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A SCREAMING SPIN IN A SUPERCAR IS ONE OF LIFE'S MOST SATISFYING EXPERIENCES, EVEN IF IT DOES THREATEN TO DO PERMANENT DAMAGE TO YOUR INSIDES. HERE WE PRESENT SEVEN MODELS THAT COULD JUST CHANGE YOUR LIFE

Lamborghini Huracan

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Supercar. It's such a grand, over-the-top appellation for something with an engine, doors, seats and no cape or mask whatsoever. Looks aside, how super can something like a Lamborghini be?

The answer is, pretty damn super. Driving the now-obsolete Gallardo is one of the rare experiences that is as good as you hope it will be, full of noise, fury and chest-fluttering fear and exultation. And now, somehow, Lamborghini has bettered this beast with the introduction of its even more super Huracan LP 610-4.

The Huracan benefits from an even more savage 5.2-litre V10, which now makes an extra 43kW and 20Nm for a total of 448kW and 650Nm (90 per cent of which is kicking you in the back from just 1000rpm).

It's a made a hefty difference to its 0 to 100km/h sprint, slashing it from an eyeball-hurting 3.7 seconds for the Gallardo to just 3.2, which is fast enough to make your eyes smack the back of your skull. The Huracan can also hit 200km/h from rest in 9.9 seconds, at which point it's possible that your eyes, and indeed your whole body, will have shut down in disbelief.

While the new baby Lambo doesn't look vastly different from the Gallardo, it does have a tighter, tauter rear end, an even more jetfighter-like front splitter. There are changes underneath as well, with most of the body built from aluminium but the spine of the structure made from carbon fibre. All this super-ness doesn't come cheap, of course, with the Huracan going for \$428,000, but that is almost \$35,000 less than the Gallardo. Super.

LaFerrari and McLaren P1

In theory, a hybrid-powered supercar makes as much sense as a climate-change-denying Greens candidate. Hybrids are dull but worthy and very rarely bought by rich **oil** barons. And yet all of a sudden, along come two hybrid hyper-cars in the same year. Ferrari's LaFerrari and the McLaren P1 were much hyped and teased last year but have now become startling reality.

The Ferrari is what's hilariously called a "mild-hybrid", meaning it uses its batteries mainly for extra acceleration rather than saving low-lying island nations from extinction. The result is a combined power figure of 708kW and 900Nm from the KERS-enabled 6.2-litre V12 and a 0 to 300km/h time of just 15 seconds.

The carbon fibre monocoque is from the same autoclave as Ferrari's race cars and its ingenious F1 technical director Rory Byrne helped design the chassis. It also features proper ground-effect

aerodynamics and could, no doubt, drive upside down on the roof of a tunnel with the right stunt driver, thanks to its 360kg of downforce.

The cost is \$1.6m, or it would be if you could get one. Only Ferrari's special customers were offered the opportunity to buy LaFerrari and they all sold out quickly. There is, of course, a harder, track-only "XX" version on the way.

McLaren's P1 takes its hybrid claims slightly more seriously, offering plug-in charging, an electric-only range of 10km (which no owner will ever use) and staggering fuel economy of 6.9 litres per 100km (better than a base Toyota Corolla).

With both its electric motor and a 3.8-litre, twin-turbo V8 cranked up, it will produce 674kW and 978Nm and can reach 200km/h in 6.8 seconds, which is faster than a Veyron. It does trail LaFerrari to 300km/h, though, in a tardy 16.5 seconds (both cars have their top speeds limited to 350km/h). As speeds rise, the McLaren changes shape by hydraulically lowering itself to the ground for better handling.

People who have driven the P1 speak of the experience in hushed tones, and quietly admit to permanent (but worth it) damage to their internal organs. The braking causes almost as much punishment as the acceleration. The carbon-ceramic discs and the giant rear wing's air-brake feature haul it from 200km/h to a dead stop in just 4.5 seconds. All this fun could be yours for \$1.3m, if there were any left for **sale**.

If Ferrari hadn't spoiled its party somewhat, the McLaren P1 would be indisputably the greatest sports car on the planet, but fortunately the Italians will force the proud Brits to go and make something even better. Everybody wins.

Alfa Romeo 4C

The Alfa Romeo 4C is missing one core supercar ingredient, but it's the one you can do without - the stratospheric price. It's definitely got the looks, with a body described by designer Alessandro Maccolini as a work of "necessary beauty". The plunging V-line on the bonnet gives it menace, but it's also a part of the carefully crafted aerodynamic package, which provides this car with negative lift and makes it super-stable even on the enthusiastic side of 200km/h.

It really is as low and mean as it looks, with a centre of gravity just 40cm off the ground which, with the F1-inspired full carbon fibre monocoque and mid-engine balance, gives it supreme handling.

It's got the tech as well, with an unprecedented 1.75-litre turbocharged engine that produces 176kW and 350Nm. In a car that weighs just 895kg, it's enough to send it to 100km/h in 4.5 seconds.

Alfa has also produced the kind of deep-throated screaming sounds from this tiny engine that make Italian villagers cheer as you drive past. Best of all, it feels like a supercar to drive, with a ground-kissing seating position, sharp but weighty unassisted steering and visible carbon fibre everywhere in the interior. You have to climb over big slabs of the stuff to get in.

As for the price, most supercars have price tags that make mere mortals cry snuffly tears of resentment, but the Alfa 4C is set to come into Australia for less than \$100,000, making it cheaper than a Porsche Cayman, and 100 times better looking. The launch price could be as low as \$80,000, in fact, with higher-spec models just tipping over the \$100,000 mark when it goes on **sale** later this year.

Koenigsegg Agera One:1

When a small group of enthusiasts in **China** pestered the slightly unhinged engineers at Koenigsegg into building the world's first mega-car, they came up with the Agera One:1. This is the first car to boast a megawatt of power - 1000kW (plus 1371Nm) and the name reflects the fact that it works out as one horsepower per kilogram (1341 of each), so One:1. It's impossible to imagine what unleashing that much grunt with a flick of your right ankle feels like, but if it caused drivers' insides to be pulped into porridge it wouldn't come as a surprise. Only six owners will ever have the dubious pleasure of finding out, as only half a dozen were made - four for the **Chinese** trillionaires who demanded it be built, and two in Britain.

Top speed is a Bugatti Veyron-bothering 440km/h (it should take the world's fastest title if the **company** wants to do an officially timed run), while 0 to 100km/h will rush at you in 2.8 seconds, 0 to 300km/h takes 12 seconds and 0 to 400km/h arrives in the previously unfeasible 20 seconds. And all this from an engine that's smaller than the one you'd find in an SS Commodore, just 5.0-litres. It's also half the number of cylinders the Veyron uses.

To keep you from chopping off the top of trees with your undercarriage, the Agera gets a Le Mans-inspired active wing system that produces about 600kg of downforce, as well as active under-trim air management. A titanium exhaust system should ensure that it sounds like the end of the world

approaching at high speed. The One:1 truly is a mega-car, which raises the question, where to next for the well-heeled racing-boot owner? Keep an eye out for the first galacti-car.

Pagani Zonda Revolucion

The Revolucion is the final version of the Zonda, a track-only, multi-winged flight of fantasy of which only five \$3.1 million examples will ever be built, and it looks like a Batmobile that has come flying down a runway and rear-ended a jet fighter before escaping at high speed with a mangled nose.

All of those winglets, deflectors and weird bits mean business, however, as this is the most focused and serious of all Paganis, boasting 597kW and 730Nm in a ground-kissing body weighing just 1070kg. The job of pulling up this winged beast is performed by F1-derived carbon/ceramic matrix race brake rotors, which are fade resistant and said to last four times longer than mere mortal units.

While most Zondas have looked as if they were kitted out by a bespoke jeweller, the Revolucion's interior is almost spartan. Instead of an airbag, you get a steering-wheel-mounted rev counter and the driver and passenger are braced against serious lateral g-forces by five-point racing harnesses.

The rear of the car features an air diffuser that could keep the rain off Queensland and a set of quad exhaust pipes that would have steam-punk aficionados going weak at the knees.

Power is supplied by the usual, brutal 6.0-litre V12, sourced from AMG. The result is a 0 to 100km/h time of just 2.6 seconds. At that point, you'll need to change gear, using the magnesium sequential box, which has shifts so precise they take place in just 20 milliseconds. A highly clever traction-control system offers the driver 12 settings to keep them on the road. Top speed is a handy 350km/h, at which point, the Pagani Zonda Revolucion will be merely a blur.

McLaren 650S

The wonderful, life-changing McLaren Fax Machine (as the unexcitingly named MP4-12C has been cleverly dubbed) is an entirely different driving experience from other supercars, thanks to its fiercely clever F1 aerodynamics.

When the rear wing deploys under savage braking, you can feel the whole car clawing into the road, the nose snorting a direct line to the apex, the front end entirely planted. It quite simply corners, and rides, like no other semi-affordable sports machine.

And now McLaren has gone and made it better with the 650S, an upgrade - complete with even sexier aero bits and a swooshy, P1-derived front end - that was meant to create a new line, above the MP4 and below the hyper-hybrid. However, McLaren has now deleted the Fax Machine, just two years after its inception (although, cleverly, 12C owners can pop into their dealer for a software upgrade that allows them to match the new car's 478kW and 678Nm).

The twin-turbo V8 might be similar, although you can bet it will be louder than the too-restrained MP4, but the 650S has leapt ahead in many other ways. It's shed a few kilograms (down to 1330kg) but carries a hefty 24 per cent more downforce, which is a lot for a car that already felt as if it were magnetically attracted to bitumen. It's also claimed to have even sharper steering, which sounds, frankly, impossible.

The shift in power to weight ratio also means the 650S breaks into the rare air below three seconds for the 0 to 100km/h blast (2.9 sec). You can also go from a standing start to 300km/h in just 25.4 seconds on your way to a top whack of 333km/h (or 327km/h for the Spider version), should you be driving on a certain stretch of road in the Northern Territory. Somehow, possibly through the use of black magic, this ground-breaking new supercar also manages a fuel economy figure of just 11.7 litres per 100km.

What sounds potentially most impressive is that it now features an F1-sourced brake-steer system, which makes use of an even more involved rear wing, allowing drivers to dive even deeper into corners with impunity. Undeniably more attractive in every way, the 650S coupe is priced at \$441,500 (a jump of \$43,500 over the Fax Machine) and \$486,250 for the Spider.

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