

Prestazioni scatenate

Performance unleashed

BY DAVE STALL

There was a time when supercars were very difficult to drive on US roads. 55 mph didn't sit well with V10s, V12s or even some supercharged or turbocharged V6s and V8s. Although the speed limit has long since been raised above 55, a true supercar needed to be running over 100 mph. Then all the engine and suspension technology would kick in to give you the ride you're looking for. Unfortunately, this kind of enjoyment was not possible (or legal) on the streets.

Fast forward to today, and the supercar has got street creds at any speed.

A perfect example is the 2018 Lamborghini Huracán Performante. This top-of-the-line supercar is at the top of its game: it's got looks, style, speed and yes—safety.

And to prove it, I was invited to Thermal Raceway, a private track club in Riverside County, California, for a spirited run around this amazing road course at max speed. Here, 100 mph is not only allowed, it's encouraged!

To set the stage, the Performante is powered by a V10 engine producing 630 horsepower, backed by an LDF 7-speed dual-clutch transmission that

allowed a professional driver to travel the famous 1/4-mile in 10.4 seconds and hit 135 mph on the Nürburgring, navigating the track in a record-setting—for production cars—6 minutes and 52.1 seconds.

Lamborghini's R&D boss Maurizio Reggiani calls this a 360-degree approach to performance. This means more power, less weight, suspension improvement and additional aerodynamics.

What makes the Huracán Performante rise a grade above the base Huracán are little touches like titanium intake valves, hotter intake camshafts and free flowing exhaust with an amazing sound quality. Not only does the exhaust enhance the driving experience with its sweet resonance, it also boosts horsepower by 30 over the stock Huracán. The Performante revs lower by 25 rpms. Peak torque is increased from 30 lb-ft to 443

Thermal Raceway is in Riverside County, at 61980 Tyler Street, Thermal, California 92274, just in case you want to join: www.thethermalclub.com, or call 760-239-6844.

at an unchanged 6500 rpm, which creates a smoother power curve above 4,000 rpm.

The Performante lost about 90 pounds thanks to the addition of a lot of weight-saving carbon fiber parts and pieces. Actually Lamborghini has developed their own carbon fiber, quite simply called Forged Composite technology, that looks like water flowing versus little squares.

The chassis had to be reinforced to match the thrust, so Lamborghini gave the Huracán 10 percent stiffer springs and thicker sway bars, with a 15 percent increase in roll stiffness.

The Lamborghini also gets an aerodynamic system called ALA, which stands for Aerodinamica Lamborghini Attiva. This system comes with a front spoiler and a wing in the rear that produce 770 pounds of downforce at 193 mph. At high speeds, the rear wing will keep the Huracán from literally taking off and becoming airborne. Motorized flaps (an electro-actuated system is 80 percent lighter than hydraulics) add to downforce by pushing air over the top or into the hollow rear wing.

The Performante has three driving modes: Strada (street), Sport and Corsa (track/racing) mode. As we mentioned, the V10 engine is backed by a very smooth LDF 7-speed dual-clutch transmission, which handles the power with ease, and massive steering column-mounted (not steering wheel) paddle shifters that are easy to use, even in a turn.

The interior is fighter-pilot inspired, communicating its lightweight and aerodynamic purpose. Vents, paddles, handles and center console are created from Forged Composite. Dark-toned lightweight Alcantara fabric reflects its racing heritage, including on sports seats, with an optional lasered "Y" graphic (comfort seats with the same trim are also available). A special ALA graphic in the instrument panel shows when and how the system is working, including aero vectoring. New digital cockpit displays are configurable by driving mode selected: Strada, Sport or Corsa, with data on downforce and drag. Apple CarPlay apps include a Lamborghini telemetry system, so you can record, replay and study your own performance.

Getting set to drive the Thermal race track was pretty simple, and once the car reached operating temperature, the carbon ceramic brakes did their job. Reaching redline was rather quick until, you became one with the Performante—then the fun really began.

It was the best time ever, driving the Lamborghini Huracán Performante, and charging around Thermal at track speed was a dream come true.

But how does it drive on the street? To answer my question, Lamborghini sent me a beautiful white Performante, with aggressively raked rally stripes in the Italian flag colors of red, white and green smartly placed at the bottom of the doors.

This car was a growler when started up first thing in the morning, thanks to its amazing free-flowing exhaust.

The Performante has one great feature that you would think is exclusive to low-riders: the front end raises and lowers. This allows the driver to pass over speed bumps and park the car without damage to the trim.

The Pirelli P Zero tires did exactly what they were designed to do, and that is stick!

If there was a negative, it is the limited adjustment options for the driver's seat. The issue with the seat was not enough to dim my enthusiasm, as the Performante is truly a driver's car, and whether you take it out for a Sunday drive or to track day, it will satisfy the best and worst driver out there.

Is it worth the starting price of \$274,390? Without a doubt! This is the kind of car you'd make sacrifices to own. Major sacrifices. However, the privilege of ownership comes with a caveat: don't be stingy and keep it garaged in your collection! This is a car that needs and wants to be driven. Let'er loose! ■

SPECIFICATIONS

CHASSIS	.....Hybrid aluminum & carbon fiber
OUTER SKIN	.....Aluminum & composite
ENGINE	.....5.2L V10,IDS+MPI dual injection
COMPRESSION RATIO	.....12.7:1
TRANSMISSION	.....LDF 7-speed dual-clutch
DRIVETRAIN	.....electronically controlled AWD, rear mech self-lock differential
HP/TORQUE	.....640 hp / 442 lb-ft
0-TO-62 MPH / TOP SPEED	.....2.6 sec / 202 mph
HP/TORQUE	.....640 hp / 442 lb-ft
STEERING	.....Electromechanical power (optional LDS w variable steering ratio)
SUSPENSION	.....Aluminum double-wishbone, dual springs, hydraulic dampers (Magne-Ride electromagnetic dampers available)
BRAKES	.....Hydraulic dual-circuit system w vacuum brake servo unit, carbon-ceramic discs, ventilated/cross-drilled. F: 380x38mm 6-piston aluminum calipers R: 356x32mm 4-piston aluminum calipers.
WHEELS	.....F: 8.5Jx20" R: 11Jx20"
TIRES	.....Pirelli P Zero Corsa F: 245/30 R20 / R: 305/30 R20
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	.....177.4 in / 103.15 in
TURNING CIRCLE	.....37.73 ft
CARGO CAPACITY	.....3.53 cu.ft
WEIGHT / DISTRIB	.....3047 lb / F/R 42/57%
FUEL CAPACITY	.....21.9 gal
MPG	.....14/19/16 (city/hwy/comb)
BASE PRICE	.....\$274,390

