

## V6 Spider



### The Super Spider V6 Retrofit! Still Alfa, Still Italian, But Only in America

#### The Evolution of My Spider

I purchased my then new 1981 Alfa Romeo Spider Veloce in February 1982. I had always wanted a red Italian sports car and this car fit the bill. From that time to the present this Spider has steadily evolved from its first engine modifications to its flared rear-end, accommodating Dunlop P245s to, what master Alfa Romeo Technician Nick Muto has dubbed, the “V6 Super Spider.”

This 1981 Spider is a “purist’s nightmare.” Its evolution includes aftermarket rear spoiler, front air-dam, Carello lens covers w/ recessed headlamps, 1974 grill, modified front bumper, welded Porsche Turbo flares, Epsilon 3 piece wheels w/ Dunlop P245 tires.

#### Daily Driver

Though it has always been kept in great condition, it was and still is my daily driver. My evolving project has provided me with years of reliability and enjoyment. It has been a work vehicle, as well as a recreational vehicle. When it could no longer pass emissions testing, I had a dilemma... that is until I found Nick at Alfa Tech.



#### Nick the Master Tech

For years I searched for someone who could and would do an aesthetically pleasing V6 conversion to my Spider. In October 2001, I came upon an unusual fuzzy black & white picture of a 1974 Spider in our chapter’s magazine – what made it unusual was that there were 6 curved air intake horns going into what appeared to be a V6 engine – the caption read: “Nick Muto’s beautiful V6 conversion” – nothing more – no elaboration. That’s what I’ve been looking for – someone with the ability and the enthusiasm to make my dream a reality!

After a bit of searching, I found Nick Muto's shop in La Habra, California. I telephoned him and talked about his car. I asked him if I could test it. He said, "sure... just come down and check it out." I went down to his shop the next day. The '74 Spider was parked in front of his office. Looking at it, it was impossible to detect that there was a V6 under the hood. He took me for a ride, then, he let me drive – WOW! – this car was responsive. First gear chirped the tires, second gear chirped the tires and I wasn't even trying to... This larger V6 had noticeably more torque than I was used to. I was sold! I asked Nick if he would consider doing another conversion -- mine. He thought about it for a second and said he would, but there was a catch. His shop is very busy. He would only be able to work on my project during his off hours. He said that it would probably take several months – I agreed. We agreed on a price and I told him that I would bring my car in as soon as he could begin.



#### A Perfect Candidate for a V6 retrofit!

A few weeks later I had my Spider placed on a flatbed tow-truck and delivered to Nick's shop. When the car arrived, Nick was surprised to see a Spider flared so wide in the rear. He said that this car was definitely in need of a V6. Over the next few months, I periodically stopped by the shop to see the progress. First he pulled out my old modified 4-cylinder engine and transmission. He gutted the entire engine compartment and over the next few weeks, he performed a significant amount of cutting and welding to accommodate the Milano 2.5 liter engine and the Maserati ZF transmission comfortably. He didn't just hack it up. This is where Nick's creativity and workmanship truly shine. After making all of the metal modifications, he gave the engine compartment a textured black matte finish, which sets the engine in an aesthetically dramatic backdrop.

### Nick's Craftsmanship

On the interior of the car, under the console, cutting and welding is also necessary to add space for the larger transmission bell housing and to allow the gearshift to properly locate. The gearshift of the ZF is in a more typical position much closer to the tip of the parking brake grip. Once closed up, everything fits nicely. Nick rearranged the console so that the gearshift and boot are in the area where the ashtray originally was located and he fashioned a black textured panel to accommodate the switches where the ashtray used to be.



### Alfa Romeo V6 Spider - SuperSpiderV6

#### Time to Drive!

After several months of anxiously waiting, I went to test-drive my new reborn Spider. I started it up – the engine sounded so substantial and smooth. I then took it out for a spin. It was lively and very sensitive. There were no flat spots -- the acceleration was very smooth. This was everything that I had hoped for and more. Nick also brought the car to the Bureau of Automotive Repair for inspection and documentation. Not only did it pass, the supervisor was so impressed with Nick's work that they chatted about Alfas for quite a while. Nick's innovative method of accommodating the V6 using the lower profile 164 intake, which allows it to fit cleanly under the hood.

#### Getting the Word Out

I began publicizing Nick's V6 conversions on my Alfa Exotics website several months ago and the response has been phenomenal. Nick has been talking to people all over the world, setting appointments and offering advice. He is now in the process of creating a kit for this conversion. When it becomes available, I plan to post it as well. Website address: [www.g-site.com/alfaxtc](http://www.g-site.com/alfaxtc)

## The Super Spider V6

Alfa Exotics, Customs & Racers and Alfa Tech Center announces Spider V6 retrofits!

### The "SuperSpider" Idea

Since the GTV 6 was introduced in 1980, many Spider owners and enthusiasts have pondered the fantasy of stuffing a V6 under the hood of the classic Spider Veloce. The fantasy was always tempered with the reality that the Alfa Romeo Spider's aggressively sloping hood and tight engine compartment design presents many challenges to successfully achieving such a fit.



The Spider's challenges are a direct result of the classic body style that has made the Spider such a stylistic icon – the challenges include:



- \* Fitting the V6 under the aggressively sloping hood  
(Which has no excess clearance)
- \* Fitting the engine into the tight area between the firewall and the radiator
- \* Accommodating the V6's dual exhaust headers
- \* Conforming to stringent emission standards (Especially California)
- \* Acquiring the proper emissions documents and tags

Alfa Tech

A few years ago, Master Alfa Romeo Technician, Nick Muto, owner of Alfa Tech Center in La Habra decided that he would

tackle the V6 project. He took his own 1974 Spider Veloce, gutted the engine compartment and began doing something that few Alfisti have attempted -- installing the high-performance Milano Alfa V6 -- an engine designed for a high performance 5 passenger sport sedan weighing 3800 lbs\* into the 2900 lb\* Spider (\*GVWR). His result differed from those achieved by most others who attempted similar projects. This retrofit succeeded in creating a radically improved Spider that retains both its Alfa Romeo and Italian heritage, will pass emissions requirements and is quite street-able. Performance tests have not yet been conducted but using basic performance achievements of the 2.5 liter Milano and allowing for the weight reduction of the Spider's lighter body, the positive results seem apparent. Personally, I have driven one of the retrofits and it feels absolutely beautiful – the responsiveness and torque are totally apparent – and when driven with gusto the rear tires will chirp with each gear shift! [Lorenzo Gigliotti]

Keeping the Marque Interesting – American Style...

With no new Alfas bound for U.S. shores anytime soon we are proud to be a part of something that offers new possibilities for our classic Spiders. Many Spiders are now reaching an unnecessary end of their road-life and as a result are being retired. Many, are worn out, while others are simply unable to pass the difficult emissions testing. Many owners who have invested money and time into engine modifications to make the little Spider more “vispa,” now find that they have a beautiful Italian classic that is unable to pass the ever-more-stringent emissions tests. This has left many loyal owners with a dilemma; Re-install all of the original equipment and put the car back to its original stock engine specifications or retire the vehicle. Those of us, who have remained loyal, love this car, but at the same time, don't want to detune it. We want to somehow maintain that little added sport feel and still be able to drive this car legally.



What's Old is New...

This is the same roadster who's styling was criticized so thoroughly during the 1980's, but who's elements are now being copied by every wanna-be sports car on the market. An observation of some of the "distinctive" design features of the new breed of sports cars seem to lead back to the Alfa Romeo Spider/Duetto. Clear headlight covers, which were one of the original features of the Duetto and were available on many years of Spiders, are suddenly the rage. The aggressively sloping hood is being emulated almost across the board. Distinctive speedometer and tachometer cowls once called “60's tackiness” are inspiring new dash board designs in the vehicles that were once called “more sophisticated than the Spider.” The fact is, that the Alfa Romeo Spider Veloce was and is a classic. There are few cars that can turn heads like it – even after 30 years of production.

V6 Installed Rebirth -- Rinascita...

Now with a V6 retrofit you have the opportunity to breath new life and added vitality into your polite classic – you enjoyed your Spider before, but with the new added responsiveness, horsepower, and torque of the Alfa Romeo V6, mated to a smooth Maserati Bi-Turbo transmission, you now have an Italian roadster that will not only keep up with the “road-rockets” being mass-produced today, but will blow many of them away in the everyday stop-light derby.

Because the Alfa Romeo V6 adds less than 100 lbs. to the weight of the vehicle, the Spider retains all of its charm, but with added torque across the power-band. It now has the ability to jump off the line and effortlessly power out of the corners.

