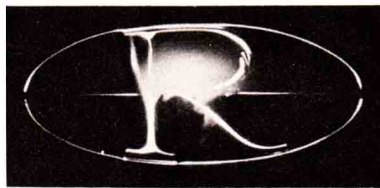


BUICK RIVIERA GS ROAD TEST

THE RIVIERA IS BOUND to change the driving habits of thousands of Americans — they no longer will have a window-vent frame to cling to. □ This may distress many, but Riviera has more than enough that's new to make up for this reversion to the past. Three types of seating are now available: standard bench seats for 6-passenger capacity, optional buckets with center console that holds a new shift handle, and the new "Strato-Bench" notch-back seats with center arm rest and bucket-like looks. □ The dash, also redesigned, uses real gauges plus a new drum-type speedometer. However, we do wish they'd put some markings (like numbers maybe) on gauge faces to permit accurate readings. Except when the tank is "½" full, you can only guesstimate its content. A bin-type glove compartment doesn't spill things on the floor when opened, but, like the trunk, it's a bit small and lacks real carrying capacity. □ The "Strato-Bench" seats proved quite comfortable for long or short trips. There's an optional reclining feature for the passenger's side, and our test car's 4-way power plus tilting steering wheel gave a wide range of driving positions. Head room, leg room, and knee- and foot room were adequate, front and rear, with nice, wide-opening doors and tilting seatbacks to allow easy rear-seat entry and exit. □ These same doors, though, create problems when parked close to another vehicle in a parking lot. They're very heavy and getting in or out in close quarters is a chore. Opening them uphill takes a real effort. □ Looking back for parking or backing turned up another problem — that of rear vision. A smallish rear window, plus large rear-quarter blind spots and optional head rests restrict your view severely. □ But the real joy of owning the Riviera GS (that's "Buickese" for heavy-duty suspension, 15-to-1 quicker steering, a 3.23 performance axle with positive traction, and ornamentation) comes from driving it. It's fast — should top 120 mph easily.



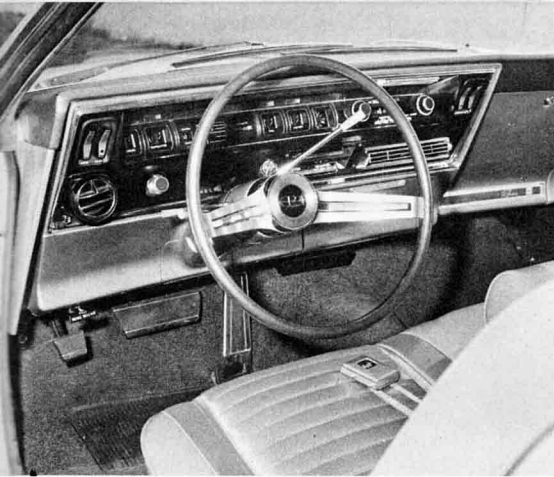
It handles very well for a 4400-pound automobile on a 119-inch wheelbase. And its big, 12-inch brakes, with finned aluminum drums in front and finned cast-iron drums in the rear, give it excellent stopping control. Add to this a set of 8.45 x 15 premium red-line tires with 32 psi up front and 30 psi in back — and you've got a luxurious 6-seater that'll adhere quite well to a winding

road. □ Buick doesn't offer the twin-4-barrel setup as a factory option this year, but 340 is still a lot of horses when all 4 barrels of the single big Rochester are open. Zero to 60 mph in 8.6 seconds and an 84-mph quarter-mile run in 16.4 seconds spell performance with a capital "P." Buick calls this a "tuned" automobile, and it's very well tuned indeed, with all components working toward a common goal — a very uncommon automobile. □ We've mentioned its ability on corners. On fast straightaways it tracks unswervingly, actually feeling better as speed increases. And, when the end of the straight is reached, those husky, finned brakes give a great feeling of security as they bring this 4400-pound fast-back to a straight stop, time after time. □ Whisper-quiet at 80+ mph, the ventless Riviera gives good ventilation via new intake openings and exhaust vents just behind the back window. It works best when all windows are closed. □ A real attention-getter, it attracted admiring glances wherever we went. No one asked if it was a Toronado. Comments such as "sharp, wild, and sexy" were heard about its new styling. We also received many compliments on the car's tastefully executed interior. □ Stretched out to 63 inches, the wider rear track aids handling. The car is also 3 inches longer, 2 inches wider and has gained 2 inches in wheelbase, plus more inside room. □ The Riviera GS is one of the most exciting new cars for 1966. It's a driver's car that handles, stops and goes like it seated two in the open rather than six in relaxing, closed comfort. How about that, sports-car fans?
— R.M.

PHOTOS BY DARRYL NORENBURG



LEFT FRONT TIRE FOLDING OVER IS ONLY INDICATION THAT EDITOR MC VAY IS CORNERING WITH VERVE. GS SUSPENSION REALLY STICKS.



Comprehensive instrumentation is marred by casual calibrations. You're "F-1/2-E."



Riviera shares GM "E" body shell with Olds' Toronado, but Buick stylists managed to make it look tastefully different. No American car has a lower, easier-to-look-over hood.



Thanks to a new perimeter frame, tunnel is much less pronounced than it appears in this picture. Medical opinion is still split on protection provided by optional head rests.



Stylish rear quarter abets looks but not parking ease. Tail lights aren't sequential.

BUICK RIVIERA GRAN SPORT 2-door, 6-passenger coupe

ACCESSORY PRICE LIST

360-hp engine (dealer-inst.)	.....\$254.71
*Automatic transmission	.....std
4-speed transmission—
Overdrive—
Limited-slip differential	.....incl. w/H-D susp.
*Heavy-duty suspension	.....176.82 pkg. (GS)
Whitewall tires	.....std
Disc brakes—
*Power brakes	.....std
*Power steering	.....std
*Power windows	.....105.25
Power seat	.....69.47
*Radio AM	.....88.41
*Radio AM/FM	.....175.24
*Air conditioning	.....421.00
*Tinted glass	.....42.10
*Bucket seats	.....std
*Adjustable steering wheel	.....std
*Clock	.....std
Tachometer	.....47.37
Automatic headlight dimmer—
Automatic speed regulator	.....63.15
Vinyl roof cover—
Head rests (with reclining seat)	.....84.20
*On test car—

Dash (—) — not offered

MANUFACTURER'S SUGGESTED LIST PRICE: \$4424 (incl. taxes, safety equip't & PCV device)

PRICE OF CAR TESTED: \$5503.31 (incl. excise tax, delivery & get-ready charges, but not local tax & license)

MANUFACTURER'S WARRANTY: 24,000 miles and/or 24 months

SPECIFICATIONS FROM MANUFACTURER

ENGINE IN TEST CAR: Ohv V-8
 Bore and stroke: 4.3125 x 3.64 ins.
 Displacement: 425 cu. ins.
 Advertised horsepower: 340 @ 4400 rpm
 Max. torque: 465 lbs.-ft. @ 2800 rpm
 Compression ratio: 10.25:1
 Carburetion: 1 4-bbl

TRANSMISSION TYPE AND FINAL DRIVE RATIO: Automatic, Super-Turbine, 3-speed w/torque converter; 3.23:1

SUSPENSION: Coil springs at each wheel, ball joints at front; tubular shocks used with springs

STEERING: Recirculating ball nut, integral w/power piston

Turning diameter: 44.0 ft., curb to curb

Turns lock to lock: 4.0

WHEELS: Disc type; steel

TIRES: 8.45 x 15 tubeless rayon

BRAKES: Hydraulic, duo-servo, self-adjusting

Diameter of drum: front, 12 ins.; rear, 12 ins.

SERVICE:

Type of fuel recommended: premium-grade

Fuel capacity: 21 gals.

Oil capacity: 4 qts.; with filter, 5 qts.

Shortest lubrication interval: 6000 mi.

Oil- and filter-change interval: 3000 mi.

BODY & FRAME: Cruciform-type construction

Wheelbase: 119.0 ins.

Track: front, 63.5 ins.; rear, 63.0 ins.

Overall: length, 211.2 ins.; width, 78.8 ins.; height, 53.4 ins.

Min. ground clearance: NA

Usable trunk capacity: NA

Curb weight: 4400 lbs.

PERFORMANCE

ACCELERATION (2 aboard)

0-30 mph3.1 secs.

0-50 mph5.2 secs.

0-60 mph8.6 secs.

TIME & DISTANCE TO ATTAIN PASSING SPEEDS

40-60 mph4.5 secs., 330 ft.

50-70 mph5.0 secs., 440 ft.

STANDING-START QUARTER-MILE: 16.40 secs. and 84 mph

BEST SPEEDS IN GEARS @ SHIFT POINTS

1st44 mph @ 4800 rpm

2nd73 mph @ 4700 rpm

3rd114 mph @ 4700 rpm

MPH PER 1000 RPM: 24

SPEEDOMETER ERROR AT 60 MPH: .05%

STOPPING DISTANCES: from 30 mph, 28 ft.; from 60 mph, 154 ft.

NA — Information not available at presstime