

EXPLORING THE UPPER LIMITS

TOYOTA SUPRA TURBO

It's not that we expect many of our readers to plunk down \$48,000 for a supercar seemingly designed to go from here to there at triple the speed limit. Rather, we tested the *Toyota Supra* Turbo along with the sports coupes in the preceding report to see how much extra performance you get for more than twice the money. More specifically, we wanted to see whether this model's exotic technology would raise any of our performance benchmarks.

The *Supra* Turbo didn't disappoint: It provided blistering acceleration, and it handily broke our records for stopping distance on dry pavement and for outright cornering grip on our skid pad.

The *Supra* started life in 1979 as an upscale version of the modest *Toyota Celica*, becoming a true high-performance sports car only after a mid-1993 redesign. The nonturbo 3.0-liter Six, at 220 hp, is certainly potent enough. But the version we tested, with twin intercooled turbos, cranks out an awe-inspiring 320 hp. A six-speed manual transmission and limited-slip differential, along with traction control, transfer the power to massive ultralow-profile rear tires that measure 10 inches across.

The result is a 0- to 60-mph time of 5.9 seconds—within 0.4 second of the record set by the *Chevrolet Corvette* we reported on in September 1992. Two other excellent sports cars that we reported on in that issue, the *Nissan 300ZX* Turbo and *Mazda RX-7*, trail with 0- to 60-mph times of 6.1 and 6.0 seconds. (A peppy family car might take 9 or 10 seconds.) Expect the *Supra* Turbo to deliver about 22 mpg overall on premium fuel.

At our track, we had merely to point the *Supra* and shoot it from corner to corner. Only the width of its body limited the speed through our avoidance maneuver. The steering is quick but lacks much feel. The ride is harsh and noisy.

Antilock brakes halted the *Supra* from 60 mph in just 114 feet on dry pavement, breaking the 1993 *Pontiac Firebird* Trans Am's and *Volvo 850 GLT*'s record by four feet. The *Supra* stopped short and straight in our wet-braking tests as well—an excellent performance.

Despite a height adjustment, the low driver's cushion impedes the view over the hood. Firm front seats provide strong support, but climbing in and out requires agility. Dual air bags are standard.

The rear seat is far too cramped for adults, and the pockets in the rear cushion are too narrow for a child seat. The trunk is extremely shallow.

Although we lack reliability data for the redesigned *Supra*, other *Toyota* models have held up exceptionally well. The *Nissan 300ZX*'s predicted reliability is average. We lack sufficient data to predict the *Mazda RX-7*'s reliability. The *Chevrolet Corvette* promises to be much worse than average.

The *Supra* Turbo scored higher, overall, than any sports car we've tested, but its sole, relentless objective is to go very fast indeed. The *Nissan 300ZX* Turbo makes a few more concessions to comfort—and, over the long haul, it's a bit easier to live with. There's also the matter of price: Our *Supra* Turbo, with removable roof panel, leather upholstery, premium stereo/CD player, and rear spoiler, lists for \$47,975. The *Nissan* Turbo costs some \$6000 less.



TEST JUDGMENTS

Performance

Acceleration ●
Transmission ●
Routine handling ●
Emergency handling ●
Braking ●

Comfort

Ride, normal load ●
Noise ○
Driving position ●
Front-seat comfort ●
Rear-seat comfort ●
Climate-control system ●

Convenience

Access ●
Controls and displays ●
Trunk ●

Other

Fuel economy ○
Predicted reliability ●

TEST DATA

Acceleration

0-30 mph, sec. 2.8
0-60 mph, sec. 5.9
Quarter mile, sec. 14.4
Quarter mile, mph 105
45-65 mph, sec. 4.0

Fuel economy

EPA mpg 17/23
CU's 150-mile trip, mpg 24
City driving, mpg 15
Expressway driving, mpg 33
Fuel refill capacity, gal. 15.4
Cruising range, mi. 340
Fuel for 15,000 mi., gal. 690
Cost of fuel for 15,000 mi. \$965

Braking from 60 mph

Dry pavement, ft. 114
Wet pavement, ft. 136
Pedal effort, 1st stop, lb. 10
Pedal effort, 10th stop, lb. 15

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