CHEVROLET

CAMARO SS 350—The accent's on fun in this one with special suspension, new 350-cubic-inch V8, big red stripe tires on 14 x 6-inch rims, 25-inch dual exhausts, all standard. It looks the part, too, with a special striping and lower-styled hood, plus special identification emblems.

CAMARO RALLY SPORT—Change the appearance of Camaro by ordering the Rally Sport package. It has hidden headlights in a full-width black grille, special taillight treatment and special exterior trim. You can order the SS 350 and Rally Sport packages together, too, for double the pleasure.

Camaro SS 350 Convertible with Rally Sport equipment.

A 1967 Camaro SS 350 Rally Sport convertible, sporty and stylish.

BY JEFF KOCH AND TERRY McGEAN

There are times when it can be advantageous to arrive a little late. General Motors didn't start the pony car trend with its Chevrolet Camaro and Pontiac Firebird, that having been accomplished so famously by the Ford Mustang. Though they could easily have been a "me-too" offering, the F-body twins stood tall from the moment of their official introduction, burrowed into the hearts of millions, and have gone on to become American institutions all their own. Time passes, fashions change, and technology evolves. During the Camaro's lifetime, plenty of other factors have arisen, including crash standards and fuel economy concerns, in addition to ever-changing tastes among consumers.

One thing that stands out immediately from the print ads:

Pontiac Firebird 400. The top end. Heavyweight of Pontiac's Magnificent Five Firebirds for 1968.

The credentials below are the powers behind our Heavy. You'll find them all set snugly atop 400's extra-firm but obliging suspension, with new asymmetrically mounted, multiple rear springs and wide-ovals. And you can order knitted (the better to breathe with) vinyl upholstery.

And, with every Firebird, the kind of safety that comes from seat belts and side mounted marker lights. And that's just the beginning.

Now, any guesses why we call the 400 the Heavyweight of our Magnificent Five? We didn't think there'd be any confusion.

**400 cu. in.
Quadra-jet 4-bbl.
H.D. suspension.
330 hp.
Hurst.**



The end.

Speed, deceleration and 8 other attributes of the Great Wide Track, are yours for \$30,384 (including U.S.A.). Send for the Wide Track, P.O. Box 988, 148 Wide Track Blvd., Pontiac, Michigan 48054.

The stacked headline on Pontiac's in-your-face Firebird ad says it all.

GM seemed to eschew the Everyman aspect of the pony car, and geared its advertising more toward the performance angle of these models. That played well in the pages of the buff books, and helped take a significant chunk out of Mustang's sales once the F-bodies arrived on the scene. The racy image even played a part when performance cars were (supposedly) not the sort of thing America wanted to buy anymore—even though the Camaro and Firebird single-handedly made that overarching assumption a complete fabrication.

As these icons turn 50, let's take a look at some of the magazine-ad sizzle that helped sell the F-body steak during the platform's first two generations, and rediscover just what it was that made the Camaro and Firebird so appealing for so long. **63**

How much Camaro you want depends on how much driver you want to be.

Top:

Camaro-about-town. The sport coupe. Buckets. Carpeting. Fully synchronized 3-speed. Very civilized Six. Safety features like dual master cylinder brake system with warning light. Especially nice for wife-types.

Center:

Country-club Camaro. Rally Sport with hideaway headlights and standard V8. 210 hp. Add custom interior, Powerglide, console, wheel covers, vinyl roof cover, stereo tape system. Decorate right front seat suitably.

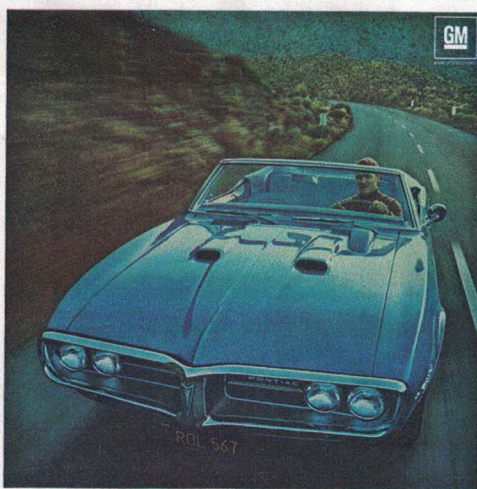
Bottom:

Camaro the Magnificent. SS convertible, now available with 396 cu. in., 325 hp! Bulging hood, striped nose, red stripe tires all come. You order the 4-speed, front disc brakes, Positraction and such. At your Chevrolet dealer's.



CHEVROLET Command Performance
Camaro

All-American family portrait of the new 1967 Camaro.



After this, you'll never go back to driving whatever you're driving.

If you can stop drooling for a moment, we'd like to tell you what's propelling that Firebird 400 in the picture. What it is, is 400 cubes of chromed V-8. And what it puts out is 325 hp. (Even without our extra-cost Ram Air package, that makes those dual scoops functional.)

The point thing, that Pontiac Firebird 400 was designed for heroic driving.

To assist you in this noble venture, the 400 comes with a heavy-duty 3-speed floor shift, extra sticky sus-

pension and a set of duals that announce your coming like the brass section of the New York Philharmonic. Taken as she comes, Firebird 400 is a lot of machine, but you can order things like a 4-speed (or our stupendous 1-2-3 Turbo Hydra-Matic), map-type steel wheels, special Koni adjustable shocks and a hood-mounted tach. Naturally, the GM safety package is standard. Of course, if the 400 is too much car for you, there are four other Firebirds to choose from. Lucky you.

Firebird 400. One of Pontiac's Magnificent Five.

Picture this. We'll send you a 24" x 36" x 1/4" color picture of Firebird 400, Pontiac 2 + 5, 350 and GTO. Send \$24.95. Outside USA to \$3.95. Visa, MC, AmEx, Discover, or Cash. Pontiac, Mich. 4806. Include your ZIP code.

The 1967 Firebird 400 convertible was photographed in motion.

A word or two to the competition:

You lose.



Camaro SS Sport Coupe with Rally Sport equipment.

Camaro beats all other sporty cars in 1969 Car and Driver Readers' Choice.

Camaro did it. Beat the toughest competition the other cars could muster.

In the kind of contest that really counts. Every year, Car and Driver magazine asks its readers (over half a million at last

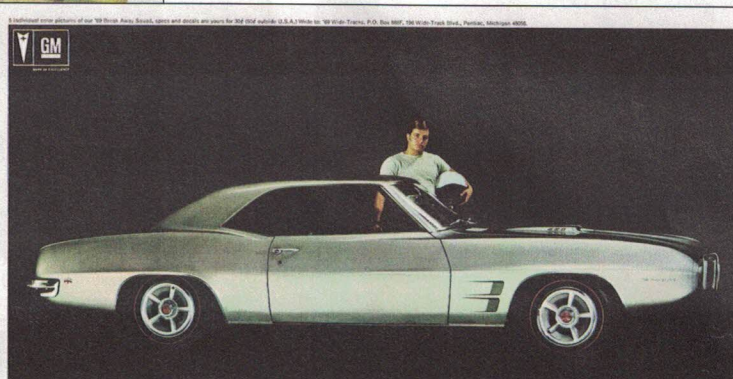
count) to rate cars. And there's no tougher panel of judges than these real enthusiasts.

Why does the Hunger make it so big with the guys who really know cars? Maybe it's Camaro's looks. Maybe it's Camaro's engines—up to

a 386 V8. Maybe it's performance packages, like the eye-popping Z/28. All we know is the competition wasn't in the same ball park. Car and Driver readers know, too.

Putting you first, keeps us first.

Bright colors, hot equipment, and menacing angles for 1969.



The Graduate.

We'll grant you two wheels are better than none. But look what happens when Firebird 400 comes onto the scene. If it's your 400 version.

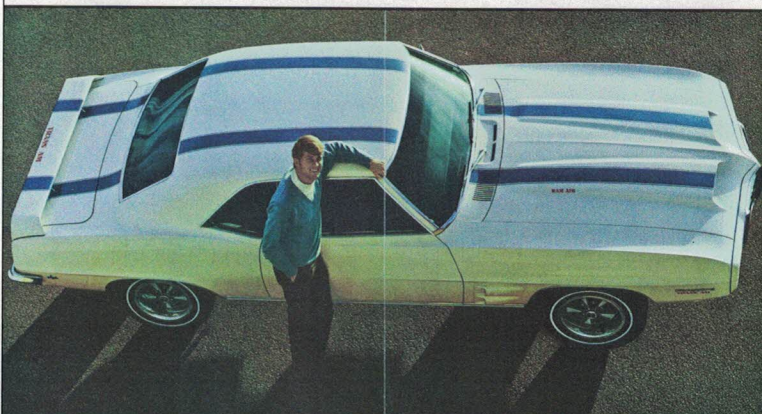
You won't believe how this one handles. Don't let the smoothness fool you. New rear axle, new load rates on our multi-leaf rear springs and a set of sticky wide-walls (mounted on 7-inch rims) put new shine on Firebird's cornering reputation. A 400-cubic-inch, Quadrajet V-8 attached to a 3-speed, heavy-duty transmission, stirred by a Hurst, is your standard power setup. But there's also our two-scoop Ram Air IV that you can order with a 4-speed hand shifter or with 3-speed Turbo Hydra-Matic, if you just tell your dealer.

Obviously, all that genius is below decks. Topside, Firebird comes on with all-new looks. Inside, new comfort. With wider, more heavily padded bucket seats wrapped in Pontiac's own woven vinyl. Also, an all-new highly readable instrument panel.

Hood facts, front disc brakes, variable-ratio power steering, polyglas cord, wide tread rubber... all that great Pontiac stuff... will practically let you build your own Firebird... if you want to.

And that's a liberal education in itself.

Firebird 400 by Pontiac



Firebird Trans Am.

The 1969 Firebirds, both standard and Trans Am, were shot in profile.