



Catalina for the family



This is milder-mannered one of Pontiac's thoroughbred stable



New design makes Catalina look a lot longer than it really is. For our money, it's one of the best-looking family sedans going.



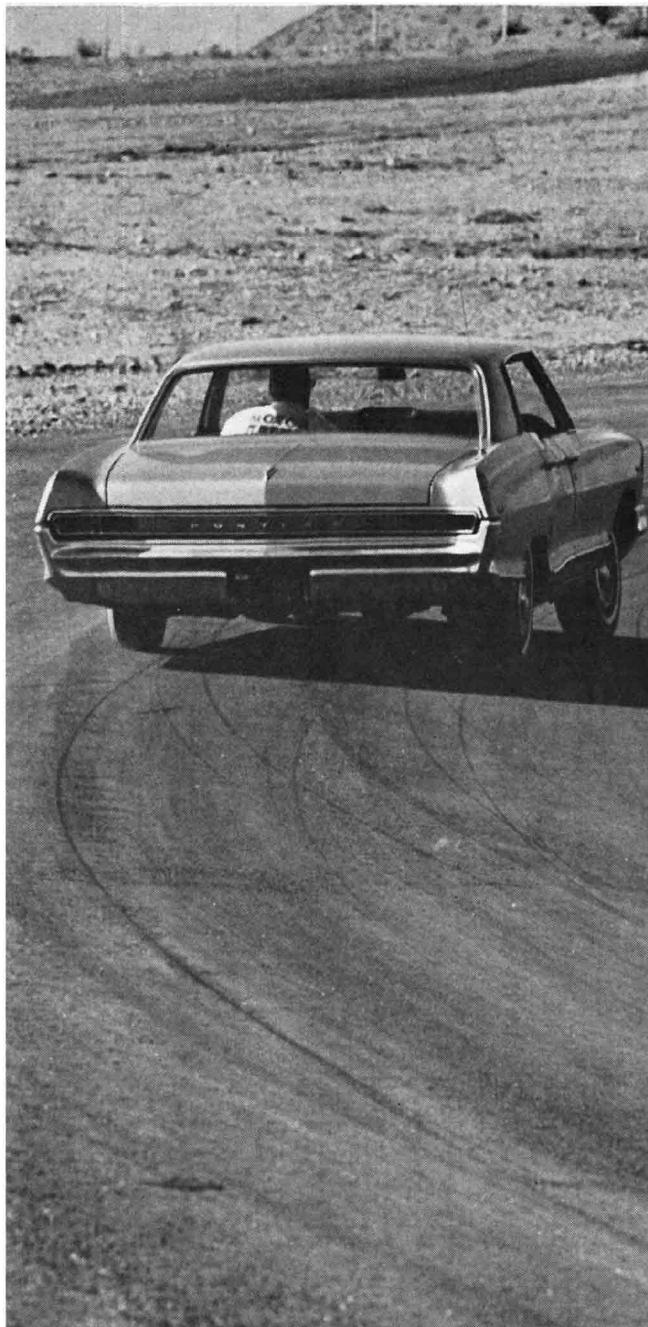
Cruising along the highway, our Catalina with standard engine and rear axle gave top-notch mileage for its size and weight.

by Bob McVay, *Assistant Technical Editor*

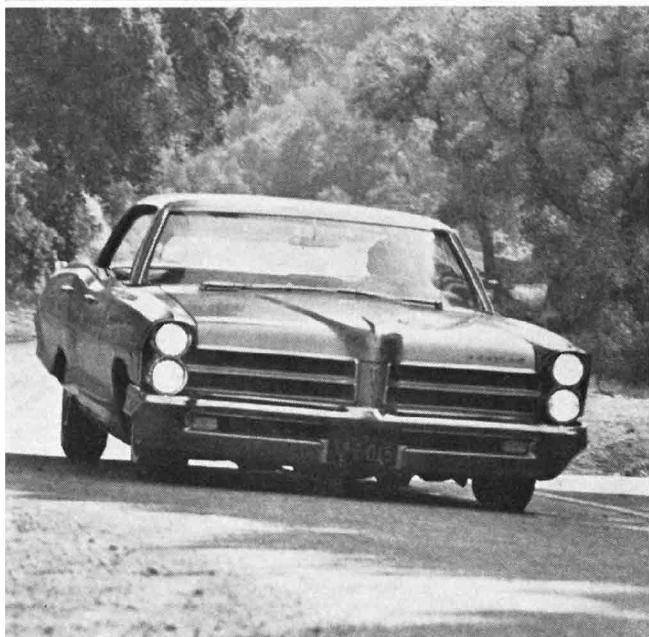
IN PONTIAC'S full-sized line, the Catalina's definitely the daily breadwinner. And a more versatile series is hard to imagine. There's a full range, from the white-hot 2 + 2 convertible to standard four-door sedans with economy V-8s to two station wagons. Performance from mild to wild, handling in the same range, and a tremendous array of options and accessories allow Catalina shoppers to build their own personal dream car from their dealer's option list.

Trying to pick a representative model for road testing presented quite a problem, but since we reported on hardtop coupes (two of them) last year, we picked a four-door hardtop with the Ventura Custom interior. This car had Morrokide vinyl-coated fabric throughout and gave our Catalina a luxury look and feel akin to its more expensive brethren. Seven models and four choices of interiors put the shopper in an excellent position to suit his slightest whim. Naturally, there's an abundant choice of colors, both inside and out.

Our Catalina had the normal complement of options, but



On Willow Springs' demanding turns, car showed lots of body lean, considerable understeer, but was fine for family driving.



Dips, taken at highway speeds, showed full travel of family sedan's suspension. Yes, it did bottom, but only when prodded. Pontiac offers options to turn this car into a curve-hugging, road-gripping handler. These items aren't expensive.

used the standard 290-hp, 389-inch V-8 mounting a two-throat carburetor. This was matched to a 2.56 rear axle through Pontiac's new three-speed Turbo Hydra-Matic, a good choice for the overall driving needs of the American family. Each of Pontiac's Turbo Hydra-Matic units is matched carefully to the individual engine. Although our Catalina had a higher axle and fewer horses than some of the more powerful Pontiacs tested, its initial acceleration in normal speed ranges almost matched the more powerful cars. Only after 70-75 mph could we feel the difference. At this point, the speedometer showed a much more leisurely rate of climb. We did see 97 mph before we had to slow down during performance testing at Fontana Raceway Drag Strip. But the car definitely would've topped 100 mph with a

longer run. It was far from through when we had to back off.

This combination, even though it needs premium fuel, is a real winner. It strikes an outstanding balance between sparkling performance and better-than-average economy — this for a family four-door with air conditioning. Normal driving, combining freeway and city traffic, averaged 14-16 mpg, with 65-mph long-distance trips shooting the figure to a strong 19.1. Our average for over 900 miles was 15.2 mpg — and that's better than many sedans will do at their most economical cruising speeds.

Equipped with power brakes and steering, our Catalina makes an easy car for the woman of the family to drive. It's set up for family use and not for particularly fast driving. Suspension is nice and soft, giving a comfortable ride on or



BLASTING THROUGH DEEP PUDDLES FAILED TO AFFECT CAR'S BRAKES OR DIVERT ITS COURSE. STOPPING WAS ALWAYS STRAIGHT AND TRUE.

CATALINA *continued*

off the highway. As might be expected, high-speed driving brought out considerable body lean, and the front suspension could be bottomed on harsh dips if we weren't careful.

Bench seats proved quite comfortable and gave good support to legs and back. But the steering wheel seemed a bit too high for shorter drivers (Pontiac's adjustable wheel option takes care of this nicely). There's lots of stretch-out room, front and rear. Anyone can see out of the Vista four-door hardtop. Vision is especially good, with aiming made easier by something not used too often anymore, a chromed hood ornament. The hood seems to sweep out to a point, although it actually doesn't. This gives the driver the feeling he's driving a much smaller car.

We especially appreciated the big car's ease of maneuvering when we had a chance to do some snowy driving during testing. Here again, the 2.56 axle came into play by making smooth starts easy on slippery ground. Our Catalina showed traction that its more powerful counterparts just couldn't match. Spinning the wheels doesn't help a bit when the going gets wet and slippery. Don't get us wrong — the car's 290 hp had more than enough beans to leave long, black strips on the driest pavement, but only when provoked by a heavy foot. This engine/axle combination impressed us as a good overall choice, especially in the midwestern and eastern states,

where snow and rain are common hazards. Naturally, a limited-slip differential would make things even better.

Due to heavy rainstorms in sunny California, we had a good chance to really soak the Catalina's brakes. They showed no tendency to pull to one side when wet — a definite safety feature. With 14.8 more inches of effective lining area than last year, Pontiac's 11-inch-diameter, cast-iron drums proved quite effective under normal conditions. We noticed some rear-wheel lock-up during our braking tests at Fontana, but stops were fairly straight and controllable, if not impressively short. One favorite Pontiac option is the aluminum hub and drum brake assembly. Not only does this extra give better cooling, it's good-looking as well. Sintered metallic linings are offered, too, giving Pontiac owners extra braking advantages if they're willing to part with the extra money. We would be.

Pontiac's full-sized bread-and-butter winner is their most versatile offering. Hot or cold, mild or wild, it's a darn good car for the American family man in its standard form. It has comfort galore and plenty of room for six (or eight in a pinch). It also has a huge trunk.

The vast array of handling, performance, comfort, luxury and towing options for the Catalina makes it one of America's most all-around automobiles. In standard trim, our Catalina was a big, comfortable, family automobile with more than its share of luxury. With certain options, it'd be even better — and that's saying a lot. /MT



NEW AUTOMATIC TRANSMISSION, COUPLED TO STANDARD MILD ENGINE, MADE SNOWY GOING EASY, WITH GOOD TRACTION, MINIMUM SLIPPAGE.

Specifications on page 61

PHOTOS BY BOB D'OLIVO, PAT BROLLIER



There's plenty of room and luxury to suit the largest family. Vinyl Ventura interior should be durable and easy to clean. Author points out air-conditioning vents on standard system.



Three round gauges—one a clock—are angled in toward driver for easy reading. Front and rear vision put all fenders in view. Test stopwatches clocked Catalina's strong acceleration.

PONTIAC BONNEVILLE

2-door, 6-passenger hardtop

OPTIONS ON CAR TESTED: Turbo Hydra-Matic, air conditioning, power steering and brakes, vinyl roof, AM-FM radio, tilting steering wheel, whitewalls, seat belts, misc. access.

BASE PRICE: \$3357

PRICE AS TESTED: \$4999.47 (plus tax and license)

ODOMETER READING AT START OF TEST: 2202 miles

RECOMMENDED ENGINE RED LINE: 5200 rpm

PERFORMANCE

ACCELERATION (2 aboard)

0-30 mph.....	3.4 secs.
0-45 mph.....	5.9
0-60 mph.....	9.1

PASSING TIMES AND DISTANCES

40-60 mph.....	4.8 secs., 352 ft.
50-70 mph.....	5.6 secs., 492 ft.

Standing start 1/4-mile 17.4 secs. and 80.5 mph

Speeds in gears @ 4500 rpm

1st	51 mph	3rd	112 mph
2nd	87 mph		(observed)

Speedometer Error on Test Car

Car's speedometer reading	30	46	52	63	73	84
Weston electric speedometer	30	45	50	60	70	80

Observed miles per hour per 1000 rpm in top gear..... 24.5 mph

Stopping Distances — from 30 mph, 49 ft.; from 60 mph, 192 ft.

SPECIFICATIONS FROM MANUFACTURER

Engine

OHV V-8
Bore: 4.06 ins.
Stroke: 3.75 ins.
Displacement: 389 cu. ins.
Compression ratio: 10.5:1
Horsepower: 325 @ 4800 rpm
Horsepower per cubic inch: 0.84
Torque: 429 lbs.-ft. @ 2800 rpm
Carburetion: 1 4-bbl.
Ignition: 12-volt coil

Gearbox

3-speed automatic (Turbo Hydra-Matic); column shift

Driveshaft

1-piece, open tube

Differential

Hypoid, semi-floating
Standard ratio: 3.23:1

Suspension

Front: Independent ball joint, upper and lower A-arms, rubber-mounted, coil springs, direct-acting tubular shocks, anti-roll bar
Rear: 4-link pivoted control arm, coil springs, and direct-acting tubular shocks

Steering

Coaxial recirculating ball bearing, with power assist
Turning diameter: 43.7 ft.
Turns lock to lock: 4.2

Wheels and Tires

5-lug, steel disc wheels
8.55 x 14 4-ply rayon whitewall tires

Brakes

Hydraulic, internal-expanding, 2-shoe, single anchor, with integral power assist; finned, cast-iron drums
Front: 11-in. dia. x 2.75 ins. wide
Rear: 11-in. dia. x 2.00 ins. wide
Effective lining area: 188.5 sq. ins.
Swept drum area: 328.9 sq. ins.

Body and Frame

Welded steel body, with perimeter-type frame
Wheelbase: 124.0 ins.
Track: front, 63.0 ins.; rear, 64.0 ins.
Overall length: 221.7 ins.
Overall width: 79.6 ins.
Overall height: 54.3 ins.
Curb weight: 4340 lbs.

PONTIAC CATALINA VISTA

4-door, 6-passenger hardtop

OPTIONS ON CAR TESTED: Turbo Hydra-Matic, air conditioning, power steering and brakes, Electro-cruise, Ventura interior, radio, whitewalls, misc. access.

BASE PRICE: \$2945

PRICE AS TESTED: \$4400.73 (plus tax and license)

ODOMETER READING AT START OF TEST: 2870 miles

RECOMMENDED ENGINE RED LINE: 5200 rpm

PERFORMANCE

ACCELERATION (2 aboard)

0-30 mph.....	3.5 secs.
0-45 mph.....	6.0
0-60 mph.....	9.3

PASSING TIMES AND DISTANCES

40-60 mph.....	5.2 secs., 378 ft.
50-70 mph.....	6.0 secs., 529 ft.

Standing start 1/4-mile 17.6 secs. and 82 mph

Speeds in gears @ 4400 rpm

1st	48 mph	3rd	97 mph (observed) @ 3200 rpm
2nd	75 mph		

Speedometer Error on Test Car

Car's speedometer reading	33	48	54	64	75	85
Weston electric speedometer	30	45	50	60	70	80

Observed miles per hour per 1000 rpm in top gear..... 26.5 mph

Stopping Distances — from 30 mph, 36.7 ft.; from 60 mph, 207.7 ft.

SPECIFICATIONS FROM MANUFACTURER

Engine

OHV V-8
Bore: 4.06 ins.
Stroke: 3.75 ins.
Displacement: 389 cu. ins.
Compression ratio: 10.5:1
Horsepower: 290 @ 4600 rpm
Horsepower per cubic inch: 0.75
Torque: 418 lbs.-ft. @ 2400 rpm
Carburetion: 1 2-bbl.
Ignition: 12-volt coil

Gearbox

3-speed automatic (Turbo Hydra-Matic); column shift

Driveshaft

1-piece, open tube

Differential

Hypoid, semi-floating
Standard ratio: 2.56:1

Suspension

Front: Independent ball joint, upper and lower rubber-mounted control arms; coil springs, direct-acting, 2-way shocks, anti-roll bar
Rear: Solid axle; 4-link control arms, coil springs, direct-acting 2-way shocks

Steering

Recirculating ball bearing, with coaxial power assist
Turning diameter: 42.8 ft.
Turns lock to lock: 4.2

Wheels and Tires

5-lug, steel disc wheels
8.55 x 14 4-ply rayon whitewall tires

Brakes

Hydraulic, internal-expanding, single anchor, with integral power assist; finned, cast-iron drums

Front: 11-in. dia. x 2.75 ins. wide

Rear: 11-in. dia. x 2.00 ins. wide

Effective lining area: 188.5 sq. ins.

Swept drum area: 328.9 sq. ins.

Body and Frame

Welded steel body, with perimeter-type frame
Wheelbase: 121.0 ins.
Track: front, 63.0 ins., rear, 64.0 ins.
Overall length: 214.6 ins.
Overall width: 79.6 ins.
Overall height: 55.2 ins.
Curb weight: 4360 lbs.

TEMPEST CUSTOM

4-door, 6-passenger sedan

OPTIONS ON CAR TESTED: Automatic transmission, power steering, radio, whitewalls

BASE PRICE: \$2400

PRICE AS TESTED: \$3035.12 (plus tax and license)

ODOMETER READING AT START OF TEST: 2320 miles

RECOMMENDED ENGINE RED LINE: 4800 rpm

PERFORMANCE

ACCELERATION (2 aboard)

0-30 mph.....	6.1 secs.
0-45 mph.....	10.3
0-60 mph.....	16.0

PASSING TIMES AND DISTANCES

40-60 mph.....	9.7 secs., 709 ft.
50-70 mph.....	9.9 secs., 870 ft.

Standing start 1/4-mile 22.5 secs. and 68 mph

Speeds in gears @ shift point

1st	71 mph @ 4800 rpm	2nd	85 mph (observed) @ 3400 rpm
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Speedometer Error on Test Car

Car's speedometer reading	34	51	56	64	75	85
Weston electric speedometer	30	45	50	60	70	80

Observed miles per hour per 1000 rpm in top gear..... 22 mph

Stopping Distances — from 30 mph, 35.5 ft.; from 60 mph, 188.8 ft.

SPECIFICATIONS FROM MANUFACTURER

Engine

OHV, in-line 6
Bore: 3.40 ins.
Stroke: 4.125 ins.
Displacement: 215 cu. ins.
Compression ratio: 8.6:1
Horsepower: 140 @ 4200 rpm
Horsepower per cubic inch: 0.66
Torque: 206 lbs.-ft. @ 2000 rpm
Carburetion: 1 1-bbl.
Ignition: 12-volt coil

Gearbox

2-speed automatic; column lever

Driveshaft

1-piece, open tube

Differential

Hypoid, semi-floating
Standard ratio: 2.56:1

Suspension

Front: Independent ball joint, upper and lower control arms, rubber-mounted, coil springs, direct-acting, two-way shocks, anti-roll bar
Rear: Solid axle; 4-link pivoted control arm, coil springs, direct-acting, two-way shocks

Steering

Recirculating ball bearing, with coaxial power assist
Turning diameter: 40.9 ft.
Turns lock to lock: 4.2

Wheels and Tires

5-lug, steel disc wheels
6.95 x 14 rayon whitewall tires

Brakes

Hydraulic, internal-expanding, 2-shoe, single anchor, cast-iron drums

Front: 9.5-in. dia. x 2.5 ins. wide

Rear: 9.5-in. dia. x 2.0 ins. wide

Effective lining area: 170.7 sq. ins.

Swept drum area: 269.8 sq. ins.

Body and Frame

Welded steel body, perimeter-type frame with swept hips
Wheelbase: 115.0 ins.
Track: front and rear, 58.0 ins.
Overall length: 206.1 ins.
Overall width: 73.1 ins.
Overall height: 54.0 ins.
Curb weight: 3280 lbs.