

The Practical Prancer

Catching eyes in Carmel with the Ferrari GTC4Lusso T



It's a chilly morning in Carmel Valley, and the dew on the grass glimmers like frost. I take it slow down the mile-long driveway at Carmel Valley Ranch, figuring that by the time I meet the main road, the turbocharged 601-horsepower V8 in my Ferrari GTC4Lusso T should be just on the verge of proper operating temperature.

An autophile magnet thanks to the nearby 17-Mile Drive and the Laguna Seca raceway, Carmel is no stranger to machines from Maranello. But judging by the expressions of wonderment, the GTC4Lusso T has the locals particularly smitten. It's the rarest of automotive creatures: a shooting brake. A rakish two-door four-seater with a station-wagon-like back, Ferrari's take on the genre is proof that in the hands of Italian artisans, even practicality can be seductive.

The name Lusso alludes to a striking 1960s Ferrari, the 250 GT Lusso, a grand tourer engineered for passenger comfort and outright performance in equal measure. Particularly appealing were that car's exquisitely supple ride and bright, airy interior—qualities

virtually unheard of in sports cars of the era. Echoing its predecessor, the GTC4Lusso T neutralizes bumps in the road with fluid ease, owing to an ultra-sophisticated magnetorheological damping system. A panoramic glass roof, meanwhile, floods the spacious cabin with sunlight, minus the harmful rays.

And then there's speed, for which I have just the road in mind—a switchbacked strip of

The Ferrari GTC4Lusso T is the world's sleekest station wagon

heaven whose coordinates are strictly confidential. Transmission set to manual, I go all in. The acceleration is explosive, monstrous, delicious; the soundtrack a mad harmonic howl. Where my inner pragmatist has disappeared to, I'm not quite sure. Belted into a rear bucket seat, perhaps? Or better yet, stowed in the trunk alongside an Italian leather duffel and two cases of Carmel Valley cabernet.

The Essentials

The Car

- Ferrari GTC4Lusso T, \$256,000

The Resort

- Fresh off a \$20 million renovation, the 500-acre **Carmel Valley Ranch** offers unrivaled peace and tranquility, breathtaking valley views, and unique encounters with the outdoors, from organic garden tours and beekeeping lessons to horseback rides in the oak- and chaparral-covered hills. Few luxuries compare to Spa Aiyana's massage therapies, which the resort enhances with herbs from its own garden. carmelvalleyranch.com

The Restaurant

- In the intimate dining room at Carmel-by-the-Sea's **Aubergine**, chef Justin Cogley explains the recipe for his Monterey Bay Dungeness crab dish: "The broth is made from the body, fennel, and brown butter. It's very simple." Simple, maybe, for a

three-time James Beard Award nominee. Cogley's ingredients are the finest available; his technique elevates them to another level. auberginecarmel.com

The Luggage

- Olga Berluti invented Venezia leather, using a natural and mineral tanning process to produce incredibly supple hides. Handmade in Ferrara, Italy, the **Berluti Jour-Off Leather Travel Bag** (\$3,750), in vivid indigo, is the ideal size for a quick getaway. Its ultra-fashionable looks are perfectly at home in the trunk of the sexiest shooting brake ever made. berluti.com

