

# Production May Vary

## DeLorean gets back to the future with Alpha5 EV

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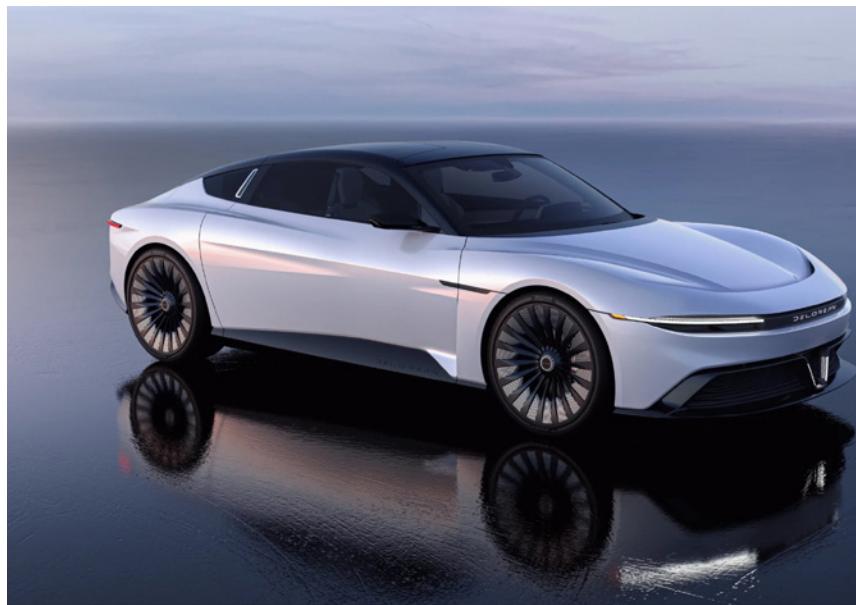
It can't be easy starting a new car company let alone bringing back an old one that ended almost as soon as it began. The original DeLorean Motor Company (DMC) headed by John DeLorean went spectacularly bankrupt in 1982 due to issues of quality among other things. Yet DeLorean once said, "It's inevitable that the company come back," and despite many attempts by various parties to revive the company over the years, DMC is now back to the future of automobiles deep in the heart of Texas. The San Antonio-based company is partnering with Volkswagen-backed Italdesign—which helped develop the iconic DMC-12—to build the Alpha5. The new electric vehicle will retain some of the hallmark design features, such as rear-window louvers and gullwing doors.

Although John DeLorean is perhaps most remembered for the car *Back to the Future* made famous, in the early 1960s he was Detroit's golden child. As chief engineer at Pontiac, he transformed the division from a practical and conservative carmaker into a vanguard of muscle by dropping a 6.4-liter V8 engine into a Pontiac Tempest, and thus, the GTO was born, one of the most legendary cars of all time.

However, ironically, when launching out on his own—production of his namesake car began in Northern Ireland in 1981—drivers voiced their dismay from the get-go. While the DMC-12 looked amazing, anyone who drove one quickly discovered how woefully slow they were. The engine produced a scant 130 hp and the stainless-steel paneling that gave it such a singular appearance was so heavy it could only travel indolently from 0–60 in 10.5 seconds.

Low performance wasn't all. The gullwing doors would stick, the stainless-steel body was impossible to keep clean, and even the dye from the floor mats would bleed out of the fabric. In other words, the car was a nightmare inside, out, and under the hood. Absent a market for slow, expensive, and undependable cars, DeLorean ceased production after just three model years.

There are a lot of asterisks surrounding the performance and design of the forthcoming DeLorean Alpha5, but time will tell. According to their website, "Actual production



vehicle performance may differ slightly. Some range and charge times are preliminary manufacturer estimates based on the EPA test cycle and are not official EPA values. All official EPA values are noted. Vehicle range varies with conditions including weather, driving behavior, vehicle condition and load, and battery age."

To be sure, the company indicates the car goes from 0–88 mph in 4.35 seconds, which of course is the speed required to activate a flux capacitor were one to equip the Alpha5 for time travel. And no need for plutonium from the corner drugstore or to be outfitted with a Mr. Fusion Home Energy Reactor for the 1.21 "jigowatts," the Alpha5 has a 100-kWh battery with a 300-mile range.

While no DMC factory has been selected, the company announced that only 9,531 of the Alpha5 will be made, exactly one more than DeLorean built of the DMC-12. CNET estimates a price of around \$125,000. The Alpha5 premiered at Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance Award ramp on August 18 and the Concept Lawn on August 21 and was publicly revealed on August 29, 2022. DeLorean expects Alpha5 to be in production sometime in 2024. The number 88 is also the initial number of EV units planned for production, which will apparently be tied to NFTs in some way. As I said, it can't be easy starting a new car company. If that is all too much gimmick for you, there is always the 1:64 scale version available from Hot Wheels, but like the full-scale version, Mattel, too, warns, "Production items may vary from the photos shown."

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