

# Rides of the Year

Street-tested for your approval: the baddest road warriors of the year. Better start clearing some room in the garage.

2008



## Audi R8

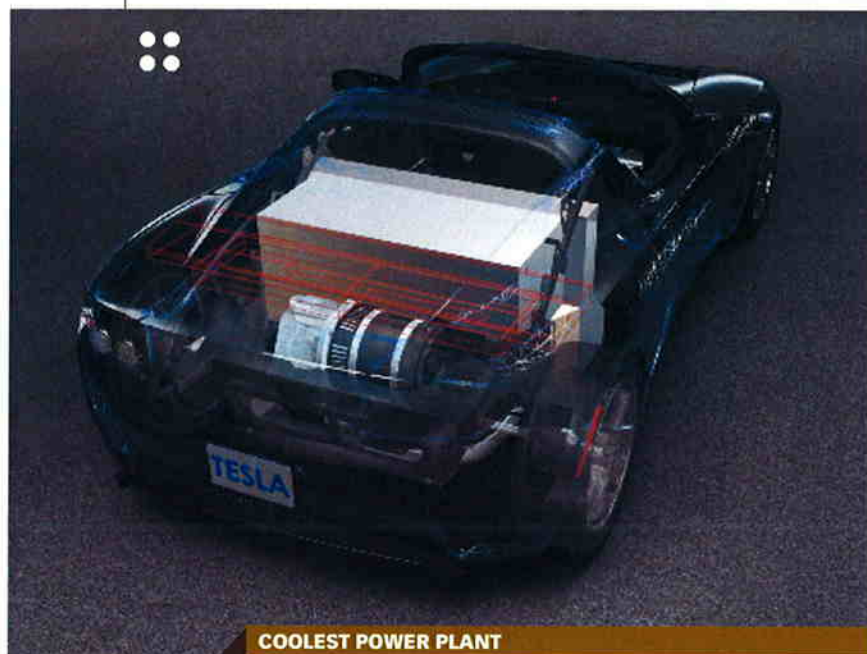
●● Hold on to your hat—and lunch—this bad beauty moves. The R8 shares some components with the Lamborghini Murciélago and manages to harness and control its powerful midmounted V-8 thanks to a smorgasbord of engineering feats: Quattro all-wheel drive, pinpoint stability control, an aluminum and magnesium space frame, and optional electromagnetic shocks that

respond to road conditions changing faster than Lance Briggs' alibi. The result is a car that can be comfortably sped to Sbarro on Saturday night and tossed around at the track on Sunday morning. The six-speed manual tranny offers a ballsy open gate with a small learning curve, while Audi's R tronic automatic eliminates the clutch pedal and gives drivers the option of an

aluminum shifter, wheel-mounted paddles, or an automatic shift-by-wire. Gauges are where they should be, and the interior's mix of brushed aluminum, leather, and carbon fiber make it feel like a spaceship on wheels. The defining design details, however, are the aesthetic sideblades behind the doors. Six figures to be able to say "sideblades" all the time? What a bargain.

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# The RPM Awards



## COOLEST POWER PLANT

01

**Tesla Roadster's 6,831 Lithium-Ion Batteries**  
Scads of ordinary laptop cells provide enough greased lightning to propel the Tesla from 0-60 in four seconds and have 250 miles' worth of staying power.



## MEANEST FACE

02

**Cadillac CTS**  
You lookin' at me, punk? It's hard to miss the aggressive front end of the new CTS. An oversize badge, stacked headlights, and a dual-textured grill up the intimidation.



## BEST LISTENER

03

**Ford Sync**  
We've always talked to our cars. Now Fords will start doing something about it, via a \$400 option that allows you to control your cell phone and music player by voice.

## BEST FLAIR

04



## Dodge Viper's Candy Colors

The folks at Mopar added five candy colors to the Viper's option list, turning this 600 hp "notice me" ride into a flaming plea for help. The violent new hues include Viper Violet and Snakeskin Green. Scary!



## BEST DESIGN DETAIL

05

## Mercedes-Benz CLK63 AMG Black Fenders

These bold and beautiful flared carbon-fiber fenders help keep rain, sun, and the jealous tears of fellow drivers from sully your supersticky 19-inch tires.



## TOUGHEST HYBRID

06

## GMC Yukon and Chevy Tahoe Hybrids

Prius didn't make your granola-fed knees weak? Check out GMC's burly new hybrid trucks, which split the work load between an electric motor in stop-and-go traffic and a V-8 combustion engine on the highway. It's not gonna save the world, but it will save 25 to 40 percent at the pump.

