



Baby Bull By Brice Cooper

Italian supercars of the past are generally associated with outrageous price tags and finicky performance. A lot of these disparaging thoughts were bred out of the frustration that their owners shared, due to the high cost of a more than frequent service schedule.

This, however, has changed in the case of the automaker with the raging bull mascot. In recent years, Lamborghini was bought out by Audi (cough, cough) Volkswagen. Yes, *Volkswagen*, the company that brought you a car dubbed *the Beetle* with a less than modest 50hp motor, has contributed the successful launch of the Lamborghini Murciélago's 500hp little brother: the Gallardo.

The 2005 Gallardo is everything a true supercar should be, at about half the price. However, price does not denote a lack of quality in this baby bull. The exterior of the Gallardo has a striking presence that's nowhere near as garish as some past Lambos. There's a distinct emphasis on being smooth,

yet edgy, in the design of this all-aluminum beauty. Everything about the Gallardo is focused around perfection. The fit and finish of the body panels are superb. The wheel wells are tastefully filled with enormous rims and tires that not only look impressive, but also perform like none other.

When you approach the exterior of the Gallardo, you'll notice that the trademark gullwing doors that Lamborghini is famous for are lacking on this V-10 monster. That's because Lamborghini reserves this privilege for its V-12 "flagship" models. At around 3,300 lbs and a whopping 500hp with full-time all-wheel drive, the Gallardo is no slouch. Neither is the price. The Gallardo retails for around \$170,000, which is still a steal compared to the \$300,000 price tags of the other models in Lamborghini's stable.

Some regard the Gallardo as an entry level exotic; this could not be further from the truth. With Audi as a major contributor in design and functionality, the Gallardo is reliable

enough to be considered a daily driver for those who have the dough. Yes, I said *daily driver*. Whereas Ferraris need to have their timing belts replaced every 15k miles, the Gallardo's V-10 utilizes a timing chain that may even outlast you. Blown clutch? No problem. Just slip off the rear clip of the car and Bam! there's the heart of the beast ready to be serviced. The Gallardo requires about as much service as any high performance vehicle on the road today. Notice that I didn't say exotic. This relatively low cost maintenance schedule is only one of the contributing factors that have helped catapult the Gallardo into supercar stardom in just three short years.

Another impressive feature of the Gallardo is the phenomenal fit and finish of the car's interior. The dashboard, as well as the console and seats, are finished in top grain leather. With the optional suede headliner package installed, this Lambo makes you feel right at home in luxury, without making you feel like you're on a cattle ranch. At nearly