

## [Savvy Trucks & Toys]

# 2023 ALFA ROMEO TONALE REPRESENTS SEVERAL INDUSTRY “FIRSTS”

By Beverly & Steve Smirnis, the Savvy Drivers

**T**he iconic brand's first compact SUV remains true to the DNA of noble Italian sportsmanship. A “GT Line” running from the rear to the headlights, recalls the forms of the 1960s Giulia GT Junior, while the full and elegant volume of the vehicle is reminiscent of iconic Alfa Romeo models, such as the 8C Competizione. The front features the “Trilobo” front grille with the distinctive Alfa Romeo “Scudetto” shield.

The “3+3” full LED headlight design evokes the proud look of the SZ Zagato or the Proteo concept car. Developed in conjunction with Marelli, the three modules make up a unique frontline for the car and simultaneously provide daylight, dynamic turn signals and a “welcome and goodbye” feature (activated every time the driver turns the car on or off) to ensure the best lighting conditions. Taillights take on the same design cues as the headlights to form a sine curve that fully wraps around the rear of the car, providing a truly unique and distinctive light signature.

Also inspired by Alfa Romeo's racing history, the interior is designed for and around the occupants, characterized by meticulous attention to detail paired with a constant quest for the highest quality. The sporty and high-tech environment with the cool solidity of aluminum and the warmth and softness of leather and Alcantara suede reflect the personality of a young, metropolitan and dynamic customer. Alfa Romeo use of software and connectivity to enhance the driver's experience is also well executed.

Perhaps the biggest news about the Tonale, is how the plug-n hybrid (PHEV) Q4 AWD poses to reinvent the definition of “sporty” in the 21st century. The advanced hybrid system uses the 1.3-liter MultiAir



*Built at the Giambattista Vico Stellantis plant in Pomigliano d'Arco, Naples, Italy on a revamped production line dedicated to the Alfa Romeo Tonale the all-new 2023 Tonale redefines “sporty.”*

turbocharged four-cylinder engine (180-horsepower) to provide torque to the front wheels. A high-voltage Belt Starter Generator, mounted to the engine, delivers torque to the crankshaft to smooth transitions from the six-speed automatic transmission. The system is bolstered by a 15.5-kWh lithium-ion battery and a 90 kW electric motor powering the Tonale's rear axle, making it capable of 184-lb-ft of torque from 0 rpm. All this works together to deliver best-in-class total horsepower of 272.

The PHEV offers three options in delivering electrified power to the wheels, controlled by the DNA switch. “PHEV/Dynamic” maximizes output from both the engine and electric motor. “Natural” manages power for everyday use, balancing use of the engine and electric motor without compromising performance or driving comfort. “Advanced efficiency,” designed for pure electric operation, allows the vehicle to run off the large battery with more than 30 miles of pure electric range.

The other powertrain option on Tonale is a Q4 AWD 2.0-liter turbocharged four-cylinder, with nine-speed automatic transmission with best-in-class standard horsepower rated at 256 and 295 lb.-ft. of torque, equipped with engine stop-start technology that meets the super-ultra-low emissions 30 (SULEV 30) standard.

Tonale also debuts non-fungible token (NFT) technology, Alfa Romeo is the first automaker to link a car with an NFT digital certificate. The technology is based on the “blockchain card” concept, a confidential and non-modifiable record of the main stages in the life of an individual vehicle. With the customer’s consent, the NFT will record vehicle data, generating a certificate that can be used to assure the car has been properly maintained, with a positive impact on its residual value.

The 2023 Alfa Romeo Tonale will begin arriving in showrooms throughout North America in the first quarter of 2023. Pricing is expected to start around \$38,000 with entry-level Sprint trim with 2.0-liter turbo, and around \$50,000 for the plug-in hybrid version. Tonale will compete primarily with BMW X1, Mercedes-Benz GLA-Class, and Volvo XC40.



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***Beverly & Steve Smirnis are members of the Texas Auto Writers Association and the Texas Motor Press Association, reviewing vehicles and casting their votes at driving events where the Truck of Texas, Car of Texas and Off-Road Truck of Texas are some of the titles awarded. Follow their automotive blog on [TheSavvyList.com/TheSavvyDriver](https://TheSavvyList.com/TheSavvyDriver)***

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