

LITCHFIELD SUBARU BRZ

» COUPE TUNED BY BRITISH EXPERTS » 25BHP EXTRA FOR £1500

SPECIFICATION

Engine Flat-four, 1998cc
CO2 159g/km Power 203bhp @ 7200rpm
Torque 160lb ft @ 4800rpm 0-62mph 7.0sec
(est) Top speed 150mph (est)
Conversion price See text On sale Now

It's fair to say we've given the Subaru BRZ (and Toyota GT86) a hard time so far, mainly because we feel it doesn't deliver sufficient performance for the asking price.

Subaru guru Iain Litchfield agrees. He can't do anything about its price, but he can do plenty for its performance. He has attempted to inject some character into the car while keeping the price reasonable, and to this end has created a suite of modest upgrades.

The most significant is the Stage 1 ECU remap (£600), which delivers a 14bhp boost with more mid-range meat. When combined with Litchfield's Milltek-made performance exhaust system (£866), there's a 25bhp total gain over the standard power output. Interestingly, Litchfield's dyno measured the unmodified machine at 178bhp, some ten per cent less than Subaru's claimed 197bhp...

Litchfield can also beef up the BRZ's stance a little with a set of Eibach springs (£245) that bring a 30mm drop in ride height. Together with a fast-road geometry set-up, lightweight 18in 'Nurburg' wheels (£1056) and a set of 225/40 Michelin Pilot Super Sports



Above: upgrades push BRZ past 200bhp. Below: wider and lower-profile Michelins sharpen the ride



(versus standard 215/45 R17s) it looks tougher and has a sharper, more controlled feel. The ride is a little busier, but still suited to everyday use.

The result is a BRZ – or GT86, as all the parts are interchangeable – that feels and sounds keener, with an improved response through the mid-range and top-end. Despite fears the Michelins' grip would spoil the fun, the car is even more enjoyable because the tyres have greater progression and are happier working harder. And the car still slides.

It's encouraging stuff, and proves there's potential to be unleashed. We can't wait to see what Litchfield does with the car next. **Richard Meaden**

EVO RATING ★★★★★

- ➕ Upgrades inject urgency and character
- ➖ Lifted into tougher class of rivals

