

ALFANATIC

4C Spider Ready for Release at the Detroit Auto Show?



Now that 4Cs are appearing at dealers across the U.S., Alfa is teasing us with its next release, appealing to well-heeled wind-in-the-hair aficionados. [This Video](#) shows two 4C Spiders, apparently in production trim, caught in the act of shooting advertising footage somewhere in Spain.

At the same time, various enthusiast sites are buzzing with speculation that the Spider will be introduced at the upcoming Detroit International Auto Show. This [FCA blog](#) appears to be the source of the rumors. The very last sentence reads: “You’ll get your next Alfa fix at the [North American International Auto Show](#) in Detroit in January.” This statement has been taken by many to mean that the production version of the 4C Spider will be shown

for the first time to Alfa-hungry U.S. enthusiasts. The Spider concept was introduced at last year’s Geneva show and the production versions seen in the video are said to be little-changed from the prototype but have the extra cooling vent low on the left side first seen on U.S.-delivered coupes.

If this speculation is true, it will only serve to increase the anxiety of Alfisti already frustrated by the high demand and low supply of 4C coupes in North America. Based on reports, most or all of the Launch Edition cars are spoken for and the supply of the “normal” model is still severely restricted by the slower-than-projected production ramp-up of the composite chassis. Adding an additional variant to the mix won’t help things on the production side. Demand for the 4C is strong worldwide, so every 4C you see on the streets here means one less will be hitting the streets elsewhere.

Still no Wisconsin 4C sightings

One locale that hasn’t seen a 4C on the road yet is Appleton, WI. Gary Schommer recently checked in with a sales consultant at Bergstrom Alfa. They reportedly have not seen a car yet and have no projected arrival date. Word has it that their car(s) have already been spoken for. We’d love to hear from any member or friend who has purchased a 4C. If you’re willing, we’d love to share your good news with the membership. 🍀

In This Issue

- 4C Spider on the Way?
- New Fall VSC Event
- The Events Calendar
- Alfa News
- Winter Driving
- Want Ads



New VSC Door County Fall Event Planned

Last month Gary Shommer was contacted by John Baker Welch of the Vintage Sports car Club. He outlined plans for a new VSC event planned for this coming September in Ephraim, Wisconsin. Inspired by our own Das Kurze Klausenrennen Hillclimb in New Glarus, the organizers have been working toward a weekend event in Ephraim, September 11, 12, & 13, 2015, which will include a tour, hill climb, dinner, and possible concours d'elegance.

They chose Ephraim, Wisconsin, for its character, old world charm, and the steep cliffs that shelter marvelous twisty, technically challenging, but relatively safe roads that linked together form a wonderful one-quarter to three-quarter mile hillclimb for pre-war and select post-war automobiles.

The VSC committee has obtained the support of the tourism board and local administrators and in January will be seeking the village's approval for a five-year

permit and other permissions needed to make the event a success. Those that have visited Door County know that there are ample lodging, recreational, shopping, and sightseeing opportunities for both participants and non-participants. The committee is planning complementary activities for spouses who may not be quite as interested in the hill climb and other car-related events.

We've added the event to our events calendar and will update you as plans progress. 🍀



2015 Local, Regional, and International Events Calendar

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| January 10-18 | Phoenix and Scottsdale Collector Car Auctions, Phoenix, AZ area |
| January 17-25 | Detroit International Auto Show, Cobo Hall, Detroit, MI |
| February 4-8 | Retromobile Salon, Paris, France |
| February 14-22 | Chicago Auto Show , McCormick Place, Chicago |
| February 21-March 1 | Greater Milwaukee Auto Show, Wisconsin Center |
| March 5-15 | 85th Annual International Motor Show, Geneva, Switzerland |
| March 13-15 | Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance , Amelia Island, FL |
| May 2 | AROC-Wisconsin, Das Kurze Klausenrennen , 27th Hillclimb and Tour, New Glarus, WI |
| May 2-3 | SCCA Majors Tour, Blackhawk Farms Raceway, S. Beloit, IL |
| May 15 | SVRA Spring Vintage Weekend, Road America |
| June 11-14 | SVRA Brickyard Vintage Racing International, Indianapolis, IN |
| June 11-14 | WeatherTech Chicago Region SCCA June Sprints, Road America |
| June 13-14 | The 24 Hours of LeMans |
| June 24 | 105th Anniversary of the founding of A.L.F.A. |
| June 24-28 | Alfamiglia Nordest, Alfa Romeo Owners Club National Convention, Rhode Island |
| June 26-28 | Pirelli World Challenge, Road America |
| July 10-11 | 21st Annual Millers at Milwaukee, Milwaukee Mile, West Allis, WI |
| July 12 | Indycar ABC Supply Wisconsin 250, Milwaukee Mile, West Allis, WI |
| July 16-19 | The Hawk with Brian Redman, Vintage Racing, Road America |
| July 24-26 | SVRA U.S. Vintage Grand Prix (& Alfas at the Gen), Watkins Glen, NY |
| August 2(t) | AROC-Wisconsin, Italian Car and Motorcycle Show , Milwaukee, WI |
| August 6-9 | Continental Tire Road Race Showcase, Road America |
| August 8 | Alfa Demo Day at Simeone Foundation Automotive Museum , Philadelphia, PA |
| August 16 | Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance, Monterey, CA |
| August 16-20 | Ferrari Club of America International Meet, Monterey, CA |
| August 27-29 | NASCAR XFINITY Series, SCCA Pro TransAm, Road America |
| August 22-23 | Milwaukee Masterpiece , Veterans Park, Milwaukee |
| September 11-13 | VSC Tour and Hillclimb, Ephraim, Wisconsin |
| September 18-20 | VSCDA Elkhart Lake Vintage Festival, Road America |

Three New Engines Readied for Giulia

European correspondent Luca Ciferri, reporting in [Automotive News Europe](#), says three new engines are being prepared for Alfa’s new D-segment sedan, to be released this coming June and available for sale in 2016. They include a hot, twin-turbo V-6, a cooking version 2 litre turbo four, and a turbo-diesel.

The six is based on the engine supplied by Ferrari for the Maserati Ghibli and Quattroporte. At 2.9 liters, it’s slightly smaller than the three-liter Maser engine and can produce up to 480 hp with direct injection and the twin-turbo setup.

The two-liter four will be the more mainstream engine of the line. Dubbed the “Global Medium Engine” it boasts Alfa’s MultiAir variable valve timing technology and will be available in outputs ranging from 180 to 330 hp.

The diesel will be of 2.2 liter displacement and produce 135 to 210 hp.

More new engines are in the works but it is anticipated that these three will be the ones earmarked for the new “Giulia.” ❄️

Alfa Development Mule Spotted in Winter Testing

Good news for Wisconsin Alfisti! The development mule for the new Alfa sports sedan is being tested in cold weather. If things go well, you’ll be able to drive your new Alfa year-round!

Spy shots posted December 8 on [Autoevolution.com](#) show the tipo 952 development mule testing in winter conditions (Sweden?) This looks like the same chopped Ghibli with makeshift interior that was captured testing in Italy in August. The article reiterates the notion that they will not be calling this car the Giulia, although other reporters still use the name. The engine used is said to be a Maserati-derived twin turbo V-6. Remember the Maserati bi-turbos of yore? Let’s hope that the technology has advanced considerably beyond those creations. ❄️



Tipo 952 mule found playing in the snow

Memories of Winters Long Past

I’ve been saving this feature, forwarded by Gary Shommer with pictures presumably from [TheOldMotor.com](#), since last winter. Now that we have snow on the ground, it seems like the right time to run it.

Before I complain the next time I get into that



car, I’ll try to remember what it was like for my grandparents and their contemporaries: ❄️





Another new Alfa in winter testing? Note the skis, front.



Can't be sure, but I think several of these shots were taken in Kenosha last winter.

Next Alfa Spider Won't Be a Mazda

Welcome to the new Fiat-Abarth 124 Spider(?)

Confirming earlier reports, Alfa's CEO Harald West-er stated in an [interview](#) published by *Car* magazine in its January, 2015, issue that the forthcoming Alfa Romeo Spider will not be a rebodied Mazda MX-5. Rather, it will be based on the new Giorgio chassis and developed in-house. Project Giorgio is the code-name for the Italians' new in-house rear-wheel drive architecture which will underpin most of Alfa Romeo's future models, including the new Giulia 159 replacement and now the new Spider as well.

This is consistent with earlier reports that the result of the Fiat-Mazda joint development project, launched in 2012, will now be badged as a Fiat or Abarth, complying with FCA chairman Marchionne's mandate that Alfas and Ferraris remain uniquely Italian.

Supporting this news was a piece posted on the [Car and Driver blog](#) just before Christmas, reporting that FCA had trademarked both "124" and "124 Spider."

The presumption is, of course, that the name will be used for the new Fiat or Abarth-badged Spider when it's introduced. We've already seen pictures of the 2016 Mazda, so can the Fiat variant be far behind?

What this news implies for Alfa Romeo is also significant. First, a Spider version of their D-segment offering is actually in the works and second, the fact that it's based on the Giorgio chassis might indicate that the result will more closely resemble a Maserati GranCabrio than it will the Duetto in your garage.



Nonetheless, whatever your roadster tastes, FCA appears to have you covered. For popular-priced sportiness there's the 124 Spider. Higher-end hardcore enthusiasts will have the 4C Spider, while Alfisti seeking an open-top grand touring experience will have the new Alfa Spider. 🍀

Message To Wisconsin Drivers: "GET OUT OF THE WAY!"

Faithful Alfista and sometimes European correspondent, Jim Huff, writes: Wisconsin drivers can be very annoying and love to sit and dawdle in the left (passing?) lane. They're getting slightly better but many still drive oblivious to the world. I've driven on the autobahns in Germany and in Italy and France, etc., but always had an International Drivers License from the AAA. Maybe they thought I went through a driver's exam. (I didn't.) Or maybe it was my NRA ID...

So You Thought You Could Drive...in Germany

By
Andrea Thomas [The Wall Street Journal](#)
Updated Dec. 9, 2014 12:17 a.m. ET

Berlin - If you're an American planning to live in Germany and hoping to let loose on the autobahn—where, more often than not, the speed limit is a car's horsepower—you'd better come from the right state.

A total of 28 U.S. states get the thumbs-up in Germany when it comes to obtaining a German license. All of them—including **Texas and Illinois**—have reciprocal agreements with Germa-

ny's transport ministry and the country's 16 state governments.

But if you come from a state where, in the view of Germany's state governments, Americans aren't used to daily congestion or don't learn to conduct a car safely under German-like weather conditions—you'll find yourself back in driving school.

"We have to make sure the holder of a foreign driver's license is capable of steering a vehicle under German traffic conditions," Germany's transport ministry says. "Besides, German owners of a driver's license must get granted the same treatment abroad."

Drivers from 11 U.S. states, including Florida or Connecticut, are exempted from the road test but must take a theory test to get a German license.

People with licenses from the remaining states—including New York—will be headed to driving school, where they must pass a theory and a practical test.

The theory test can be done in English. But schools advise booking at least four practical lessons before taking the driving test. And with costs for both tests together totaling about €500 (about \$640), not to mention other requirements such as providing an eyesight certificate and taking a first-aid course, earning a pass to the autobahn isn't cheap, fast, or easy.

About 29% of all applicants, including German residents, failed the theory exam in 2013 and 26% didn't pass the practical exam, according to government figures.

The Fahrschule Berlin Prenzlauer Berg, a driving school specializing in preparing English speakers for the German test, has about 100 pupils a year who take the theory or driving lessons, and about 30% of them come from the U.S.

"They find it a bit humiliating to have to go back to school after driving a car for 15 years or so," said Andreas Winter, an administrator at the school. "But we don't make the rules."

Dmitri Katz got his driver's license in California in 1989 and moved to Germany in 2002. Driving in Germany is very different from what he was used to. "In California, you talk defensive driving. You always assume that the other person will not follow the rules and you drive to be safe," said Mr. Katz. "In Germany, you drive according to who has right of way and if you hesitate, you cause accidents. It was a very hard thing for me to take the right of way without being sure that the other

person was slowing down." Americans are used to a limit of around 70 to 75 miles an hour (112 to 120 kilometers an hour). Big stretches of German highways, by contrast, have no speed limit. It isn't unusual for Germans in supercharged Porsches, BMWs, or Audis, to drive at 100 miles an hour or more and switch lanes. Laggards in the left lane can expect some rude honking. 🇩🇪

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One Driver's 4C Experience—One Month Later

Last month you read new owner Don Kalish's initial impressions of 4C ownership. This month, he's back after a month of ownership to recount his experiences. His [AlfaBB.com posting](#) has a number of close-up detail pictures that you might be interested in.

My update after a month of driving the car:

It is very low to the ground, far more so than any car I've owned in the past. This has required a new understanding of parking and of what I can and can't drive up and over. I learned the hard way on my driveway and after two major scraping incidents, where I ripped up the underside pretty bad (will share photos later) I now have a good understanding of what the clearance really is.

I get a lot of attention everywhere I go, which is fun. The car really perks people up and honestly I see a lot of smiles as people take in the fact they are witnessing a 4C up close. People take pictures, they ask questions, it's social and fun.

I find myself laughing *a lot* while driving, for no particular reason other than an upshift. The racing exhaust in Dynamic mode is pretty amusing to listen to—it's just over the top.

I have found myself "just going for a drive" for the first time in a long time. It's relaxing and de-stressing to drive this thing. It's hard to take the car too seriously since you feel like a 12-year-old in a supped up go-kart. The vehicle kind of rattles along with the road, you feel everything, and sporadically the car just does something on its own. The turbo will kick in or you just lightly touch the gas and it'll decide to change gears (in automatic mode), or the front wheels will catch a rut and just pull the car over somewhere outside of where you were planning on steering.

It just makes for a *driving* experience, as I've been trying to explain to my 16-year-old son. This is a *car* and you *drive* in it. It's brought me back and has been a return to the road, a return to feeling like you are really moving along at 70 mph and that going that fast should be exhilarating and exciting and loud and tiring, not quiet and smooth and predictable.

I personally blast the stereo everywhere I drive and find the combination of loud engine noises, road noise, and music to be quite pleasurable.

The steering wheel feels great, the leather and the shape

and the contours at the 10/2 positions really feel *right*.

The suspension is something else—hard to describe but with the manual steering and the suspension there's a magic that happens in a turn. You really have to drive one to get it, although I think those that have had old school manual steering cars in the past will get what I mean.

The single windshield wiper actually works really well (got stuck in the rain once so far). The molding and shape of the doors is quite something to behold and the sheer volume of carbon fiber throughout (I'm a bicycle rider and am used to carbon in small packages) is a joy. I mean there is a whole lot of carbon that went into this thing.

I have a very biased standpoint always having been an Alfa lover, but this car far exceeds anything I could have wished for in a new Alfa.

I'm a very happy Alfa owner. It's a fast, fun, absolutely gorgeous machine.

Ok, the complete lack of storage is a bummer, I was going to a New Year's Eve party and the "trunk" was completely filled by the car cover which I had to take with me, which left my passenger carrying flowers, champagne, and various types of food in her lap for an hour. But this is what makes for great stories, the "remember that time..." type stuff that comes from owning a greater than life and impractical automobile. 🍀



Hot Links

Have you seen the new Alfa 4C promotional video? If not, click here: [Video](#) (Caution - PG-13, might not be suitable for some work environments.)

ICAMS Featured in *Alfa Owner*

Don't miss member Bob Ludwigson's report on the 2014 ICAMS event, published in the last issue of *Alfa Owner* magazine. Kudos to Bob for taking the initiative to get this published. 🍀

Classifieds

Alfanatic will post brief non-commercial classifieds for members and friends at no charge. Email the [editors](#) to make a submission.

For Sale



1974 Alfa Romeo Spider

Sadly I must sell my everyday summer car. Runs super and looks great inside and out. Some work needed on lower panels. Personally owned 2 years. Previous owner also used daily in the summer for many years. 89,000 miles. Asking \$6,200.

Contact: Kristine Fauerbach, 1-608-877-0562, or kristine.fauerbach@gmail.com

1985 Corvette

Red/Red, 4+3, removable hard top. 51k miles and stored inside since new. All original. Body and interior in great shape. This car is move-in ready and is a nice ride. Blue Book value \$12,000.

Contact: Jim, 262-642-5068 or jzyla@wi.rr.com

Two Engines

1987 2.5l from a rusted out Milano. Approximately 90k. Make Offer.

1991 3.0l S motor. Approximately 200k. Make Offer. Steve Wirtz, West Bend, WI

262.306.8238 Home swirtz@charter.net

Parts - Make offer

Several Milano parts—Engine parts, oil pans, valve covers, heads, small interior parts, hood, and sunroof. Don't have a Milano so I don't need the parts.

1974 Spider Hood, Cowl, Doors, Transmission and interior parts. New Left rear quarter panel and lower nose pan.

Steve Wirtz, West Bend, WI

262.306.8238 Home swirtz@charter.net



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SUBMISSIONS

Do you have a story you'd like to share? Have a restoration in progress or finished? Taken a memorable road trip or have a funny car story? Pictures, lessons learned, maintenance tips? Whatever. The *Alfanatic* is always looking for material to publish. Email your submissions to the editor at rabhalter@att.net and share with your fellow Alfisti.

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