

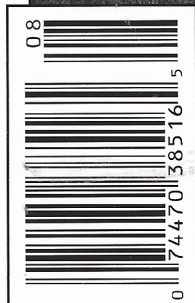
# Collectible AUTOMOBILE

## The Cars of 1956: Golden Oldies

1974-78 Chrysler and Imperial: Changing of the Guard  
1982-92 Chevrolet Camaro • 1972-76 Jensen-Healey and GT

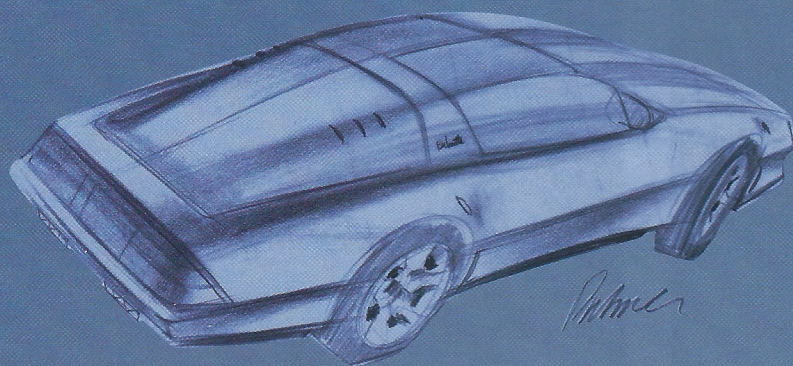


Photo Feature Bonus! *Three Great Cars:*  
*'35 Fiat, '39 Ford, and '69 Shelby*



1956 Mercury Montclair Convertible Coupe





# 1982-92 Chevrolet Camaro: The Will to Survive

by Gary Witzenburg

**Amid late-Seventies doubts about the prospects for the “ponycar” market in general, Chevrolet began planning for a new generation of its Camaro. The car it came up with proved to be tougher than the odds.**





As a fresh decade dawned in 1970, little did anyone know how truly awful it would be for the American automobile. By the time Chevrolet's beautiful new second-generation Camaro "ponycar" hit the streets to thunderous applause that spring, the country was heading into a deep recession that curtailed its sales. That autumn brought a costly 10-week UAW strike against General Motors that delayed launches of '71 models long enough that archrival Ford outsold Chevrolet by more than 140,000 cars for the calendar year.

Meanwhile, the political war on the automobile was gaining momentum. Federal safety and emissions requirements ratcheted up dramatically for '71 models, the latter leading GM to cut compression ratios of its engines across the board so they could burn the low-octane unleaded fuel required by catalytic converters that were in the offing. (At the same time, the corporation began rating powerplants with lower, more-realistic net horsepower figures.) New damage-resistance standards for '73 put big bumpers on every car sold in America. Next, an economically disastrous embargo

by oil exporters touched off by Middle East conflict caused months of fuel shortages and kick-started a migration of American buyers from homebuilt cars to smaller, more fuel-efficient imports. The following year brought a national 55-mph speed limit naively intended to save both lives and fuel. Then, in 1975, came federal fuel-economy mandates in an ill-considered form called Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE).

As then-*Car and Driver* Technical Editor Pat Bedard put it, "My heart was still pounding from the mid-1970 Chevrolet Camaro Z28 and Pontiac Firebird Trans Am . . . when the whole car thing got sideways and spun off into deep gloom. Horsepower went away in 1971 as compression ratios plummeted in anticipation of no-lead gas. The first energy crisis hit in 1973, which some wise guys in Washington tried to fix with a 55-mph speed limit. By 1974, we couldn't drive cars and we couldn't stand to look at them either, because the big-bumper mandate had made them so ugly."

There was some good news for Camaro buried deep in all this gloom and doom in that Ford went from big,

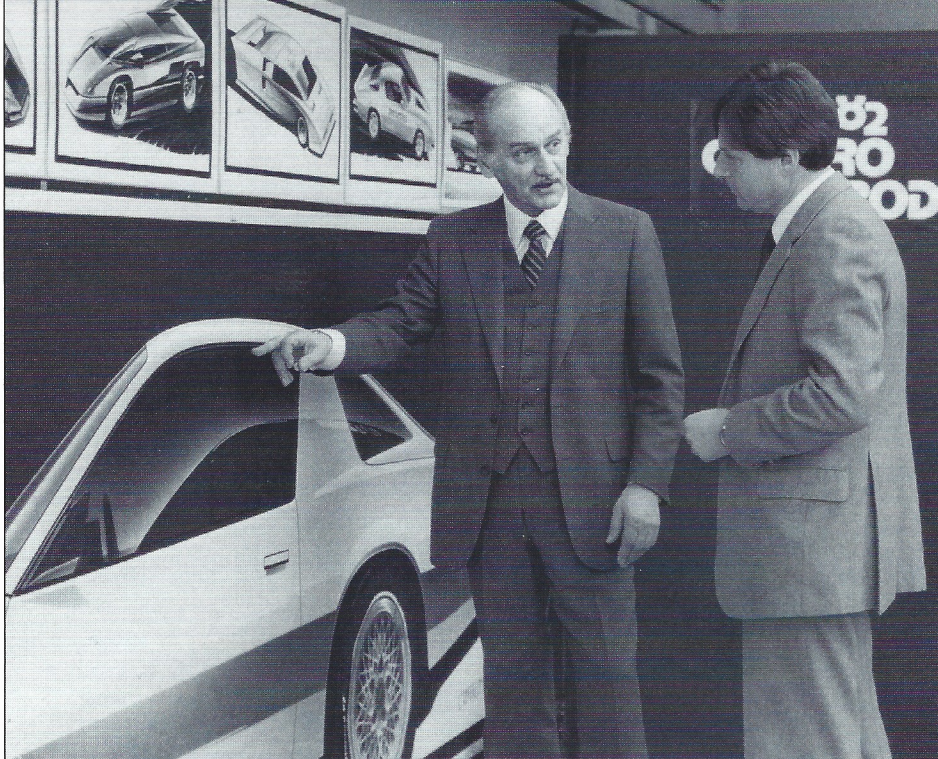
bloated Mustangs in 1971-73 (CA, April 2004) to tinny, tiny Pinto-based Mustang IIs in 1974-78. Other rival ponycars—Mercury Cougar (CA, April 1986), Plymouth Barracuda (CA, December 1987), Dodge Challenger (CA, January 1985), and AMC Javelin (CA, October 1987)—dropped out as the market for American sporty coupes substantially shrank. By contrast, Camaro (CA, February 1992) got better and more refined each year and, as a result, regained momentum from a dismal 69,000 cars produced for model year '72 sales to more than 282,000 in '79.

Given the sagging fortunes of American ponycars in general during the Seventies, it's a wonder that GM persevered to design and develop a brand-new Camaro. The evolution of a new Camaro/Firebird "F-car" design, originally intended as a 1980 model, began early in 1975 in Bill Porter's Advanced Studio and

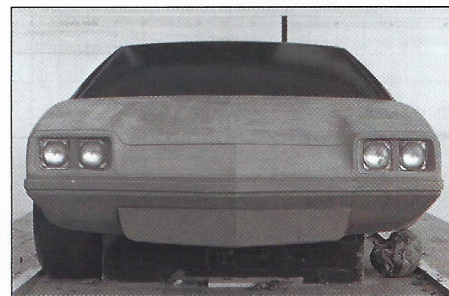
An undated Jerry Palmer sketch (opposite) captures many of the elements of the third-generation Chevrolet Camaro that finally made it to market after some delay for the 1982 model year. By 1986, the wedge-shaped Camaro was enjoying consistently strong sales and a muscular image thanks to the likes of the IROC-Z (below).







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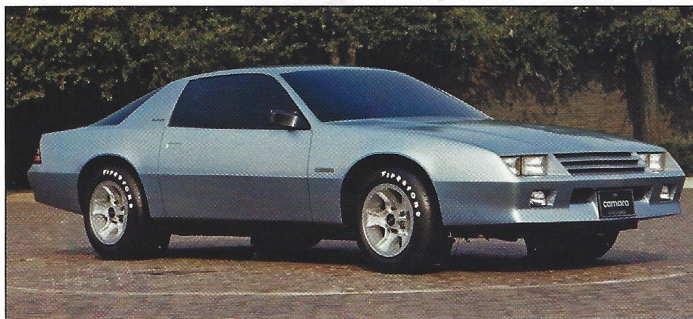
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Jerry Palmer's Chevrolet Studio. Believe it or not, they were seen at first as front-drive sporty coupes spun off the new compact X-cars being developed for the '80 model year—logical, considering that space- and fuel-efficient front-wheel drive was the industry's direction at the time, and the F-cars had always been derivatives of compact family cars.

By March 1977, the initial designs were nearly ready for release, but production plans had been moved back to 1981. Then GM Design Vice President Bill Mitchell (CA, June 2004) retired, replaced on August 1 by Irv Rybicki, who made a

review of every ongoing program. Among other things, he ordered a Camaro/Firebird redirection. As a result, in January 1978, Porter's studio was ordered to start again on the third-generation F-cars, which were now scheduled as '82 models.

"[Porter] had an assistant . . . by the name of Roger Hugnet [who] turned out an illustration," Rybicki recalled around the time of the car's introduction. "We took one look at it and . . . said, 'Do it in scale.' Then we tried it full-size, and it was a success from the very beginning. We didn't think we could get there

because this car is considerably shorter and narrower, has better seating in back, a hatch, and fold-down rear seats. And we've got one design feature on it that no one else has ever done. We take the backlight glass and form it into a compound curve in two directions, and then it flows right into the sheetmetal surfaces. There is a deck, but you never quite see the break."

By May, Palmer's Chevrolet studio was back into the project. "At that time," he said, "it was back to rear-wheel drive. The package had been settled, the wheelbase and the interior dimensions. We had





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1. General Motors styling chief Irv Rybicki (left) and Chevrolet Studio head Jerry Palmer discuss the third-generation Camaro's design development, circa 1978. 2. A styling model (right) compared to a current Camaro in July '78. 3, 4. Raised pockets for round headlamps gave way to rectangular lamps that fit under the hoodline. 5. Competing ideas for rear-fascia graphics were worked out on halves of the same mock-up. 6, 7. A prominent above-bumper grille was under consideration in August 1978. 8. A 1982 Z28, Camaro's performance leader, with its second-generation predecessor. The new car's wheelbase was seven inches shorter. 9. The Berlinetta, with a standard V-6, appealed to comfort and luxury buyers. 10, 11. A Z28 was tabbed to pace the '82 Indianapolis 500.

all the dots to connect now, and the more we got into it, the better it got . . . and we were fighting for a 'faster' windshield, a 62-degree windshield. By July, we had a pretty serious model . . . and we were pretty proud of it."

Creation of the new F-car interiors began in fall 1977, shortly after Rybicki took over as styling chief, in a new concept interior studio under John Shettler. "We started to study the Lear business jets and the Concorde, which have tremendous aerodynamics," Shettler recalled. "Their windshields are pushed down almost flat, and they have these big

hoods over the instruments to cut down glare and reflections. We decided to get the feel of those hoods, to bring the controls, and the gauges, and all the parts that might reflect in the windshield pulled back toward the driver."

Camaro chief engineer Tom Zimmer's group had begun formulating the next-generation's engineering concept late in 1976. "In gross terms," he recalled, "the objectives were to significantly reduce the weight of the car; try to keep the seating for the front passengers essentially unchanged; improve, or at least maintain, the rear seating; significantly

improve the luggage capacity; maintain a specialty-car character, high-styled with a sporty image; and improve the fuel economy. We felt we knew going in what the mission of this car ought to be. It ought to be an extremely good-handling car. . . . [W]e used benchmarks like the Lotus Esprit and the Porsche 924."

In June 1977, the new F-car became a GM corporate Engineering Staff project led by project manager Bob Knickerbocker. "We started in a very preliminary way putting together the various proposals that would produce a 1982 car in the Camaro and Firebird image," he related.



"At that time, we examined the many options that were available: front-wheel drive, rear-wheel drive, two-passenger cars, four-passenger cars, different powertrains, and different concepts of fuel economy and performance. As it turned out, the concept was a rear-wheel-drive car with a significant spectrum of powertrains that would provide good fuel economy on one end and reasonable performance, but with improved fuel economy over 1981, on the other . . . [and] a four-passenger car, because the rear seat in an F-car is still a very usable thing, even though it's been bad-mouthed by a lot of people in the past."

Added Zimmer, "In spite of the obvious trend to front-wheel drive, when we aligned our priorities and looked at the customer and the market we were trying to serve, the facilities, the packaging, the mass, the fuel economy, and all those things, and looked at what kind of physical arrangement would produce the kind of car we wanted, we said we wanted to make it rear-wheel drive."

The all-new third-generation 1982 Camaro debuted with great fanfare to an excitement-starved American market. In Z28 form, it graced the covers of nearly every auto magazine, paced that year's Indianapolis 500, and was named "Car of the Year" by *Motor Trend*. "Our engineers are excited by what they were able to accomplish with the 1982 Camaro," then-Chevrolet Chief Engineer Paul King enthused. "We've made the best better."

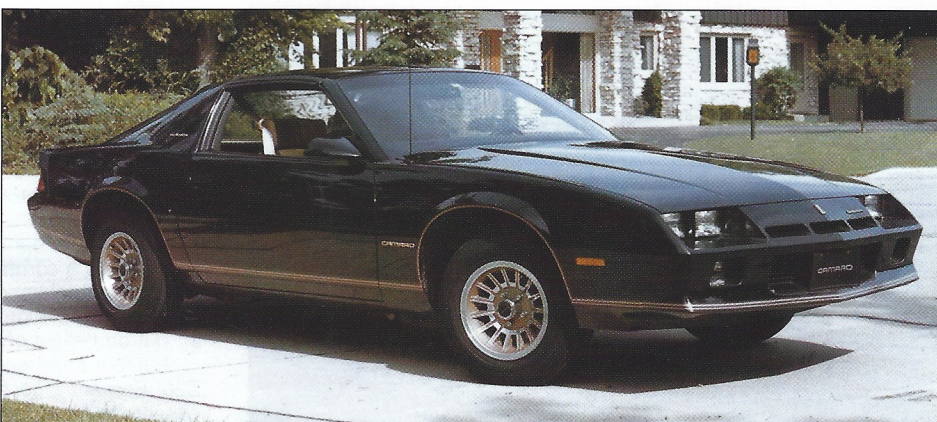
For the first time, a four-cylinder engine—a 2.5-liter throttle-body fuel-injected unit rated at 90 bhp—powered the base sport coupe. Chevy said that, when coupled to the standard four-speed manual transmission, the inline four performed about as well as the larger, heav-



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ier base V-6 that powered the '81 Camaro while delivering 20 percent better fuel economy. Optional engines were a 102-bhp 2.8-liter two-barrel-carbureted V-6 and a 145-horse 5.0-liter four-barrel V-8. These last two powerplants were standard in the cushy Berlinetta and racy Z28 models, respectively. Outside of California, where emissions standards were more stringent, Z28 buyers hungrier for more go could select a throttle-body "Cross-Fire Injection" version of the 305-cid small-block V-8 rated at 165 bhp and available (at first) with automatic transmission only. The other three engines could be teamed with either a four-speed manual or a three-speed automatic transmission.

Though smaller and lighter than its predecessor (wheelbase was shorter by

seven inches and overall length was cut by almost 10 inches), this new unibody Camaro lost little in interior room. The compound S-curve glass rear hatch provided easy cargo access, and a new advanced bumper design used honeycomb composite energy absorbers backed by high-strength steel or aluminum (depending on equipment levels) impact bars front and rear. The Z28 sported a front air dam integrated with flared rocker panels and a sheet-molded plastic hood with computer-controlled fresh-air intakes for the Cross-Fire V-8.

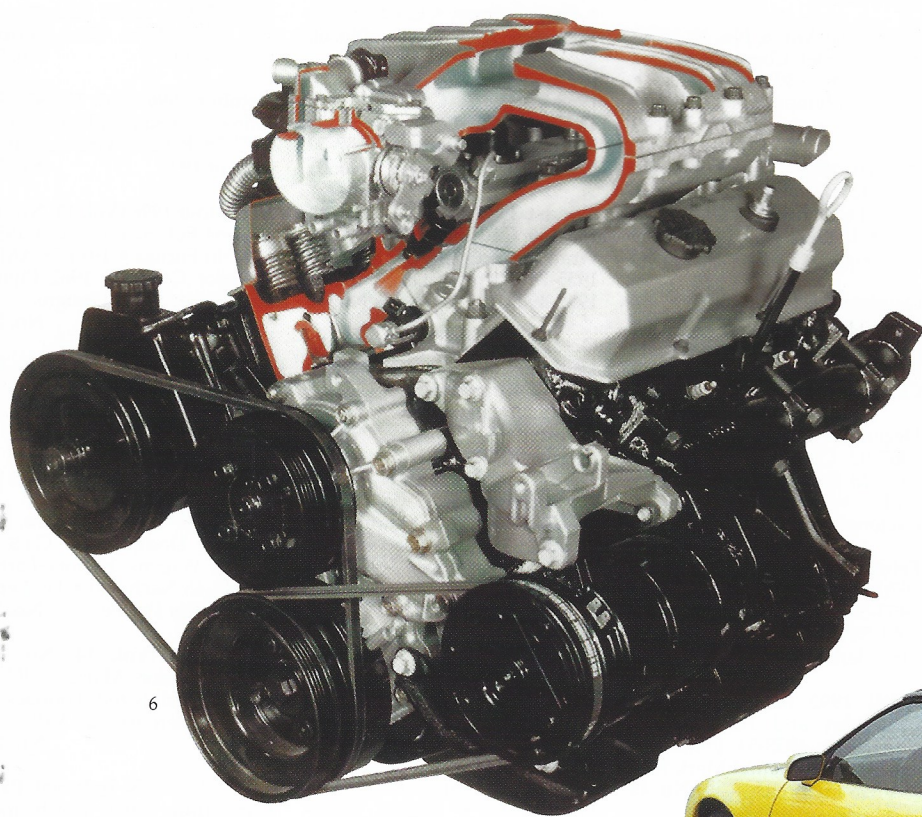
Inside, a standard center console contained the glovebox (the cutaway instrument panel design left no room for one in the dash), plus radio and climate controls, and a parking brake lever. The rear seatback folded down to expand cargo

capacity, and a terrific "Conteur" driver's seat with six separate adjustments—including thigh and lumbar supports—was optional in the Z28.

The new front suspension used MacPherson struts in place of the previous upper control arms and conventional shock absorbers, while coil springs replaced the old leaf springs in a new torque-arm arrangement in back and a track bar provided good lateral axle control. Though the new body was 2.7 inches narrower, the front tread was a mere half-inch less while the rear tread was up to an inch and a half wider than in '81. The base sport coupe rolled on fiberglass-belted tires around 14×6 steel wheels, the Berlinetta got steel-belted radials on 14×7 gold-toned aluminum wheels, and the Z28 wore Goodyear Eagle GT performance radials on 15×7 five-spoke cast-aluminum wheels. Front disc brakes were standard; four-wheel discs were available for cars with V-8s.

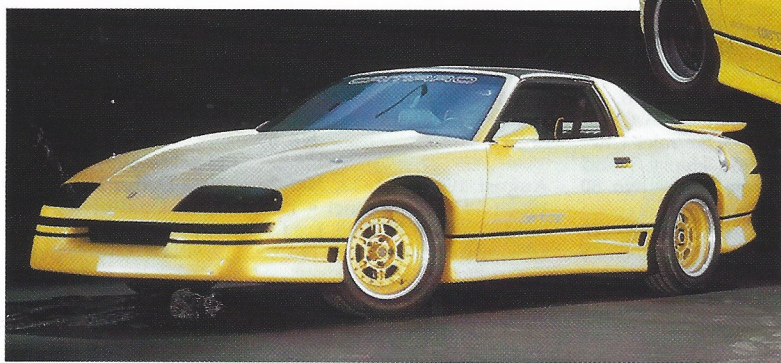
Magazine reviews, most focusing on the Z28, were highly enthusiastic. While some complained that the Cross-Fire engine didn't quite get the performance job done, especially with no available manual transmission, all praised its

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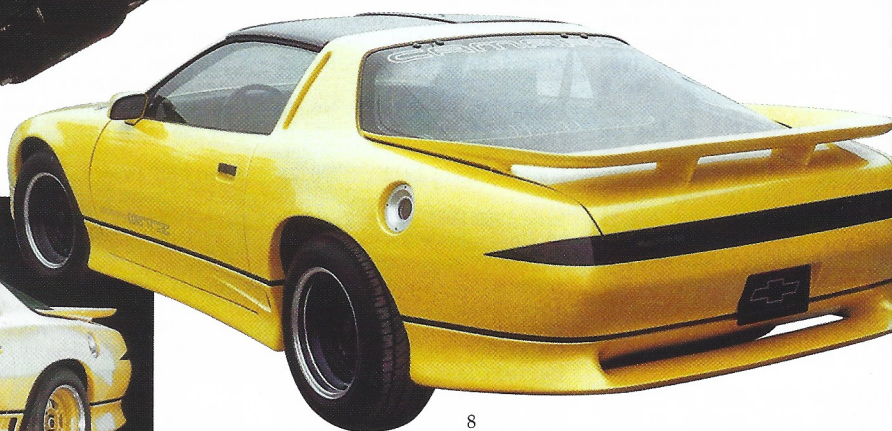


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1. Powertrain upgrades were the key changes to the 1983 Z28. 2. Third-generation Camaro demand peaked in 1984, a year in which Z28 production topped 100,000 cars. (Owner: Wayne Thuenemann) 3-5. The '84 Berlinetta got interior improvements that included an overhead console—even in cars equipped with the optional T-top removable roof panels. 6. A new version of the 5.0-liter V-8 with tuned-port fuel injection, good for 215 bhp, became the top Z28 engine offering in 1985. 7, 8. The '85 Camaro GTZ concept car tipped off F-body styling updates.



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styling and handling. "Initial one-word reviews . . . ran the gamut from 'Wow!' and 'Hot!' to 'Brillante!,'" wrote *Motor Trend's* Tony Swan. "And based on this [January 1982] preview test, we're willing to call this piece—as well as its upstream sister at Pontiac—the best-handling car made in this country." Swan deemed the interior "tasteful, appealing," then summed up: "This new Z28 may not possess the sheer light-the-tires thrust of some of its predecessors from the age of big-block excess, but for our money it's better in every other measurement you'd care to name."

"It's lighter, it's smaller. Gas mileage is much improved. The new Z28 has superb seats and some of the stickiest tires money can buy. The handling is a take-home Bondurant course," wrote *Car and Driver's* Don Sherman. "The body is so gorgeous, grown men will blush." Though Sherman raked the Z28's "crude" three-speed automatic, "lame" 5000-rpm redline, and "measly" 165 horsepower, his instrumented tests yielded 0-60-mph acceleration of 7.9 seconds, fairly respectable for 1982.

Your author was also duly impressed by the new Z28 (and its Pontiac Trans Am sister ship) when reporting on the F-cars in the February 1982 issue of *Popular Mechanics*. "We can tell you categorically that these cars are nothing short of phe-



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nomenal in cornering power and overall handling . . . and the standard suspension setups allow the other new Camaros and Firebirds to acquit themselves surprisingly well, too," I wrote. "If you want heart-stopping handling, enough power to spin the rear wheels at will, and looks that will stop nubile young things in their tracks, look no further."

The Z28 handily won the *Motor Trend* Car of the Year Award over an 11-car

field that *MT* called its finest ever. "It's a bold move, committing to an all-new performance machine when everyone else is thinking economy," the article said. "The new Camaro boasts what is likely the most carefully developed 'handling' chassis ever issued by Detroit, as well as daring sheet metal. The Z28 is the hardcore Camaro, offering proper suspension, 4-wheel discs, big tires and quick steering. Recaro-like support comes from

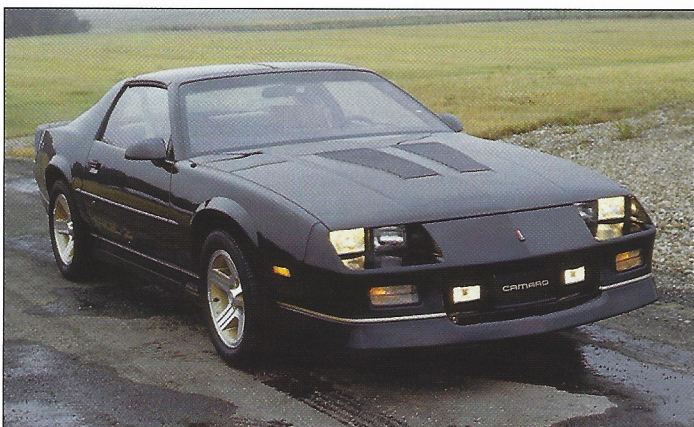




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1, 2. A new RS model combining the aerodynamic add-ons of the Z28 and alloy wheels with the base V-6 powerplant was introduced in certain markets for 1987. The intent was to provide an aggressive-looking car that was affordable to insure. 3. Almost 50,000 customers selected the Z28 with the International Race of Champions-inspired IROC-Z package in 1986. Only the two most-powerful Z28 engines were available with IROC-Zs. 4. In mid 1987, Chevy added convertibles to the Camaro line, with conversion work done by American Specialty Company. They were the first factory-authorized Camaro ragtops since '69. 5. With the "standard" Z28 cut, IROC-Z was the performance Camaro in 1988. Power options ran to a 230-bhp 5.7-liter V-8. 6. The RS continued with restricted market availability in 1988.

the excellent new Contour driver's seat." It was the favorite of five of the six judges. "If you're making up your personal shopping list of great road cars and you don't have a Z28 or Trans Am on it, you need a new list," Swan opined. "The Camaro is simply the best American road car ever built," added Jim Hall. "When one car can meld supreme roadworthiness, dramatic styling and contemporary engineering in an exciting package that sells for \$10,000, it deserves unique recognition," the story concluded.

The following year brought new transmissions: a five-speed manual optional in the base Camaro, but standard on Z28 and Berlinetta; and a four-speed overdrive automatic available for all V-8-powered cars. Horsepower was nudged up in all '83 Camaro engines. Late in the model year, a 190-bhp high-output four-barrel V-8 with a hotter cam and higher com-

pression replaced the Cross-Fire engine as a Z28 option. A flashy "tri-tone" interior with the optional Contour seat was another new extra-cost item for Z28s.

The Berlinetta moved upmarket for '84 with a "space-age" instrument panel with digital speedometer, vertical-bar tachometer, and adjustable control pods that brought key controls (lights and turn signals on the left, wipers and climate on the right) within fingertip reach of the steering wheel. An electronic stereo radio swiveled on a pedestal extending from the floor console, while a first-ever overhead console (optional on all other Camaros) contained the dome light, a map light, a storage pouch, and even a flashlight—batteries included.

"The Berlinetta is intended to be the 'mature' Camaro," wrote *Motor Trend's* Jim Hall in a May 1984 review, "hence Chevy's engineers have smoothed out the

F-car suspension. . . . The soft ride has been tuned to keep road noise, as well as harshness, to a minimum." On the downside, Hall added, "the Berlinetta lacks the fighter-plane reflexes of the Z28." MT clocked a Berlinetta with a V-8 and four-speed automatic transmission (the three-speed no longer available for Camaros) at 9.25 seconds 0-60 and 16.99 seconds at 81.10 mph in the quarter-mile. Berlinetta sales perked up a bit, but not nearly as much as the base and Z28 models in what would prove to be the biggest model year for the third-generation Camaro.

For 1985, the V-6 got multiport fuel injection and other upgrades that raised its output from 107 to 135 bhp. There were now three 5.0-liter V-8 choices: the standard Z28 mill, now rated at 155 bhp; the 190-horse high-output carbureted job; and a new 215-bhp tuned-port electronic fuel injection (TPI) option.

The best news of all was a hot new IROC package for the Z28, commemorating the International Race of Champions series, which featured some of the world's best drivers competing in identically prepared Camaros. Fitted with deep "ground effects" body cladding, chassis enhancements, and 16x8 alloy wheels, IROC came with a choice of the



high-output four-barrel V-8 with five-speed manual or the new TPI engine with four-speed automatic. (The latter was also an option for the Z28). "The '85 IROC-Z is a responsive, precise, hard-cornering weapon that will humble many Euro/Japanese cars sporting much fancier window stickers," Ron Grable wrote in *Motor Trend*. Zero-to-60 was measured at an impressive 6.87 seconds, the quarter-mile at 15.3 seconds at 89.1 mph, and skidpad grip at a neck-straining 0.85g.

For 1986, the five-speed stickshift replaced the four-speed as the new standard transmission. Base coupes got a little sportier looking via standard styled steel wheels with trim rings and black lower-body accents. Suspension upgrades were made, too. The flashy, but slow-selling, Berlinetta was discontinued midyear after only 4479 of the '86s were made. The 305-cid V-8 that was standard in Z28s and optional down the line got a 10-bhp boost to 165.

For 1987, a 350-cid V-8 returned to the Camaro for the first time since 1981. This 5.7-liter TPI powerplant was a \$1045 option for the IROC-Z. Available only with the automatic transmission, it made 225 bhp at 4400 rpm and could propel a Camaro to 60 mph in 6.3 seconds, with a quarter-mile run in about 14.5 ticks. Also, the five-speed manual became available with the optional 215-horse V-8, but the carbureted 190-bhp V-8 was gone.

With the four-cylinder engine cut from Camaros, the 2.8-liter V-6 became the new base engine. A limited number of RS Camaros with Z28 looks but more affordable—and insurable—V-6 power were sold in some markets. The Berlinetta's absence was filled by a series of LT option groups for base models that contained varying levels of luxury and convenience equipment.

The biggest story, though, was the return of convertible Camaros after an 18-year hiatus. Produced with assistance from American Specialty Company, the task of converting a Camaro hatchback coupe into a notchback convertible with manual top added about \$4400 to the price tag. Introduced in January, 1007 of the '87s were built across all series. *Motor Trend* predicted the new IROC-Z soft top (CA, February 1988) would be "one of the most desirable cars of [the] decade."

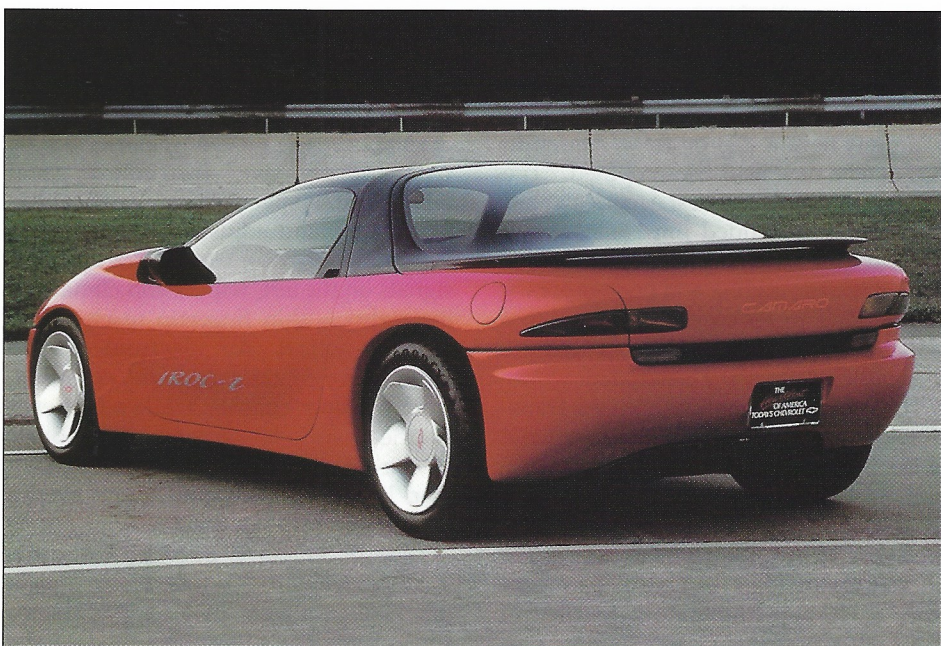
Come 1988, base Camaros took on most of the Z28's appearance with the addition of lower-body extensions, chin and deck spoilers, body-colored external mirror housings, and five-spoke alloy



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1. Steadily falling demand for muscle Camaros amounted to barely more than 24,000 of the 1989 IROC-Zs. 2, 3. The '89 IROC-Z concept presaged the fourth-generation Camaro coming in a few years. 4. This '90 IROC-Z is equipped with the 5.7-liter V-8 and 1LE option group developed for a showroom-stock racing series. (Owners: Jerry and Carol Buczkowski)

### 1982-92 Chevrolet Camaro Engine Specifications

| type/cid | bore×stroke | bhp@rpm  | torque@rpm | comp. ratio | induction | years   |
|----------|-------------|----------|------------|-------------|-----------|---------|
| I-4/151  | 4.00×3.00   | 90@4000  | 132@2800   | 8.2:1       | fuel inj. | 1982    |
| I-4/151  | 4.00×3.00   | 92@4000  | 134@2800   | 8.2:1       | fuel inj. | 1983    |
| I-4/151  | 4.00×3.00   | 92@4000  | 132@2800   | 9.0:1       | fuel inj. | 1984    |
| I-4/151  | 4.00×3.00   | 88@4400  | 132@2800   | 9.0:1       | fuel inj. | 1985    |
| I-4/151  | 4.00×3.00   | 88@4400  | 130@2800   | 9.0:1       | fuel inj. | 1986    |
| V-6/173  | 3.50×2.99   | 102@5100 | 142@2400   | 8.5:1       | 2V carb.  | 1982    |
| V-6/173  | 3.50×2.99   | 107@4800 | 145@2100   | 8.5:1       | 2V carb.  | 1983-84 |
| V-6/173  | 3.50×2.99   | 135@5100 | 165@3600   | 8.9:1       | fuel inj. | 1985    |
| V-6/173  | 3.50×2.99   | 135@5100 | 160@3900   | 8.9:1       | fuel inj. | 1986    |
| V-6/173  | 3.50×2.99   | 135@4900 | 160@3900   | 8.9:1       | fuel inj. | 1987-89 |
| V-6/191  | 3.50×3.31   | 140@4400 | 180@3600   | 8.8:1       | fuel inj. | 1990    |
| V-6/191  | 3.50×3.31   | 140@4400 | 180@3800   | 8.8:1       | fuel inj. | 1991    |
| V-6/191  | 3.50×3.31   | 140@4200 | 180@3600   | 8.8:1       | fuel inj. | 1992    |
| V-8/305  | 3.74×3.48   | 145@4000 | 240@2000   | 8.6:1       | 4V carb.  | 1982    |
| V-8/305  | 3.74×3.48   | 150@4000 | 240@2400   | 8.6:1       | 4V carb.  | 1983-84 |
| V-8/305  | 3.74×3.48   | 155@4200 | 245@2000   | 9.5:1       | 4V carb.  | 1985    |
| V-8/305  | 3.74×3.48   | 165@4400 | 250@2000   | 9.5:1       | 4V carb.  | 1986    |
| V-8/305  | 3.74×3.48   | 170@4400 | 250@2800   | 9.3:1       | 4V carb.  | 1987    |
| V-8/305  | 3.74×3.48   | 170@4000 | 255@2400   | 9.3:1       | fuel inj. | 1988-92 |
| V-8/305  | 3.74×3.48   | 165@4200 | 240@2400   | 8.6:1       | fuel inj. | 1982    |
| V-8/305  | 3.74×3.48   | 175@4200 | 250@2800   | 8.6:1       | fuel inj. | 1983    |
| V-8/305  | 3.74×3.48   | 190@4800 | 240@3200   | 9.5:1       | 4V carb.  | 1983-86 |
| V-8/305  | 3.74×3.48   | 215@4400 | 275@3200   | 9.5:1       | fuel inj. | 1985    |
| V-8/305  | 3.74×3.48   | 215@4400 | 285@2800   | 9.5:1       | fuel inj. | 1986    |
| V-8/305  | 3.74×3.48   | 215@4400 | 250@3200   | 9.3:1       | fuel inj. | 1987    |
| V-8/305  | 3.74×3.48   | 220@4400 | 290@3200   | 9.3:1       | fuel inj. | 1988-90 |
| V-8/305  | 3.74×3.48   | 230@4400 | 300@3200   | 9.3:1       | fuel inj. | 1991-92 |
| V-8/350  | 4.00×3.48   | 225@4400 | 330@2800   | 9.0:1       | fuel inj. | 1987    |
| V-8/350  | 4.00×3.48   | 230@4400 | 330@3200   | 9.3:1       | fuel inj. | 1988-90 |
| V-8/350  | 4.00×3.48   | 245@4400 | 345@3200   | 9.3:1       | fuel inj. | 1991    |
| V-8/350  | 4.00×3.48   | 245@4400 | 345@3200   | 9.8:1       | fuel inj. | 1992    |

All horsepower and torque figures are standard configurations. Some high-output 5.0-liter engines had reduced horsepower with optional automatic transmission. Some high-output 5.0-liter and 5.7-liter V-8s had additional horsepower with optional dual exhausts. Sources: *Standard Catalog of Chevrolet 1912-1998*, Ron Kowalke, editor, Krause Publications, 1998; *Consumer Guide*® new-car buying guides, various issues; Chevrolet sales literature.

wheels, all standard. The lineup was thinned out as the LT option and the basic Z28 model were dropped. The 170-bhp V-8 standard in IROC-Zs and optional in base Camaros swapped its four-pot carburetor for electronic fuel injection. Meanwhile, the IROC's extra-cost 5.0- and 5.7-liter engines got slight horsepower boosts. Cars ordered with these engines could also be fitted with new silver- or gold-accented 16-inch aluminum wheels.

Base Camaros gained a new identity in 1989 when the RS nameplate appeared nationwide on entry-level models. Convertibles came with the 170-bhp 5.0-liter V-8 as standard equipment. GM's PASS-Key security system (first used in '86 Corvettes) enhanced security. Horsepower ratings of the optional IROC-Z engines depended on both transmission and exhaust system: 195 with automatic, 220 with manual, and 230 with dual exhausts on the 5.0 liter; 230 with single exhaust and 240 with dual exhausts on the automatic-only 5.7 liter available for IROC coupes.

A mandated driver-side airbag arrived for 1990, along with a new standard ohv V-6 engine displacing 3.1 liters and rated at 140 bhp. A tilt steering wheel and tinted glass were among additions to the general standard-equipment list; IROC-Zs also gained a limited-slip differential and, on convertibles, 16-inch wheels. The lockup points on the automatic-transmission torque converter were raised in an effort to improve fuel economy, and leather upholstery was newly optional.

With the 1991 Camaros set for a March 1990 debut, production of '90 models was





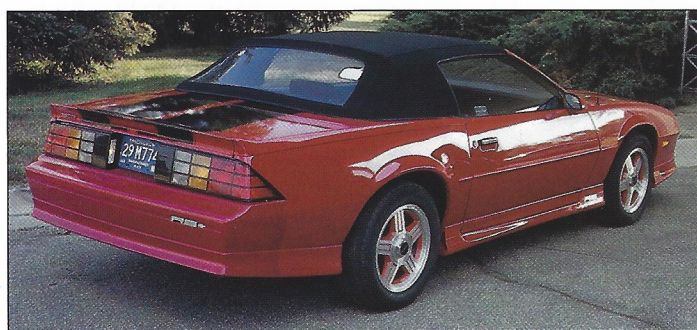
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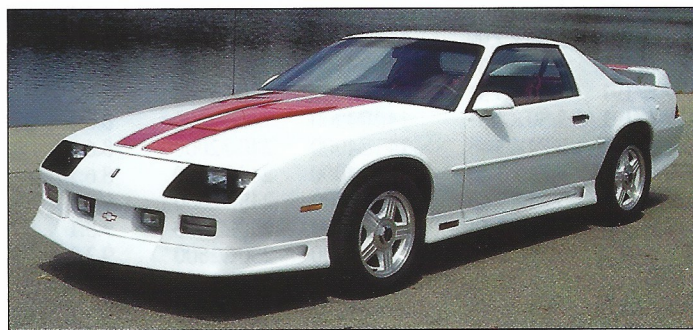
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cut off early. Output of the '91s rebounded to 100,000 cars, but even with the long model year, assemblies trailed the 1989 total by about 10,000. The Z28 was revived and the IROC-Z designation dropped because Chevy did not renew its contract with the IROC series. All '91 Camaros had redesigned ground-effects panels. Z28 coupes got a new, much taller rear spoiler and 16-inch wheels. The 170-bhp 5.0-liter V-8 was now reserved for use in RS models. The high-output 5.0 liter—hiked to 230 bhp—became the

new base engine for Z28s; the optional 5.7 V-8 was perked up to 245 bhp.

To celebrate Camaro's 25th anniversary in 1992, Chevy came up with a Heritage Appearance Package that included bold hood and deck stripes, a body-color grille, black headlamp recesses, and a decklid badge. (All '92 Camaros had 25th anniversary emblems on their instrument panels.) RS convertibles again got a standard V-6 after several years of it being a credit option in place of the V-8.

The third-generation Camaro's final

year was also one in which General Motors very nearly went broke; threw out its top leaders (chairman Bob Stempel and president Lloyd Reuss, both strong "product guys"); and began a long, painful recovery from previous CEO Roger Smith's dismal decade of misleadership. A lot of product programs were delayed or canceled, and with '92 Camaro output barely topping 70,000 units, it's a miracle that Chevy's ponycar wasn't one of them. In fact, an all-new fourth-generation Camaro was just around the corner. **CA**



1. The RS—available nationwide since 1989—captured 84 percent of Camaro sales in '91. (Owner: Jackie Bean) 2. A "special service" version—an RS with powertrains from the revived Z28—made a speedy police pursuit vehicle for highway patrol. 3. The third-generation Camaro ran its course in 1992. This Z28 packs the 245-bhp 5.7-liter engine. (Owner: John DeLoach) 4, 5. A Heritage Appearance option saluted 25 years of Camaros in '92.

### Clubs for 1982-92 Chevrolet Camaro Enthusiasts

The International Camaro Club  
2001 Pittston Ave.  
Scranton, PA 18505  
Telephone: (717) 585-4082

Worldwide Camaro Club  
5140 S. Washington Ave.  
Titusville, FL 32780  
Telephone: (321) 269-9680  
Website: [www.worldwidecamaro.org](http://www.worldwidecamaro.org)

## 1982-92 Chevrolet Camaro: Models, Prices, Production

| 1982                        | Weight | Price | Prod                |
|-----------------------------|--------|-------|---------------------|
| (wb 101)                    |        |       |                     |
| coupe, I-4                  | —      | 7,631 | 78,761              |
| coupe, V-6                  | —      | 7,755 |                     |
| coupe, V-8                  | —      | 7,925 |                     |
| Berlinetta (wb 101)         |        |       |                     |
| coupe, V-6                  | 2,940  | 9,266 | 39,744              |
| coupe, V-8                  | —      | 9,436 |                     |
| Z28 (wb 101)                |        |       |                     |
| coupe, V-8                  | 2,870  | 9,700 | 71,242 <sup>1</sup> |
| Total 1982 Chevrolet Camaro |        |       | 189,747             |

| 1983                        |       |        |                     |
|-----------------------------|-------|--------|---------------------|
| (wb 101)                    |       |        |                     |
| coupe, I-4                  | —     | 8,036  | 63,806              |
| coupe, V-6                  | 2,959 | 8,186  |                     |
| coupe, V-8                  | 3,116 | 8,386  |                     |
| Berlinetta (wb 101)         |       |        |                     |
| coupe, V-6                  | 2,944 | 9,881  | 27,925              |
| coupe, V-8                  | 3,136 | 10,106 |                     |
| Z28 (wb 101)                |       |        |                     |
| coupe, V-8                  | 3,061 | 10,336 | 62,650 <sup>2</sup> |
| Total 1983 Chevrolet Camaro |       |        | 154,381             |

| 1984                        |       |        |                      |
|-----------------------------|-------|--------|----------------------|
| (wb 101)                    |       |        |                      |
| coupe, I-4                  | 2,899 | 7,995  | 127,292              |
| coupe, V-6                  | 2,932 | 8,245  |                      |
| coupe, V-8                  | 3,112 | 8,545  |                      |
| Berlinetta (wb 101)         |       |        |                      |
| coupe, V-6                  | 2,944 | 10,895 | 33,400               |
| coupe, V-8                  | 3,126 | 11,270 |                      |
| Z28 (wb 101)                |       |        |                      |
| coupe, V-8                  | 3,135 | 10,620 | 100,894 <sup>3</sup> |
| Total 1984 Chevrolet Camaro |       |        | 261,586              |

| 1985                        |       |        |                     |
|-----------------------------|-------|--------|---------------------|
| (wb 101)                    |       |        |                     |
| coupe, I-4                  | 2,881 | 8,363  | 97,966              |
| coupe, V-6                  | 2,977 | 8,698  |                     |
| coupe, V-8                  | 3,177 | 8,998  |                     |
| Berlinetta (wb 101)         |       |        |                     |
| coupe, V-6                  | 3,056 | 11,060 | 13,649              |
| coupe, V-8                  | 3,221 | 11,360 |                     |
| Z28 (wb 101)                |       |        |                     |
| coupe, V-8                  | 3,251 | 11,060 | 47,226 <sup>4</sup> |
| IROC-Z (wb 101)             |       |        |                     |
| coupe, V-8                  | 3,319 | 11,739 | 21,177              |
| Total 1985 Chevrolet Camaro |       |        | 180,018             |

| 1986                        | Weight | Price  | Prod                |
|-----------------------------|--------|--------|---------------------|
| (wb 101)                    |        |        |                     |
| coupe, I-4                  | 2,900  | 8,935  | 99,517              |
| coupe, V-6                  | 2,994  | 9,285  |                     |
| coupe, V-8                  | 3,116  | 9,685  |                     |
| Berlinetta (wb 101)         |        |        |                     |
| coupe, V-6                  | 3,063  | 11,902 | 4,479               |
| coupe, V-8                  | 3,116  | 12,302 |                     |
| Z28 (wb 101)                |        |        |                     |
| coupe, V-8                  | 3,201  | 11,902 | 38,638 <sup>s</sup> |
| IROC-Z (wb 101)             |        |        |                     |
| coupe, V-8                  | 3,278  | 12,561 | 49,585              |
| Total 1986 Chevrolet Camaro |        |        | 192,219             |

|                                    |       |        |                            |
|------------------------------------|-------|--------|----------------------------|
| <b>1987</b>                        |       |        |                            |
| <b>(wb 101)</b>                    |       |        |                            |
| coupe, V-6                         | 3,062 | 9,995  | 83,890                     |
| coupe, V-8                         | 3,181 | 10,395 |                            |
| convertible coupe, V-8             | —     | 14,794 | 263                        |
| <b>Total Camaro</b>                |       |        | 84,153 <sup>6</sup>        |
| <b>Z28 (wb 101)</b>                |       |        |                            |
| coupe, V-8                         | 3,228 | 12,819 | —                          |
| convertible coupe, V-8             | —     | 17,218 | —                          |
| <b>Total Z28</b>                   |       |        | 14,718                     |
| <b>IROC-Z (wb 101)</b>             |       |        |                            |
| coupe, V-8                         | —     | 13,488 | —                          |
| convertible coupe, V-8             | —     | 17,917 | —                          |
| <b>Total IROC-Z</b>                |       |        | 38,889                     |
| <b>Total 1987 Chevrolet Camaro</b> |       |        | <b>137,760<sup>7</sup></b> |

|                                    |       |        |               |
|------------------------------------|-------|--------|---------------|
| <b>1988</b>                        |       |        |               |
| <b>(wb 101)</b>                    |       |        |               |
| coupe, V-6                         | 3,054 | 10,995 | 66,605        |
| coupe, V-8                         | 3,228 | 11,395 |               |
| convertible coupe, V-8             | 3,350 | 16,255 | 1,859         |
| <b>Total Camaro</b>                |       |        | 68,464        |
| <b>IROC-Z (wb 101)</b>             |       |        |               |
| coupe, V-8                         | 3,229 | 13,490 | 24,050        |
| convertible coupe, V-8             | 3,352 | 18,015 | 3,761         |
| <b>Total IROC-Z</b>                |       |        | 27,811        |
| <b>Total 1988 Chevrolet Camaro</b> |       |        | <b>96,275</b> |

|                                    |       |        |                |
|------------------------------------|-------|--------|----------------|
| <b>1989</b>                        |       |        |                |
| <b>RS (wb 101)</b>                 |       |        |                |
| coupe, V-6                         | 3,082 | 11,495 | 83,487         |
| coupe, V-8                         | 3,285 | 11,895 |                |
| convertible coupe, V-8             | 3,116 | 16,995 | 3,245          |
| <b>Total RS</b>                    |       |        | 86,732         |
| <b>IROC-Z (wb 101)</b>             |       |        |                |
| coupe, V-8                         | 3,264 | 14,145 | 20,067         |
| convertible coupe, V-8             | —     | 18,945 | 3,940          |
| <b>Total IROC-Z</b>                |       |        | 24,007         |
| <b>Total 1989 Chevrolet Camaro</b> |       |        | <b>110,739</b> |

| 1990                               | Weight | Price  | Prod          |
|------------------------------------|--------|--------|---------------|
| <b>RS (wb 101)</b>                 |        |        |               |
| coupe, V-6                         | 3,077  | 10,995 | 28,750        |
| coupe, V-8                         | —      | 11,345 |               |
| convertible coupe, V-8             | 3,263  | 16,880 | 729           |
| <b>Total RS</b>                    |        |        | 29,479        |
| <b>IROC-Z (wb 101)</b>             |        |        |               |
| coupe, V-8                         | —      | 14,555 | 4,213         |
| convertible coupe, V-8             | —      | 20,195 | 1,294         |
| <b>Total IROC-Z</b>                |        |        | 5,507         |
| <b>Total 1990 Chevrolet Camaro</b> |        |        | <b>34,986</b> |

|                                    |       |        |                            |
|------------------------------------|-------|--------|----------------------------|
| <b>1991</b>                        |       |        |                            |
| <b>RS (wb 101)</b>                 |       |        |                            |
| coupe                              | 3,103 | 12,180 | —                          |
| convertible coupe                  | 3,203 | 17,960 | —                          |
| <b>Total RS</b>                    |       |        | 85,183                     |
| <b>Z28 (wb 101)</b>                |       |        |                            |
| coupe                              | 3,319 | 15,445 | —                          |
| convertible coupe                  | 3,400 | 20,815 | —                          |
| <b>Total Z28</b>                   |       |        | 15,655                     |
| <b>Total 1991 Chevrolet Camaro</b> |       |        | <b>100,838<sup>8</sup></b> |

|                                    |       |        |                           |
|------------------------------------|-------|--------|---------------------------|
| <b>1992</b>                        |       |        |                           |
| <b>RS (wb 101)</b>                 |       |        |                           |
| coupe                              | 3,103 | 12,075 | —                         |
| convertible coupe                  | 3,203 | 18,055 | —                         |
| <b>Total RS</b>                    |       |        | 63,556                    |
| <b>Z28 (wb 101)</b>                |       |        |                           |
| coupe                              | 3,319 | 16,055 | —                         |
| convertible coupe                  | 3,400 | 21,500 | —                         |
| <b>Total Z28</b>                   |       |        | 6,451                     |
| <b>Total 1992 Chevrolet Camaro</b> |       |        | <b>70,007<sup>9</sup></b> |

<sup>1</sup>Includes 6360 equipped with Indianapolis 500 pace car commemorative packages and 1319 built for export. <sup>2</sup>Includes 550 built for export. <sup>3</sup>Includes 478 built for export. <sup>4</sup>Includes 204 built for export. <sup>5</sup>Includes 91 built for export. <sup>6</sup>Includes 794 equipped with LT option packages. <sup>7</sup>Includes 52,863 Z28 and IROC-Z coupes, and 744 Z28 and IROC-Z convertibles. <sup>8</sup>Includes 92,306 RS and Z28 coupes, and 8532 RS and Z28 convertibles. <sup>9</sup>Includes 66,191 RS and Z28 coupes, and 3816 RS and Z28 convertibles. Sources: *Camaro White Book*, by Mike Antonick, Michael Bruce Associates, Inc., and Motorbooks International, 2003; *Encyclopedia of American Cars*, by the Auto Editors of Consumer Guide®, Publications International, Ltd., 2002; *Standard Catalog of Chevrolet 1912-1998*, Ron Kowalke, editor, Krause Publications, 1998.