

# DRIVING IMPRESSIONS

WE DRIVE THE 2011  
MUSTANG GT 5.0!





Text by Mary Jean Wesche  
Photos by Mary Jean Wesche and  
Courtesy of Ford Motor Company

**T**he second day of the Ford Long Lead for the new 2011 Mustangs created a smile on my face that has yet to diminish. After waiting for 15 years for Ford to once-again build a stock 5.0 for the Mustang GT, it was time to get a chance to drive the 2011. Dave Pericak escorted me to the awaiting GT six-speed, and gave me the instructions that many of us dream of hearing, "I want to hear you leave this parking lot and I want you to drive it like you stole it." WOW! NICE! Ok, well, it's not my car and I just felt too guilty to do exactly that, but I did leave the parking lot with a fair amount of speed!

It is difficult to find enough superlatives to describe the new 5.0. I can say it was a blast to drive. I would prefer to adjust the clutch, but which one of us doesn't have a particular preference when it comes to a clutch? And, again I would like to have the ability to lower the seat. Yes, I like sitting close to the ground, blame it on years of driving lowered cars. But, other than that, I have no complaints.

The throaty sound is, to me, perfect.

Apologies to aftermarket muffler manufacturers, this Mustang is equipped with a high-flow stainless exhaust system with rather large chrome tips. It was explained by the engineers that they spent many months perfecting the sound. And, driver and passenger are treated to the throaty sound without being drowned in it! A conversation could be held without elevated voice levels.

Preferring to drive a manual transmission when I can, this six-speed manual comes with a standard 3.31 rear axle, which easily helped launch the 412 hp under the hood. Of course, 3.55s are always an option. The steering in the 2011 is an all-new Electronic Power Steering Assist System (EPAS), not the usual hydraulic system. This eliminates a power steering pump. This system detects the crown in the road or a strong crosswind and will automatically adjust. The steering/handling on the curvy roads of Southern California was more precise than expected.

The engine is a visual beauty and possesses outstanding performance and efficiency. Knowing that the suspension was to be improved slightly over the 2010 model, I could actually feel the difference, albeit slight (12% over its predecessor). Road

noise was minimal in the cabin. Some of this can be attributed to stiffer rear control arms.

We were in the first group to test these vehicles, and I'll be the first to admit that I was probably one of the oldest journalist in attendance, and that my reaction time is no where near where I'd like it to be. But I heard rumors of 0-60 in less than 4.5 seconds from more experienced hotshoes! We didn't put the GT on a dyno, but again I've read reports with numbers in the 377-395 rwhp range.

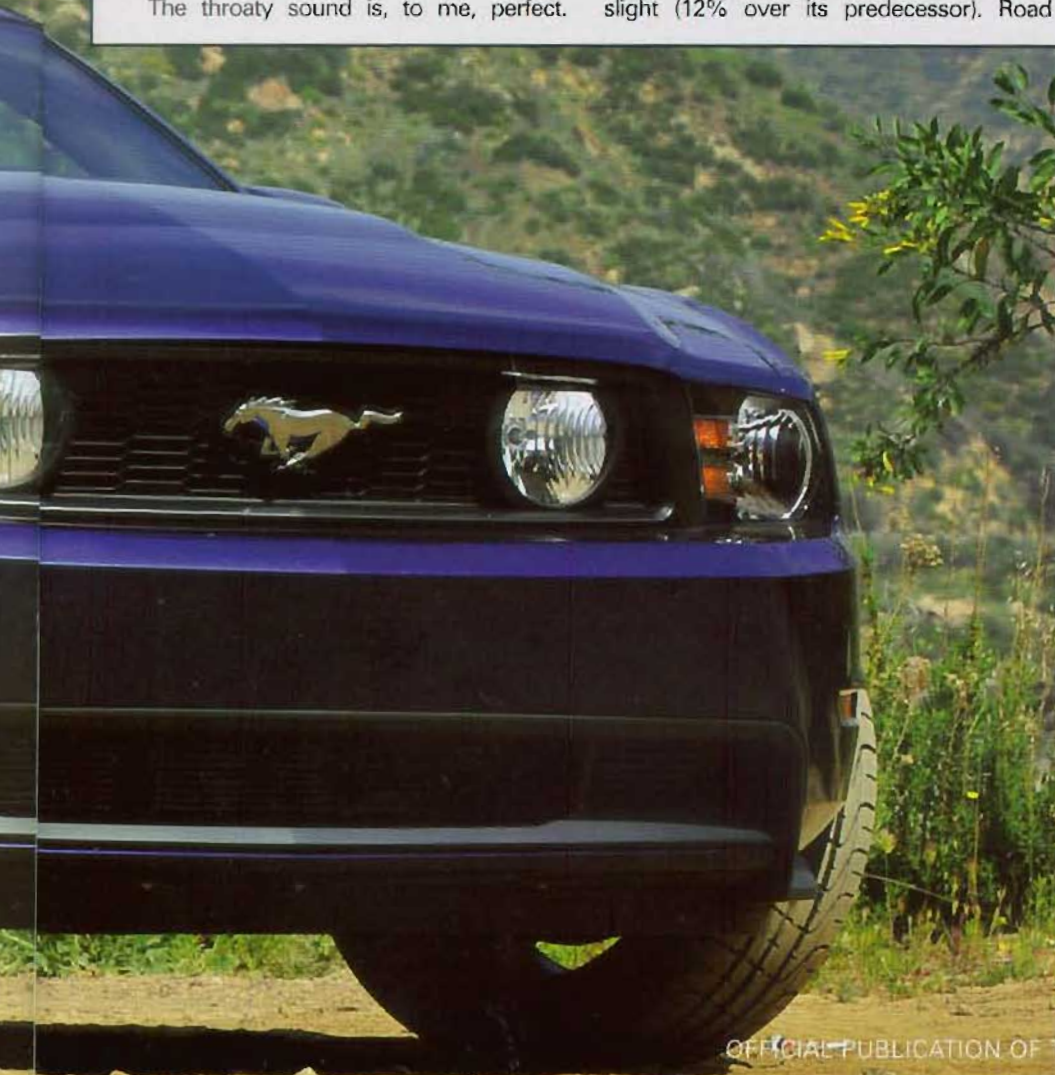
We were given a few 6-speed automatic equipped 2011 Mustang GTs to "experience the acceleration" at California's Camarillo Airport. Needless to say, that experience just made my grin even wider. The Brembo brake package helps this beast stop on a dime with 14-inch front disc brakes from the GT500. I personally loved the 19-inch wheels, although replacing tires would be interesting when the time comes.

Not being one to particularly like a two-tone interior, I saw a Black GT, glass roof with a Saddle leather interior that changed my opinion. The color is so striking and the leather is so soft, and much higher grade than expected. Look at the list of options and colors to make the choice even more difficult. The glass roof is nearly as good as having a convertible. It even comes equipped with a screen to give more shade on really sunny days.

The finish on the dash is clean and elegant. Add Sync, a touch-screen voice-controlled Navigation, SIRIUS radio, and maybe a rear-view camera to assist in parking and you've got the perfect cabin for a Mustang. I found the interior comparable to more luxurious vehicles.

To experience building your own, log onto [www.fordvehicles.com](http://www.fordvehicles.com), click on the vehicle of your choice, and you can customize your own Mustang, complete with engine, transmission, gearing, wheels, colors, options, and finally pricing.

All in all, I expected a lot and I saw more than I expected. This was the ultimate test drive. And it was addictive, it left me wanting more, and more. I have toyed with purchasing a new Mustang for a few years. For many reasons I had to pass...however, this may be the one Mustang that moves from the "Want It" side of the list to the "Have to Have It" side. **MT**





## THE MCA EDITION - PACKAGE 203A

- The MCA Edition - Package 203A, features:
- 6-gauge cluster with MyColor™
- Ambient Lighting
- Unique Dark Stainless Steel billet grille with the Tri-Bar Pony badge
- Front lower-mounted fog lamps
- Side stripes
- Rear decklid spoiler
- Custom decklid tape applique between the tail lamps
- 18-inch sterling gray metallic painted aluminum wheels
- Automatic headlamps
- Premium carpeted front floor mats with an embroidered Pony logo
- Base MSRP \$22,145
- MCA Edition Base MSRP \$25,845
- Convertible add \$5,000



## AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- Glass roof - \$1,995
- Tape Stripe Delete - \$0
- 3.31 Limited Slip Rear \$395
- HID Headlamps \$525
- Security Package \$395
- 18-inch polished aluminum wheels \$495
- 18-inch chrome-clad aluminum wheels \$1,848.57
- Also available are tires, center caps and tire pressure monitoring system (TPMS), requires Pirelli tires and TPMS.
- Interior comfort package \$595:
- Electronic package \$2,340
- Rear Camera: \$385
- SYNC, Satellite Radio and SHAKER 500 audio are all standard with the MCA package.



## MUSTANG GT

- 5.0L 4V Ti-VCT V-8
- 18-inch wide-spoke painted aluminum wheels
- 6-speed manual - Base MSRP \$29,645
- 6-speed automatic - Base MSRP \$30,640
- Convertible, add \$5,000 to above

## PREMIUM GT

- 5.0L 4V Ti-VCT V-8
- Shaker 500 Audio
- Voice Activated SYNC
- Ambient Lighting
- 6-speed manual - Base MSRP \$32,845
- 6-speed automatic - Base MSRP \$33,840
- Convertible, add \$5,000

## GT Spec 401A \$395

- Premium GT plus
- Charcoal Black Interior
- Color-accented seats
- Door trim with bright Pony badge
- Dark aluminum instrument panel

## GT Spec 402A \$1,995

- Premium GT plus
- Unique chrome billet grille
- Side scoops
- Unique leather seats with Carbon inserts
- Unique door panel carbon inserts (package not available in Kona Blue or Sterling Gray Metallic)

## BREMBO BRAKE PACKAGE \$1,695

## OTHER AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- Glass roof \$1,995
- Tape Stripe Delete
- 3.55 Rear Axle Ratio \$395
- HID Headlamps \$525
- Security Package \$395
- Premier Interior Trim with Color accent \$300
- Comfort Package \$595
- Electronics package \$2,340
- Rearview camera \$240
- Shaker 1000 Audio System \$1,295
- Side scoops \$112
- Hood scoop \$365
- Quarter Window Louvers \$112
- Pedestal Decklid Spoiler \$335
- GT Decklid Trim Panel \$225
- Side Window Deflectors \$59
- Wheel Lock Kit \$43
- Illuminated Front Door Sill \$207
- 18-inch 5-spoke chrome wheels \$1,848.57
- Satin Black or White Hood & Side stripes \$395





# ALUMINUM TRAILERS

- **Ultra Lightweight**  
Maximum fuel economy
- **Rust-Free Durability**  
Higher resale value
- **Detail Driven Design**  
For car enthusiasts



Canfield, OH  
Toll Free: 1-800-282-5042

[www.trailex.com](http://www.trailex.com)

## 3.7 V-6 SPECIFICATIONS

### BODY

- Unitized welded steel body
- Aluminum hood
- Final Assembly in Flat Rock, MI
- Curb weight:  
Manual: 3,453 (est.)  
Automatic: 3,473 (est.)
- Wheelbase: 107.1
- Seating Capacity: 4

### POWERTRAIN / CHASSIS

- Engine: 3.7L V-6
- Manufactured in Cleveland, Ohio
- Aluminum block and head
- DOHC 4 valves per cylinder, twin independent variable camshaft timing
- Horsepower: 305 @ 6,500 rpm
- Torque: 280 ft-lb. @ 4,250 rpm
- 82 Horsepower per liter
- Recommend fuel: Unleaded 87 octane
- 16 gallon fuel capacity
- Sequential multi-port fuel delivery
- Fuel Economy:  
• 6-speed automatic: 19 / 31 mpg  
• 6-speed manual: 19 / 29 mpg

### DRIVETRAIN

- Rear-wheel drive
- 6-speed manual transmission
- 6-speed automatic transmission
- 2.73 or 3.31 final drive ratio

### SUSPENSION / BRAKES

#### Suspension

- Front: Reverse-L independent MacPherson strut, 34.0 mm tubular stabilizer bar
- Rear: 3-link solid (limited slip) axle with coil springs and Panhard rod and 22.0 mm solid stabilizer bar

#### Brakes

- Type: Four-wheel power disc brakes with 4-sensor, 4 channel anti-lock braking system (ABS)
- Front: 316 (12.4-in.) x 30-mm vented disc, twin-piston 43-mm floating aluminum calipers
- Rear: 300 (11.8-in.) x 19-mm vented disc, single-piston 43-mm floating iron calipers

### STEERING

- Type: Rack-and-pinion with electric power assist
- Ratio: 15.7:1
- Turning circle curb to curb: 33.8 ft.

## 5.0 GT V-8 SPECIFICATIONS

### BODY

- Unitized welded steel body
- Aluminum hood
- Final Assembly in Flat Rock, MI
- Curb weight:  
Manual: 3,605 (est.)  
Automatic: 3,653 (est.)
- Wheelbase: 107.1
- Seating Capacity: 4

### POWERTRAIN / CHASSIS

- Engine: 5.0L 4V Ti-VCT V-8
- Manufactured in Windsor, Ontario
- Aluminum block and head
- DOHC 4 valves per cylinder, variable intake, variable camshaft timing
- Horsepower: 412 @ 6,500 rpm
- Torque: 390 ft-lb. @ 4,250 rpm
- 82.4 Horsepower per liter
- Recommend fuel: Unleaded 91 octane
- 16 gallon fuel capacity
- Sequential mechanical returnless
- Fuel Economy:  
• 6-speed automatic: 18 / 25 mpg  
• 6-speed manual: 17 / 26 mpg

### DRIVETRAIN

- Rear-wheel drive
- 6-speed manual transmission
- 6-speed automatic transmission
- 3.15 or 3.31 final drive ratio

### SUSPENSION / BRAKES

#### Suspension

- Front: Reverse-L independent MacPherson strut, 34.6 mm tubular stabilizer bar
- Rear: 3-link solid (limited slip) axle with coil springs and Panhard rod and 24.0 mm solid stabilizer bar

#### Brakes

- Type: Four-wheel power disc brakes with 4-sensor, 4 channel anti-lock braking system (ABS)
- Front: 336 (13.2-in.) x 36-mm vented disc, twin-piston 43-mm floating aluminum calipers
- Rear: 300 (11.8-in.) x 19-mm vented disc, single-piston 43-mm floating iron calipers

### STEERING

- Type: Rack-and-pinion with electric power assist
- Ratio: 15.8:1
- Turning circle curb to curb: 36.7 ft.