* **The Alpine Vision Gran Turismo, fruit of the collective imagination of the designers and engineers entrusted with developing the 21st Century Alpine, is due to appear soon in the celebrated Gran Turismo®6 game in millions of homes worldwide!**
* **The Alpine Vision Gran Turismo will enable players to get behind the virtual wheel of this exclusive creation that embodies the brand’s unique DNA.**
* **Dreams will become reality as Alpine present a breath-taking full-scale model of the car at the Festival Automobile International in Paris on 27th January, 2015.**

The Alpine of the 21st Century is creeping gradually closer. The wait may seem interminable to the more impatient fans, but at least there is plenty going on in the meantime!

In motor racing, for example, the Alpine A450 prototype collected European endurance racing titles in 2013 and 2014, as well as a podium finish in the LM P2 class in last June’s Le Mans 24 Hours.

Now, as the brand’s 60th anniversary festivities get under way, the Alpine Vision Gran Turismo heralds a new chapter in the make’s revival. Polyphony Digital Inc. – developers of PlayStation®’s Gran Turismo game – proposed the challenge of creating a new ‘virtual’ car in July 2013 and the teams at Alpine turned their attention to the project with the same passion, enthusiasm and rigour as they are committing to the upcoming new road car.

“The designers and engineers involved in this project were tasked with creating a car that expresses the spirit of our brand. Alpine’s genes are immediately visible in its styling, while its performance won’t disappoint either when players get behind the wheel, or their DualShock®PlayStation controller. They will find the same agility that helped to forge the legend of the original cars produced by Alpine founder Jean Rédélé. The Alpine Vision Gran Turismo stands at the crossroads of the past, present and future, at the frontier between motorsport and road cars. It also provides a link between the virtual and real worlds. Indeed, the end result is so stunning that we couldn’t resist producing an actual full-scale model of it! The Festival Automobile International, which places the emphasis on automobile aesthetics, was seen as the ideal setting for the first ‘real life’ rendering of a car since the announcement of Alpine’s revival broke cover. It will be possible to admire our latest creation and also to enjoy it first-hand thanks to Gran Turismo®6.”

**Bernard Ollivier, CEO, Société des Automobiles Alpine**

**PASSION – A DRIVING FORCE**

Before going into the design of the Alpine Vision Gran Turismo in more detail, it is perhaps an idea to go back more than 15 years when Sony recruited the Japanese economics student, Kazunori Yamauchi. ‘Kaz’ was an ambitious and visionary young man whose skill and passion as a game producer persuaded Sony to allow him to create his dream, five-years in the making - the ultimate driving simulator. Taking advantage of the technological breakthrough that was the PlayStation console, Polyphony Digital produced an immediate hit with the launch of Gran Turismo on 11th December, 1999. It revolutionised the video game industry with sales of the first title reaching more than 11 million copies.

More than fifteen years later, the success story continues. Sales of the various iterations of Gran Turismo totalled more than 72 million before Gran Turismo®6 for PlayStation®3 was released in December 2014. Gran Turismo®6 stands out as a new benchmark and features over 1,200 of the world’s best cars and 39 tracks. The success of the franchise is due in great part to the partnerships its producers have sealed with the most prestigious carmakers. Grouped under the Vision Gran Turismo banner for the game’s 15th anniversary, the prototype cars that have been created especially for the occasion are eagerly awaited by car and video game enthusiasts alike.

“Would you be prepared to design a car for Gran Turismo?” This simple question got the brains of the teams at Alpine thinking overtime, despite the fact that they were already busy preparing the brand’s comeback in the form of the first production car that will be presented to the public in 2016. This enticing blank sheet of paper provided them with an exciting opportunity to explore new creative ideas without having to take certain production-related constraints into account.

In July 2013, around 15 staff from Polyphony Digital Inc. visited Alpine’s studio where they were greeted by a similar number of people who shared the same passion for the automobile. ‘Kaz’, who has been fascinated by Alpine for some years, could not conceal his delight at the idea of hosting the French brand in his virtual showroom. Indeed, he rarely turns down a chance to indulge in a little circuit driving himself, so the inclusion of a racing marque such as Alpine held a special meaning for him.

Very soon, the idea of a lightweight, agile, barquette-type car, in keeping with the brand’s racing programme with the A450, took form.

An in-house competition involving around 15 designs was won by the project submitted by Victor Sfiazof: “It’s a genuine sportscar which combines the passion for cars with enjoyment behind the wheel. There are numerous references to the past, present and future. The idea of a barquette stemmed from the Alpine A450’s involvement in the Le Mans 24 Hours. That said, the front end takes its inspiration from the A110, while the vertical fins at the rear recall the A210 and A220 while making a real contribution to the car’s styling. As an aeronautic fan, I also wanted to incorporate cues from the world of aviation, too. The airbrakes add a nice high-tech touch to the rear end.”

Little by little, the car appeared in drawing form before a digital version was produced. At the same time, the chassis development engineers worked on the car’s technical characteristics. After benchmarking and comparing dozens of other cars featured in Gran Turismo, they found a set-up that put the accent on driving enjoyment, in keeping with the Alpine spirit.

Meanwhile, Polyphony Digital fed the data into their own software and, a little more than a year after the project’s launch, the final specification of the Alpine Vision Gran Turismo was set in concrete.

As the final icing on the cake, a new challenge was set: that of producing an actual tangible version of this incredible creation. The fruit of the model-makers’ efforts sparks a different set of sensations still, and the Alpine Vision Gran Turismo’s racy, atypical lines speak to all generations.

“As a child, I used to admire concept cars. They were like gifts that pointed to a bright future. That’s still how I see them. The technology used by car manufacturers today allows them to surpass my imagination. I hope that this research will contribute to changing our lives. I am very proud to have Alpine on board with us for the Vision Gran Turismo project. It’s a brand for which I have always had a great deal of affection and I have greatly appreciated the quality of the contact between our respective teams. This close tie was facilitated by the passion we all share. The Alpine that is now available for Gran Turismo players is the fruit of a formidable shared enthusiasm.”

**Kazunori Yamauchi, President, Polyphony Digital Inc.,**

**Senior Vice President, Sony Computer Entertainment Inc.**

**A SPECTACULAR REAR-END DESIGN**

While the brief submitted to the designers was, well, brief, it included one specific stipulation in comparison with their usual creations. The key focuses of the concept car needed to be the rear end and the cockpit, simply because they are the most popular views in motor sport video games.

Even so, our tour begins with the front of the car, which bears a striking resemblance to the A110. The sloping V-shaped bonnet is enhanced by a central crease and, in another nod to the 1960s, the cross-shaped LED lights recall the black tape that was used to protect the additional lights fitted to the Berlinette rally cars. These references to the past blend in seamlessly with an undeniably modern aerodynamic package that includes a splitter designed to channel airflow along the body sides. It also provides a glimpse of the suspension wishbones. Openings in the bonnet expose the orange struts which are located horizontally at the top of the chassis.

The car’s profile awakens other memories. Large air intakes direct the flow that escapes behind the front wheels and accentuate the narrow form of the body. Complementing the overall harmony, the long lateral rear fins call to mind the A210s and A220s which shone so brilliantly at Le Mans, achieving victory in the 24-hour race’s Efficiency Index class in 1966.

The wheels alone are eloquent of the fusion of present and past. The design of the rims – inspired by those fitted to the A110s – is sufficiently open to reveal the impressive brake callipers, painted in orange or blue, depending on the version.

The appeal of the Alpine Vision Gran Turismo is further enhanced by its open cockpit. The driver sits on the right, a design typical of sport-prototype cars given that the majority of circuits – not least of which Le Mans – run in a clockwise direction.

The roll cage is stylishly integrated, as is the engine air intake duct on the left-hand side. A butterfly door facilitates access, enabling the driver to slide on board. When it opens, it is possible to glimpse a little more of the work that has been carried out. The visible stitching of the leather seat is redolent of the famous cross pattern, complete with blue thread that brings a modern feel. The almost rectangular steering wheel, of the sort seen on the endurance racing prototypes, is crowned by digital instruments. Indispensable in fast-and-frenetic races, the rear view mirrors have been replaced by a high-definition camera.

The rear-end design represents an unmistakeable highlight of the Alpine Vision Gran Turismo. The flat bottom that runs beneath the car terminates in arched form, while a lower wing links the wheel arches to the stern. As at the front, the bodywork exposes the double wishbone suspension. A second, beautifully integrated wing yields even more aerodynamic downforce.

The most striking characteristics of the Alpine Vision Gran Turismo become apparent under braking. Integrated into the profile of the tail, the hydraulically-activated airbrakes can be deployed in an instant, while at the same time revealing the brake lights!

Gran Turismo allows players to choose between three personalised colours:

* White and blue: this elegant, understated livery is also the colour scheme chosen for the full-scale model of the car
* Orange and blue: inspired by the Alpine A450, two-time European Endurance Champion
* Matt black: in true gamer style

“The design needed to contribute to the lightweight feel and convey an impression to the driver of being at one with the machine. The Alpine Vision Gran Turismo features the brand’s timeless hallmark agility and elegance borne out of efficiency and ingenuity. We even took advantage of the exercise to subtly conceal several details that are directly inspired by the future Alpine which will see the light in 2016 – but I can’t give any more away about that...”

**Antony Villain, Design Director, Alpine**

**A CAR THAT’S FUN FOR ALL PLAYERS!**

The Alpine Vision Gran Turismo might be a virtual machine, but it was nonetheless duty-bound to adopt driving dynamics and handling characteristics worthy of its glorious predecessors. Terry Baillon, a simulation and chassis development engineer for the forthcoming road-going model, explains the development process.

**What did your work on this project consist of?**

“Right from the outset, we set performance and handling targets for the Alpine Vision Gran Turismo. We then transcribed them into technical characteristics, with the objective of achieving driving dynamics for players that are as close as possible to what we envisioned back at the start – exactly as we would do for a real vehicle.”

**What dynamic characteristics have you instilled in the Alpine Vision Gran Turismo?**

“This virtual concept car bridges the gap between the Alpine A450 race car and the 21st Century Berlinette. It was important to define this vehicle by imbuing it with the true Alpine genes. In terms of performance, it slots between the LM P2 endurance racing prototype and our forthcoming sportscar. If you look carefully, you may discern some of the handling characteristics of our future road-going model, while at the same time retaining features specific to the prototypes that compete at Le Mans.”

**How would you summarise the car’s characteristics?**

“A sense of lightness, I would say. The car is lightweight – that was our starting point in its design. However, looking beyond the figures, we focused and worked hard on the sensations that it could inspire. The Alpine Vision Gran Turismo feels agile, responsive and fun – in other words, a true Alpine!”

**What is the recipe for faithfully replicating realistic driving dynamics and performance in a ‘virtual’ machine in a video game?**

“We worked on the Alpine Vision Gran Turismo much like we would work on a road car. From the beginning of its development, we modelled it using our own software. Once the car was ready, we sent all of our data to Polyphony Digital. The data had to define the desired dynamics of the car and the sensations that we wanted the driver to feel. Next, the gaming specialists integrated the characteristics of our Alpine into Gran Turismo. After that, testing could begin. Not dissimilar to the manner in which we would develop a road car, by running with vehicles that we call ‘test mules’, we chalked up the kilometres – in this case in front of a screen – to gain a feel for and refine the car’s performance and handling. This was the fine-tuning phase, before the final version was submitted.”

**What will you take away from this project?**

“There is genuine value in working this way. In my opinion, there is a bright future for this sort of collaboration. If we correlate the information we glean from both Gran Turismo and the real vehicle, further developments will become possible. Our objective is to offer a car whose dynamics match those that we initially defined. If everything is modelled perfectly, we can even continue to work on the car and compare it to other models, so that we can see where we stand!”

**Out of interest, what type of player are you?**

“I’ve spent hours playing. For me, Gran Turismo offers the best simulation and is the most well-known and most highly-acclaimed game. My only regret is no longer having enough time to continue racking up the laps!”

**THE VISION TAKES FORM**

“It’s such a beautiful car that it would be great to see it in the flesh!” What was intended as little more than a quip was taken on board by Alpine and, once the digital version was completed, attention turned to producing a real-life version of the Alpine Vision Gran Turismo.

A double composite shell was produced to give form to the concept car which was no longer merely ‘virtual’ any more. Since the bodywork also reveals the technical elements that lie beneath, significant work also went into incorporating the different assemblies, including the suspension. Similarly, the cockpit’s design called for particular care and upholsterers were called in to produce a bucket seat with visible stitching.

The full-scale version of the Alpine Vision Gran Turismo immediately impresses through its unusual proportions, while visibility from behind the wheel is perfect with nothing in the line of sight.

The Alpine Vision Gran Turismo will be seen for the first time at this year’s Festival Automobile International in Paris, France. For 30 years, this yearly gathering of experts in the fields of aesthetics and automotive excellence has presented a number of special awards, including one for the Plus Belle Voiture de l’Année (Most Beautiful Car of the Year). After its unveiling during the gala evening at the French capital’s Hôtel des Invalides on Tuesday, 27th January, the car will remain on display at the Festival until 1st February.

After that, it will be exhibited at the 2015 Rétromobile Show (4-8th February) at the Porte de Versailles, Paris, where celebrations of Alpine’s 60th anniversary will kick off in earnest.

**HOW TO ACQUIRE THE ALPINE VISION GRAN TURISMO…**

The Alpine Vision Gran Turismo will be made available as part of a free update of Gran Turismo®6 for PlayStation®3 in March 2015. To discover the car, players will select ‘Vision GT’ on the ‘My Home’ page.

After choosing the body colour, you will be able to admire your acquisition in full-screen mode, along with a detailed description. It will also be possible to view videos and sketches starring the Alpine Vision Gran Turismo before you take part in your first race…

**TECHNICAL DATA**

**CHASSIS**

Type: carbon monocoque
Suspension: double wishbones, pushrods, adjustable spring/damper assemblies

**ENGINE**

Position: mid-rear
Type: V8
Cubic capacity: 4,494cc
Maximum power: 450hp at 6,500rpm
Maximum torque: 580Nm at 2,000rpm
Maximum engine speed: 7,500rpm
Top speed: 320kph

**TRANSMISSION**

Seven-speed sequential gearbox
Rear-wheel drive

**BRAKES**

Front: 390mm x 32mm vented discs with six-pot callipers
Rear: 355mm x 32mm vented discs with four-pot callipers

**WEIGHT AND CAPACITIES**

Weight: 900kg
Weight distribution: 47 / 53
Fuel tank: 75 litres