



# Pontiac Fiero 2M4

*Lighting a pilot under burning desire.*

Fans of the new and different, rejoice. The P-machine is here at last. Although Pontiac's progeny does bow to convention with seats, doors, a roof, and four wheels, you should be prepared to buckle up for a sharp break from tradition. Consider the particulars:

- The Fiero 2M4 is the antithesis of the corporate-committee car. One man, Hulki Aldikacti, a Turkish-born GM engineer, conceived it as a turning point for the Pontiac Division. He also helped sell the idea to corporate management, directed the design (in an around-the-clock crash program purposely sequestered from Pontiac engineering), supervised the building of the prototypes, and guided the car through the development process.

- The Fiero 2M4 is a mid-engined, rear-wheel-drive two-seater. Detroit has for years toyed with such a layout but has never before manufactured one for sale to the public.

- The Fiero 2M4 is a true sports car. Now that America has two to its credit, the terms "personal-luxury car" and "sporty two-plus-two" will never be quite the same.

- The Fiero 2M4 has bolt-on plastic fenders and an engine bay that is large enough to accommodate a wide variety of powertrains. This combination makes it an ideal blank canvas for future alterations, both inside the factory and out-

side in the ever resourceful aftermarket.

- The Fiero 2M4 is a thrill to look at, a joy to ride in, and a ball to drive. Its visceral appeal will doubtless teeter the loftily perched Corvette.

Be forewarned that this impressive list of character references must be taken with two grains of salt. First of all, our experiences to date are limited to pilot-built cars, which are never a perfect forecast of what the assembly line will deliver. Second, you should realize that the Fiero burns with a steady flame under the engine lid, but it's nothing even close to a raging inferno. There is 92 net horsepower to work with for the time being, clearly not enough to blast this 2600-pound machine into the acceleration record books.

As luck would have it, though, the Fiero does boast several strengths to carry it through the first year of its life while it awaits the significant horsepower upgrades it so richly deserves. Nowhere else can you buy the true exotic look for less than ten grand. What's more, the Fiero is blessed with its share of that all-important factor, fun-to-drive, even though the power factor isn't what it should be. There's also a purposeful exclusion of practicalities. This good-time Charlie is quite happy to entertain you and a buddy while carrying a bag or two of beer and pretzels in the back, but don't ask it to bring the

kids or move that piece of furniture for the mother-in-law. The Fiero deals in charisma, not cargo.

Aldikacti's intention at the very beginning was a sharp departure from the sterile economy cars that sprang forth during Detroit's knee-jerk response to two close-coupled energy crises. For once, the end product of all the high-minded planning sessions has hit the target, if not the bull's-eye. To sell the corporation on this much fun, there were but two prices to pay: early Fieros would have to deliver exemplary fuel efficiency, and, to keep the base price well below \$10,000, all would have to be built with as many existing components