

# Teracruz with Mace Missile

by John DeRosia

**Scale:** 1/32

**Company:** Revell/Renwal

**Price:** \$70.00

**Product/Stock #:** 857812

**Website:** Revell

**Product Web Page:** [View](#)

The advertising said:

"Fully operating model does everything but fire!" That's what they said about this kit when it was first released in the late 1950s and they're saying it again with this highly-anticipated reissue. Authentically scaled from U.S. Air Force blueprints, this limited edition, 1/32 scale, plastic kit of a Teracruz towing an MGM-13 (mobile- launch) version of the Mace - a surface-to- surface missile first deployed in 1956 - includes movable parts, a finely detailed cab with opening doors, and five crew figures. 23¾" long; 278 parts, skill level 2."

They were not kidding. I believe ages ago when Renwal was still around, I had just about gotten their whole line of military models and built them. Back then, they were the absolute coolest models I had ever seen.



Forward to June 2012. Thank you Revell for re-releasing this kit. For whatever reason, the Teracruz was NOT one I had gotten and built. So when it came out again - I had to get one once and for all. After hiring a moving company to deliver the HUGE box to my house (well it was a very large box) - I was salivating waiting to take the clear plastic wrapping off and look at what was inside. I may have had my contacts on backwards because I swear the contents were only taking up one-fourth of the available space in this box. That said, this was the only

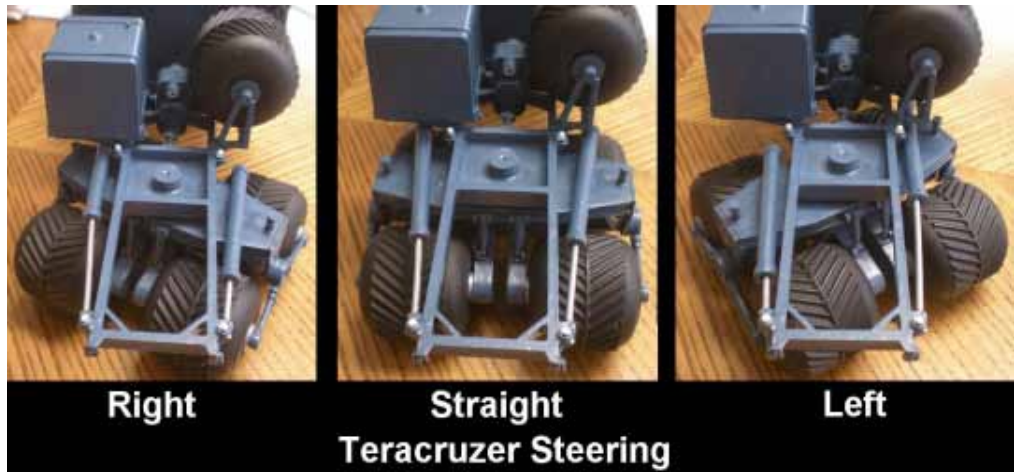
one of two negatives I encountered with the kit. The other was it did not come with any clear windows. No big deal since I used my own clear styrene for them. The five figures that were distorted - no big deal. I don't do figures!

The re-molding took place in Poland - and for whatever reason - having a 50-year-old mold and all the items being as crisp as the day they were first made got me very excited. Very very few pieces in my kit had any flash on them. The high quality of this re-released kit was absolutely

amazing to me. The instruction sheet also had 1-1/2 pages of nothing but part identification and DESCRIPTION of each and every item. Perfect for dummies like me who just don't have a degree in "Understanding Gizmology". Sure I know what a tire is and cab and seats - but not everything. I wish more modern instructions were like this in their identification of parts.

I actually started with the coolest tires and 'trucks' on any kit I had ever built. Each truck had four balloon tundra tires. Each truck if carefully built allows all four tires to pivot independently and roll. During this model build, the stars lined up, the moon was still yellow, and the oceans kept having tides - because everything worked when I was done. All trucks/tires rotated and pivoted. All of them!

The engineering on this kit still astounds me. All linkages, all hydraulics, and working features work! I did find while assembling the missile launcher frame and linkages that I would hand paint (Air Force Blue) a few moving parts at a time. Then I let this dry overnight, and the next day I gently 'moved/forced' the items to move/ rotate and they did. Then I would add more paint to unpainted areas



(remember- the paint seeps into all the moving links/ pins) – and the following day repeat the process. When I was done, absolutely everything moved. I did make one exception - the cab doors. I glued these shut on purpose because I did not do too much to the inside of the cab. Just your basic colors and hint of a dash and steering wheel.

The following if carefully glued and painted work:

1. All three 'trucks' with four balloon tires each
2. The trailer pivots
3. The front vehicle two steering hydraulics cylinders
4. The missile lift frame two launcher hydraulics cylinders
5. The doors (if not glued shut, like I did)
6. The Mace missile attaches/detaches easily from the lift frame
7. The spare tire attaches/detaches
8. The fuel panel door opens/closes on the first pod behind the cab

The rest of the kit went together like a Swiss watch. No kidding. The little flash on a very few of the parts made for easy clean up.

Looking on the Internet at the real vehicles and missiles showed they were in pretty harsh conditions. That was one reason I weathered mine a little extra. Ideally you can't go wrong on military vehicles being too dirty - unless they are right off the factory floor.

There were many missile color themes also shown on the Internet. I did not want to make mine a bright orange so I went with a silver/aluminum look. They also had several 'test color patches' on them – but mine came about because of only one reason. THUMB PRINT! Yes- right in the middle of the top of the missile. RATS! So I got out my trusty solid red decal sheet and cut a few patches and that's how they came to be. And you thought I did really good research - ha!

The vehicle still looks like something out of science fiction. I can only imagine the terror they must have instilled in real people in the 1950s when they were driving around town.

There were actually four real vehicles that made up the Teracruzer/Mace missile system. The four vehicle types were - 1) Fueling, 2) Warhead carrier, 3) Missile trailer tower, and 4) Crane to put it all together on the battle field. If expense were no object, it would be fun to build all four versions with three more kits. There is a real one (the last one?) still working up in Alaska for some gold mining company. It is in negotiation for going to a museum since none of the drive vehicles seem to be anywhere. Lots of missiles and trailers, but why no vehicles exist is one of the mysteries of our time.

If you want something totally different and yet a joy to build I can't say enough about this kit.

Have fun, then have more fun, then enjoy. That's what modeling is all about to me.