



Not many engine bays are as sexy as an Alfa's...

Few marques evoke more fiery passion than those from the stables of the Italian manufacturers. From nutty know-it-all fundis who swear Michael Schumacher and his Ferrari galloped straight through the gates of heaven and on to become 7-time champion to those that go so far as to tattoo emblems on their bodies.

So when hanging out with guys like "Nibbles" and his brother Shamieg, one shouldn't expect an unbiased, impartial, factual discussion about how Alfas are simply, logically and/or statistically better than say, modded M3s or other road and track rivals. It's more a case of an enthusiastic speech about how, even if any other car is better in any other area, there is one where Alfas are unrivalled: Passion. Most times Alfa fundis are simply overcompensating for an underachieving car. Take the 1970's Gulia. Like Maserati of a few years ago and

# italian flare

PHOTOGRAPHY & STORY BY ERNEST

OFTEN  
OVERLOOKED  
IN THE MODI-  
FYING SCENE IS  
THE MODERN  
ALFA ROMEO...  
UNLESS YOU'RE A  
TRUE ENTHUSIAST!





***“NIBBLES SLIPS INTO HIS OMP KEVLAR SEAT AND GRABS THE SUEDE RACING WHEEL.”***

Ferrari of the 90's, they simply lost the plot. But ask any Alfa fan about that very same car and they'd simply argue that as imperfect as it may have been, it was to them, and countless others, the embodiment of perfection and beauty. I can't argue with the beauty part because along with many of the famously stunning cars of old, from the iconic curves of the 250GTO to the eyelashes and rump of the Miura, cars like the new 8C could hang out with the best of

them.

Growing up in Cape Town's Southern Suburbs, I remember a few legendary cars kids around town would always talk about. Kind of like Top Trumps of the Cape Flats. Three Giulietta's, one silver, one purple and one blue were always mentioned by guys like Rustin Mia. You see, Rustin was one of those guys that hung out with all the local car guys. From nossed-up Super Boss Opels to VR6s, he'd driven them all, or at least sat



You really can't get any better than this!



Individual throttles on a V6 - No better sound!

passenger. He knew this guy named "Nibbles" who, along with his brother, owned the most stunning Giulietta's on the scene. This was over 10 years ago and recently, when I eventually met Nibbles, I realised he wasn't much older than me!

The 156 owned by Alfa Bodyworks started off as a stock standard 2.5 V6 156 and was sent up to Jozi for some serious remodelling by tuning guru Dawie de

Villiers of Glenwood Motors. A 3.8 litre motor was fitted and the car was quickly turned into an all round monster. The car was designed to be the full package and everything from the inside to the outside was designed to do the job of going fast in a straight line, around a corner and everything else in between.

As I step towards the car my nose is greeted by a cacophony of smells. Not that new car scent one would expect from a car this pris-





*“OVER THE AMBIENT NOISE OF A QUIET INDUSTRIAL AREA I CAN HEAR THE ‘BAAARP, BAAAAAARP’ OF A LARGE CAPACITY ENGINE...”*



tine but in fact a fuel mix so potent, GSR Developments (the guys who tune the car) won't divulge the recipe! Nibbles slips into his OMP Kevlar seat and grabs the suede racing wheel. The car fires up with a bark and slowly gets backed out of the pristine Alfa Bodyworks workshop. We head to a nearby location and Nibbles quickly disappears into the distance.

Everything on the car is aimed at being track spec, from the Bridgestone semi slicks to the Powerbrake (race spec) brakes and OMP interior decoration. The motor is rated at a staggering 300kW which translates to over 400hp in the Queen's English. The cams are a ludicrous 304 degrees with solid lifters and vernier gears. The head was completely worked from top to bottom and all rotating parts were balanced. Throttle bodies are of the individual variety and a Gotech Pro X was used as the engine management.

Over the ambient noise of a quiet industrial area I can hear the 'baaarp, baaaaaarp' of a large capacity engine. It's yet another V6 Alfa but this time it is Nibbles' sibling rocking

Now that's attention to detail!



## **DRIVERS NIBBLES & SHAMIEG**



***“IT SEEMS THE ALFA BODYWORKS GUYS HAVE DONE IT AGAIN, AS ONLY THEY CAN WITH AN ALFA.”***

up with the stunning 3.7 GTV.

The GTV has been on the Cape Town scene for a little while longer than the 156 and has received a treatment similar to that of its stablemate although much more streetable in comparison. Massive 19-inch wheels sit snugly in the arches and bare testimony to the huge brakes. The power is put down by the Q2 limited slip diff and gets tuned via Dastek's potent Unichip system. The head was also worked and 288 degree cams were put in for ultra high revving performance.

The engine bay is pristine with the chrome intake simply gleaming. A Ferrari throttle body was fitted for extra responsiveness from the already responsive motor. The exterior also received the custom treatment with Zender sideskirts and custom front and rear bumpers, done by Alfa Bodyworks of course.

Both cars are crimson and is the only colour to have when it comes to Italian exotica. One a comfortable daily with power to reel in many a boy racer to a pukka track biased road car. These cars have a reputation in the Cape to be serious highway monsters, killing all who challenge them. After seeing them up close, and more importantly, hearing them, it seems the locals may be on to something.

It seems the Alfa Bodyworks guys have done it again, as only they can with an Alfa. Great stuff guys, now lets see what the V-Box says...

## vehicle data

### ENGINE

3.0 V6 engine with 3.7 big bore kit, comprising 11:1 Ross forged pistons, GTA 3.2 crankshaft, 288 degree Newman cams, ported and gas flowed cylinder heads, Ferrari 360 throttle body, GTA airflow meter and a Unichip for tuning/mapping. All rotating parts have been balanced to help increase reliability and speed up the revs. There's also a custom exhaust system with 76mm quad tailpipes.

### TRANSMISSION

Stock Alfa GTV with a Q2 limited slip differential.

### HANDLING

Eibach springs all round with an OMP strutbrace for added rigidity.

### BRAKES

Brembo brakes (factory-spec) with EBC Red Stuff brake pads.

### WHEELS n TYRES

19" Trafficstar 3-piece split rims wrapped in Yokohama AVS 235/35/19 tyres

### INTERIOR

Stock interior with an Alfa GT gearknob

### EXTERIOR

Custom front and rear bumpers, Zender sideskirts, Chev Lumina SS vents fitted and moulded into GTV's fenders and Porsche mirrors and bumper indicators



## VBOXTESTED

Vehicle: Alfa Romeo 156

### Virtual Time slip

60 ft	- 2.28sec
330 ft	- 5.88sec
660 ft	- 8.68sec @ 143.04km/h
990 ft	- 11.03sec
Quarter mile	- 13.10sec @ 182.90km/h

### Gearing Speed Acc

#### As per quarter mile run

1st gear	- 59.08km/h	- 0.610g
2nd gear	- 99.64km/h	- 0.667g
3rd gear	- 143.1km/h	- 0.494g
4th gear	- 183.5km/h	- 0.319g
5th gear	- 213.4km/h	- 0.214g
6th gear	- 263.9km/h	- 0.140g

### Acceleration

0 - 60km/h	- 2.99sec
0 - 80km/h	- 3.86sec
0 - 100km/h	- 5.26sec
0 - 120km/h	- 6.57sec
0 - 140km/h	- 8.09sec
0 - 160km/h	- 10.39sec
0 - 180km/h	- 12.69sec
0 - 200km/h	- 16.20sec
0 - 220km/h	- 20.93sec
0 - 240km/h	- 26.55sec
0 - 260km/h	- 36.64sec



## SPYKE'S VIEWS

The Alfa battled for traction through the first two gears and partly into third but still managed to yield an impressive 2.2-sec 60ft on semi slick tyres. We managed to get the car into top gear and the venue was long enough to get to a VBox first - 6th gear and 260+ top speed. The car over read slightly but the true top speed settled at 263.9km/h and only took a measly 36-seconds to get there. One must remember that this is a front wheel drive naturally aspirated motor to be able to appreciate these figures, I'm impressed. This is one serious N/A motor and it sounds glorious on song. The air was cool which helped the breathing.



## vehicle data

### ENGINE

3.2 V6 GTA engine with 3.8 big bore kit, comprising of Ross forged pistons and Pauter conrods with a compression ratio of 12:1. Up top there's 304 degree cams, solid lifters, twin vernier pulleys and bigger valves with 3 angle seats and spiralling in ported and flowed cylinder heads. There's individual throttle bodies with bigger injectors controlled by a Gotech-Pro X engine management. For cooling there's a custom aluminium radiator. All rotating parts have been balanced to help increase reliability and speed up the revs. Lastly, a custom 76mm exhaust.

### TRANSMISSION

Stock Alfa with a Gemini Race limited slip differential set at an aggressive 50:50 split

### HANDLING

Eibach springs with Koni Sport shocks and an OMP strutbrace for added rigidity.

### BRAKES

Powerbrake custom billet aluminium calipers with 330mm grooved discs and race pads

### WHEELS n TYRES

17" black wheels with Bridgestone S55 semi slicks

### INTERIOR

OMP kevlar seats in red, OMP race, suede flat bottom steering wheel, First Race 4 point quick release harness, front and rear seats removed including part of the interior.

### EXTERIOR

Zender front and rear bumpers and sideskirts, 156 GTA smoked headlights and the grille shield made black.