

GT500 REBORN AS A MODERN THOROUGHbred: SHELBY, SVT CREATE MOST POWERFUL MUSTANG EVER

- "Mustang Dream Team" of Carroll Shelby and Ford SVT develop a worthy successor to the legendary Shelby GT500 of the late '60s
- Shelby Cobra GT500 has modern performance credentials: 450-plus-hp, supercharged V-8, 6-speed manual transmission, SVT-tuned suspension
- SVT functional features with Shelby design flare - LeMans racing stripes, aerodynamic enhancements and 19-inch wheels with cross-drilled brake rotors
- The driving zone - red leather seat and door trim, titanium-faced gauges

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The most powerful factory-built Ford Mustang in history takes to the street next year, following a unique collaboration between performance car legend Carroll Shelby and the Ford Special Vehicle Team (SVT).

Ford took the wraps off the 450-plus-horsepower Ford Shelby Cobra GT500 show car at the New York International Auto Show March 23. Designed in the unmistakable image of Shelby Mustangs of the 1960s, the Shelby Cobra GT500 melds SVT's modern engineering with the big-block performance that made the original GT500 the king of the road.

"The all-new 2005 Ford Mustang is one of the hottest cars in many years," says Phil Martens, Ford group vice president, Product Creation. "Its chassis was engineered from the beginning to be the basis of a high-performance, world-class sports car from SVT, and the Shelby Cobra GT500 is it."

Carroll Shelby lends his support to SVT, adapting his earlier role as a senior advisor on the "Dream Team" that was assembled to develop and build the 2005 Ford GT. "I've worked with the SVT guys for several years now, and I know they have the guts, the talent and the passion to deliver the best performance Mustangs ever," says Shelby.

A production version of the GT500 will go on sale in 2006, continuing the high-performance lineage of the SVT Mustang Cobra model line. It will be followed by a steady stream of performance products developed by SVT, including Ford Sport Trac Adrenalin, the industry's first performance sport-utility truck, in 2007.

"SVT led the modern-day factory performance trend with the Mustang Cobra and the industry's first high-performance truck, the F-150 Lightning," says Hau Thai-Tang, director, Ford Advanced Product Creation and SVT. "Today, we're building on that pioneering vision with vehicles like the Ford GT, Shelby Cobra GT500 and Sport Trac Adrenalin - great performance machines that connect with enthusiasts in a way no other companies or vehicles can match."

The production GT500 will be the first in a string of specialty Mustangs that SVT will help deliver. This will create Ford Motor Company's - and one of the industry's - broadest product portfolios, stretching from under \$20,000 for the V-6 Mustang coupe to the 450-plus-horsepower GT500, each offering performance and value.

The GT500 and the production-intent Sport Trac Adrenalin teaser accelerate the wave of momentum at SVT since the launch of the 2005 Ford GT supercar. SVT also now will develop non-SVT branded Ford Division performance vehicles - including heritage-based performance Mustangs in the spirit of the 2001 Bullitt GT and 2003 Mach 1 - as it becomes more directly integrated into Ford's mainstream product development process.

Shelby Cobra GT500's supercharged 5.4-liter DOHC V-8 produces over 450-plus horsepower

Just as the original Shelby GT500 was the "step up" to big-block power from the GT350, the new Ford Shelby Cobra GT500 steps up to Ford's 5.4-liter "MOD" V-8. The result? The GT500 is the most powerful factory Mustang ever. Its supercharged 5.4-liter, 32-valve V-8 evolves from SVT's experience with supercharging the "MOD" engine to deliver more than 450 horsepower and 450 foot pounds of torque.

The cast-iron-block, four-valve engine is force-fed an air-and-fuel mixture via a screw-type supercharger at 8.5 pounds per square inch of boost. Aluminum cylinder heads, piston rings and bearings sourced from the Ford GT program bring a high level of proven durability to the drivetrain, while upgraded cooling components promise longevity. "Powered by SVT" camshaft covers are the finishing touch to the engine.

"This version of the 5.4-liter V-8 has a higher horsepower rating than any other factory Mustang in history," says Jay O'Connell, SVT chief vehicle engineer. "It really delivers on the essence of two great names in Ford performance - a mix of SVT's modern-day experience with supercharging and the Shelby GT500's heritage of big-block power."

The engine has been further tuned from its first application in a Mustang, the 2000 SVT Mustang Cobra R, a limited edition model of 300 units.

Helping to put the power of the GT500's supercharged V-8 to the pavement is a T-56 six-speed manual gearbox. The evenly spaced gears mean less stirring is needed to find the "sweet spot" in keeping the revs "on cam" for power to pass, while at the same time making the most of the engine's broad torque curve. The heavy-duty transmission has proven itself a willing companion to V-8 power in Mustangs in both road and track environments, including the 2000 SVT Mustang Cobra R, 2004 SVT Mustang Cobra and the new race-winning Ford Racing Mustang FR500C.

Great power requires great control

The great Shelby Mustangs of the 1960s were anything but one-trick ponies. They earned their stripes on twisty roads and race tracks across America and Europe. The Shelby Cobra GT500 show car continues that legacy of all-around performance.

The GT500 starts with the solid 2005 Mustang underpinnings. The all-new Mustang's platform was designed from the beginning with performance derivatives in mind, providing an exceptionally rigid, well-engineered starting point for SVT chassis engineers.

Using real-world experience gained during more than 12 years of building great-handling SVT Mustang Cobras, SVT engineers retune and upgrade key chassis components. Improvements such as revised shocks, spring rates and upgraded stabilizer bars help the GT500 stop and turn with the same authority as it goes.

The GT500 features a MacPherson strut independent front suspension with "Reverse L" lower control arms, and a solid-axle, three-link rear suspension with coil springs and a Panhard rod for precise control of the rear axle.

This rear suspension design has been validated on the track by Ford Racing. The race-prepared Ford Racing Mustang FR500C was purpose-built from the base 2005 Mustang body structure and suspension geometry to run in the Grand-Am Cup series, a class of road racing for production-based cars. Competing against the best from Germany and Japan, a Mustang FR500C competed in and won its first ever race in the season-opener at Daytona International Speedway in February 2005.

"SVT and Ford Racing will be working closer than ever as we go forward on future projects, especially Mustangs," says Thai-Tang, a Ford Racing alumnus who served as the race engineer for the Newman-Haas Racing team in 1993. "The Mustang FR500C racing program is an exact

demonstration of the capability we engineered into the mainstream Mustang to be capable of. Now, we have both a Daytona victory and the return of the Shelby Cobra GT500 to showcase Mustang performance possibilities."

To match this power and handling ability, SVT fitted some of the biggest brakes in the business to the GT500. Fourteen-inch cross-drilled Brembo rotors up front and 13-inch discs in the rear continue SVT's legacy of great-braking Mustangs. Secure footing is provided by 19-inch wheels wrapped in high-performance tires.

The snake is back - Legendary looks with SVT function

The Shelby Cobra GT500 combines the dramatic design genes of the all-new Mustang with Carroll Shelby's legendary performance image to create an SVT Mustang that broadens the power brand's design approach and appeal.

"The restrained, performance-oriented SVT design theme has become instantly recognizable to enthusiasts without brash styling cues," says Doug Gaffka, design director, Ford SVT vehicles.. "The GT500 takes a huge leap forward by combining the modern Mustang muscle car with the classic Shelby performance look to expand SVT's reach to a much bigger audience."

The 2005 Mustang design team drew inspiration from classic 1968 Mustangs, the models that transformed the mild-mannered pony car into a muscle car with attitude. Envisioning an SVT model, the team tested GT500 design cues on the Mustang GT coupe concept that was unveiled at the 2003 North American International Auto Show. In 2004, designers further developed the GT500 look on the Mustang GT-R, a race-bred concept with the dual purpose of foreshadowing SVT's Mustang design direction and Ford Racing's plans to return Mustang to road racing.

The GT500 now comes into full light, punctuated by the classic Le Mans-style white stripes that race along the top of the show car's "SVT Red" paint from nose to tail. The stripes recall the Shelby Mustangs that marked another important 1960's Mustang transition when Ford put it on the track to becoming a racing legend. The GT500 nomenclature is prominent in the lower bodyside racing stripe, another cue from the classic Shelby Mustangs.

"The new Mustang has classic design cues from some of the best-looking Mustangs of all-time, including the Shelbys," says Keith Rogman, Ford senior designer. "The design of the GT500 has been at the forefront of our minds since the outset of the entire Mustang program."

The Shelby design elements alone are enough to tell the GT500 story but are not the only visual cues that set this Mustang apart. The reworked front fascia features a functional air splitter and the unique hood has heat-extraction ducts, combining to provide improved airflow and aerodynamics. Revised headlamp insets offer a more aggressive look and result in symmetrical upper and lower grilles with large air openings, creating a visual connection to vintage Shelby Mustangs.

The unique rear fascia features strakes inspired by the Ford GT's integrated rear airflow diffuser, and a rear spoiler reminiscent of a classic GT500. To mark the collaboration of two Mustang performance icons, the GT500 features Shelby and SVT badging.

Continuing the snake logo tradition of past-generation SVT Mustang Cobras, as well as late-model Shelby Mustangs, the fenders each feature an updated design of the Cobra. For the first time on any SVT Mustang, the front grille features an off-center snake in place of the standard running horse. "GT500" is emblazoned inside the side rocker stripes, and the name "SHELBY" is prominently featured across the rear deck. The SVT logo can be seen on the wheel center caps, a signature SVT location, as well as on the doorsill plates. To top it off, the "gas cap" medallion between the taillights reads "Shelby GT500" centered on the Cobra image.

The interior is completely wrapped in ebony black leather, including the top of the dash, door panels and center arm rest. Also wrapped in ebony leather are the shift lever, shift boot and parking-brake handle. SVT Red leather seating surfaces and door panel inserts provide a marked contrast to the rest of the leather-trimmed cabin, surrounding the performance enthusiast with luxury and comfort. Snake logos embroidered into the seat backs finish the package.

"We've taken leather design trends to a new level by using it on almost every exposed surface in the GT500," says Rogman. "Leather has long been a performance fashion accessory for enthusiasts, from jackets to racing gloves, so it perfectly matches all the other driving oriented cues."

The Shelby GT500 script and Cobra image are repeated on the steering wheel cap. Behind the wheel are titanium-faced gauges swapped in location so that the tachometer is dominant visually for the driver. The chrome accessories inside the cabin have been replaced with a satin aluminum finish, including the aluminum shift lever knob that is nicely positioned for quick, positive shifts of the six-speed transmission.

SVT and Shelby: The Legends Grow

With the look and legend one would expect from Carroll Shelby and the kind of power and performance enthusiasts have come to expect from SVT, the GT500 show car points to a brand new era in Ford Motor Company's performance future.

"Carroll Shelby is truly a living automotive legend, a Ford performance legend," says Martens. "It's a dream come true to be able to put the Shelby name on a Mustang again."

Carroll Shelby first put his name on a Mustang back in 1964 when he was asked to inject some high performance into the brand-new pony car. The result was the GT-350R, a lightweight, handling-focused race car that earned the Mustang its first performance credentials. Subsequent Shelby Mustangs included a street version of the race car, the GT-350, and what was known as the "rent-a-racer" Mustang, the GT-350H, a joint project with the Hertz rental car corporation.

The ultimate Shelby Mustang of the era was the GT-500KR, or "King of the Road." Powered by a big block 428-cubic inch "Cobra Jet" V-8, the GT-500 was one of the most powerful, and memorable, muscle cars of that period. Shelby Mustang production ceased in 1970 with a total volume of 14,559 units.

The Ford Special Vehicle Team brought performance back to Mustang in 1993. After 12 years and with nearly 80,000 high-performance Mustangs on the streets, and a total SVT vehicle production nearing 145,000 vehicles, SVT is primed for growth with the GT500 serving as the foundation for other performance Mustang projects.

By bringing together Carroll Shelby and Ford SVT, the company's commitment to performance becomes as powerful as at any time in its history - including the famed "Total Performance" days of the 1960s. From the Ford GT supercar, the GT500, to a rejuvenated Ford Racing Performance Parts program - performance and racing adds luster to its proud brand heritage.

"SVT has been and will remain the leader in performance vehicle engineering and marketing," says Martens. "SVT remains unique in offering the total performance experience. The return of Carroll Shelby to our performance family only strengthens our firepower."

About Ford Motor Company

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