

A TORINO LOVE AFFAIR

By David Claveloux

Back in 1971, Ford offered many products bearing the Blue Oval. Just think - Pintos, Mustangs, Thunderbirds, Galaxy 500s, Torinos – Ford had something for most every taste and budget. This grand strategy has been at work ever since the Iacocca era, and it has helped maintain Ford's leadership in the automobile industry.

In March of 1971, Ford introduced a vinyl-roof option for the Torino 500. These specials were referred to as "Halo Torinos." They were produced from March to May of 1971 to stimulate the buying public's springtime urges.

"Halo Torinos" are identified by unique trim codes and colors. The "Halo" is identified by a 65C model code and came in only three color / trim codes code combination:

Paint Code

Trim Code

- 9 Peppermint Metallic 1R Green with lime accent
- 5 Medium Brown Metallic..... 1F Ginger with yellow accent
- V Light Pewter Metallic..... 1A Black with red accent

Actual numbers of 1971 Torino 500s produced during this limited production period as reported by Marti Auto Works shows a total of 32,900 cars manufactured as follows:

- 14,587 Medium Brown Metallic
- 9,492 Peppermint Metallic
- 8,821 Light Pewter Metallic

Upon graduating from college in June, 1971, my wife and I bought a new Medium Brown "Halo Torino." We loved that car, but over time, the demands of a growing family (four children, finally) took priority. Thus, the sporty Torino was sacrificed on the altar of practicality.

After a couple of decades, with the kids now through college, we began looking for an old car, one that could evoke special memories. The Torino was the first brand new car bought after college, and it was a perfect symbol of those happy days.

In October 2010, we located a 1971 "Halo Torino" very similar to our old car. It had the same Select Shift transmission and two spoke steering wheel. Beneath the hood was a 302 cubic inch V-8 rated at 210 horsepower. Optional equipment included color keyed sport mirrors along with power-assisted front disc brakes and power steering. The car rolled on a 117 inch wheelbase supported by Magnum 500 wheels.

This particular Torino was sold new in California. Later, the owner and his Ford moved to Iowa. And that's where we found it for sale. Negotiations began and detailed photos of the car along

with a video revealed it had received a thorough and correct restoration. Initially, I was going to meet with the owner in Iowa. Instead, a contract was made and car was bought sight unseen. On arrival, there were no disappointments. Since then, we have thoroughly enjoyed our endless trip down memory lane.

COMMENTARY
By Steve White

Ford's Torino line appeared just about the time EPA was first flexing its muscles. Although the basic engine configurations remained pretty much the same for the nine-year run - from 1968 to 1976 - there was a serious decline in torque and rated horsepower over this period. Fortunately, Dave's car arrived before the most debilitating effects were felt.

As Dave notes, his 1971 302 was rated at 210 horsepower at 4600 rpm. Just a year later, in 1972, this same configuration was drastically reduced to 140 horsepower at 4000 rpm, a loss of a third of its power.

It took years for engineers to cope with the standards and for manufacturers to once again offer performance to the car-buying public. We have the computer to thank for that.





