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With a starting price under \$30,000, the 2023 Dodge Hornet comes with a powerful turbocharged engine and styling elements inspired by classic muscle cars.

The Sizzling Sting

All-New Dodge Hornet Packs Power, Style Into Italian-Built Crossover

By Derek Price

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The 2023 Dodge Hornet GT has burst into the compact crossover scene, and it's creating quite the buzz.

In a world where crossovers are multiplying like insects in a Texas summer, the Hornet stands out as a stylish, practical and surprisingly entertaining option for families on the move.

Granted, there are no bad crossovers for sale today, and the Hornet is no exception. It ticks all the right boxes with its nice driving dynamics, attractive looks and ample space for the brood. It balances affordable practicality with a dash of excitement, like finding a gourmet meal at a fast-food joint.

The Hornet GT drives with the energy and enthusiasm of a caffeinated hummingbird, zipping through traffic with a driving feel that's just fantastic. The Hornet feels light on its feet, with a power surge that sets it apart from its less-energetic rivals.

Potential buyers have some questions to ponder.

First, do they want to embrace the power of a Dodge, even if it means sacrificing some fuel economy?

And, perhaps more importantly, are they okay with a Dodge built in Italy?

Yes, you heard that right. The Hornet emerges from the boot-



The Hornet, Dodge's most affordable current model, has a cabin that centers around the driver.

shaped nation, sharing a platform with Alfa Romeo. While Italy is renowned for its passion, pasta, wine and picturesque landscapes, it's not typically associated with quintessential American muscle like Dodge. But life is full of surprises, and the Hornet is here to make a statement.

One can't help but question the build quality, given Alfa Romeo's somewhat iffy reputation. Sharing a platform with an Italian brand known for its sporadic reliability

raises concerns about the long-term durability of the Hornet. It remains to be seen whether the Hornet's sting will stand the test of time, but for now, potential buyers might want to approach with cautious optimism.

The Hornet GT is not your average honey-drinker. Under its hood, fueled by the Hurricane4 engine, a 2.0-liter turbocharged inline four-cylinder, it packs a sizzling 268 horsepower and 295 pound-feet of torque.

It's the segment's most potent gas engine, providing the kind of gusto that'll make other crossovers jealous. It's like the little insect that could, outperforming the competition without breaking a sweat.

Sport Mode is where the real stinger comes out to play. Sharper throttle response, optimized upshifts, tighter steering and an electronic limited-slip differential make the Hornet GT sprint from 0 to 60 mph in a brisk 6.5 seconds.

That's quick enough to surprise those luxury crossovers thinking they're the only ones with swiftness in their DNA.

Looks-wise, the Dodge Hornet is a head-turner. It's unleashed the unmistakable Dodge DNA design vocabulary on the segment, showcasing characteristic muscle-car styling cues that are both eye-catching and assertive.

Inside, the center stack controls, display screens and HVAC vents all tip their hats toward the one in command. The cockpit has a driver-centric design, bringing a sense of empowerment to the person behind the wheel.

And speaking of screens, the tech is on point with best-in-class 12.3-inch digital cockpit cluster screen and a 10.25-inch central display standard on R/T and GT trims. More than 22.5 inches of in-vehicle display screen space can keep you well-informed and entertained.

Overall, the Hornet is a force to be reckoned with in the buzzing world of compact crossovers. It's got the power, style and practicality to make any family swarm with delight.

If you're looking for a compact crossover with a sting in its tail, and you're not afraid to embrace a touch of Italian flair mixed with American muscle, the Dodge Hornet GT is an undeniably appealing option hitting the market this year.

A CLOSER LOOK



AT A GLANCE

FACTS, FIGURES AND RATINGS

What was tested? 2023 Dodge Hornet GT Plus (\$34,995). Options: Tech pack (\$2,245), track pack (\$2,995), premium paint (\$595), sunroof delete (\$615 credit). Price as tested (including \$1,595 destination charge): \$41,810

Wheelbase: 103.8 in.
Length: 178 in.
Width: 82 in.
Height: 63.8 in.
Engine: 2.0-liter turbo inline four cylinder (268 hp, 295 lbs.-ft.)
Transmission: Nine-speed automatic
Fuel economy: 21 city, 29 highway

Ratings
Style: 9
Performance: 7
Price: 7
Handling: 8
Ride: 7
Comfort: 6
Quality: 6
Overall: 7

Why buy it?
It's more powerful than competitors and shares its sparkling, crisp handling with a pricier Alfa Romeo cousin. It looks good, too, with Dodge muscle-car styling cues.

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