

WALD HAS BEEN CATERING TO THE LUXURY LIFESTYLE FOR YEARS, THEY'VE RECENTLY BROKEN THROUGH THE PLATINUM AND DIAMOND ENCRUSTED CEILING AND STEPPED UP TO ITALIAN AND BRITISH SUPER CARS.



THE REAL JDM

Ultra VIP Tuning Is Born

The Real JDM is a monthly column written by Ben Schaffer of Bespoke Ventures. Bespoke Ventures operates a number of JDM related businesses including: Bulletproof Automotive, Top Secret III, Ings+1 USA, VARIS USA, HyperRev USA and C's USA. Visit www.bespokeventures.com for more information.

BY BEN SCHAFFER

IN THE WORLD'S metropolises, owning an exotic sports car doesn't provide the curb appeal as it does in smaller cities. For example, a night on the town cruising in a red Ferrari 360 Modena might make you a local legend if you're in Wyoming. On the other hand, if you're leaving a five star restaurant in Beverly Hills and the valet drives up with a red 360, you'd need to consider whether he's driving your Ferrari or someone else's.

In ultra posh locales there is an increasing desire for ultra VIP tuning and a declining level of exclusivity when driving a factory-spec exotic. Japan in particular has a number of thriving high class districts including the recently developed Roppongi Hills, where Louis Vuitton stores are larger than your local supermarket. In areas like Roppongi Hills, spotting a Ferrari is like spotting a Mercedes-Benz in any average American town, heads don't turn. It takes exclusivity to impress and when people don't stop and stare as you drive by, it's perhaps a sign that your exotic machine might not be as exotic as you once thought. In fact, exotics can occasionally become so commonplace that exotic car owners in Japan may become frustrated when trying to identify their car in parking lots filled with Ferraris, Bentleys and Lamborghinis.



Lucky for them, Japanese tuners have been developing a new level of ultra VIP tuning designed just for the affluent car enthusiast who demands a bespoke image for their exotic car. Tuners who have already made their mark in VIP and sports tuning have recently developed new offerings that aim to meet the standards of the most exclusive and demanding customers. With the help of Japan's top tuners, it may again be possible to revitalize the exotic nature of increasingly common super cars and perhaps even make some young females drop their Louis Vuitton bags in disbelief of what they've seen drive by them.

Wald may arguably be the Japanese market's originator of representing the affluent lifestyle. In fact, Wald is the only company that offers luxury yachts in the same catalog as their VIP car tuning parts. While Wald has been catering to the luxury lifestyle for years, they've recently broken through the platinum and diamond encrusted ceiling and stepped up to Italian and British super cars. Last year Wald introduced its aerodynamics package for the Lamborghini Murcielago and this year they've created an aero package for the Aston Martin DB9. By fueling such monumental aspirations as driving your Wald Murcielago to your Wald luxury yacht,

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Wald is doing its share to stimulate the economy by motivating business executives to put in the extra hours.

Fabulous is another luxury brand representing the growing VIP tuning scene in Japan. The insanely large 208 page Fabulous hardcover catalog can make you feel like a VIP just reading it. In the past, the Fabulous product lineup has ranged from the entry level Toyota Ist (Scion xA) to the amazing Mercedes SL. While they've made the extreme VIP styling available to a wide range of makes and models, the latest flagship

does not fit the typical VIP image. The Fabulous Ferrari 360 Modena represents its first entry into the exotic market. With body work in carbon fiber and a full titanium exhaust, the cost of entry into the exclusive Fabulous Ferrari customer base is quite prohibitive. The 360's aero parts alone cost over \$20,000, plus you'll need the Ferrari.

VeilSide, the originator of nearly every popular aerodynamic style over the past decade, has also entered the ultra VIP tuning market. At the Tokyo Auto Salon this year a new product line, the VeilSide Premier Collection,

was introduced. With solid carbon fiber aero products and titanium exhausts with 480 carat Swarovski crystal and onyx jeweled exhaust tips, VeilSide has gathered the most exotic of materials and mated them to the most exotic of automobiles. The Bentley Continental GT is a fine example of the more refined and tasteful side of VeilSide's occasionally wild and groundbreaking aerodynamic design.

While in the past it was extremely rare to see tuning parts for exotic cars produced outside of Europe, it seems that Japanese companies have finally entered the elite club of super car tuners. Although it is still far too early to tell whether these Japanese produced parts will be well-received in Europe, the home market of the exotic car manufacturers, they're already a hit in Japan.

North America is unfortunately still in an infantile state when it comes to ultra VIP tuning. While VIP tuning in Japan is extremely popular on a mainstream level, many of us stateside haven't even seen a glimpse of it yet. In a future column, we'll give a proper introduction into VIP tuning for luxury cars that won't require you to sell a loved one into slavery to afford it. You'll be surprised to find that Japanese VIP tuners have an eye on the US market and our cars. VIP classic cars like the Celsior and President are gaining foreign cousins like the Hummer H2 and Chrysler 300C. Whether riding in plush leather seats, riding in a race bucket strapped in by a harness with a crotch strap, or riding on the bus saving your quarters, The Real JDM will be here every month to inspire you and your motoring dreams.

Look for next month's The Real JDM as Ben brings more cutting-edge industry insider knowledge from Japan to Modified's pages. //

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