

TANGERINE TESTOSTERONE

LS SERIES SIXTY-TWO

STORY & PHOTOS BY BETO MENDÇA





Nowadays, \$2,400 might afford you a few upgrades for your low-rider, but back 12 years ago it would have landed you something a whole lot more—like an entire project car. Just ask San Diego native Alberto Sotelo who picked up his Impala for just \$2,400.

He purchased the vehicle from his brother-in-law as a rolling chassis and it was the perfect project. In part of envisioning his lowrider he

wanted every piece of the car to be gone over with a fine-tooth comb, but he also understood that it would be a long-term project. The car needed a full restoration, and thankfully his dad, a retired welder, contributed significantly to the build. With little time to spare, they did what they could when they had the free time but they insisted that the car be built properly. Instead of patchworking the floor, they took

the time to cut it completely out and replace it entirely. Every free weekend was spent working on the car, and annually Alberto would use up his vacation time in order to put in additional work with his father.

During the process, the father-son team worked at doing everything they possibly could, and part of that was to hide the master cylinder in the dash while incorporating a '59 dash into the build.





1962 CHEVROLET IMPALA

VEHICLE NICKNAME

Simply Tangerine

OWNER

Alberto Sotelo

CITY/STATE

San Diego, CA

SUSPENSION

Wilwood disc brakes all around, tubular A-arms with hidden Airbag Technology with ViAir compressors

BODY/PAINT

PPG Candy Tangerine

WHEELS/TIRES

14-inch Tru Rays with Premium Sport 5.20s

INTERIOR

Four custom bucket seats wrapped in tan leather, perforated leather, and velour; custom center console; Lokar handles; ididit chrome steering column; CPP billet steering wheel; and Classic Instrument gauges

ENGINE

LS1 with chrome Edelbrock low-profile intake, Street Performance cool air intake, March Performance serpentine kit, Be Cool aluminum radiator, Lokar dipstick

SOUND

Custom Autosound stereo with all Pioneer system that includes 5.5- and 6x9-inch mids, two amps, and a single, 10-inch subwoofer



"My dad used to own a '59 Impala, so we thought it would be a good idea to incorporate that dash into the build," Alberto says. From there, his father built the center console and shaved the firewall. They did as much as they possibly could with the little time they had, but after 11 years they had finished everything they could do themselves and that's

when the car began going from shop to shop until completion.

The first stop was the Riviera Brothers. They finished up the bodywork and laid the Candy Tangerine paintjob with the pearl white top. Afterward it was sent to California Upholstery to have the custom interior stitched together while additional parts went to AP

in Anaheim to have everything dipped in chrome. Jose Martinez and Luis Garcia made a house call to install the Pioneer system while the LS1 powerplant was left to Miggz, the San Diego LS man, to do the install. In addition to dropping in the heart of the beast, Miggz ran master cylinder hard lines from under the dash and then performed



a wire tuck to keep the pristine LS1 distraction free.

The 12-year build required plenty of patience, and although his mom insisted that "he get rid of the junk," the feelings definitely changed upon its completion. Now the neighbors come by, they sit in it and take pictures, and it went from being an eyesore to a prized

possession for not only his family but his neighbors as well. In the end, the 12 years spent making this masterpiece were well worth the wait and it sports the old-school look and new-school technology he had always hoped for.

"I used to go to a lot of cruises and shows and I was always in the passenger seat but now that I



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have my own car to take I must say it's a lot more fun." Yet as he looks back at his build, the one thing he can definitely share is that the car represents more than just a clean show car. It serves as a monument to all the memories it helped created. If you were to ask him which memories were best he'd be quick to tell you that "the best part of building this car was all the time I was able to spend with my dad."