

Balancing Act

G8 GT satisfies owner's wish list

by Dennis Staszak

MATT LORONO WAS a man on a mission. The 35-year-old mechanical engineer for a biotech company in Sunnyvale, Calif., was set on replacing his 2003 Acura TL-S with a more exciting set of wheels.

"I bought the TL in 2002 as a compromise," he admits. "I liked the car a lot, but never loved it."

So began an 18-month-long search for a vehicle that would move him in more ways than one.

"When I look for a new car, I have a certain set of criteria," Lorono says. He sought a sedan that not only could seat five comfortably, but also would work well for daily transportation and road trips.

Wait, there's more. "I look for a balance between price and horsepower." Anything else? Oops, he almost forgot to mention interior and exterior styling. That's a given, as is a "balanced ride," Lorono explains. "I like to feel the road without being jostled by it."

Lorono says, "In general, I'm impressed with the direction of the Pontiac lineup in recent years." He previously owned a Pontiac Firebird and had regularly driven his ex-fiancée's Sunfire GT.

When he saw and sat in the G8, it just blew him away. It was obvious from the outset that this was a car he could love. "It just felt right sitting in it," he says. This from a man who had been test-driving competitive models for over a year and a half and hadn't had the G8 GT on the street yet.

Although Matt and his wife Alice had pretty much decided to trade in the Acura for a Malibu LTZ when they scoped out the G8 GT, he knew it was time to take stock of the situation away from the showroom. A few days

later, he returned to take a test drive and was impressed. The balance was clearly tipping in favor of this high-performance Pontiac sedan. It just seemed to best match up with his criteria.

Granted, it was up against some pretty formidable competition — the upscale European and Japanese models that are so commonplace in the Silicon Valley area where the Loronos live and work.

An avid consumer publications reader who has many friends and co-workers who own expensive imports, Lorono knew that there was more to the financial end of owning and driving a new car than just the sticker price.

He wanted a reliable car that wouldn't cost him an arm and a leg to maintain.

Lorono also wanted a car he could enjoy driving while taking his wife and friends for a weekend on the Monterey Peninsula, hiking or camping in the mountains, or enjoying a little downtime in Reno or Tahoe.

Two things Lorono says pretty much sums up his take on his new set of wheels. First, "For the price point, the G8 GT is the best fit for my tastes." That's the analytical engineer talking. Next, he admits, "One disappointing thing about my new G8 GT is that I need more excuses to drive it!" Now that's the automotive aficionado talking. Looks like both sides of Lorono are going to be very pleased in the months and miles ahead. ▽

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