



# Birchwood GM's PALAY PRESS

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Michael Palay

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In August 2008 the Winnipeg Free Press printed 2 very entertaining articles. The first BUY CANADIAN, by Trevor Lautens, then DOMESTIC IS FOREIGN, a rebuttal by Kelly Taylor. Since I'm able to sell vehicles from all of the Birchwood Auto Groups' dealerships I found the articles very, very relevant. The following are some excerpts from these 2 articles.

I believe it's time to "buy Canadian."



The fact of the matter is that the quality of North American vehicles has vastly improved in recent years. Also value for money. Lauten says that his "2006 Pontiac Montana, a seven-passenger van that can swallow pets, cottage stuff and seven people, with auto transmission, air conditioning, power this and that etc., cost a nickel under \$20,000. A bargoon."

He goes on to say "Like my 2004 Sunfire, it's hugely underrated by the car snobs - led by hugely overrated Consumer Reports, which uses those intimidating bar graphs to demonstrate how objectively authoritative it is. Balls. It's always reeked of automotive ideology, and I have copies back before 1960 to prove it."

CR commonly notes the exquisite finish of imports, compared with -- well, I randomly opened its 2007 auto guide to the Pontiac G6: "Interior quality is unimpressive, with cheap and flimsy materials." Cheap "plastic" is a CR obsession. Right, and how about mere drive-train durability, in which the Big Three, (GM, Ford, and Chrysler) excel?

But let's warmly concede this: Japanese vehicles, initially a joke, slowly taught fat, arrogant Detroit a fat, humbling lesson.

Not just in the executive suite. A few decades ago sullen Big Three workers weren't merely indifferent about quality. Some actively sabotaged cars on the assembly line, just for laughs. They'd put a nut into an enclosed space and take glee that angry customers and frustrated service staffs went mad figuring out where the rattle originated.

The shrewd buyer checked the manufacturing date. She avoided vehicles built Mondays, when assembly-line workers stumbled in with weekend drink and drug hangovers, and Fridays, when they were impatient to get into such stuff. Even today I get some clients asking if I can check what day this certain vehicle was built. Yeeesh!

Pride? Workmanship? Innovation? Who cared? Some did, doubtless. But the Big Three had the domestic market sewn up. Complacency was their most obvious product.

But it says here that the Shriveled Three have been punished enough. If you're in the market, my advice is: **Buy domestic.**

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## Did you say you need a Hybrid? I don't think so!

Let me introduce you to 3 GM vehicles that give you quality, reliability, performance, and a minimum of 34 mpg in the city, or for you people that have caught on to the new way that would be 6.9 litres per 100 kms. Oh yea, did I say they sell as quickly as they land on our dealer lot. So call me for an appointment to test drive these great vehicles.

## The 2009 Pontiac G3 Wave - Sedan or Hatchback



What's new for Pontiac's most affordable car for 2009? Well, for one thing there's a new name - G3 Wave. Fresh new styling on G3 Wave models. A more powerful engine. Available OnStar®. It carries one of the lowest sticker prices of any new car in Canada. Something else that hasn't changed: the lighthearted attitude that makes G3 Wave a blast to drive. Put it all together and you've got a car you can feel good about for all the right reasons.

## The 2009 Pontiac G5 - Sedan or Coupe



G5's standard 2.2 L ECOTEC engine doesn't just generate more power for 2009. It's also significantly more fuel-efficient, thanks in part to the addition of high-tech variable valve timing (VVT). VVT adjusts the opening and closing times of the intake and exhaust valves to help optimize efficiency at all operating speeds. If you're searching for an awesome value, G5 Special Edition is awfully hard to beat. Anti-lock brakes, aluminum-styled wheels, remote keyless entry system, air conditioning and power windows, door locks and mirrors are all standard. Yet G5 Special Edition is still amazingly affordable. No wonder our competition is going crazy.



The herd media are, as usual, rushing in the same direction and tossing around the feverish language of extremism and self-fulfilling prophecy - SUV and truck sales have "collapsed" and "nobody" is buying domestic vehicles. The towering urban bias ignores both Canada's rural winter realities and bigger families, both in number and physique, and we are all supposed to feel appropriately guilt.

Lauten has a blatant distrust with most of the automotive media. I tend to agree with him. Like other cliques, they tend to share a bias: They're enthusiasts -- wannabe racers who rave about cornering and "European" handling that few drivers need, hot about the new, cold about the old (last year's or time-tested cars), and flatly are pushers of sales and purveyors of discontent in your present steed.

All of this has a silver cloud for many drivers. If you estimate that you have two to five more years of low-mileage driving ahead of you, look hard at the discounted domestic pre-owned market for excellent value.

Kelly Taylor of the *Winnipeg Free Press* says Lauten was correct in one way: "All the Big Three carmakers, particularly **General Motors**, have made enormous strides in improving the quality, drivability, durability and desirability of their vehicles. Pontiac's G6, for one, is every bit as good a car as you can get from a foreign brand".

In short, buying a car from the Big Three is no longer a sympathy play.

"The interesting thing about saying to 'buy domestic' is that the top two selling cars in Canada are both built in Canada," said Toyota Canada managing director Stephen Beatty, referring to the Honda Civic and Toyota Corolla, in that order.

Which is domestic? The Chevy built in Korea? The Ford built in Mexico? Or the Suzuki built in Canada?

The list of foreign carmakers who build vehicles on North American soil is longer than Lauten may think: Volkswagen, BMW, Mercedes-Benz, Hyundai, Toyota, Honda, Mazda, Subaru, Suzuki, Mitsubishi and Nissan all produce, on average, more cars than they import.

Colin Fisher, spokesman for Honda Manufacturing in Alliston, said that with few exceptions, a Honda or Acura vehicle sold in Canada is made in North America. Civic, Ridgeline, Accord, CR-V, Pilot and Acura MDX -- the heavy hitters in Honda's Canadian sales -- are all built in North America.

"Any carmaker who doesn't think its first job is building product the public wants is making a big mistake," he said. "If you lean on a 'buy domestic' campaign, it's a crutch and it weakens you."

**My advice to you. Buy the car that best meets your needs. The manufacturer who doesn't meet the needs of enough customers has only itself to blame.**

**Call me Michael Palay to go over your vehicle needs. I can be your one stop shop at the Birchwood Auto Group WHICH NOW INCLUDES:**



## The 2009 Pontiac Vibe - AWD or FWD



**Now this is a car. I am currently driving one as a demo and it is fun, roomy, and runs on fumes!**

It's full of features like OnStar, ABS brakes, 6 airbags and StabiliTrak™ electronic stability control system with traction control plus you get flat-folding rear seats and available flat-folding front passenger seats so you've always got a surprising amount of room to spare. And once you're in, it's time to put the Variable Valve Timing powertrain technology to work. It's designed to be highly efficient, and that means good fuel consumption. And it is a blast to drive be it in FWD or the AWD models!

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