



ARISTO **PT8** MANIFESTO

The JZS147 Aristo was more often treated as a VIP car than a performance car in Japan

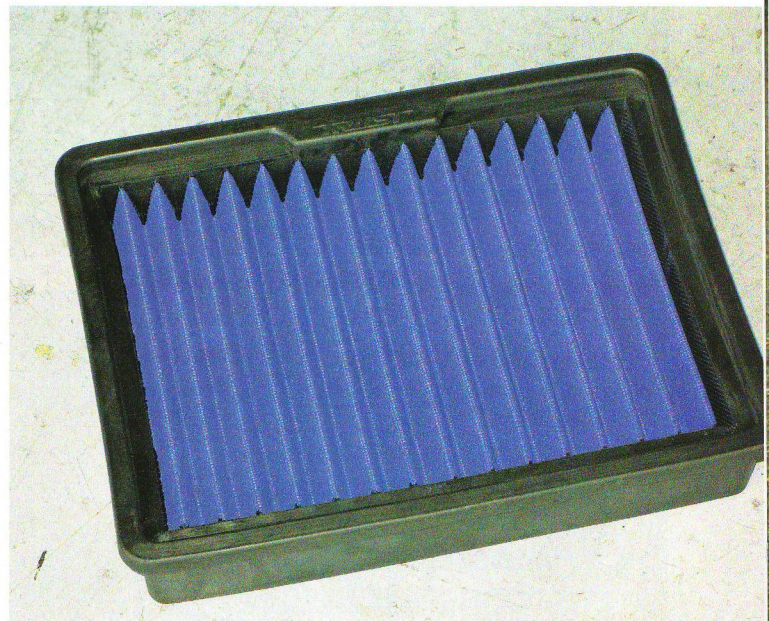
Story by Ben Ellis Photos from HPI archives

It's strange how this happened, but despite coming with the twin-turbo 2JZ-GTE engine, the Aristo was never viewed as a performance car in Japan. While the JZX90 Mark II and Chaser were popular to modify for drift, racing etc, the Aristo had more of an older driver's image, so most cars you see in Japan are not very modified. If anything, the VIP style is more popular on this model than a performance approach to modifying the car.

Having only automatic transmission available probably had a lot to do with the Aristo's image problem, but we are finding it very well suited to modification as a sports sedan. This issue we've only got a couple of small changes happening on our own car, so we've rounded up some of the aftermarket parts we've seen used in Japan, so you can get some perspective on the model. Though

we have no intention of fitting any body kit to our car, we've found a number that are available in Japan. They range from a deeper lip for the front spoiler to full VIP kits that replace both bumpers, the skirts, the rear wing and even the panels on the doors. Making the lower part of the door sit out further to meet the skirt gives more of an impression of low ride height. For a VIP fan, this is the most important aspect of the car's looks.

If you're trying to decide on wheels for an Aristo, the pics here give you a good idea how different sizes will look. We feel that 18s are the best compromise, although for the best looks, 18s on the front and 19s on the rear is a perfect balance for the wheel arch sizes. To be specific, if we were ordering a full set for our car, we'd want 18x9 +37 fronts and 19x10.5 +40 rears.



Our air filter was looking pretty second-hand, so we ordered this Trust replacement panel

As far as performance upgrades from Japan go, there are only a couple of intercooler and exhaust options available. Fujitsu and HKS still have bolt-on exhaust systems, but at the price you may prefer to have something custom-made here. Trust has an intercooler kit, but it isn't the easiest thing to fit, so Otomoto developed a KKR intercooler kit in Australia which doesn't require any metal cutting. Otomoto have also released two variations of HSD coilovers specifically for the Aristo. You can also order Aristo coilovers from the major Japanese brands such as Tein and HKS.

For brake upgrades, it is easy to get braided brake lines and better pads from Japan. These parts are generally the same as for the local GS300 Lexus. You could also upgrade to later-model JZA80 four-piston calipers, but bear in mind that these require more wheel clearance. Beyond

that, there isn't much available, as the majority of turbo upgrades and so on for the 2JZ-GTE are designed to fit a JZA80. Some of them may fit on the Aristo too, but you may also find that some modifications are needed to make them fit.

There are also no plug-in ECU options for the JZS147, so you will need to look at a wire-in full computer or piggy-back. Hopefully the growing popularity of the model in Australia will encourage one of the local ECU companies to come up with an easier option.

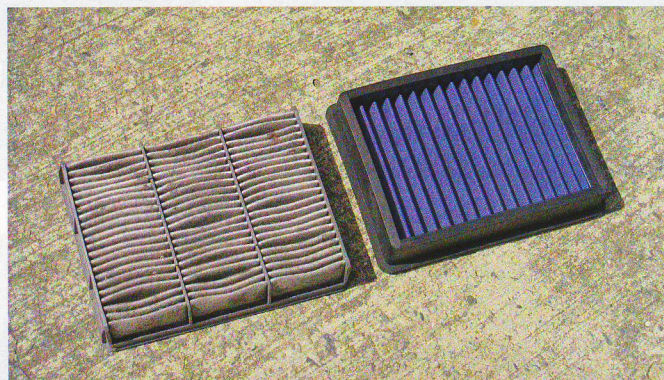
Next issue we will be getting started on a twin-turbo upgrade for the Aristo, which will hopefully be viable for the JZA80 too. This will be available from Otomoto as a kit later this year. Otomoto will have more JZS147 products from Japan available soon, so check out the website for more information: www.otomoto.com.au 



17-inch wheels look a bit weak on the Aristo, especially at standard ride height



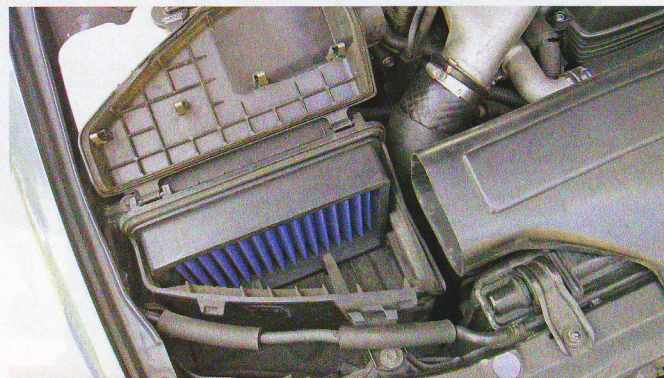
With the right size 18s there is room for reasonable dish at the rear, but not the front



The Toyota filter is actually not paper, but a cotton-style element



19-inch wheels fit okay, but you will have to remove part of the plastic inner guard



The Trust panel slots straight in and gives slightly more inlet noise, but no measurable performance gain



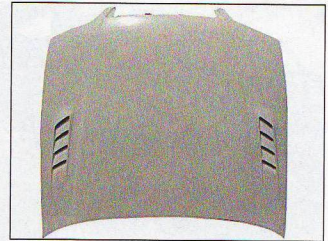
20-inch wheels are really too big for the wheel arches and limit how much you can lower the car



With the right offset you don't need the car too low for the wheels to 'fill-out' the guards



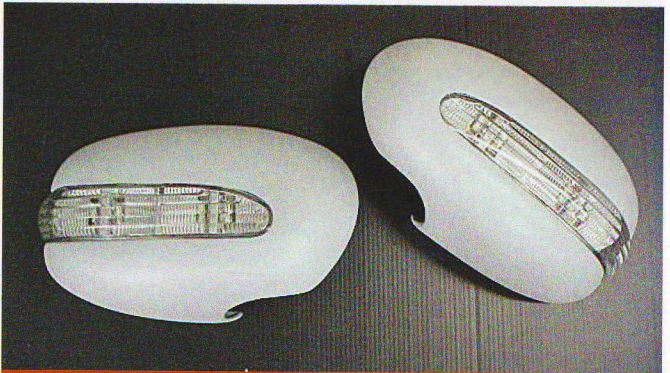
You can also get chrome eyelids for the headlights, which you could paint body-colour if you prefer



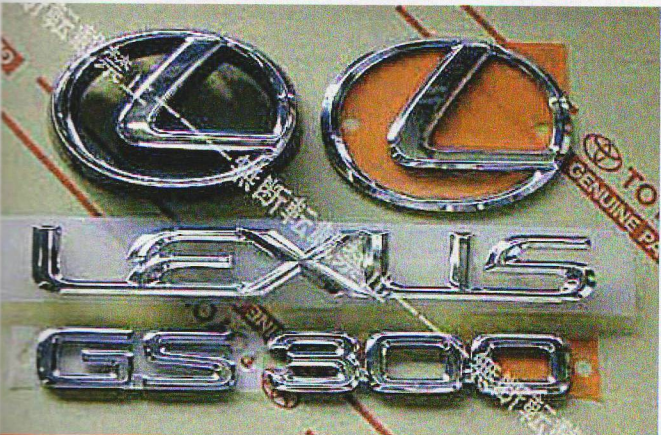
You can get a vented FRP bonnet too, though we can't see why you would want to



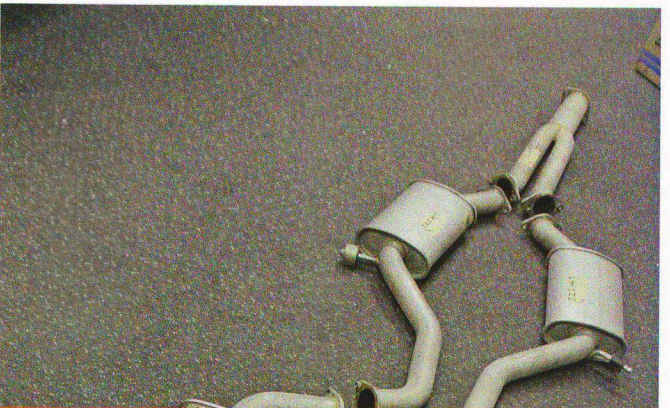
Even 18s can look too small with a big VIP bodykit



Skypass make these Mercedes-style mirror covers with built-in indicators



This shape was sold in America as a Lexus GS300, so the badges are an easy retro-fit



The exhaust we put on our car is similar to the Fujitsubo, but only the mufflers are stainless



A company called Hiro makes tinted tail-light lenses, but these are most likely illegal in Australia



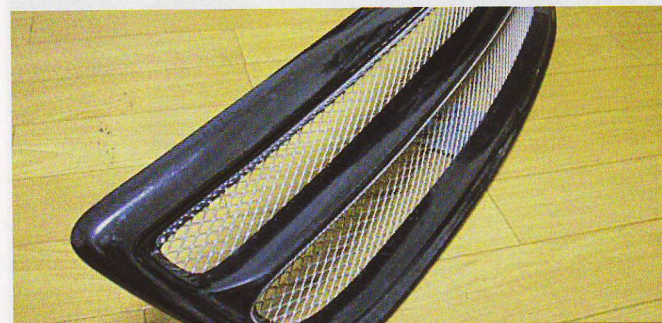
A VIP kit company called Insurance makes this full VIP package, which includes lower door panels



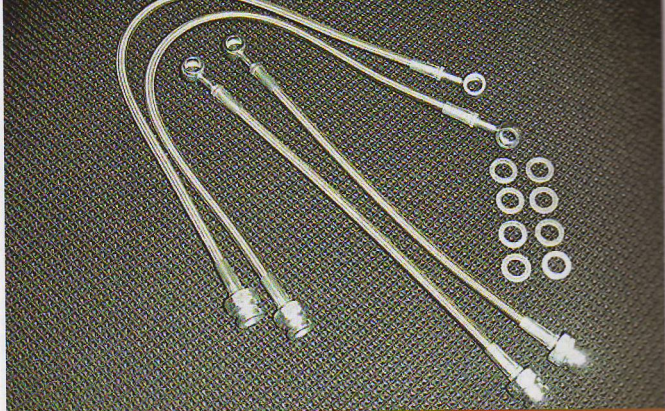
This very deep spoiler is typical VIP style and very impractical, especially on a lowered car



This is the Samurai rear bumper with late-model tail lights



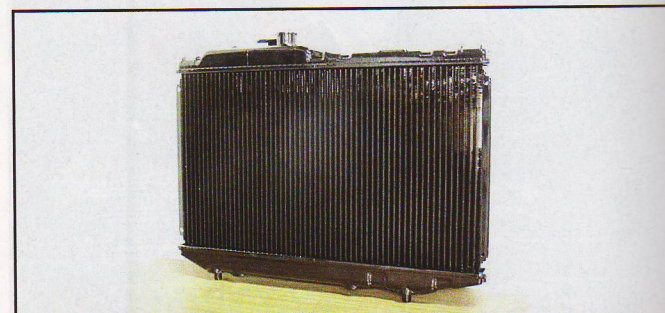
This TRD-style sports grille is available from various suppliers



A number of Japanese companies make braided brake lines for the Aristo. We chose APP



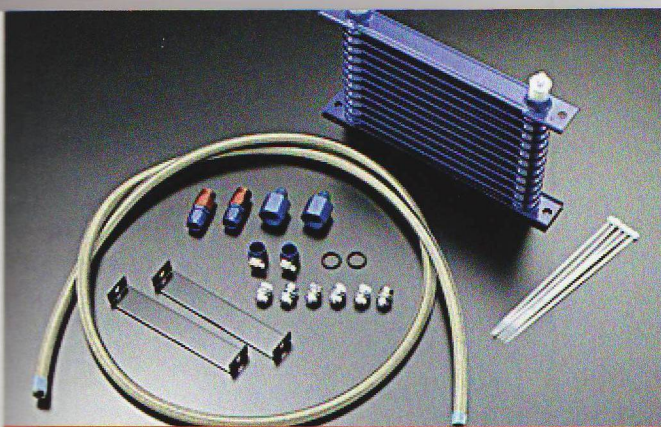
We also upgraded our pads with these Acre 'Super Fighter' pads, which we've been very happy with



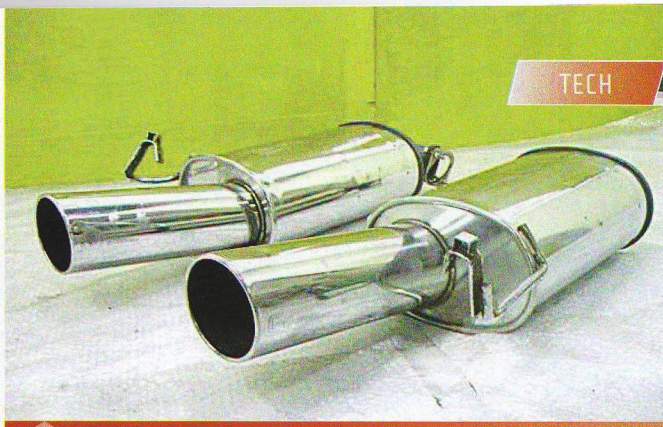
Koyo have twin and triple-core radiators for the Aristo, but only the twin core is suitable for automatic transmission unless you have a separate ATF cooler



This simple body kit from Progress looks good when combined with very low suspension. Note the larger diameter wheels on the rear

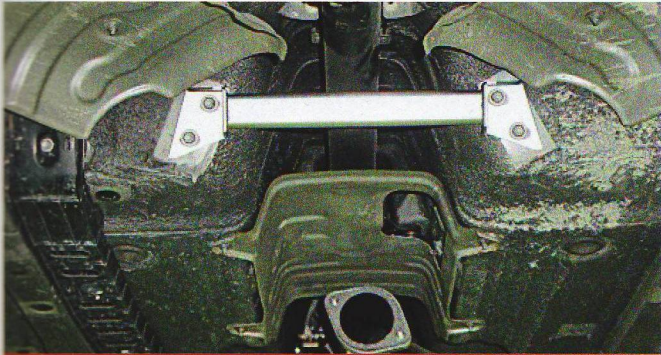


Trust make an upgraded automatic transmission fluid cooler, but you could also make one locally from off-the-shelf parts

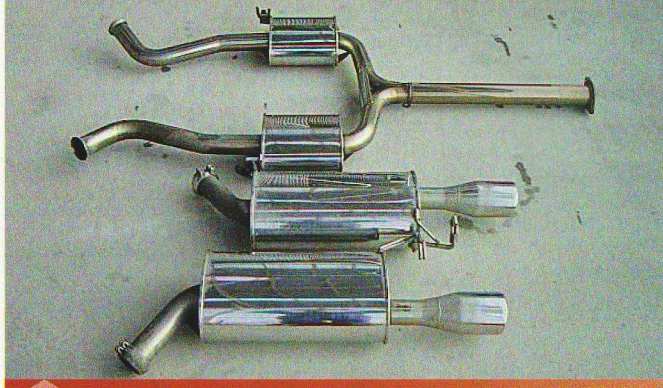


TECH

Big, 'erect' muffler tips are the go for a VIP look



This under-floor brace for the transmission tunnel is an interesting product available in Japan



This Fujitsubo stainless exhaust is one of the best on the market, offering a good power increase without too much noise

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When my dad was considering buying a second runabout car, he asked for my advice. "You should get a Toyota Aristo", I said. I jumped straight on the phone to Mick Martin at SVI Imports in QLD. What this guy doesn't know about importing isn't worth knowing and no sooner had I discussed the requirements that I had 3 separate emails, each with a different Aristo. All were grade 4 cars with even the smallest dent or scratch noted. My Dad settled on the silver car (pictured) and went through the hassle free process of purchasing his first import through SVI. The buying process was quick and easy with SVI giving my dad regular updates as to where the car was in transit and when it would be ready for compliance. The whole process took less than a month and as you can see my dad is one happy customer. A big thanks goes out to Mick Martin and everybody at SVI Imports for finding and delivering such an excellent car. If you're in the market for a new car log onto

www.svi.com.au
 Grant Warne, Managing Editor of Zoom magazine