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Car of the Week: 1962 Chevrolet Corvair Monza

May 27, 2009

The infamous Chevrolet Corvair probably deserved a better fate than it suffered. One high point of the Corvair era definitely worth remembering is the introduction of the sporty 1962 Monza Spyder.



1962 Corvair Monza convertible

Much-maligned over the years, the Chevrolet Corvair probably deserved a better fate than it suffered. As legions of loyal fans have discovered, Corvairs are agile, spirited, stylish and fun cars! Today, despite Corvair's somewhat unconventional mechanicals and spotty reputation, a well-organized club and parts network brings practical and economical ownership of these rewarding vehicles to virtually any enthusiast.

The Corvair was introduced for 1960 as an import fighter, and it's no accident that the car was more than a little similar to the dreaded "German Beetle" that it was intended to combat. Both were powered by rear-mounted, horizontally opposed, aluminum air-cooled engines with their luggage compartments located up front where most other cars' engines would be. There was a significant difference in size, however. The Corvair engine had six



cylinders as opposed to the VW's four, and it rode on a 108-inch wheelbase platform that stretched a full 180 inches overall. It was a compact

by American standards, but it was a large car for most of the rest of the world.

1962 Corvair Monza Convertible

Originally offered only a two-door coup and a four-door sedan, the Corvair added a conventional station wagon model in 1961, along with a van-type wagon and three half-ton trucks. Despite this, Chevrolet product planners tried to convince the public that the Corvair could be a sports car as well as a economy compact — something that was seemingly missing from the equation.



1962 Corvair Monza Spyder convertible

The gap was filled for 1962 with the introduction of a convertible in the Monza Series 900 line. This satisfied enthusiasts who felt that a sports car must be open to the elements. At the heart of any true sports car, however, is a favorable power-to-weight ration. Chevy's answer to this was the Spyder option, available on both Monza coupes and convertibles. The focus of this package was a turbocharged version of the Corvair engine that produced 150 hp and was not offered with air conditioning or automatic transmission. While the Monza Spyder was actually an option package, many view the Spyder as a separate model.

1962 was also notable for being Corvair's highest production model year. More than

306,000 were produced — about 51 times the number for its final production year, 1969.

NOTE 1: Figure in parentheses indicate the number of each body style equipped with the turbocharged six. These figures are included in the Monza series 900 body style production totals of coupes and convertibles.



Table CORVAIR MONZA SPYDER

Series Number	Body/Style Number	Body Type & Seating	Factory Price	Shipping Weight	Production Total
900	0927	2-dr Clb Cpe-4P	2569	2490	(6,894)
900	0967	2-dr Conv-4P	2779	2675	(2,574)

1962 Corvair Monza convertible

ENGINES

(BASE SIX) Horizontally opposed six. Overhead valve. Aluminum block. Displacement: 145 cid. Bore and stroke: 3.43 X 2.60 inches. Compression ratio: 8.0:1. Brake hp: 80 at 4400 rpm. Four main bearings. Hydraulic valve lifters Carburetor: Two Rochester one-barrel Model 702101.

(MONZA POWERGLIDE SIX) An 84 hp (at 4400 rpm) engine was used with Powerglide-equipped Monzas only. It came with a compression ratio of 9.0:1.

(MONZA SPYDER TURBO SIX) Horizontally opposed six. Overhead valve. Aluminum block. Displacement: 145 cid. Bore and stroke: 3.43 x 2.60 inches. Compression ratio: 8.0:1. Brake hp: 150 at 4400 rpm. Four main bearings. Hydraulic valve lifters. Induction: Carter YH one-barrel sidedraft carburetor Model 3817245 with turbocharger.



1962 Corvair Monza coupe

CHASSIS FEATURES

Wheelbase: (all models) 108 inches. Overall length: (all models) 180 inches. Front tread: (all models) 54.5 inches. Rear tread: (all models) 54.5 inches. Tires: (station wagons) 7.00 x 13; (passenger) 6.50 x 13.

COLLECTOR VALUES:

1962 Corvair

Series 700 Monza

Four-door sedan

No. 1 condition \$12,100

No. 2 \$8,460

No. 3 \$5,450

No. 4 \$2,420

Two-door coupe

No. 1 condition: \$13,600

No. 2: \$9,520

No. 3: \$6,120

No. 4: \$2,720

Two-door convertible

No. 1 condition: \$15,000

No. 2 \$10,500

No. 3: \$6,750

No. 4: \$3,000

Four-door station wagon

No. 1 condition: \$12,200

No. 2: \$8,540

No. 3: \$5,490

No. 4: \$2,440

Series 900 Monza Spyder

Two-door coupe

No. 1 condition: \$14,100

No. 2: \$9,870

No. 3: \$6,350

No. 4: \$2,820

Two-door convertible

No. 1 condition: \$18,000

No. 2: \$12,600

No. 3: \$8,100

No. 4: \$3,600

NOTE: Add \$1,600 for K.O. wire wheels. Add \$1,000 for air conditioning.