

# WIDE BODY TUNING PART 1

## Comprehensive Wide Body Aero Kits: Taking JGTC to the Streets



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](http://www.bespokeventures.com) for more information.

BY BEN SCHAFER

**BORN OUT OF** necessity and worshiped out of lust, wide body aero kits have a unique gift of being able to turn the average into the extraordinary. They are what separate the men from the boys, the super cars from the sports cars and the super models from the cute girl next door. Although the cute girl next door may be adored by some men, something astonishing happens when she gets breast implants, suddenly every guy takes notice. It is no coincidence that the same process occurs with another object of men's lust – cars. Although a nicely tuned sports car may draw looks and admiration from those that notice it, when it's modified with a wide body kit suddenly every street is a runway for the supermodel to strut its stuff.

It's a universally accepted fact that men enjoy big things. Whether it's a TV, a car, a yacht or a hamburger, men are somehow born with a gene that repeats the mantra 'bigger is better'. I wrote three months ago that "an anorexic car is sexy", but put an anorexic car with big curves in front of me and suddenly my vision

goes blurry and I find myself overwhelmed and completely engulfed with visual and conceptual perfection. The equivalent of a 36-24-36 supermodel manifested in sheet metal, or better yet, dry carbon. People around the globe share this passion and nowhere more so than Japan where the best automotive plastic surgeons continue to sculpt the most provocative automotive implants we've ever seen.

Some say that the most menacing view of a Lamborghini is from behind. As wide as a Hummer and with tires so wide that Verne Troyer can successfully hide inside one, Lambos ooze sex appeal and power reserved only for cars over \$200,000. Yet if you install a comprehensive wide body kit to your more moderately-priced Japanese sports car you'll often find that it can achieve nearly the same levels of respect and admiration at both the valet of the hottest night club and the pits of the fastest racing circuit. Whether you have a 350Z, G35 Coupe, Supra, S2000, RX-7, or even a MR-S, with the right plastic surgery, you can enter the elite club of super cars while

cheating the cover charge.

Before we get too hung up on the glamour that super car looks bring, we must remember that wide body kits are created to serve a functional purpose. A Lamborghini is wide because it is the only way to fit impossibly wide wheels on a street driven car. The wheels of course are there to provide traction to the 400+ horses that most wide-bodied cars pummel the pavement with. The appeal of a wide body car is as equally attributed to dimensional impact as it is to the underlying reason for why it exists in the first place – to house a brutally fast machine.

A \$30,000 car with a wide body kit can never become a super car with aero parts alone. Without the performance to back up the visual and functional statement, a wide body converted car would be sure to let down any admirer it managed to trick, much like a woman who pads her bra with two boxes worth of tissues. Additionally, installing oversized tires to fill the newly swelled fenders can lead to slower and less satisfying driving if you don't have enough power to need them.



DRIVING A GT CAR ON THE STREET IS USUALLY THE HIGHEST ASPIRATION THAT ANY STREET TUNER COULD DREAM OF.

Building a \$30,000 car into a proper super car is no easy or inexpensive accomplishment. As an increasing number of wide body aero kits get released each year, it continues to be apparent that the main source of inspiration is the JGTC race series (which in 2005 was re-branded as "Super GT"). With Super GT backed by millions of R&D dollars, aerodynamic breakthroughs are continually pioneered in wind tunnels and street tuners are always watching closely to recognize effective new developments with aims to adopt the technology to the fastest street driven vehicles. For example, on many wide body kits you can see a great similarity to the current GT front fender designs. Only recently did GT cars begin using front fenders that come to a sharp triangular point on the upper rearward corner. During the past year Nismo

and M Speed have released that same front fender design for street driven BNR34 Skyline GT-Rs. Years earlier GT cars began using front fenders that stayed wide towards the rear and featured open vents, rather than smoothing back into the body in front of the door. That fender design is still highly popular with wide body kits produced by everyone from Amuse to Top Secret to Varis to Marga Hills.

With Super GT representing the peak level of tuning based on Japanese produced sports cars, driving a GT car on the street is usually the highest aspiration that any street tuner could dream of. Although there is no way to legalize a Super GT car for street use, the inspiration for most wide body aero kits is to recreate as much of the GT magic as possible on a road legal vehicle.

Top Secret made their intent perfectly clear when they named their JZA80 Supra wide body kit the GT300 after JGTC's GT300 class. Their demo street legal Supra used the wide body with a 3SGTE 4 cylinder engine transplanted and mounted far rearward in the engine bay, creating room for a large "V" mount intercooler up front. The 3SGTE engine is the same engine used in the GT300 JGTC Supra. The Top Secret Supra GT300 wide body is identical in width to the GT Supra down to the last millimeter, measuring in at 1910mm.

Complete wide body aero kits represent the pinnacle of visual and performance aerodynamic tuning. They are designed as a comprehensive system to completely transform a car into something new, leaving few if any body panels behind. Due to the cost of producing these kits and the low sales volumes, retail costs typically start at \$5,000 and go to beyond \$50,000 in some cases. To properly build a wide body car the performance should equally match the body work, a challenge that often will usually cost more than the wide body conversion itself. Surely not everybody has the funding to build their 350Z into a McLaren F1 equivalent so next month we'll continue with this topic, but we'll steer it in a new direction that illustrates alternatives in function, design, style and price.

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

### GT WIDE BODY KIT RESOURCE PRICE

MANUFACTURER	APPLICATIONS	WEB SITE	PRICE RANGE
Curve AD	FD35, JZA80, Z32, Z33	<a href="http://www.curve-ad.com">www.curve-ad.com</a>	\$4,000+
Top Secret	CPV35, G35, JZA80 Supra, Z33 350Z	<a href="http://www.topsecretjpn.com">www.topsecretjpn.com</a>	\$6,000 - \$8,250
Amuse	AP1 S2000	<a href="http://www.webamuse.co.jp">www.webamuse.co.jp</a>	\$6,000
ASM	AP1 S2000	<a href="http://www.autobacs-asm.com">www.autobacs-asm.com</a>	\$50,000
Monocraft	ZZW30 MR-S	<a href="http://www.ab-carsshow.com">www.ab-carsshow.com</a>	\$5,000
VARIS	ZZW30 MR-S	<a href="http://www.varisusa.com">www.varisusa.com</a>	\$5,400-\$9,750
VeilSide	CPU35, FD35, JZA80, NA1, ZZW30	<a href="http://www.veilside.com">www.veilside.com</a>	\$4,000-\$15,000
Tamon Design	FD35 RX-7	<a href="http://www.tamondesign.com">www.tamondesign.com</a>	\$18,000