

Ferrari and California

60 Years of Shared History

On a list of dream California car experiences, driving an open Ferrari from LA to Monterey via the Pacific Coast Highway must rank at the top. But then, Ferrari is in the dream business, and the great state of California has long been at the heart of how it brings those dreams to life.

From the south's endless summers to the north's dramatic coastline, from snaking roads paved into popular culture to the historic road courses, California is synonymous with memorable automotive dreamscapes. The Golden State's unique auto-centric lifestyle has over the decades left its indelible imprint on cars made around the world. Ferrari is no exception, and the California model pays homage to that critical branch of its heritage.

The name "California" is of course enshrined in Ferrari lore, first appearing on the incomparable 250 GT California built between 1958 and 1963. The new California, though not meant to be a resurrection of that celebrated model, similarly wears its name in deference to the place that has been so crucial to Ferrari's ongoing success in America – and the world.

In the 1950s, Ferrari's U.S. distributors lobbied the factory to create an open car imbued with the highest-performance capability of its racing berlinettas. Especially in the Golden State, an "ultimate" sports car had to be open to the sun and wind. Ferrari, its designer Pininfarina and coachbuilder Scaglietti responded with the 250 GT California. Though just 100 of these landmark automobiles were built -- in two distinct series -- their impact on Ferrari, its clients and the entire sports car universe remains an enduring automotive legend.

The new California certainly embodies that spirit. Designed as an "everyday GT," the California harnesses the brand's best technology to render breathtaking performance – on road or track. In the California tradition, it is an open car, but one for the 21st century.

For its first-ever retractable hardtop model, Ferrari again turned to Pininfarina. The roof transforms the California from GT coupe to open GT in just 14 seconds, yet leaves enough trunk room for a weekend getaway to Monterey.

The events on the peninsula have come to represent the best in automotive tradition. Driving there in a Ferrari California is a reminder that Ferrari's allure and success are founded on transferring race car technology to road cars.

The new California is the first-ever Ferrari with a front/mid-mounted V8, and the driver can feel the benefits of the resulting balance on every curve of the PCH. The car summons its 453 horsepower to rocket from rest to 60 mph in about four seconds. On the track, a top speed of over 190 mph is possible. Technical details of its engine, seven-speed dual-clutch transmission, chassis, carbon-ceramic brakes and electronic dynamic controls reflect Ferrari's Formula One expertise and experience.

Driving a Ferrari California along the PCH to attend an event such as The Quail must now rank at the top of automotive paradise's car dream list. 📌

