

# TOP 10 - JDM FACTORY SPECIALS

Factory specials are a dime a dozen these days, with hot hatches labelled as "special edition" cars after having some tacky stickers stuck onto it. If anyone knew how to make a factory special car, it was definitely the Japanese in the late 80s and 90s – they built cars that were actually special, and a solid improvement over the mass produced models. As the prices of JDM rockets like Skylines and Supras shoot up worldwide, we run down the list of the rarest and best JDM factory specials – cars which might be modern classics of a bygone era soon enough.

## Nissan Skyline GTR NISMO 400R

When the R33 was launched, it was faster around the Nurburgring than the R32 by 24 seconds. How do you improve on that? By adding double the power and making your in-house tuner develop race spec parts for the road car.



## Nissan Skyline GTR NISMO Z-tune

The NISMO name was already a legend among JDM enthusiasts - the R34 Z-tune would be the ultimate product that Nissan's in-house tuner would develop to date. The Z-tune had incredible power - 500 HP enabled this final model of the Skyline R34 to do 205 MPH and sprint to 60 MPH in just 3.8 seconds. Only 19 were made.



## Nissan 300ZX Turbo Shiro Special

The original Nissan Z-car introduced Japanese reliability and efficiency to the sports car market, but later models were sub-par. The 300ZX Shiro Special tried to take the Z back to its roots. The name refers to the all-white paint.



## Mitsubishi Galant AMG

Before AMG became Benz's official in-house tuner, they were hired by Mitsubishi to warm up the Galant. 170 HP meant it was not exactly hot. But look at it.

## Subaru Impreza Prodrive RB320

In the UK, the Subaru Impreza became extremely popular thanks to local rally drivers like Colin McRae and Richard Burns. Subaru themselves gave customers plenty of reasons to buy these manic AWD sedans by offering up special Prodrive tuned models. The RB320 competed with Mitsubishi's UK only FQ Evolutions, using a whole host of custom parts to bump the power beyond 320 HP. Road testers think the RB320 nearly, nearly rivals the 22B STI in terms of driving experience.



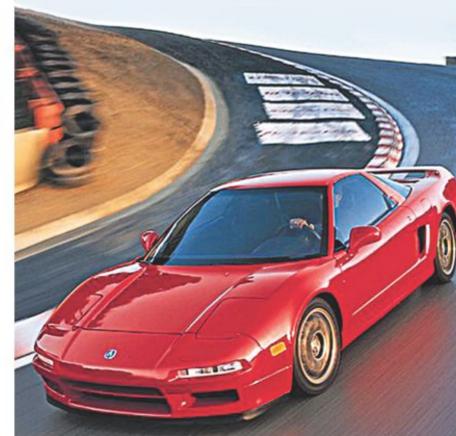
## Honda Civic FD2 Type R Mugen RR

No one doubts the performance and handling abilities of the FD2 Type R, and most agree that it's a brilliantly fast FWD car. When Mugen, Honda's in-house tuner, took the Civic and upped the ante, they saw fit to remove weight, add better cams, exhaust and ECU. Only 300 were made.



## Subaru Impreza 22B STI

The 22B is the holy grail of Subarus, using a 2.2 litre boxer 4 producing 300 HP, with bigger brakes, better suspension and lighter weight. Only 400 22Bs were made, making it the rarest, most exclusive Subaru ever made. Prices regularly go beyond \$100,000, and most enthusiasts agree it's one of the best handling cars ever.



## Acura NSX Alex Zanardi Edition

The first gen NSX is one of the best drivers' cars ever, and this special edition, named after famed racing driver Alex Zanardi, came with special lightweight alloys, significantly stiffer suspension and manual steering. All of that made this special NSX sharper and edgier, and only 50 were made.



## Mazda RX7 FD Spirit R

The RX7 FD3S is one of the most desirable JDM icons of the 90s, and the Spirit R is the ultimate RX7 with bigger brakes, less weight and more special features. The Spirit R models were the final 1500 units of the FD RX7, divided into three models - Type A, B and C. Best part is, Bangladesh has a genuine Spirit R Rx7 - easily the rarest Rx7 model in the world thanks to the low production numbers and huge collectible value.

## Mitsubishi Lancer Evolution VI Tommi Makinen Edition

Combine one of the best AWD rally cars of the 90s with one of the sport's greatest drivers and you get motorsport glory. Tommi Makinen won 22 of his 24 World Rally Championship victories in Mitsubishi Evolution 3/4/5/6/6.5s, making a mark on the rally world and establishing the Lancer Evolution badge in the world of rallying and performance cars. Only 2500 TME Evos were made, with special colours, wheels, bumpers and livery.



## Toyota and Mazda strike up deal for US plant, new tech



Toyota is set to take a 5 percent stake in Mazda as part of an offensive plan of action in order to ward off rivals in the US market. Mazda is also taking a token 0.25 percent in the Japanese giant.

The move comes as part of Toyota's plans to establish a new joint-venture plant in the US and set up a research and development unit for electric cars.

Mazda will work on the overall architecture of electric cars while Toyota will be responsible on the battery and power unit side of things. The electric car hardware and software will be developed jointly, but produced separately and in varying degrees.

They're also looking at connected car tech, both in the vehicle to vehicle and vehicle to infrastructure communication segments.

The Toyota-Mazda deal comes during a tidal wave of acquisitions faced by Japan's smaller automakers, as the "Big Three" of Japan - Toyota, Honda and Nissan - are bringing the rest of the manufacturers under their influence. Nissan recently acquired 34 percent of Mitsubishi following a huge controversy over faked fuel economy figures by the latter - Honda is much less aggressive, although their partnerships with Hitachi and Waymo make them well equipped for the coming age of digital cars.

## In other news...



Honda's compact hatch Jazz gets an aggressive new facelift, with all new bumpers, grille and headlights, as well as side skirts, new wheels and paint. The Jazz did well here in Bangladesh despite having a manual only gearbox - we'll bring you a test drive of the updated one soon.



Hyundai has decided to ape the BMW 6 series Gran-Coupe, with a strikingly similar rear end to the Bimmer for its i30 Fastback. The i30 is a brand new model from the Koreans, aimed at the mid-range European hatch segment. That means it won't come to Bangladesh because it'll cost too much. Damn.



## Ford Raptor F-22 Concept

Because naming a blocky truck after a sleek, hyper-advanced air superiority fighter plane makes a lot of sense...

The F-22 Raptor, developed and produced by Lockheed Martin for the United States Air Force, was designed for air superiority - easily the most advanced fighter ever produced at the time of introduction, the Raptor is an infamous winged beast that never actually saw much action.

On the other hand, Ford's F-150

Raptor is a capable brute with incredible power hiding in its bulging bodywork. While it shares the same name and a similar penchant for power as the F-22, the similarities stop there - the fighter is graceful and sleek, the truck is...well, a truck.

As is Ford's tradition of showcasing US aviation history with special mod-

els of its cars - Ford has previously done several Mustangs inspired by fighter jets - an F-22 inspired F-150 is perhaps the most contrived. It's a concept, but that doesn't mean it's any less significant - as far as owning an F-22 is concerned, it's probably easier to get your hands on a truck rather than an insane fighter jet.

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