

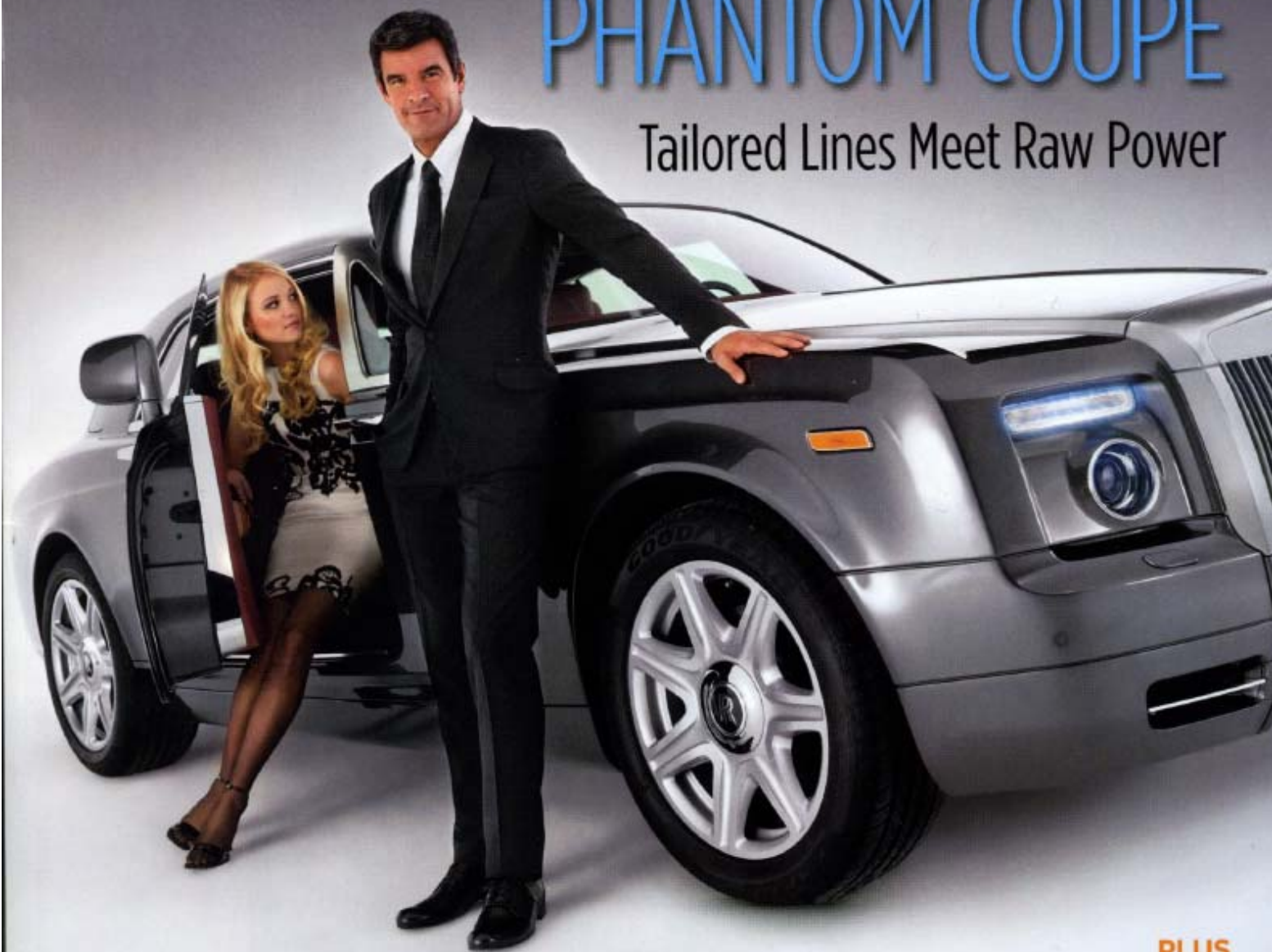
THE \$1.2 MILLION MERCEDES-BENZ SLR McLaren 722 GT HITS THE ROAD

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A Manhattan boutique offers a feast for the feet. . . .

STEVEN TAFFEL WANTS you to stop suppressing your footwear fetish. "Men enjoy great shoes as much as women do; they just don't talk about it," says Taffel, who recently opened *Leffot* (www.leffot.com), a men's footwear boutique in Manhattan's West Village. The shop carries seven European brands

of handmade shoes (priced from \$610 to \$1,315), including the first U.S. offerings from English shoemaker Gaziano & Girling and the French brand Aubercy. Taffel, a fashion-industry veteran who previously worked at Bottega Veneta and Prada, serves customers himself and will help design custom-order shoes. His shop

resembles a dining room, with a 14-foot-long, solid-ash table sitting under a crystal chandelier and displaying footwear like an array of delectable treats. Chairs covered in elegant white slipcovers are set against the room's walls. "It's meant to be inviting," Taffel says of the room's decor, "but masculine at the same time." . . .

Leffot, in Manhattan's West Village, presents a tasteful selection of handmade shoes from seven European brands.

Porsche makes quicker work of the Carrera, Ducati gets it write. . . .



DIALING UP THE 911 * The Porsche 911's soap-bar-shaped body seemingly has not changed since 1963, when the first models rolled out of Stuttgart. Although they, too, look like their predecessors, the 2009 **Porsche 911 Carrera** and **Carrera S** (www.porsche.com) coupes and cabriolets embody changes both subtle and substantial. The headlights and taillights now are LEDs, the front air intakes are bigger, and the side mirrors have been revised for a larger field of view. More significant are the alterations to the cars' mechanicals. A direct fuel-injection system—first seen in last year's Cayenne models—pushes the Carrera's 3.6-liter engine to 345 hp and the Carrera S' 3.8-liter motor to 385 hp (an increase of 20 hp and 30 hp, respectively). Paired with an optional 7-speed, dual-clutch transmission in the Carrera S, the latter engine helps the car (which starts at \$86,200) accelerate from zero to 60 mph in 4.1 seconds and reach a top speed of 188 mph. . . .

BIKE WRITER * The **Ducati Corse** (www.aquilabrands.com) is a limited-edition pen made by an Italian brand, named for an Italian motorcycle marque, and inspired by the feats of a young Australian. That Aussie is 22-year-old Casey Stoner, the current MotoGP champion, who won the title while riding an 800cc Ducati Desmosedici racing prototype. "The pen draws inspiration from elements of the Ducati bike—in particular, the piston and the paint," says Giuseppe Aquila, CEO of the pen's maker, Aquila Brands. Indeed, hidden in the barrel, nib holder, and blind cap are tiny model pistons, and the pen's fiery-red paint is exactly the same as that used on the racing bikes. The nib of the fountain pen and the caps of both the fountain and roller-ball models are engraved with MotoGP's laurel-wreath logo; the Ducati logo appears on both the barrel and the clip of the pen. Aquila Brands has produced 500 fountain pens (\$1,400) and 500 roller-ball models (\$850). They are available in gold or silver finish, and each is numbered. However,

number 27 is not available for purchase; it already belongs to Stoner, whose racing bib bears that numeral. . . .

VIVA RIVA * Italian boatbuilder Riva selected this month's Cannes International Boat Show as the setting for the launch of the **Riva 92' Duchessa** (www.riva-yacht.com). The Duchessa model sports a distinctive fiberglass-topped flybridge and striking exterior lines—elements implemented by the team at *Officina Italiana Design*, which longtime Riva designer Mauro Micheli and his business partner, Sergio Beretta, founded in 1994. "For us it is important to give to each boat an individual character," notes Beretta. "But it is also important that they are recognizable as part of the Riva family." The Duchessa has four guest cabins and three crew cabins, and two 2,211 hp engines provide the boat with a range of 415 miles and a top speed of more than 33 mph. Orders for the roughly \$11 million yacht are filled through the end of next year. . . .

Porsche's 911 Carrera S and Aquila's Ducati Corse pens.



A new Hawker takes flight, an Adirondack resort rises from the ashes. . . .



HIGHLY ANTICIPATED ✦ Though it will not begin deliveries until 2010, Hawker Beechcraft already has received more than 70 orders for the next model in its line of light business jets, the **Premier II** (www.hawkerbeechcraft.com). The fuselage of the \$7.4 million aircraft, which is made of a lightweight composite, will

make it one of the most durable and efficient jets in the Wichita, Kan., company's fleet. Twin turbofan engines will carry six passengers to a cruising speed of 535 mph and a maximum altitude of 45,000 feet. The Premier II will have a range of about 1,700 miles and a time-to-climb of 14 minutes—a three-minute

improvement over its predecessor, the Premier IA. A Rockwell Collins Pro Line 21 avionics suite will enable single-pilot operation. . . .

ADIRONDACK RENAISSANCE ✦ A 2005 fire destroyed the circa-1882 **Lake Placid Lodge** (www.lakeplacidlodge.com), but the Adirondack Mountains landmark has been rebuilt, and the resort is reopening its main lodge this month. The new structure retains the original's rustic charm, with fieldstone fireplaces, exposed beams, and log-and-twigg furniture throughout. Suites, however, are now much larger than they were, and each has its own covered porch. The setting is as pristine as ever, nestled on the water's edge amid pines and hiking trails in upstate New York. Guests in the lodge's restaurant enjoy views of Lake Placid and Whiteface Mountain while dining on local fish and game. The resort has added a 34-foot mahogany Hacker-Craft to its fleet of boats, which already included a pontoon for evening cocktail cruises. . . .

FROM THE ROBB CELLAR ✦ Fine wines & spirits worthy of a place in your private collection.

IN THE LATE 1960s and early 1970s, when Robert Drouhin—then head of Joseph Drouhin, one of Burgundy's most prestigious domaines—became interested in expanding the family's production to Chablis, the Vaudésir appellation suffered from neglect that had begun with the French phylloxera epidemic of the late 19th century. Today, after investment and renovation, the Drouhin parcel in Vaudésir is planted with 30-year-old Chardonnay vines that extract from the calcareous soil lovely mineral notes, while the vineyard's exposure imbues the wines with a pleasing roundness. The **Joseph Drouhin Chablis-Vaudésir Grand Cru 2006** glows as yellow-green as a peridot, while its nose offers scents of jasmine, kiwi, and banana. The palate adds a touch of stewed rhubarb

and caramel, before the finish dissolves into cool mineral. (\$83) www.drouhin.com

WINEMAKER Chris Carpenter has for some time contemplated adding a fourth wine to the trio of single-vineyard Cabernet Sauvignons that define Napa Valley's Lokoya label. His creations are admired among collectors with a taste for concentrated, muscular, dark Cabernets that express the styles of their mountain appellations. The Diamond Mountain vineyard, for example, tends toward an accessible fruit profile, while Howell Mountain is more complex, with pronounced yet supple

tannins. Mount Veeder, the most potent of the lot, combines dense black fruit, intense minerality, and massive tannins wrapped in a velvety texture. Though intrigued by the Spring Mountain appellation, Carpenter wondered if its softer take on Cabernet would complement the other Lokoyas. His experiments with a grower on Spring Mountain, however, paid off in the 2005 vintage. The **Lokoya Spring Mountain Cabernet Sauvignon 2005** is a wine of great finesse and presence, with a nose of rose petals, cherry blossoms, and coffee, and a palate that ranges from black cherry and red currant to creamy toffee. (\$200) www.lokoya.com



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IN RARE FORM * Jewelry designer **Nina Runsdorf** (212.382.1243) scours the diamond market for nontraditional stones—thin slices or rough rocks—that give her pieces a modern look. “Organic-looking diamonds lend themselves to a more casual jewelry style,” says Runsdorf, who was formerly an accessories designer for several fashion houses, including Ralph Lauren. Her fashion background is apparent in novel design concepts such as her diamond fringe ring, which is composed of about 50 small diamond beads attached to concealed wires that allow the stones to move back and forth, like the fringe on a dress. Runsdorf started her business in 2005 by creating custom-made designs at her New York studio and then introducing her eponymous collection of pieces, which range from about \$5,000 to \$500,000. . . .

SHOCK ABSORBER * As a publicity stunt, early-20th-century watchmaker Paul Wyler once demonstrated the durability of his timepieces by tossing one of them off the Eiffel Tower. In the rose-gold **Wyler Genève Tourbillon Big Date** (www.wylergeneve.com), the newly relaunched Wyler Genève firm has tripled the number of shock-resistant systems that its namesake’s old watches contained. (Nevertheless, the company has no plans to make dramatic demonstrations of the durability of the \$190,200 timepiece.) Wyler’s original design employed a flexible balance wheel—the timekeeping center of the watch—with curved arms that acted like springs. Wyler Genève has incorporated this feature into all its new pieces, which also sport an intricate 17-part case that further dampens shocks. Wyler Genève movements, including that of the new tourbillon, are suspended in titanium capsules, which are themselves sandwiched in carbon-fiber composite between the front and back plates of the cases and supported by springs. BNB Concept, creators of the brand’s tourbillon movement, added an even

higher level of protection by mounting the cage (containing the timekeeping element) on springs instead of the usual stout bridges. These constructions give the tourbillon an interesting, functional appearance that you will appreciate, whether or not you choose to fling the watch across the room to see if they work. **B**

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Nina Runsdorf’s diamond fringe ring and Wyler Genève’s Tourbillon Big Date.

SELECT SMOKE * Recommended additions to your humidor.



CIGAR CONGLOMERATE Altadis has augmented some of its top brands with Cabinet Selección blends, which are made with specially selected and aged tobaccos. The **Por Larranaga Cabinet Selección** is the best of this elite breed, offering a wonderfully smooth, subtly spicy taste, a fresh, foresty nose, and a flavor that never bites. The leaves are mostly of Nicaraguan origin, with a touch of Honduran filler added for balance. The rough-looking wrapper does not particularly please the eye, but the intricate blend of tastes more than makes up for it. Five sizes are available, the largest and most

satisfying of which is the 6 x 56 Toro shown here. (\$7 each) www.altadisusa.com

THE NEW Andre Garcia Pack & Go cigar case displays impeccable form and offers flawless function. A zippered section at the bottom conceals a humidification element; vents allow its moisture to reach the cedar-lined cigar compartment. The zippered section can also hold a lighter and a cutter. The company says the leather that covers the case is of the same grade as that used in luxury cars. The case can be crafted to fit your preferred cigar size. (\$250 to \$350) www.andregarciacases.com

BOTTOM: CARIBBEAN STUDIOS; WWW.COMBINATION-OS.COM