

AIR-PALA

An Airbagged and Slammed '60 Impala That Retains Its Retro Feel and 348 W-Motor But Is Wrapped In a Modern Package



OVER THE YEARS, BURBANK, CALIFORNIA'S "ROAD KING" R.O. AZAMENDI HAS BUILT A NUMBER OF NICE STREET MACHINES, BUT HIS LATEST IS, WELL, SOO. HE THE RUDGE.

Christened the Air Pala, this airbagged and slammed copper-and-black 348 dual-quad '60 Impala was built from a concept drawing. The

artist rendition was done by Jeff Angelotti, whose work you have seen in this magazine many times. Ray's ultra-talented son, Michael Azamendi, of Protech Performance in Burbank, California, along with assistants Juan Villa and Tony Wale, spent close to a year and an undisclosed sum of money building one of the

finest big-windowe Cherys we've seen in quite some time.

We first saw the car at this year's National Roadster show, but Ray found the car listed on eBay. "The car was owned by a guy who built surfboards for a living in Escondido, California, and he actually had performed a frame-off restoration a number of years earlier,"

Ray told us. Nevertheless, the bottom line was that Ray was the alternate bidder on the car, and for whatever reason, the winning bidder did not complete the transaction, so the seller called Ray and offered him the car.

The Azamendis immediately drove down to Escondido to look at the car, and after a

round-dicker loaded whole there's engine had a needed we just

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round or two of customerly dickering, Ray and Michael loaded up the Impala and headed back to Burbank. "The whole underside of the body was covered in oil, so we knew there were problems with the engine," Ray said. "The car also had a few body dings that needed to be fixed. In short, we just decided to tear the

whole thing apart and start over."

As Ray puts it, "Over 130 holes on the frame have been welded up, and then the chassis was sandblasted, powder-coated black by Powder Craft in Sun Valley, California, painted copper and penstriped. The gas tank is stock and was also painted black and copper

to match the rest of the car."

As far as the actual suspension is concerned, the Automendis installed a 3,251 Cook Engineering-prepared GM 10-bolt, equipped with Air Ride Technologies airbags and anti-sway bar. Up front, the Impala makes use of an Air Ride Technologies airbag suspension, this time with tubu-

lar upper and lower control arms, equipped with a set of 2-inch-dropped Superior Spindles and a big front anti-sway bar. Also onboard is a GM 605 power steering assembly with remote reservoir from CPP Classics. The car also uses a set of Wilwood four-wheel, four-and-six-piston disc brakes. The wheels

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Inside the slammed '60 are a pair of Glide Engineering front buckets and a handmade rear bench covered with black leather and suede material, thanks to the craftsmanship of upholsterer Victor Cuniga. Lokar provided the shifter and pedals, while Haneline gauges fit perfectly in the original dash.

and tires are 17x7-inch front and 18x9-inch rear Budnik Goosie billet aluminum wheels, wrapped with P225/45ZR17-trim and P235/40GZR18-inch BFGoodrich g-Force Radial T/A rubber.

While Michael, Juan Vella and Tony Wade were thrashing on the chassis, former North Hollywood High School chum Lou Terrelli rebuilt the 348 W-series Turbo-Fire Chevrolet using a 0000-inch-overbore EGGE Engine Rebuild kit. The breather on the rear of the motor has been blocked off at the crank and relocated to the air cleaner. The intake is an Offenhauser dual-quad for a 348, which has been outfitted with a set of 500cfm Edelbrock Performer Dual Shine carburetors and a Billet Specialties air cleaner. The valve covers are also Offenhauser casts, looking period perfect, while the ignition system is one of MSD's race Pro-Billet systems.

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