# 2015 F-35 Lightning II Edition Ford Mustang is First to be Modified and Auctioned

Lightning Strikes Twice: This 2015 Mustang is the first to be modified and one of the first to be sold to benefit a great cause.

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**Photos By:** Drew Phillips

With the 2015 Mustang officially available to the general public, it was only a matter of time before we came across news of the first S550 to be modified.

This 2015 Mustang GT Premium was chosen by Ford Motor Company to be handed over to Chris Mangum and MAD Industries in Costa Mesa, California, to create a one-off "2015 F-35 Lightning II Edition Ford Mustang" that would be auctioned off for charity. The plan was to model the 2015 F-35 Lightning II Edition Mustang after the Lockheed Martin F-35 Lightning II aircraft, the world's most advanced multirole fighter jet, which provides unmatched capabilities to the United States and allied military forces.

The project was led by the engineering and design teams at Ford after the donation, and the car was then auctioned at the Gathering of the Eagles charity event on July 31, 2014, during the Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) AirVenture Oshkosh 2014—an event known as the World's Greatest Aviation Celebration. Ford is the exclusive automotive sponsor of the event, which ran from July 28 through August 3 at Wittman Regional Airport in Oshkosh, Wisconsin.

"The idea to model one of our specialty builds after the F-35 was four years in the making, under discussion even as we created the SR-71 Blackbird Mustang for auction in 2010," explains Edsel B. Ford, a member of Ford's board of directors. "Just as the F35 was designed with unprecedented capabilities and versatility in mind, we felt it would be a natural fit to pair with the all-new 2015 Mustang. Visitors to the Ford Hangar are sure to be wowed by both the beauty of the F-35 Lightning II Edition Mustang and the opportunity to get the fighter jet experience firsthand."

At the auction, the car was one of the first 2015 Ford Mustangs to be sold. It rolled across the block for nearly $200,000, benefitting the EAA Young Eagles, a program that has provided free introductory flights to over 1.8 million young people since it started in 1992. The goal of the program is to inspire and motivate the next generation of leaders, aviators, and innovators.

It's really all about the details with this one-off Mustang. Wrapped in a cool BASF Glasurit line custom tri-coat Titanium high-gloss Charcoal color (with low-sheen Charcoal center stripe), the Mustang's design pays tribute to its fighter jet brethren while being sure to highlight and outline the new features of the 2015's body. The distinctive accents seen throughout the car were inspired by the blue and yellow lightning tail livery noticeable on early production examples of the F-35 aircraft. The car was painted by LGE-CTS Motorsports of San Dimas, California.

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If you look closely, you'll notice that the windows of the Mustang appear to have a gold tint. No, your eyes are not playing tricks on you. The bubble canopy of the F-35 features a distinctive gold tint that helps minimize its radar signature, which was of course replicated on the Mustang using Madico Specialty window film.

The original Mustang GT performance pack springs were pulled and replaced with the Eibach Pro-Kit springs performance package, which lowered the Mustang 1.1 inches in the front and 1.0 inch in the rear. The Eibach Anti-Roll Kit helps to reduce body roll for increased handling and corning grip. The Mustang roars to life through an exhaust with a stainless Gibson X-pipe featuring larger black ceramic-coated dual tips.

The capable standard six-speed manual transmission handles shifting duties.

When it comes to wheels, these guys weren't messing around. Wrapped in Pirelli P Zero rubber are Forgiato-created custom 21-inch three-piece wheels (21x9 front, 21x10 rear), finished to match the paint scheme. Rigid Industries LED lightning was used for the underglow, with a total of eight A-Series lights, six in-car dome lights, and a Legacy E-Series LED lighting of the front grille. All of the lighting is controlled by sPOD through Bluetooth cellphone connectivity. An aggressive carbon fiber front splitter, a rear diffuser, rocker moldings, unique mirror skullcaps, hood vents, and a vertically enhanced one-of-a-kind pedestal rear spoiler complete the fierce build.

MAD Industries collaborated with Ford Trim Shop to create the custom interior, which features Recaro seats and custom steering wheel, door panels, center console, and shift and parking break boots. A modified instrument cluster, a custom Focal audio system, custom floor mats proudly bearing F-35 Lightning II elements, and unique sill plates also reside within.

The modification of this 2015 Mustang GT definitely sets the bar high. We can't wait to check out the radical builds that will undoubtedly use the S550 as a platform.

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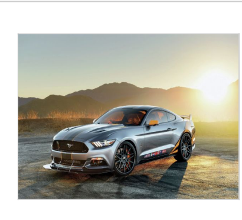

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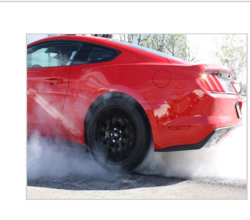

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