

Merkur Club of America

As sales of the XR4Ti waned in 1988, Ford introduced a second car to the Merkur line. The Merkur Scorpio was first sold in North America in May 1987 in a market segment dominated by the Mercedes 190E, Saab 9000, Volvo 7 series, Audi 100 and BMW 525i.



In an attempt to encourage sales, Lincoln-Mercury even introduced the Guaranteed Resale Value Program which linked the Scorpios resale value to that of a Mercedes 190E.

Unlike the XR4, the Scorpio that was introduced to US markets was very similar to that being sold in Europe at the time. The Scorpios smooth running 2.9L V6 powers 3200 Lb car effortlessly to speeds well in excess of 120 MPH; the Scorpio is indeed a car designed for hour after hour of autobahn cruising. To accompany the Euro hatchback styling, the car is packed with features normally only found on more expensive cars of the time. Features such as four wheel discs with ABS, fully independent suspension, heated front seats, reclining rear seats, climate control and above average head and legroom, made the Scorpio an attractive partner to the smaller XR4Ti.

Unfortunately, although the car was very different from the XR4Ti, it suffered from a lot of the same marketing problems. The sales team at Lincoln-Mercury failed to realize the potential of the car and preferred instead to concentrate on the higher margin, more traditional Town Car. The Scorpio, with the same difficult to pronounce Merkur marque, failed to make sales targets and Ford terminated the import of the Scorpio, along with the XR4Ti, and plans to augment the Merkur product line with other European imports, in 1989. A total of only 21,886 units were sold.

In Europe, the Scorpio line continued to evolve and was finally terminated in 1997. The Scorpio was a car ahead of its time. Unfortunately only the Europeans realized the full potential of the car where it regularly saw service

as luxury executive transportation; much in the same way as the Lincoln Town Car is in America today.

*"I wept because I had no Mercedes--until I saw a man
with no Scorpio"*

Paul Doering

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