

Galant ES: a step up in quality



'96 Mitsubishi Galant

WINFRED CROSS

Test Drive



Cars are funny things. Just when you think you've got a particular model figured out - bam! - something happens to change your mind completely.

Such is the case with Mitsubishi's Galant. The 1995 I test drove was nearly atrocious in every aspect. If I put together a "10 Worst Drives" list, the Galant would have made it.

What a difference a model year makes. The 1996 Galant felt so different from the '95 I looked to see if '96 was indeed the same kind of car.

Yes, it was a Galant, but it wasn't the base model. It was the more upscale ES model. It lacks for little in accoutrements. Most of which one considers to be on a "loaded" car - i.e. cruise control, air conditioning, keyless remote with security system, electric windows, mirrors, door locks and four-speed automatic transmission - is standard for the \$19,790 base price.

Also standard was a generous amount of room for a mid-size Japanese car (which makes it a compact by Detroit's standards). Five peo-



ple can ride in relative comfort. The front passengers will be especially comfortable. The seats might be a little narrow for wide bodies, but thin- to medium-builds will appreciate how firm, yet comfortable and supportive they are. The fabric that covers them looks and feels expensive.

The dash is tidy, giving easy access to all controls. The gauges can be read at a glance and are not obstructed from view. The dash is a near copy of all other Mitsubishis. I'd like to see something a bit more adventurous, but there is something to be said about simplicity.

I wish I could say the same about the exterior. It's clean and uncluttered, but about as exciting as a bowl of Brand X ice cream. The styling certainly doesn't offend, but you could easily lose this car in a parking lot. I must say, however, the barcelona red pearl paint job did a lot to spice up the looks.

Thankfully, the ES version of the Galant doesn't drive anything like the base model. Its engine is a 2.4-liter, 16-valve-, four-cylinder engine. One hundred forty-one horses are corralled under the hood, along with 148 pounds-feet of

torque. It's the same engine found in all three Galant models. A 2.5-liter V6 was suppose to find a home under the hood of the LS model, but Chrysler (once a partner of Mitsubishi) uses so many of them, that may never happen.

The Galant's engine is loud under hard acceleration, but calms down greatly once the car hits top gear. Passing power is good, but could be better. Getting to 60 mph is a slow, but steady process. Nothing dramatic will happen, but you won't be the slowest thing on the road.

The engine is mated to a four-speed electronically controlled transmission that shifts harshly from first to second. Afterwards, it's barely noticeable.

The Galant's handling seems to also have gone through some kind of transformation since last year. It feels extremely surefooted, even on wet pavement. Credit that to the four-wheel independent suspension. It's multi-link front and rear, all of which are attached to cross members which are attached to the body.

The ride is very European, meaning it's firm but comfortable. You can whip the car around a bit and have some fun. It's not a true sports sedan, but it imitates one fairly well.

As the whole, the Galant is satisfying. I still think it lacks some of the refinement of Honda's Accord or Toyota's

Camry, but in this trim it's not far off. The options - premium package (CD prep, alloy wheels, tire upgrade and AM/FM cassette with CD controls) and anti-lock brakes - push the car's total to \$22,839. Pricey, but a well put together, built in America (Normal, Ill.) sedan.

Just don't buy the base model.

If You Have Any Questions About The Automobiles Tested In **TEST DRIVE**. Please Feel Free To Call **Winfred Cross**. He Will Be Glad To Help You With The Information You Would Like To Obtain.
(704)376-0496

SUBSCRIBE TODAY!
(704)376-0496

FORD'S USED TIRES
NEW TIRES

• Brake Job - Labor \$25.00

• Oil Change - Labor \$17.95

3401 Tuckasegee Rd.
Charlotte, NC 28208
(704)393-1109



• N.C. State Inspection

1222 Central Ave.
Charlotte, NC 28204
(704)377-0870

THE EXCELSIOR

921 Beatties Ford Rd. • 334-5709

WEEKLY FEATURES:

- Tue. "FISH NIGHT" All you can eat \$5, DISCO following
 - Wed. R&R
- Thur. "KARAOKE NIGHT" w/Swing Low Productions
 - Fri. & Sat. DISCO with C.C.
 - Sunday - LIVE MUSIC or DISCO

SUPPORT OUR ADVERTISERS

COCA-COLA
CITIZEN OF THE MONTH

IKE HEARD, JR.
Coca-Cola Is Proud To Honor
Ike Heard, Jr.
As Our Coca-Cola
Citizen Of The Month



For years, Ike Heard Jr. has committed himself to improving the Charlotte community through his hard work and involvement in various endeavors.

He has earned undergraduate degrees in Sociology and Urban Studies from Dartmouth College, and graduate degrees in Urban Planning from Harvard University and in Public Administration from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte.

This Charlottean is most often soft-spoken, but very dynamic in his effectiveness. Mr. Heard worked for 13 years as a City Planner in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg local government. While in public service, he was involved in planning, zoning ordinance maintenance and revisions, review and evaluation of development proposals, and review and evaluation of urban design plans. Following this experience he worked for 3 years with private developers and home builders as project and operations manager. These efforts resulted in the development of a half dozen subdivisions containing several hundred housing units throughout the Charlotte-Mecklenburg area.

Mr. Heard has also worked as a sole proprietor market research and strategic planning consultant to a number of small businesses in the Charlotte area including restaurants, general contractors, banks, savings and loan institutions, optometrists, nursing registry services, fine arts galleries, and convention/visitors' bureaus. In a related capacity, he served as the program evaluator for a 4 year, longitudinal Federally-funded study of youth gang violence and drug activity overseen by the Mecklenburg County Health Department. Mr. Heard has served as the planning and environmental consultant to the N.C. Air Cargo Airport Authority, also called the Global TransPark.

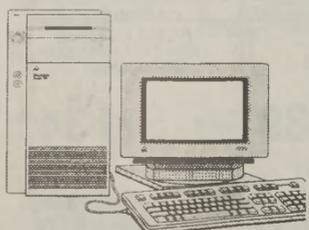
Since October 1991, he has been employed as the Executive Director of the Northwest Corridor Community Development Corporation. In that capacity, Mr. Heard has been responsible for planning and executing a 55,000 square foot shopping center, developing affordable housing stock (new, rehabilitated, rental and owner occupied), implementing leadership training seminars for neighborhood activists, and developing a 15,000 square foot community-oriented services facility and office building (in architectural design phase). Mr. Heard serves as an Adjunct Assistant Professor in the Department of Geography and Earth Sciences at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. His primary subjects are environmental planning, transportation planning, and urban planning.

He is married to the former Patricia Jones, a psychologist/social worker. They have two children - Issac Addison, 20 (sophomore at Dartmouth College), and Meredith Virginia, 10.

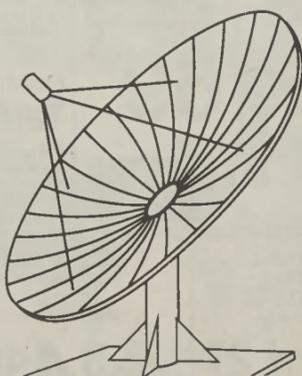


The Charlotte Post Online

Email us with your comments, story ideas, stories, or just whatever



Soon you will be able to log on your computer and communicate directly with The Charlotte Post. The Post will be online through Internet, CompuServe and America Online. We will be offering segments of The Post online as well. Stay tuned for more details.



charpost@mindspring.com