

Muscle Tuner Automotive Builds a Tribute to the Historic AE86 for Toyota's SEMA Display

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PLANO, Texas, Oct. 30, 2018 — Appearing at Toyota’s **2018 Specialty Equipment Market Association (SEMA) Show** display, Muscle Tuner Automotive built a custom 2019 Corolla Hatchback as a tribute to the historic AE86 Corolla GT-S. It is one of two specialty vehicles modified by noted Latino builders.

“Corolla is globally the most popular car in history,” said Ed Laukes, Group Vice President – Toyota Division Marketing. “Its heritage makes it a car that’s near and dear to fans of Toyota and automotive enthusiasts all over the world.”

Selected as one of the builders for this year’s Battle of the Shops, Los Angeles car builder Alex Molina founded Muscle Tuner Automotive to express everything he loves about cars.

“We’re true enthusiasts who grew up loving and working on cars from a very young age,” Molina said. “With this build we wanted to pay homage to the AE86 Corolla GT-S. We wanted to keep the look clean, but also serious and race-inspired, and we wanted to bring its handling and acceleration in line with that of a true sports car.”

AE86 was the last of the rear-wheel-drive Corollas and remains an elusive, sought-after platform for compact performance enthusiasts. This modified 2019 Corolla Hatchback incorporates visual cues such as the black side stripe and white-on-black front-bumper lettering found on the original.

The engine has been modified with a custom 3-inch cold-air intake with a ram-air funnel, and a straight-pipe exhaust system fabricated at the Muscle Tuner Auto shop. The Corolla Hatchback’s four-cylinder engine power output has been further boosted with a Nitrous Express main line wet nitrous oxide system.

The car’s underpinnings include a prototype performance suspension from RS-R Japan, an early development coilover system that is one of only a handful in existence. Featherweight Rays Engineering “Gram Light” Model 57 wheels and Bridgestone RE-71R performance tires connect it to the road.

To accent and enhance the exterior of the Hatchback, one-off aerodynamic components were crafted from aluminum, including the front splitter, side splitters, canards, fins, and a rear diffuser. It is wrapped in flat battleship-gray vinyl and the throwback Corolla AE86 graphics.

The Muscle Tuner Automotive Corolla Hatchback—along with other Toyota specialty vehicles—can be found in the Toyota display booth (#24800) in Central Hall and on the Patio Annex of the Las Vegas Convention Center, October 30 – November 2, 2018.