

Dry Lips?



If you have dry lips or sore lips, you need Blistex, the medicated ointment in the tube. Blistex soothes and softens cracked, chapped lips, no matter what makes your lips that way! It's also great to help heal fever blisters and cold sores. **Blistex—The lip soother**

SUNBURN? BURNS?

Soothe your sunburn pain, as well as burns, minor cuts, abrasions and nonpoisonous insect bites with Foille First Aid Spray. Also available in ointment. It gives you fast, soothing relief from pain, itching and discomfort. Helps heal and prevent infection, too!



Foille—The burn soother
From the makers of Blistex, Oak Brook, IL 60521

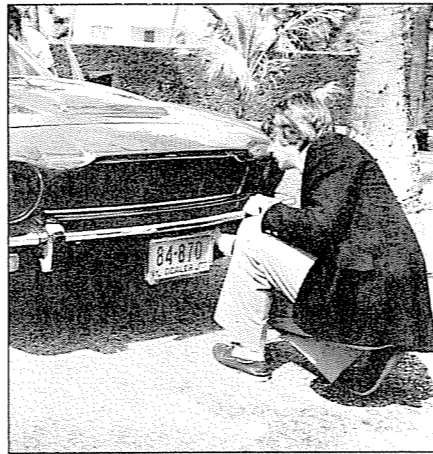
going to look touring around with a set of bleeding shins in a car that doesn't have room for a clean change of clothes. Which raises the point that if you have an automobile with no legroom, no trunk room, and not much room of any other kind, why is it fifteen feet long and six feet wide? Also, why does it weigh 5000 pounds?

By now you're probably wondering how you open the hood. It took three of us an hour to locate the hood release (flush-mounted on the post between the hinges of the right-hand door).

There are also a huge number of electric doohickeys, all made by Lucas, and they work about as well as you'd expect. After two days the courtesy lights, electric mirrors, and cigarette lighter had quit. The fuel warning lights wouldn't go off, and the horn didn't work. The car is hard to start in the morning. The radio reception is lousy. And the tape deck runs at the wrong speed. The electric windows are the world's slowest, and the convertible-top motor is not strong enough to lower the top without help. The top itself is all leather, which must have seemed like a nice, luxurious touch at the time, but if you leave it in the sun with the windows rolled up, the interior begins to smell like your wallet. And the leather and its lining fold about as well as a mattress and make a wall of cowhide tall enough to block your rear vision. And the carpet sheds little balls of fluff. And the catalytic converters create a great heat sink that wells up around the sides of the car. Hot enough to fry your shirtsleeve to your skin if you rest your elbow on the windowsill, which you can't do anyway because the windows don't fully retract.

I could go on, but it seems unfair. After all, they're only building 80 of these a year, so you can't expect them to get all the bugs out right away. And they aren't being built by a real car company either, with vast staffs of ergonomics experts on tap. The way Aston Martins are built is sort of like having someone make you a Duesenberg from scratch in his garage. That's why they have aluminum bodies. God knows it's not for the weight savings. It's just that aluminum is easier to pound into shape with a big wooden hammer. And each engine is custom-built by one engine maker who affixes a plaque with his name on it to the right cam cover. Bob Butler made the engine on the Volante I tested, and

he made it somewhat out of tune. But I appreciate the personal touch, just the same. Besides, these details don't matter. If you're paying \$70,000 for an automobile, you obviously don't have the sense God gave seafood, so you're not



going to care about this stuff. What you want to hear is, what's this car like? How does it drive? How does it handle? How's it feel when you put your foot in the good place and all that horsepower goes rifling down the driveshaft and the winding road comes flying at you like a homicidal snake?

Frankly, I have no idea.

I would like to, right now, become the first honest person ever to write an exotic car road test. I do not know whether the Aston Martin Volante "shows a sudden tendency to spectacular oversteer at the limits of adhesion," or "bites into apexes with alacrity when pushed through the esses at full throttle," or "steers through the high-speed sweeps with menacing but authoritative twitches of response," or any of the rest of that crap you read in car magazines. I don't know because the thing costs \$70,000. They've only made 80 of them. They made me sign my life away when I picked it up at the dealership. And Mrs. O'Rourke didn't raise any fools. How long do you think it would be before David E. Davis invited me to another cross-country econobox-and-cocktail-capacity test if I dumped this set of wheels in a ditch? How would you like to explain to some car dealer's lawyer how you got the phone-pole-shaped customizing sculpted into the trunk lid and hood of this cream puff? How'd you like to inform the Ziff-Davis Publishing Company that it just bought \$70,000 worth of burgundy freezer wrap from some guy in Palm Beach? I don't have

any idea how the Volante handles at the speed of sound, because I drove it as though it had a trunk full of live baby girls. So would you.

It had to be one of the great uneventful road tests of all time. Not that I didn't enjoy myself. Photographer Tom Corcoran and I flew to Palm Beach for a weekend and went to stay with our friends Terry and Guy de La Valdene. They have a pool and lots and lots of delicious mixed drinks. In fact, Friday night was fabulous, and we didn't even have the car yet. In the morning we took our rented Pontiac down to Taylor Rolls-Royce to pick up the Volante. Taylor is a combined Rolls-Royce/Aston Martin/Volvo dealership. I don't know what the Volvos are for in Palm Beach. The servants, I guess. It's nice to have servants with sensible cars. Anyway, they wanted all kinds of identification from me, and I had to sign a long note about how perfect the car was when I got it. I was so overawed by the scene in general, the Taylor Rolls dealership specifically, and the incredible splendor and size of the Volante even more specifically, that I decided we'd better keep the Pontiac. We called it our "drunk car." For the next two days we cruised around until nine p.m. or so, super-cool behind the wheel of the Aston Martin, and then, as soon as we started to drink seriously, we'd jump into the LeMans, which we could back into anything we wanted to.

But even when you're sober and have a trunk load of baby girls, the Volante drives nicely. The immense weight gives an impression of positive road feel almost as if the thing were being pulled down into the pavement or as if there were a white magnetized Scottie dog under the table somewhere. I haven't driven anything with this much traction since I spent a summer vacation as a brakeman on the New York Central. But there's no sacrifice in nimbleness, or nimblity, or whatever you call it. The rack-and-pinion power steering is the best I've ever had my hands on. It was a dream around town. And when Tom and I took off for a little fast run out to the Palm Beach polo field, we thought . . . well, we thought we were about the coolest things in pants east of Aspen. But we also thought the power steering worked great.

And I have no doubt that this car will travel faster than rumors of adultery. I

Continued

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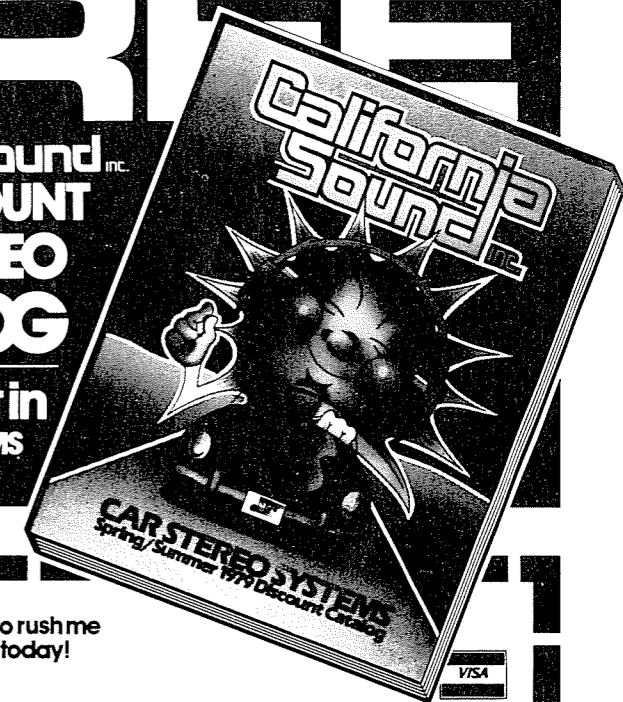
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