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AUTO **Italia**

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**MORE FERRARI
THAN FIAT**

FERRARI DAYTONA SPIDER

Pristine Straman conversion

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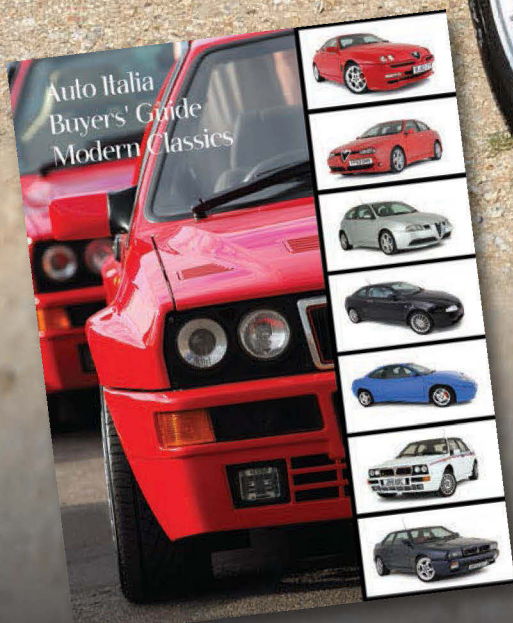
High quality – low prices

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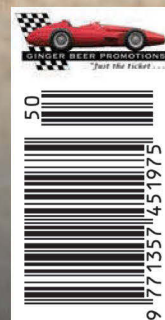
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Editor Phil Ward
Tel: 01462 678205
philward@auto-italia.net
Photographic Editor Michael Ward
michaelward@auto-italia.net
Editor at Large Peter Collins

Contributors Keith Bluemel, Alan Cathcart
Chris Chilton, Peter Collins, Elvio Deganello,
Roberto Giordanelli, Richard Heseltine,
Andy Heywood, Chris Hrabalek, Simon Park,
Chris Rees, Mike Rysiecki and Mike Taylor

Art Editor Michael Ward

Back Issues Tel: 01462 678205
Subscriptions www.auto-italia.net

Advertisement Managers
David Lerpiniere
david@talkmediasales.co.uk
Simon Hyland
simon@talkmediasales.co.uk
Tel: 01732 445325

Classifieds email liz.solo@ntlworld.com

Managing Director Michael Ward
General Manager Claire Prior
claire@gingerbeerpromotions.com

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CONTRIBUTORS

Auto Italia is brought to you by a group of journalists and photographers united by a passion for Italian cars. Contributors to this issue include:



Phil Ward



Michael Ward



Claire Prior



Chris Rees



Richard Heseltine



Andy Heywood



Richard Aucock



Mike Taylor



This bumper, special edition is a significant milestone for Auto Italia. Firstly it is our 250th issue and secondly it records the appointment of a new editor.

When myself and Peter Collins launched the title back in 1995 we had very little experience and published our first issue pretty much on a wish and a prayer. Those early years were hard going and involved changes of ownership, which became necessary for the magazine to survive and then to evolve. After 20 years we have come full cycle where the magazine was returned to the Ward family five years ago and today is now owned by my son Michael and his partner. Peter Collins stepped down as a director sometime ago, although he remains a valuable contributor, and now I am about to do something on similar lines.

The success of Auto Italia has been due to more than just the input from its creators, but also its army of contributors and supporters, to all of whom I extend my sincere gratitude. In the early days Roberto Giordanelli wrote almost all the features and John Collins at Talacrest was generous in trusting us to drive a long list of very, very expensive Ferraris. While Roberto now concentrates on his motor racing career, John Collins still provides us with special cars. As it happens John has commissioned us to produce a book on his fabulous cars and how he became the world's most successful Ferrari trader. There will be revelations!

To edit all 250 issues of Auto Italia has meant that I have spent every month for the last 20 years working to a rigid deadline. Holidays only really happened in the five week months on the calendar, when we ran 13 issues a year we published every four weeks. Even the holidays I did take usually had a work element - in Italy, of course.

Given that I have a big birthday next year it is time for me to step back and let someone else take over as editor, although I will still be involved in the events and special projects. That person is Chris Rees who, as regular readers will know, is already a key contributor. Chris has previously edited several specialist titles, he is an Italophile, an Alfa SZ owner and an all round good bloke, so our readers will be in good hands. Chris takes over in the New Year and I wish him the very best of luck!

Phil Ward
Editor

philward@auto-italia.net



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NEWS & VIEWS

RM Sotheby's at Milan AutoClassiche



Milano AutoClassica is an unmissable event in the Classic Car Show landscape; a winning combination between past and present, reliving historical brands and their glorious achievements in days gone by, as visitors eagerly glimpse present and future makes and models. For three days over November 25-

27 car enthusiasts can live, breathe, and talk about cars thanks to a perfect blend of heritage and current new models, experiencing the world of motoring in an innovative, convincing format.

RM Sotheby's has announced the 'Duemila Ruote' (2000 Wheels) auction, the largest event of its kind ever hosted in Europe. Held during Milano AutoClassica,



over 430 cars will be offered entirely without reserve, alongside over 150 motorcycles, 60 boats, hundreds of bicycles and items of automobilia.

Of particular interest to Italian competition car enthusiasts are a selection of race and rally cars, some of which rarely come up for sale. The list includes a number of Lancias, in particular an LC2, the last of the breed to be raced at Le Mans (not without incident!). There are two integrals, one a Repsol car and the other a Martini car run by a French team in 1989. Less glamorous but still very interesting is a full race 2.0-litre Beta Coupe. Fiat is represented by an impressive 'Olio Fiat' ex-Verini 131 Abarth and an unpainted 124 Abarth carrying Group 4 bodywork. Also in the auction are several racing Alfa Romeo 75s including an ex-Larini touring car and an IMSA version. Rarely do so many pristine cars become available at the same time. For the full entry list go to: www.rmsothebys.com
For ticket information: www.milanoautoclassica.com





LAFERRARI APERTA – PARIS SHOW

Technological excellence, performance, style, exclusivity. These are Ferrari's unique core values which are perfectly represented by the car launched to mark the 70th anniversary of the foundation of the company. Designed for Ferrari's most passionate clients, the LaFerrari Aperta is the new limited-edition special series, an open-top version of the acclaimed LaFerrari supercar.

Available with both a carbonfibre hard top (optional) and soft top, the LaFerrari Aperta boasts the same specification and characteristics as the LaFerrari, combining extraordinary performance with the unique exhilaration of open-top

driving. It is equipped with the same hybrid power unit as the coupe: a 778bhp, 6262cc V12 engine coupled with a 120kW electric motor for a total power output of a 937bhp.

The LaFerrari Aperta delivers the same top speed of over 350km/h, accelerating from 0-100 km/h in under three seconds and 0-200km/h in 7.1 seconds. It also delivers the same torsional rigidity and beam stiffness characteristics, as well as dynamic performance levels. Modifications to the aerodynamic set-up ensure that, with the roof open and the side windows up, the drag figure is unaffected compared to that of the coupe.



PASSIONE FERRARI AT SILVERSTONE

Silverstone Circuit was bathed in sunshine for the two day Passione Ferrari event at the famed F1 circuit, with VIP clients, guests and Ferrari owners taking to the track in their own cars, including a number of incredible FXX K and 599XX cars from the Corse Clienti department in Maranello. Former Scuderia Ferrari F1 driver, René Arnoux, and current Scuderia Ferrari F1 driver, Marc Gené, were on hand to coach the clients around the 5.6km F1 circuit in their XX cars.

Ferrari also displayed a number of historic Ferrari F1 cars, with two of the cars kindly on loan from the Donington Collection: a 312T and a 312T5. The 312T was the final example to be built and is the car in which Clay Regazzoni won the Italian Grand Prix at Monza in 1975 and the USA Grand Prix at Long Beach in 1976. The 312T5 was the last of Ferrari's F1 T cars and was driven by both Jody Scheckter and Gilles Villeneuve in the 1980 season.

Also on display was the 1990 Ferrari 641/2 which Nigel Mansell campaigned during the season to help Ferrari win the World Championship, with a Pole Position and a 1st place at the Portuguese Grand Prix at Estoril, and an incredibly beautiful F2 single-seater from the 1960s: a Dino 166 F2 which was launched in 1967 but which also raced in the Tasman Cup series from 1968.

FERRARI PARTS SPECIALIST

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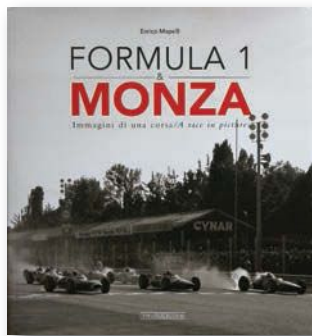
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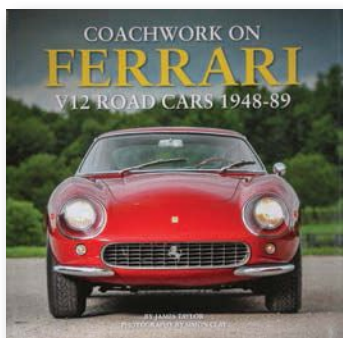


Formula 1 & Monza
A race in pictures
by Enrico Mapelli
Giorgio Nada Editore.
£60

This is another book that appears to be an author's lifetime work. The subtitle says it all, it's a pictorial record of Formula 1 at Monza from 1948 to 2015.

The archive images are superb and illustrate just how dangerous racing circuits were. Well into the 1960s there were still no crash barriers at Monza and spectator fencing was flimsy.

There are some interesting and surprising statistics in the appendix. Alberto Ascari covered the most individual race distance with 1,890,000km, while Ferrari as a team covered 7,764,284km. No surprise then that Ferrari also won the most Grands Prix at Monza totalling 19. However, British drivers have dominated the race wins with 19 victories while Italian drivers only managed five, bearing in mind that Enzo Ferrari had a preference for international drivers.



Coachwork on Ferrari V12 road cars 1948-1989
by James Taylor
Herring & Sons. £40

A pictorial review of Ferrari's classic V12s. It's nicely printed and the picture quality is



good with a mixture of studio and exterior shots. The coachbuilding story is an overview and suits a contemporary reading style. An excellent stocking filler, if you are feeling quite generous.

Yvette Fontaine - My Passion
by Frank Raemaekers
www.yvette-fontaine.be. €60

Yvette Fontaine became interested in motorsport at the age of 14 when she lived with her parents close to the Zolder circuit. After some experience in hillclimbs, national and international rallies she was ready for the action that she enjoyed the best and was most competitive in - circuit racing.

In 1966 and '67 Yvette drove for Alfa Romeo and achieved some fine victories. Her big chance came in 1968 when Ford Belgium offered her a professional

driver's contract to defend their title as the Saloon Car Championship holders. With the fast Escort Twin Cam she carried off a number of important wins.

At Zolder she shattered Jacky Ickx's lap record, and achieved class and group victories with ease and natural assurance. And later at the wheel of a single seater she demonstrated her competitiveness and flair to such a degree that her lap times were faster than men who were Formula one Grand Prix drivers.

An interesting story of a driver who was big in Belgium but perhaps lesser known elsewhere.

Stirling Moss - The Definitive Biography
by Philip Porter

Porter Press International. \$59.95

Six hundred and fifty pages of in-depth research, anecdotes and interviews of the great drivers never to win a World Championship - and this is volume 1.

His career was an exciting cocktail of innate and honed skills, deadly danger, jet-setting, fast cars and fast women. Revered by the public the world over and continually courted by the media, he was the James Bond of motor racing in his era.

Team orders prevented him from becoming World Champion winning for Maserati in Formula 1, but he dominated the Mille Miglia with some extraordinary drives for Mercedes.

This book covers his story up to 1955 so you will have to wait for Volume 2 to read the inside story on Stirling Moss and Enzo Ferrari.

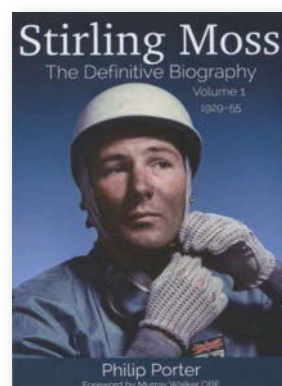
Ferrari Rex -
Biografia di un Grande Italiano del Novecento
by Luca dal Monte

Giunti & Giorgio Nada Editore. €28

The title 'Biography of a great twentieth century Italian' is a clear description of the contents. With 1100 pages this has to be the definitive book on Enzo Ferrari. The dozens of completely new images complement the life story of a giant who was one of the most versatile, complex and tormented characters in Italian history.

Considering it was eight years in the making this book is very reasonably priced. The big problem is that it is only published in Italian, so English readers will still be in the dark about Enzo's secrets - very Italian.

An important record worthy of an English edition.



MITHRIL RACING TO CLOSE AT GOODWOOD

After over 30 years of providing driving experiences at Goodwood Motor Circuit, Mithril Racing's directors are hanging up their helmets at the end of the 2016 season. It's been a tough decision to close a company built up over so long, which started with the mission of enabling ordinary people to drive the extraordinary cars they'd previously only dreamt about, in a place steeped in motoring history.

In thirty three years Mithril has hosted over 132,000 guests, putting them behind the wheels of classic Ferraris, Aston Martins, Jaguars, modern supercars and single-seater racing cars.

Mithril directors Chris Taylor and Paul Mullen: "We wish to thank the dedicated staff who have worked for Mithril over the years, our sponsors for their loyal support - none more so than Alfa Romeo with whom we have enjoyed a relationship lasting over 20 years - and of course to Goodwood for providing a backdrop as beautiful as it is unique for all our events."



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DESIGN

AUTO ITALIA'S DESIGN CONSULTANT CHRIS HRABALEK DISCUSSES THE FINER POINTS OF AUTOMOTIVE DESIGN

Ferrari GTC4 Lusso T



CHRIS HRABALEK

Age: 39

Born: Vienna, Austria

Design Education: MA at The Royal College of Art, London

Current Job: Director of Entence Design Group, a holistic design consultancy with studios in London and Berlin, working with OEMs from US, Europe and Russia, with sub-contracts for design houses with deliverables in China and Japan



Only six months since the world debut of Ferrari's GTC Lusso at this year's Geneva Motorshow and Ferrari is already unveiling a 'new' Lusso. Well not quite, but Ferrari has decided to create a new nameplate-derivative swapping V12 for V8 and ditching the complex four-wheel drive system, in an effort to make their four seater more affordable; with a 15% discount.

Unveiled in tandem with the new Ferrari LaFerrari Aperta in Paris, the Lusso 'T' – as this new entry level version of the Ferrari

FF-successor is now called – is yet another sign that Marchionne is getting down to business. While the official line of press communication is that the new Ferrari GTC4 Lusso T 'suits day-to-day driving in urban contexts' the reality is that Ferrari is in the process of trading exclusivity for profit.

Technically, the new GTC4 Lusso T features the 3855cc twin-turbo V8 from the 488 GTB with a modified air-intake system, a new intercooler and – primarily due to the different technical package – a new exhaust

system. Compared to its wealthy twin, the 'T' has approximately 80HP less in its pants, 2.1 litres less capacity in its belly and 50kg less fat on its hips; but to be fair, the budget Lusso will still make 62mph in 3.5 seconds and hit more than 199mph flat out.

Stylingwise one could conclude that the Ferrari GTC4 Lusso T was designed at Centro Stile during the month of August. Ferrari has taken the 'spot the difference' game of the 'Ferrari LaFerrari v Ferrari LaFerrari Aperta' to another level altogether. Apart from

the new set of 20-inch rims seen on the Paris Motor Show car, one would assume that not even Flavio Manzoni could tell them apart.

The styling of the Ferrari GTC4 Lusso T is that of a 'facelifted' Ferrari FF. The restyled front bumper with integrated front air-intakes, the side-air vents, the more dynamic body-side theme and double circular taillights are all identical to those of the V12 Ferrari GTC4 Lusso unveiled six months ago. The same can be said for the interior with the modern infotainment

system, the more confident dashboard architecture featuring the new arrangement of air-vents and the optional performance screen for the passenger.

Marchionne's strategy to increase volume, as a result of his desire to increase profit, makes one wonder what will come next. An 850-unit limited edition Ferrari F12 Aperta? Or a 1500-unit limited edition Ferrari LaFerrari T perhaps?

Before that, however, we will witness something radically new all together: Ferrari's annual production turning five-digit.



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Fuel consumption figures for the new Fiat 124 Spider in mpg (l/100km): Urban 33.2 (8.5); Extra Urban 55.4 (5.1); Combined 44.1 (6.4). CO₂ emissions 148 g/km. Fuel consumption and CO₂ figures based on standard EU tests for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results.

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Fuel consumption figures for the new Fiat Tipo range in mpg (l/100km): Urban 30.7 (9.2) – 70.6 (4.0); Extra Urban 56.5 (5.0) – 94.2 (3.0); Combined 44.8 (6.3) – 83.1 (3.4). CO₂ emissions 147 – 89 g/km. Fuel consumption and CO₂ figures based on standard EU tests for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results. Model Shown: Fiat Tipo LOUNGE 1.4 95HP *Promotion available on Fiat Tipo LOUNGE 1.4 95HP (including option of Electroclash paint at £550) registered between 1st October and 31st December 2016. Customer Deposit is £3,449. Optional Final Payment is £7,979. Contract Term is 24 months. With Fiat i-Deal PCP you may return the vehicle instead of making the final payment. It must be in good condition and if you exceed the agreed annual mileage, you will be charged 6p per mile for exceeding 10,000 miles per annum in this example. Finance subject to status. Guarantees may be required. Terms and Conditions apply. At participating dealers only. Fiat Financial Services, PO BOX 4465, Slough, SL1 0RW. We work with a number of creditors including Fiat Financial Services. Tipo EASY 1.4 has the lowest starting price (OTR) in C-segment on 2.8.16. Visit www.fiat.co.uk/amore for more info.

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WHO REALLY DESIGNED THE MIURA?

I'm sure what Mr Stroppa says is right (issue 249) but it really didn't cover everything. Yes, Giugiaro left Bertone in September 1965 and Gandini joined a month later, shortly before they got the Miura chassis. But he never mentioned in any detail what Giugiaro really did in the months leading up to his departure. They were working on three cars, including the Miura; he may well have had

advance notice of what was coming, with or without Mr Stroppa's knowledge. I'm sure it wasn't a complete surprise to Nuccio Bertone that the chassis just showed up with an order to clothe it.

I reckon Giugiaro had had a month or two to work on his ideas before leaving, which is why he left behind his preliminary ideas, which Gandini then honed. Giugiaro's sketches were even there in *Auto Italia* (the top two

of the four shown) but Stroppa really didn't go into any detail about what they were. Well, they were Giugiaro's and set the outline for the design. Gandini may have changed the details but the overall shape and window lines were already there. Also Mr Stroppa pointed out the hexagonal rear grille as being Gandini's; he should take a look at the Fiat Dino 2.0 Coupe's [Giugiaro's] front grille.

As I have said before,

Giugiaro 'admitted' (rather than 'claimed') that 70% of the design was his, and frankly I believe him. He is a lot less of an egotist than Gandini and it will take a lot to convince me that the Miura is not a Giugiaro design!

Norman Hawkes

Norman Hawkes has also pointed out Giugiaro's design cues on the Miura. His Corvair Testudo shares the same air intake detail aft of the side windows. The

Testudo also has the same headlights as the Miura and the line where the bonnet meets the lower flanks is identical. The Miura's front windscreen and side window line are very similar to Giugiaro's Fiat Dino Coupe, also the rear ends and even the line of the rear wings are almost completely identical.

In Norman's opinion all three of these cars were designed by the same hand – Giorgetto Giugiaro's. Ed



Auto Italia Readers' Offer

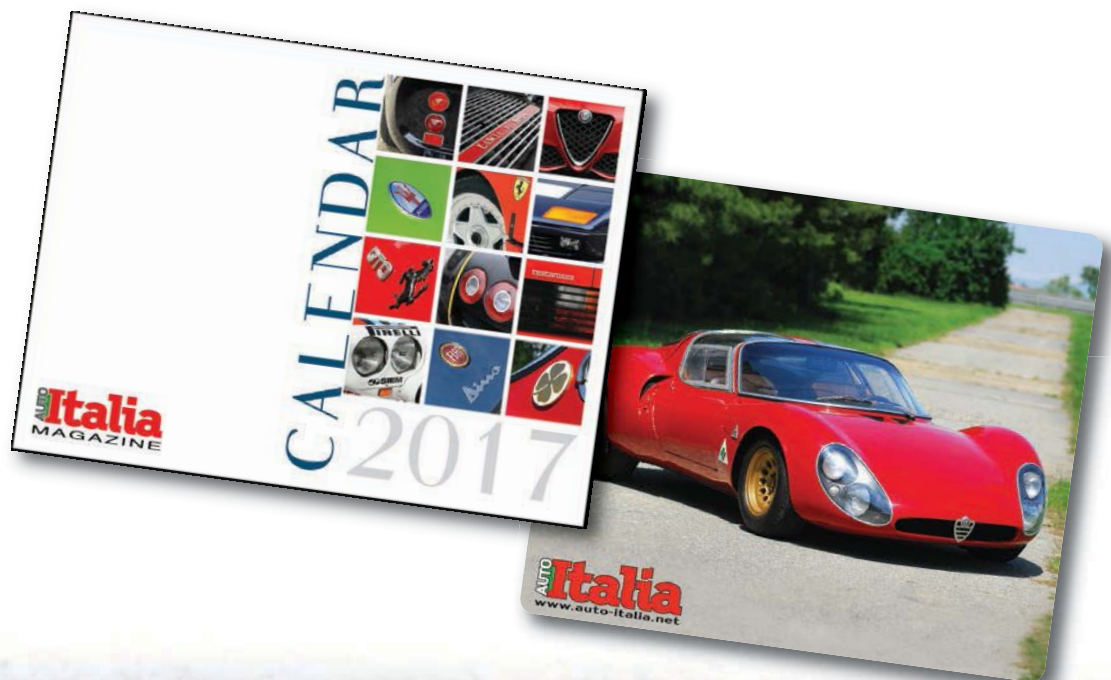
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Dolce Decorum

We head for the Welsh hills to test Fiat's iconic new 124 Spider to discover just how well it copes with challenging UK roads

Story by Chris Rees
Photography by Michael Ward





Few things in life are as much fun as driving a two-seater open-topped sportscar. And I confess, I have a special liking for sportscars that have been designed for everyman. There's something pure and utterly admirable about a pared-to-the-bone, honest, entry-level sportscar.

Which explains why the new Fiat 124 Spider is one of my most eagerly anticipated drives of the year. Can Fiat pull off the notoriously tricky job of creating a fun-to-drive, proper sportscar at an entry-level price?

The ingredients are certainly all present and correct: rear-wheel drive platform, classically elegant styling, just enough oomph and a price point that dips under the magic £20,000 barrier. The enticing prospect of sportscar heaven awaits us, and in a heavenly location, too: we're in North Wales to test the first right-hand drive 124 Spiders and answer all our questions about how well the Fiat behaves on British tarmac.

Officially, the 124 Spider is the successor to the late lamented Fiat Barchetta, last manufactured back in 2005. So if you're a Fiat fan, you've have had to wait a very long time for a two-seater open-topped sportscar. In fact, such a car might never have come to pass, had the top brass in Turin not changed their minds from the original plan to badge this car as an Alfa Romeo. In a curious shuffling of the corporate deck of cards, Alfa got the 4C (originally supposed to be an Abarth) and Fiat and Abarth got the 124. Overall, I think the correct decision was made at board level.

Of course, the 124 moniker harks back to the brilliant 1966-1985 Fiat 124 Spider. A remarkable total of more than 197,000 original-shape 124 Spiders were made, of which Fiat says that a healthy 5300 remain on European roads.

In style terms, there are clear parallels with the original 124. But there's a elephant in the room to deal with, and it comes from Japan. We're talking Mazda MX-5, with which the 124 shares an awful lot. The basic body/chassis structure is in fact built in Hiroshima, before being shipped over the Italy, so you might even say the Fiat is (at least partially) made in Japan.

But it's in Turin that Fiat really works its magic. On top of the basic structure is a body that, to my eyes at least, evokes all the romance of Lake Garda in high summer. There are subtle references to Tom Tjaarda's brilliant design for the original 1966 124 Spider – things like the kink in the body waistline just behind the passenger compartment and the sweeping shape of the headlamps. Even the bonnet bulges emulate the 1970s-era 124 Spider.

Let's get this clear from the outset: the 124 Spider is no mere rebodied Mazda MX-5. The changes under the skin are genuinely far-reaching: the engine is all Fiat, for example, while the gearbox, steering, suspension, noise insulation and interior detailing are all specific to the 124. It weighs 1050kg (or 1125kg including driver), a little heavier than the MX-5, but then it is a slightly longer, wider car.

TURBO TORQUE

Unlike Mazda, Fiat has chosen to go the turbocharger route, using its existing and rather excellent 1.4-litre MultiAir unit. 138bhp may not sound like much in sportscar terms, but for a fun summer's afternoon, who needs big power? On the roads around Llangollen, 138bhp is plenty enough to have an absolute blast.



In power terms, Fiat's powerplant slots in between the two Mazda offerings (129bhp 1.5 and 158bhp 2.0). Significantly, because the Fiat 1.4 MultiAir engine is turbocharged, it has substantially more torque than either. The peak figure is 177lb ft – which is just 7lb ft shy of the Abarth 124's far more potent (168bhp) engine. What's more, maximum torque is delivered at just 2250rpm. That means that, in contrast to the MX-5's peaky and high-revving engines, the 124's unit is brilliantly relaxed. There's so much mid-range urge that you rarely need to change gear; this is the perfect car for wafting around in 'cruise' mode.

In one way, the fact you don't need to change gear often is a shame, because the six-speed manual gearbox is so fantastic. Crisp, short-shifting, great ratios and with an ideally positioned lever – all in all, it's pretty much the perfect 'box for a sportscar. By the way, unlike the Abarth 124 Spider, there's no

automatic option in the UK (you can have an auto in the USA but not over here).

The relaxed theme to the 124's drive continues in terms of refinement. The extra noise insulation that Fiat installs makes the 124 very civilised by sportscar standards – certainly quite a bit quieter than the MX-5. Don't worry: the exhaust note is still rorty, raspy and characterful – very much the thing for a sportscar – but it's never loud. If you want something poppier and fruitier, you can always buy an Abarth 124 Spider, whose exhaust does all of that in spades.

So here's the million dollar question for any sportscar owner: how well does it handle? A big plus is that the suspension is basically the same as the talented MX-5's, although Fiat has chosen different dampers and geometry settings, as well as unique calibration for the electric power steering.

Put simply, the 124 feels fantastic on the Welsh A-

ABOVE: Attractive tan upholstery really lightens up the interior. Is this the 124's best body/trim colour combination?



FIAT 124 SPIDER



TOP: Handbrake lever is in the same position for both LHD and RHD cars – great for UK rally drivers?





roads where we tested it. One big surprise is just how compliant the suspension is, absorbing bumps impressively well. You occasionally feel a judder through the suspension on rough surfaces but nothing serious. Fiat is claiming class-leading torsional stiffness for the 124 Spider and while there are faint signs of scuttle shake, it takes real concentration to sense them. And the quality of the build throughout is very evident: we detected no squeaks or rattles at all.

The 124 turns out to be a very nimble handler on the fast, twisty roads of our Welsh test route. It turns in with great alacrity and offers solid feedback through the steering wheel. Start pushing hard and you get benign understeer. However, the 205 section tyres are pretty slender by modern standards, so there's always the possibility of lighting up the rear end. It takes some

determination to do this, though, and spinning the rear wheels does highlight one thing that's missing from the Fiat package: a limited-slip diff (something that's fitted to both the MX-5 and Abarth's version of the 124 Spider). The lack of LSD does make a difference to the speed you can carry through a corner, as well your ability to exit bends at maximum pelt, since the rear wheel with less grip just spins merrily away.

INSIDE STORY

While the cabin is very much like the MX-5's, there's more soft-touch plastic in evidence (for instance, along the door tops), while the satin chrome accents and leather steering wheel and gearknob do a great job of elevating the interior. Fiat's own seats look good too, although they're not perhaps as supportive

RIGHT: Not the most glamorous engine compartment but it's good to see the return of a longitudinal Fiat unit

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

FIAT 124 SPIDER

ENGINE:	4-Cylinder MultiAir
CAPACITY:	1368cc
BORE & STROKE:	72mm x 84mm
COMP RATIO:	9.8:1
POWER:	138bhp @ 5000rpm
TORQUE:	177lb ft @ 2250rpm
TRANSMISSION:	6-speed manual rear-wheel drive
BRAKES:	280mm ventilated discs (f), 280mm solid discs (r)
SUSPENSION:	Double wishbones with anti-roll bar (f), five-arm multilink with anti-roll bar (r), 195/50 R16 or 205/45 R17
TYRES:	4054mm (l), 1740mm (w), 1233mm (h)
DIMENSIONS:	1050kg
KERB WEIGHT:	7.5sec
0-62MPH:	134mph
TOP SPEED:	from £19,545
PRICE (UK):	



as you'd ideally like in a sportscar.

The multi-layer soft-top is identical to the Mazda's, and it's brilliant. Who needs complex, weight-adding electric motors when it's this easy to lower and raise the roof by hand? It takes just a few seconds, and you can do it all from the driver's seat with very little effort required.

The positioning of the pedals, steering wheel and gear lever is pretty much perfect. The three-dial instrument cluster is easy to see and clear, in an efficiently effective, Japanese way.

Not only is the Fiat positioned in the middle of Mazda's two MX-5 models in terms of power, it's priced slap bang between them, too, at £19,545. The Japanese car starts at £18,495 for the 1.5-litre, with the higher-powered 2.0 model priced from £21,090.





Fiat offers a choice of three trim levels: Classica (£19,545), Lusso (£22,295) and Lusso Plus (£23,295) but it's reckoned that only 15% of buyers will go for the base model, with an even split between the other two models. Standard on the Classica version is manual air-conditioning, cruise control, 16-inch alloys, keyless start, and a small-screen infotainment system with USB, AUX and Bluetooth. Adding the much nicer seven-inch infotainment system to the Classica costs £500.

The Lusso version adds Fiat's excellent seven-inch touchscreen with DAB, WiFi and two USB ports as standard, plus sat nav, rear parking camera, 17-inch alloys, heated seats, automatic climate control, front fog lamps, keyless entry, chrome exhaust tips and a silver finish for the windscreen and rollover bars.

The 'Plus' version chucks in adaptive LED headlamps, daytime running lights, automatic lights and wipers and a nine-speaker BOSE audio system with speakers in the headrests.

There are no options at all for the Lusso models, except metallic/pearlescent paint (your only no-cost paint choices are solid red or white). Of the metallics, easily our favourite is Italia Blue, although

we'd understand if you went for red, white or grey. The 124 Spider will always be a pretty rare sight in the UK: Fiat says it expects 1000 cars to be on British roads by the end of 2016.

VERDICT

Most of the people we've spoken to much prefer the way the Fiat 124 Spider looks compared to the Mazda MX-5, with which it shares so much under the skin. Yet the Fiat succeeds in offering a distinctly different driving experience to the Mazda – one that's surprisingly refined, thanks to oodles of torquey turbo pulling power, compliant suspension and effective sound insulation.

This is sportscar motoring from the old school, where you head for the hills and tour in style. It's not perhaps at its best when you're at full pelt – we'd recommend the Abarth 124 Spider if you're after thrills at speed – but it's remarkably good as a top-down touring car.

So a Ferrari will eat up the tarmac a lot quicker and with much more adrenaline involved, but would you have more fun on a Welsh mountain road? Probably not. For low-power, low-price laughs, I can't imagine anything more enjoyable than a Fiat 124 Spider. 🇮🇹

ABOVE: The 124 Spider's attractive styling, pricing and driving experience, tick all the right boxes



124^{spider}

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Fiat tip-top Tipo

How to take on a car like the Golf?
By not trying to be a Golf. Clever Fiat

Story by Richard Aucock
Photography by Michael Ward





The Volkswagen Golf has been a staple of the family hatchback sector for more than four decades. But Fiat's rival? It's changed name with almost every generation. We've had Strada, Tipo and Tempra, Bravo and Brava, Stilo, back to Bravo, and now? It's back to Tipo, the innovative 1989 five-door that spawned so many great Fiats, Alfa Romeos and Lancias in the 1990s.

This provided a great excuse to start reminiscing on the UK launch about Lancia Dedra Turbos, wide-arch Alfa 155s, even admit a strong yearning for a Tipo Sedicivalvole. But the new Tipo itself? Well, I admit, I really wasn't sure what to expect.

On paper, this is about as perfect a car as Fiat can be launching in this sector. It's foolhardy to try and go up against the Golf, the Focus, the Astra. The South Korean brands have the challenger sector pretty much sewn up and those that try to also compete are generally relegated to bit-player starring roles. No, the clever approach is to offer either better value or more quirkiness than the norm. The Dacia Duster does the former well; the Citroën C4 Cactus does the latter brilliantly.

Cue the Tipo. Fiat hasn't gone for the wacky approach of Citroën here – the 500 range serves that market well. It has instead maxed out on value, with an ultra-competitive starting price of just £12,995 for the five-door hatch. Which, if you're used to Golf prices, is breathtaking: the cheapest VW five-door is a whopping £18,280 – yes, fully £5,285 more than the

Fiat. The most expensive Tipo hatch costs less than the cheapest Golf five-door, which frankly tells you all you need to know.

So it's cheap. But it certainly doesn't look it. No Dacia Duster-style unpainted plastic bumpers and hubcapless wheels here. Ample proportions give it a look of substance and, surprisingly, near-premiumness. The line-up goes Easy, Easy Plus and Lounge: you get 16-inch alloys with the mid-trim model and a chrome detail pack to set off 17-inch alloys on the range-topper. The LED running lights that pack so much on-road clout are on all but base Easy; fancy chrome doorhandles are standard on all.

Tipo die-hards may be disappointed to discover there's no double-deck LCD instrument panel dominating the interior, but everyone else should be impressed by how the exterior elegance has carried through inside. Fiat's intentionally reduced the button count – you may recognise the big, chunky heater dials from other recent Fiats – and the broad instrument panel, with built-in infotainment unit, is suitably neat and almost Audi-like (save for the rather mean size of the colour screen itself). The dials are pretty and there's a lovely full-colour TFT display in between them: control it, and various other functions, from steering wheel buttons that look and feel the spitting image of a Mercedes-Benz A-Class. No bad thing.

It's nicely built. The main dash is low-sheen, soft-touch plastic, and although those lower down and on the doors are a bit more elephant-hide scratchy items,



TRIMMING A TIPO

The trim line-up for the Tipo is simplicity itself – intentionally, says product manager Federico Rosasco. Literally, ‘Easy’, in fact: it goes Easy, Easy Plus, Lounge, with a fleet-friendly Elite version for business uses (it won’t be promoted to retail buyers, but not excluded from them either, he says). He’s worked hard to ensure even Easy has everything most will need – air con, DAB, Bluetooth, steering wheel controls. “Rivals have foglights but we figured customers would value DAB and Bluetooth more.”

The price walk to Easy Plus is £1000 – indeed, all the key jumps in the range are £1000: between engines, between trims, between gearboxes, between hatch and estate. It’s also just £10 a month more on PCP, which is why Rosasco expects base Easy sales to be minimal: the expected-favourite Easy Plus adds touchscreen infotainment, alloys, electric rear windows, rear parking sensors, cruise control and, yes, fog lights.

Lounge adds another haul for £1000 or £10 a month: sat nav, climate control, rear-view camera, bigger alloys, rain-sensing wipers and the fancy exterior chrome pack. Elite is the same price as Easy Plus and includes sat nav, adaptive cruise control and Fiat’s Safety Pack that features autonomous emergency braking. It also has the wind-cheating aero pack that reduces CO₂ emissions of the sole 1.6 MultiJet 120 engine to just 89g/km, or 90g/km with the optional DCT. Which costs, yes, £1000 more.



they’re still neatly assembled by the Turkish plant. Make no mistake, this is a car with integrity, an impression bolstered by a fine driving position, firm and high-backed seats plus the most lovely thick-rimmed and sculpted steering wheel. The driver sits high, feels commanding and will even find it easy to jump out at the end courtesy of a slight SUV step-up to the height of the seat. I promise you, Fiat dealers, people will be surprised when they sit in this and soak up the showroom appeal.

Particularly as it’s roomy. That’s easy to achieve in the front, but less so in the rear – the new Renault Megane’s rear space is almost embarrassingly pitiful, for example. Not the Tipo: I’m six foot, mostly in the legs, and even setting the seat for my lanky limbs left loads of space behind – it’s double-take roomy back there. And the seat base is supportive and high-set, and the firm padding is as generous as up front – AND the doors open 80 degrees to make access easy. Renault and Peugeot, take note. Oh, and don’t think Fiat’s cheated by trading boot space either – at 440 litres, it’s 60 litres up on a Volkswagen Golf. Fiat reckons there’s another 12 litres’ stowage in the cabin – 1.5 litres in the centre console, 3 litres in the centre armrest, 1.5 litres in the doors: you’ll never see your smartphone again.

So things are looking positive for the clean and pretty Tipo. In sunny Cheshire, Fiat had gathered a range of pretty colours for us – all 1.6-litre MultiJet 120 Lounges. Diesel scares mean petrol is suddenly back in vogue and the 1.4 T-Jet 120 is a peach, but that would be for another day. The 1.6 MultiJet is strong in pretty much anything so we weren’t being



shortchanged. It's a bit throbby at tickover but is quick enough, reassuring, pulls nicely even from low revs. It's well-bred and welcomes rapid gearchanges to make the most of its 118bhp, although it's a pity the gearshift is rather spongy and long-throw.

And how does it drive? With pleasing finesse. Sensibly, Fiat hasn't chosen to go for a silly, unnecessary sports feel here: the Tipo has a supple, easygoing demeanour that works particularly well in town at family car speeds. The ride is quiet, harshness is damped away effectively and the ride is pliant and absorbent. It's relaxing, but not soggy or lazy; the only slight grumble is steering that's a touch heavy at parking speeds, but we're still hardly talking Iron Man muscle here.

Up the speed and supple damping boasts decent body control, again retaining the decent ride quality, and it turns into corners neatly and confidently. Indeed, the Tipo has a rather nice lightweight, light-nose feel here, giving it clean agility and precision that's actually rather good fun when pedalled quickly. Again, it's no razor-sharp hot hatch, but an easygoing five-door hatch that won't dissuade you from upping the pace on the way back from dropping the kids off at Brownie

camp. It's fuss-free, no-nonsense, but pleasant and pleasing. Simply, a nice car to drive.

Settled down in sixth gear, the engine is quiet, there's a surprising lack of wind noise and a lack of slack in the steering combines with good stability to help you sit at speed solidly. The poised, wide-track feel is confidence-inspiring and there seems to be enough well-built integrity within it to reassure you it's up for high-mileage use. Could I be picky and grumble? Sure, the steering and gearchange could be better, the engine could be more subdued at walking speeds and the sat nav looks more Argos than Audi, but they're hardly deal-breakers. Not when it's so strong in the important bits.

This is a fresh, cheerful-feeling car, with a willing nature and clean, fuss-free responses. There are no major flaws, no obvious foibles to make an excuse for, and the family-friendly things it simply must do well, it does do well. Prices, value, looks and practicality will sell it: see the pleasant drive, the elegant cabin, the effortless engine all as free extras.

It's a bullseye car for Fiat, in my eyes. It's not taking on the formidable Golf and Focus, but is cleverly finding its own way by giving 500 and Panda owners with





ABOVE: Well priced and well made, the Tipo is an impressive addition to the Fiat model range

growing families something to trade up into if a 500X isn't for them. And, giving Fiat an entry into the Duster and C4 Cactus marketplace that the smart money increasingly seems to be going into. When you can spend more than £20k on a Focus virtually in an eyeblink, the bargain-priced and able Tipo is about as perfect a family car package as Fiat could offer right now. Old name, new car, new potential against some old-school rivals that might yet surprise everyone with how the market responds to it. 🇮🇹



TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

FIAT TIPO 1.6 MULTIJET

ENGINE:	4-Cylinder 16-valve
CAPACITY:	1598cc
BORE & STROKE:	79.5mm x 80.5mm
COMP RATIO:	16.5:1
POWER:	118bhp @ 3750rpm
TORQUE:	236lb ft @ 1750rpm
TRANSMISSION:	6-speed manual front-wheel drive
BRAKES:	281mm discs (f), 264mm solid discs (r)
SUSPENSION:	McPherson strut (f), twist beam (r),
TYRES:	225/45 R17
DIMENSIONS:	4368mm (l), 1792mm (w), 1495mm (h)
KERB WEIGHT:	1370kg
0-62MPH:	9.8sec
TOP SPEED:	120mph
CO2:	98kg/m
ECONOMY:	64.2mpg (combined)
PRICE (UK):	from £17,995





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Straman Daytona

There are numerous unofficial open-top Ferrari Daytonas but the USA's Straman version is as good as it gets

Story by Richard Heseltine
Photography by Michael Ward



It holds true in broad outline that the word 'converted' tends to strike fear into buyers of old cars. That said, you could just as easily substitute 'chopped' or 'cut' as cars that have been silted and reconfigured can be a hard sell and have accordingly acquired all sorts of monikers. This in turn has led to some highly imaginative auction catalogue descriptions or dealer ads which are high on hyperbole but

light on the truth. Rarely is this truer than when discussing Ferrari's Daytonas that have gone under the knife. The thing is, prejudices towards such cars may be understandable, but they aren't always well-founded.

Take this gorgeous '72 car, for example. It was converted – in period, we might add – and looks amazing but nowadays is worth only a fraction of a real Daytona spider because, well, it left the factory with a roof.

But is it really a lesser car? The marketplace says yes, but it's all relative. It certainly isn't only fractionally as good as the real thing, that's for sure. It rather depends on who performed the surgery, and how well. That, and whose opinion you canvas.

What's more, it's worth remembering why the real thing is so highly-regarded. Great changes tend to have great side-effects and you cannot underestimate the importance of



Lamborghini's arrival in the exotica firmament on Ferrari's future direction: think of it as two storm fronts colliding. When introduced at the 1968 Paris Motor Show, the 365GTB/4 – or Daytona by its unofficial nickname – was met with muted hoopla. Tractor magnate Ferruccio Lamborghini had already half-inched the limelight with the buccaneering Miura for which the term 'supercar' was coined especially. For the most part, the motoring

media railed against the Daytona's lack of daring. The Miura flicked two fingers at convention with its radical mid/transverse engine layout and represented the future of big power machinery, they reasoned.

All of which was quickly forgotten, the balance of the universe restored, once the Miura's future-shock aspect was depleted. It soon transpired that it had been rushed to market. The Daytona may have been less

flamboyantly risky but it *worked*.

Underpinning the car was a steel chassis on to which the engine and suspension hung with other, smaller frames supporting the radiator, unstressed body panels and the floor. Unusually, this comprised a glassfibre tub, which also formed the door sills and the front and rear bulkheads, all bonded together to form one unit. Onto this, artisans at long-time Ferrari collaborator Carrozzeria Scaglietti

formed the bodies from individual sheets of metal, which were shaped over wooden bucks before being welded together.

And beauty here really was more than skin deep. The Daytona's heart was a 4390cc double overhead cam all-alloy V12 fed by six gurgling twin-choke Weber carbs. According to the factory's own stats, this meant 353bhp at 7500rpm and a thumping 318lb ft of torque at 5500rpm. Despite it emerging in an age when it was customary for manufacturers to, cough, 'fine-tune' their performance figures, the Daytona was genuinely quick. Grand Prix great Phil Hill attained 173mph aboard Bill Harrah's example during a test in *Road & Track* in 1970. The magazine's report concluded that it was '...the best sportscar in the world. Or the best GT. Take your choice; it's both.' Closer to home, *Autocar's* road testers managed to eke out a further 1mph and recorded a 0-100mph time of just 12.6sec while they were at it. Ferrari was in no

danger of losing its throne in the top speed wars. Not yet, anyway.

In late 1969, Ferrari's big-boned warhorse was joined by the lidless (and ultra-desirable) GTS/4 variant and so it continued until 1973 when Daytona production ended. And it's at this juncture that production numbers enter play. It is widely held that 1279 GTs were made but only 122 open cars (only seven were made in right-hand drive). And, as we all know by rote, lower numbers generally mean higher prices when discussing the Ferrari market. While nowhere near as superheated as it is now, the situation was much the same back in the '70s when Daytonas first began to be denuded of their roofs.

It was a case of simple economics: Spiders were worth more than GTs. Significantly more, plus ragtops were in short supply. As such, a cottage industry of specialists took to performing conversions. In the UK, there was Emilio Garcia's E.G. Autokraft concern. In Italy, there was Auto Sport of Modena, while

in the USA there was European Auto Restoration and Richard Straman Coachworks, both of which were located on the same street in Costa Mesa, California. All told, these four firms accounted for around 100 Daytona 'chops'. Throw in a few more from lesser-known operations, and the number of converted cars isn't that far off the figure for official production spiders.

The conversion process varied between rivals, though. While the basic body structure of the GT and spider are pretty much identical, the open car had steel inner wheelwells front and rear, and a steel reinforced bulkhead between the cabin and the boot area in place to add strengthening. They also had additional bracing between the front wheelwells and the bulkhead plus the sill panels. Few punters were willing to stump the many – *many* – thousands of pounds required to change parts like for like, and, as such, the overwhelming majority of cars retained the glassfibre inner structure with

Straman's detailing and trim lines are superb. Opinion has it that they used original panels produced by Scaglietti





additional reinforcement elsewhere.

Make no mistake, these conversions were not cheap. The car you see here was delivered new to Maranello Concessionaires and sold to the president of Coca-Cola in Australia. In 1978, the same owner had it transported to the USA where Straman performed surgery at a cost of roughly \$20,000 before shipping it back Down Under. And it isn't as though this firm didn't have form when it came to such conversions. From the 275 GTB to more recent fare such as the 456 and 550 Maranello, it produced hundreds of such procedures. If anything, Straman is best known for its Testarossa spiders, Michael Jackson being one early adopter. What's more, it also created convertibles for the likes of Chrysler, Honda and Nissan which were made in series and sold through the dealer network in the USA. This wasn't a fly-by-night operation.

Up close, there's little to tell this car apart from a regular factory spider, but then Straman reputedly used panels supplied by Scaglietti (as did Auto Sport). Converted cars

often fall down in the detailing, not replicating the slight peak on the rear deck or the curvature of the rear haunches, but that isn't the case here. The same goes for small but notable bits such as the pull-down blinds sited at the top of the windscreen. There's precious little to tell it apart from a gen'wine GTS/4 save, perhaps, for the placement of minor switchgear. Even then, we're talking of stuff that only the most anally-retentive obsessive would ever point out.

One of the joys of Ferraris of old is the start-up theatrics; the whirr of the starter, that initial cough and then the sound of Armageddon working itself into a lather, a sense that is only heightened here thanks to a slightly ruder exhaust system. The Daytona's throttle is firm but not stiff yet the steering is normally heavy when manoeuvring. Very – very – heavy. Here, however, it has been converted to power-steering which makes all the difference when pottering.

Once up and running, what surprises you is

just how flexible the engine is: more than two thirds of peak torque is available from just 1000rpm. At any speed, in any gear, the Daytona just bolts. All too often ancient exotica don't live up to the billing. Being mugged by a hot hatch in something multi-cylindereed and vowel-laden can be a humbling experience but, given plenty of space on a track as here, the Daytona is in its element. It builds up speed with freight train-like momentum and still feels genuinely quick despite its vintage. With all six Webers working in harmony, it's just one long sustained rush. In period, the Daytona in fixed-head form could reputedly reach 59mph in first and 86mph in second. This is entirely believable even if we are not trying *that* hard. Once the transaxle oil has warmed up, gear changes are a doddle, too, the slender chrome lever slotting neatly into place without snatching.

The real revelation to anyone unfamiliar with Daytonas is just how easy they are to drive. Yes, the controls can feel leaden





without the benefit of power-assistance, but the same is true of most GTs of the era, but the accelerator, brake and clutch are equally weighted: once rolling it isn't intimidating. Really, it isn't. And while the spider doesn't exactly feel light-footed when roads get twisty, it is not without agility. The car's ride is far from kidney-rattling, which may come as a surprise, and roll appears more pronounced from the outside than from behind the steering wheel. It corners well considering its age and size: the Daytona may be a bit on the hefty side but it's nicely balanced. Set-up is crucial with cars of this ilk, and this is among the best examples we have ever tested. Without wishing for this to sound like a

gushing advertorial, which is not our thing *at all*, this is one Daytona that you don't need to make excuses for.

Preconceptions that it might feel a bit floppy soon prove unfounded. This car feels more rigid than certain modern day production convertibles we can think of, some of them Italian. Think of it as a coachbuilt classic and you'll be on the money as, well, that's what it is, even if the coachbuilder was from the West Coast. As for the vexed question of relative values, once again it's all, er, relative. This Daytona is currently for sale for £574,995. That's anywhere between a half and a third the price of a factory spider. Either way, this still

represents Monopoly money for the vast majority of us, but it does make you think – mostly about how utterly absurd the old car market has become, and how a car's value isn't necessarily considered as important as its actual worth.

Ultimately, this Daytona will appeal to those who aren't hung up about factory original perfection, or whether or not a car has Ferrari Classiche paperwork. In other words, the sort of person who actually likes to drive their cars rather than polish them. The overwhelming majority of onlookers won't know or care that it's a chop, or whatever you want to call it. This is still a Daytona will all that entails. That's enough for most of us. 🇮🇹

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Fiat's Dino

Coachbuilt by Pininfarina
and Bertone and
assembled at Maranello,
there's more Ferrari about
these underrated cars
than Fiat

Story by Richard Heseltine
Photography by Michael Ward

Preconceptions can be hard to shake. To some, Fiat Dinos are Ferraris in all but name. To others, however, they're gussied-up pretenders, mere boulevardiers with delusions of grandeur. As such, these intriguing curios are much misunderstood. Myth and reality rarely overlap, here. The simple unvarnished truth is that they have long been considered the poor relation to Maranello products, but they really shouldn't be.

The two cars gathered here are truly, really lovely, and we're not just talking about their outer wrappers. Open their bonnets and crowds gather like puppies at a food bowl. Fire up, and grown men giggle like loons as Dinos are nothing if not theatrical. Choral, too. It's just that 50 years have elapsed since the Spider variant broke cover at the November '66 Turin Motor Show and ushered in a new breed of exotic Fiat, and it's taken most of that time for the Dino to be taken seriously. By that, we mean taken seriously by anyone who has never driven one.

As is so often the way with these things, the narrative behind how and why Fiat got wrapped up in making exotica is a little muddy. It is widely held that Ferrari was keen to homologate a V6 engine for the new-for-1967 1.6-litre Formula 2 regulations. The main stumbling block was that these rules stipulated that such engines needed to be based on a production car unit (using the same crankcase but not necessarily the same cylinder dimensions), and that a minimum of 500 had to be made in a single year. Given that Ferrari was making around 700 cars per annum, this presented something of a stumbling block.

No matter, Fiat, which had provided below the radar backing to Ferrari on the more one prior occasion, rode to the rescue once again. A meeting was arranged between Fiat's heir apparent Gianni Agnelli and Enzo Ferrari, with Fiat's MD Vittorio Valletta and general manager Vincenzo Bono also attending. Weber's







Francesco Bellicardi acted as moderator, a deal being thrashed out whereby Fiat would sponsor the construction of the engine for use in a new range-topper and also a sub-species of Ferrari. They would iron out the details later.

Just as night follows day, the exact who-did-what story behind this thoroughbred V6 rather depends on whose version of history you believe. In a nutshell, it is widely held that it began life as a Vittorio Jano design from 1956, with a 65 degree throw to accommodate twin camshafts per bank. It was chopped and change, silted and reconfigured thereafter to suit a variety of different racing regulations. Aurelio Lampredi was ultimately tasked with turning a 1596cc unit (by this time attributed to Franco Rocchi) into a production car engine.

Naturally, all four cams were driven by roller chains, and there was also a four-bearing bottom end with a nitrated crank. Head and block were made of light alloy. Lampredi left the stroke at 57mm, but widened the bore from 77 to 86mm, giving it a capacity of 1987cc. Cast iron liners and forged alloy pistons were also used, and the compression ratio was set at a relatively conservative 9:1. Three gurgling Weber 40DCN 14 carbs sat in the centre of the vee, with

power being quoted as a then credible 160bhp at 7200rpm. Peak torque, by contrast, was a modest 126.6lb ft at 6000rpm.

The rest of the car was, for the most part, robbed from the Fiat's parts bin. The five-speed 'box was derived from the 2300S unit, with a separate casing bolted to the back of the existing item for the extra cog. Underpinning the car was a stressed unitary platform with a goin wheelbase, the front end being suspended by a coil spring/wishbone set-up plus an anti-roll bar. Out back sat a 2300S-rooted live axle arrangement (with a Borg Warner limited-slip diff), which employed leading upper radius arms and twin dampers per side. Vented Girling disc brakes featured all-round, while steering was by means of a ZF Gemmer worm-and-roller design.

Then there was the styling. The Spider was the work of Pininfarina, which was also engaged to construct the bodies: floorpans were supplied to the legendary carrozzerie with the bare hulls being transported back to Fiat's Rivolta facility for the installation of the mechanical parts. Who, precisely, styled the car remains unrecorded. Not that the Spider's big reveal in Turin in late '66 came as a huge surprise as the Italian





ABOVE: The 2.4 Fiat Dino was arguably technically superior but the 2.0 had the purity of looks



media had been hyping it for the better part of 12 months. What's more, the first 500 had reputedly been sold before punters had so much as laid eyes on the car, but this may be apocryphal.

Whatever the truth, it was joined at the March '67 Geneva Motor Show by a closed sibling; one that was the work of Bertone's Giorgetto Giugiaro. He had been beavering away on a replacement design for the 2300S as far back as 1963, and his design was simply reworked for this new application. However, by the time it was completed, Giugiaro had left for arch-rival, Ghia, so it was left to others to refine the outline.

While mechanically alike to the Spider, the Coupe had a longer 100-inch wheelbase and was better equipped: the rear seats were genuinely usable and split 50/50 for added practicality. There were also electric windows and ventilation outlets in the C-pillars that opened and closed automatically under acceleration and deceleration. It also received of a promotional boost following an appearance as a Mafia staff car in 1969's *The Italian Job*.

The previous year witnessed something of a blip in Dino production, Fiat pausing manufacture after 1133





Spiders and 3629 Coupes had been made. Construction didn't recommence for several months, both variants remerging with significant changes even if not all of them were immediately obvious. For starters, the lusty V6 was now markedly more Fiat than Ferrari, with an iron block and a capacity hike to 2419cc thanks to a bore and stroke that measured 92.5mm x 60mm. This resulted in a power boost to 180bhp at 6600rpm, and greater torque: 166lb ft at 5500rpm. Importantly, it now met US emissions requirements. A ZF five-speed 'box with a dogleg first was also standardised, while a Fiat 130 saloon-derived independent suspension arrangement comprising semi-trailing arms, MacPherson struts, track control arms and an anti-roll bar appeared on both iterations.

Fiat's purchase of Ferrari in 1969 ultimately saw the house of the Prancing Horse expand its manufacturing base. Spiders and Coupes were subsequently assembled in Maranello with Pininfarina and Bertone supplying fully-trimmed bodysells. And so it continued until both models were dropped in 1972, although unsold cars remained on the books well into the following year amid a fuel crisis. A mere 424 2.4-litre Spiders had been made along with 2414 Coupes,

rendering them among the rarest of all production Fiats.

Dinos were never officially offered in right-hand drive configuration, and in the UK at least they have been underappreciated. It didn't help that cars tended to be poorly maintained as they fell down the food chain. The relative complexity of Dinos – any Dino – put off many, with values remaining on the floor for decades. Now it's a different story as prices have latterly soared and, as such, enthusiasts are now willing to restore cars properly in the knowledge that they should – *hopefully* – be able to recoup their investment rather than simply throwing cash onto the pyre.

Both cars pictured here are first-generation 2.0-litre models which, to some Dino fans, are the purest of the breed. Owners of larger-engined variants, by contrast, are known to counter this argument by saying that later Dinos are more sophisticated. That, and less frail. It's all relative. What is clear is that the Fiat Dino in any of its many flavours hasn't lost the power to captivate although, once again, there is a degree of leg-pulling among owners about which type is prettiest.

The Spider is unquestionably the more striking of the two, especially when finished in a searing shade of





rosso, but it also polarises opinion among beauty arbiters. To some, it's a truly classical shape, all curves and cleavage. To others, it's a bit *too* brassy. Certain members of this parish absolutely adore the outline, though, and there's no denying that it hasn't lost the power to magnetise. This 1967 car has the earliest (and nicest) detailing, too, with a chrome grille (rather than matt black) and no rubber strips on the bumpers.

The Coupe, by contrast, is positively restrained. Dismissed by one classic car magazine editor as being '...the rich man's Opel Manta', it's nothing of the sort. It's beautifully proportioned and elegant with it. That said, this being a Giugiaro production, it does look remarkably similar to other cars in his back catalogue, the Isuzu 117 Coupe among them. Like the open car, the Coupe is colour-sensitive and looks better in darker

hues such as 'Ferrari 502C' blue, as here.

Alex Jupe is widely recognised as being a Dino authority, this '67 example having been in the family since his father acquired it in 1996. Alex spent six years restoring it, and you're unlikely to find a better one in the UK or anywhere else for that matter. He fell under the Dino's spell after being driven around Goodwood by Mithril Racing chief, Chris Taylor, being amazed at how he, his then employer was able to steer the car on its bump-stops without any drama.

And therein lies much of the appeal of a well-sorted Coupe: it's only dramatic when you want it to be. The engine dominates the experience, singing its heart out as the chains thrash, cams whine and carbs gurgle. Past 5000rpm, it really is your spine-tingling cliché. Below this figure, it's throaty and burbly, but well-

LEFT: This concours-winning Dino Spider is an early car and has the correct, original interior



Thanks to:
Dan Drogman and Alex Jupe
www.alexjupermotorsport.co.uk



mannered when cruising. And it will dawdle happily, without any truculence at low speed. The gearbox, too, is a pleasure to use despite its reputation for frailty.

Most period reports suggest that you can steer the Coupé on the throttle. Experience of baggy examples might lead to believe otherwise, but somewhere south of ten tenths this particular car is a joy to steer. It doesn't feel edgy or threaten to spill – at all. Even the briefest of sorties is enough to make you start searching through the classifieds.

Dan Drogman's Spider is arguably the best known in the UK. It has been the recipient of a fair amount of silverware at some of the more prestigious concours events. As is to be expected, it looks amazing. It's also highly original, save for the paint, and has never been welded. Under advisement not to rev it stratospherically, it nevertheless feels more overtly sporting, but that could be down to the buffeting. Prior experience informs you that the spider feels more edgy than the coupé which could be due to the shorter

wheelbase, but it is agile with it.

The vinyl seats are perhaps a little low rent given the outer glamour, but the cabin is otherwise spacious and attractive, the aluminium fascia being much – *much* – more attractive than those found in later iterations. On rutted topography, slaloming around potholes, the Spider feels far more rigid than you might imagine, with no banging or crashing through the structure. There is no kickback through the steering either. And, needless to say, it sounds glorious even if you're staying well clear of the 8000rpm red line.

Ultimately, both cars appeal greatly but for different reasons. The Spider looks more exotic, that's for sure. It didn't wear Prancing Horse badges in period, but they don't look out of place either. It's hard not to be won over. Jupe's Coupé, by contrast, is a car that feels every inch the continent-crossing GT. It's a compelling mix of the proletariat and the high-brow. It's a car which oozes charm, although screams is probably closer. 🇮🇹

ABOVE: A progressive increase in values has resulted in Fiat Dinors receiving superior, professional restorations





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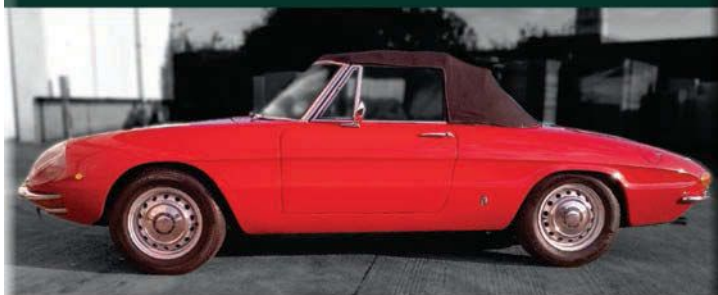
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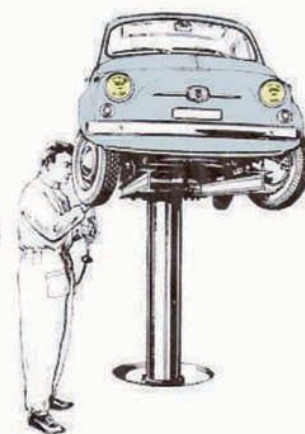
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An English Italian

The Corvette-powered, Giugiaro-designed Gordon-Keeble is the product of an alliance between a Slough-based partnership and Carrozzeria Bertone

Story by Mike Taylor
Photography by Michael Ward





The Gordon-Keeble was surely the epitome of a car enthusiast's dream of the 1960s; neck snapping acceleration, horizon grasping top speed and room to accommodate four people on tour in relative luxury.

The Gordon-Keeble story could be said to have started when F-101 Voodoo fighter Pilot, Rick Nielsen asked talented special builder Jim Keeble to install a Chevrolet Corvette V8 power unit into a Peerless GT chassis. Contact with John Gordon at the Peerless factory gained the green light for the project so long as the work was carried out at the company's headquarters in Slough.

Shortly before the Peerless Corvette was completed Gordon resigned, contacting Keeble soon after with a proposition; Keeble was to design the rolling chassis for an all new four seater grand tourer. Gordon then approached car designer Nuccio Bertone. The deal was that Bertone would set his 21 year old stylist Giorgetto Giugiaro – who was midway through his National service and working for Bertone part-time – to style the body, the finished car being used as an exhibit at the Geneva Show promoting Bertone's business. Within three months Keeble's chassis was in Bertone's studio, the metal body fitted and on display in March 1960. A month later and prototype 472 LKX was running and ready to wow the world.

Under the Gordon GT's graceful bonnet was the 217bhp version of the 4.6-litre Chevrolet Corvette engine. Drive was taken via a single plate GM dry clutch through to an all-synchromesh T10 gearbox with very close ratios.

That year the Gordon GT was shipped to the US where GM's Ed Cole sampled its delights saying that it was just what he wanted to create showroom traffic across the States, agreeing to supply the necessary drive trains. "I was convinced this was the key that opened the door to productionising the car," Gordon was to tell the author later.

When *The Autocar* tested the Gordon GT in October 1960 it was the fastest car of any type that had received their full road test treatment. Speeds in the gears were recorded as 72mph and 120mph with a Maximum of 142mph. The 0-60 sprint was timed at 7.5 seconds, and this was 1960 remember!

Inexplicably, three years came and went with no progress being made in funding the business to build the car. By now Gordon had left, returning to selling





luxury motor cars, the project now firmly in the hands of George Wansbrough, formerly of Jowett and ex-board member of Mercantile Credit. Established companies were courted, only to shy away over Wansbrough's unwillingness to relinquish control while Iso in Italy were sent a chassis frame as an introduction, only for the overture to be ignored.

In 1963 Wansbrough approached Jim Keeble over setting up production at Eastleigh Airport. Now called the Gordon-Keeble, the comprehensive assembly process would include laying up the GRP bodies, chassis frame fabrication, body trimming and painting. At its peak the factory employed over 100 skilled staff with assembly running at 3-4 cars per week.

Significantly, probably through Wansbrough's connections, impressive publicity and simply whispers made in the right ears G-Ks sold to the nobility including Lords Harlech, Bradford, Davies and Brecknock, with composer and musician Antony Hopkins and Conservative MP Somerset de Chair also falling under its spell. Even Jacqueline Kennedy was seen being driven in one around Washington.

At the end of 1964 the GK's price was hiked in an effort to rescue a drastically dwindling bank balance. Sadly, in early 1965 the situation reached crisis point and staff were paid off. Sir Michael Clark, deputy chairman of Plessey – a G-K buyer himself – offered to take over the firm, but Wansbrough wouldn't hear of it.

LEFT: The 5.4-litre Chevrolet V8 produced 296bhp, enough to propel the 1400kg car to 147mph



ABOVE: Of the 101 Gordon-Keebles built only 7 or 8 are unaccounted for. Values currently exceed £100k.

Significantly, a contributing factor in the G-K's first demise was industrial disputes, especially at steering box manufacturer Adwest, causing some 16 cars to lie uncompleted for many lingering weeks. The alternative was to install Marles boxes. But, by then cash flow had been destroyed.

In May 1965 Harold Smith, who'd dealt in G-Ks, together with fellow motor trader, Geoffrey West struck a deal with the Receiver, taking over the stock holding to reinstate production under the name Keeble Cars Limited, the business moving to nearby Sholing where a further seven cars were made before it, too, closed its doors.

In 1967 a final attempt was made to do something with the gloriously shaped Grand Tourer. Medical instrument maker and garage owner, John de Bruyne bought what remained of the company. It was a rash move for back in Newmarket he had time to count the result of his purchase. "I'd got a year's supply of horn buttons, but only a handful of suspension parts," he revealed grimly to the author.

Undeterred, de Bruyne had some styling changes incorporated into one of the bodyshells, squaring off the tail treatment and removing the vestigial fins, and straightening the angled bonnet and headlamps. In 1968 the car (called the de Bruyne Grand Tourer) was exhibited at the New York Show. But, it was an inauspicious time to launch a new car and he pulled the plug.





"My introduction to the Gordon-Keeble was when I was around eight-years-old and my father wrote to *The Autocar* magazine for advice," recalls Charles Giles, the owner of the stunning original wine red Gordon-Keeble we are reviewing. "He'd had an E-type Jaguar so he was familiar with high performance cars and the journal recommended the Gordon-Keeble. When he finally bought one it certainly lived up to his expectations. It was a tool for work. He was quite a press on type of driver, and the G-K was quick and reliable though it did break down on him during its very first trip."

Continues Charles: "While my father enjoyed driving his Gordon-Keeble he sustained two accidents in it. On one occasion he parked in a narrow lane at the bottom of a slippery slope. A lorry then skidded into it causing considerable damage and the car was sent back to Gordon-Keeble at Southampton for repairs. Later, he had a nasty smash and was taken to hospital. The car was sent to Keeble Cars Ltd to have a new front end grafted on. After this crash he found the G-K difficult to drive and sold it for a Mercedes."

Charles' awakening for the G-K and ownership came when his father wanted to find another and in 1973 they located one in Battle, East Sussex. "I drove that car quite often and enjoyed every minute of it before he sold it in 1979. Then, I began attending club meetings and thinking of buying one for myself. But, it had to be original."

"I bought this Gordon-Keeble in 1987 through an advert in *Classic & Sportscar* magazine from a garage in Northamptonshire. After a price reduction, I went to see it, realised it was original and bought it without a test drive. But, it wasn't running well. Finally, it went to Ernie Knott at the Gordon Keeble Car Centre in Brackley and they looked after it for many years, on one occasion undertaking a re-spray and body-off restoration."

"I've had three G-Ks," says Charles ruefully. "In addition to this one, I bought one which was not original and then another that was imported from the US. But, it needed considerable restoration. I had it repaired and sold them both. I have no intention of selling this one."

"I don't think the Gordon-Keeble would have survived in the numbers it has had the car been anything less than totally beguiling with stunning looks," says Charles as we look around his car. "People go out of their way to save a G-K even when it's not financially viable. Of the 101 G-Ks built we've only lost 7-8, which is not a bad tally."

Today, membership of the Gordon Keeble Owner's Club stands at some 70 owners and their cars with a further 10 'prospective' members, a reasonable percentage based on the total numbers built. "Looking at the front of the G-K it's always smiling at me," concludes Charles.

ABOVE: We wonder if Giugiaro's headlight treatment was influenced by Michelotti who also favoured this style

DRIVING A GORDON-KEEBLE

What makes the Gordon-Keeble stand out, even today, is its charismatic style. Pencil thin pillars, flowing lines and a remarkable standard of finish speak volumes for elegance and quality. With the exception of shallow bumpers fore and aft, outside, there is little external chrome brightwork to distract the eye,

The car sits low to the ground, the wheels filling the arches nicely while the swage lines flow uninterrupted, front to rear. Inside, the cabin feels light and airy. In comparison to some grand tourers you sit high on comfortable seats with ample squabs to support thighs and bottom giving good visibility all round, the seats being adjustable for rake and travel while the steering has telescopic adjustment as well. Behind, the rear seats are scalloped to accommodate two in comfort.

Ahead of the driver is an elliptical binnacle with large diameter easily read speedo and rev counter flanking the all essential water temperature and oil pressures gauges. The remaining instruments; fuel, clock and ammeter are located centrally. Below is the broad transmission tunnel console with its array of toggle type switches, all marked clearly to indicate their function, and rotary controls for heating and ventilation.

Noticeable to the G-K novice is the long throttle and clutch pedal travel. The accelerator gives sensitive control of engine speed, though to achieve graunch-free changes the heavy clutch needs to be pushed right to the floor to release the single dry plate drive.

Betraying its US origins the side loader gearstick is placed some two inches to the left of the transmission tunnel centre line, a dinky little device with a tee-bar reverse inhibitor. In operation the short travel makes the movement stiff, the stick needing a concerted effort to push or pull it across the gate. An extension cranked towards the driver was added to the last cars off the G-K line.


At manoeuvring speeds the non-assisted worm and wheel steering takes some effort, the man-sized 16in woodrim wheel helping to overcome the initial resistance to movement. At anything above walking pace, however, the steering becomes noticeably lighter.

At low speeds the innovative split circuit servo assisted brakes need care and respect, only light pressure on the pedal resulting in an immediate reaction. As the speed increases their stopping power gives confidence, totally in tune with the car's capabilities.

By today's standards the steering feels a little woolly, no doubt the result of the narrow 4.5-inch road wheels and worm and wheel-type steering. While the rear suspension remains tidy in a turn the front can occasionally have a mind of its own. Jim Keeble's suspension design included coil spring dampers all round, the long suspension travel giving a comfortable compliant ride. At the rear the independent arrangement with Watt linkage and trailing arms is clearly capable of handling the 300 (gross) brake horsepower and 360lb ft of torque.

One of the joys of G-K motoring is the flexibility of the Corvette engine and the wide spread of ratios, which gives the driver a superb range of engine speed and gears to choose from. It's possible to be as dramatic as you wish, changing down a gear to feel a satisfying surge of acceleration. However, there's little to be gained from this bullish behaviour, such is the savage grunt from the GM V8, a deep prod on the throttle can result in an equally impressive reaction.

In an interview with the author Jim Keeble once described himself as an innocent when it came to business and those involved with the G-K programme in particular. But, when it came to designing the Gordon-Keeble he was clearly in a league of his own.

Our thanks go to Charles Giles and David Yeomans for their help with this feature. 



Resurrection

Confined to a museum since the 1970s this Abarth Sport Spider 'Quattro Fari' has been liberated and restored to its former glory

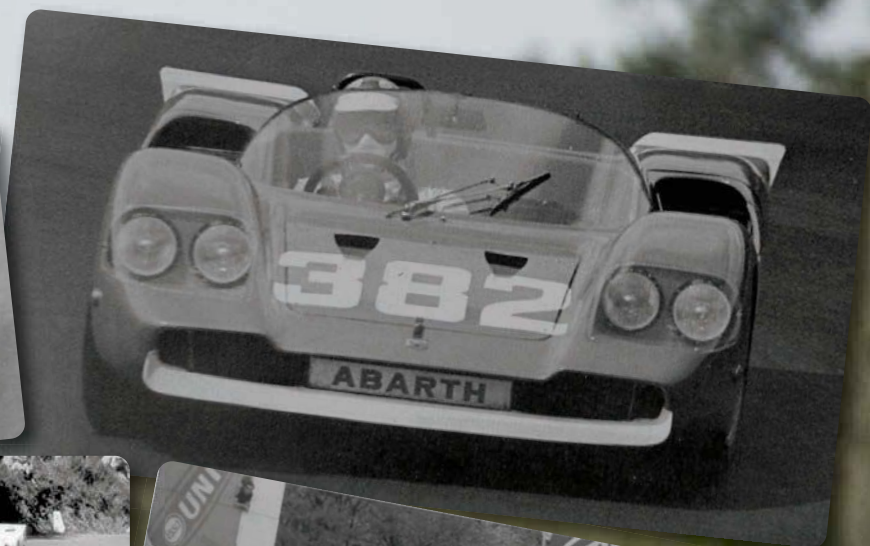
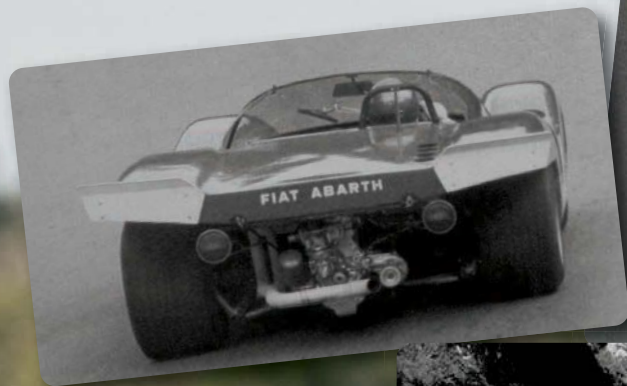
Story by Massimo Delbò
Photography by Dirk de Jager



The success of the cars built by Carlo Abarth is closely linked to his own personal growth in a mix of cultures. It is difficult to imagine something better for a car than having a half Italian and half Austrian origin, from a company where the founder was a friend of the Piech family and Tazio Nuvolari. Such was the association between nations that his name Karl became, and will always remain the Italian version, Carlo.

Karl Abarth was born in Vienna in 1908, by 1925 he was already working in Milan for Carrozzeria Castagna. When he founded the company bearing his own name in 1949, he was already Carlo, and he understood the

Italians much better than many Italians did themselves. He had the capacity to fulfill their racing dreams, which was to be the secret of his success. The evolution of his business was incredibly quick, starting with manufacturing exhausts and then soon moving on to prepare engines and then complete cars. At the end of 1960s he was already very successful in racing around the world. During this period Abarth was struggling with some homologation issues linked with the suspension on his 1-litre saloons, but on the 1st of March 1968 he was more successful with the 2000 SP (internal code SE 010) and received the homologation to race in the Group 4 of the Sport Category.



Abarth's latest evolution, the Abarth 2000 Sport Prototipo, was homologated the 1st of April and six days later made its debut at the Ampus Hill-climb in France. It was immediately competitive and won. The car was equipped with a multi-tubular space frame made by Mario Colucci, with 22mm section chromomolybdenum tubes strengthened by a double lamination, with a total incredibly low weight of just 47kg. At the wheel was Peter Schetty, the Swiss sprint specialist, and behind him was the 2.0-litre 4-cylinder engine. It had a twin choke Weber 58 DCO3 carburettor with a power output of about 250hp. Overall weight was of about 575kg and was characterised by the

double twin headlights, that would give it the nickname of 'Quattro Fari' – four headlights.

Unfortunately it seems that the production numbers went missing, but we know that the minimum requisite to achieve homologation was at least 50 examples. It is logical to suppose that a first batch of 50 was built with the specification of 2000 SP just before March 1968 and a second one of 25 (before the homologation) and another 25 (after the homologation) around April 1969. The car featured here is chassis 040, one of only two right-hand drive versions of the work-backed cars. It was raced by, among others, two of the best drivers of the period, Johannes Ortner and Mario



Casoni. On the 25th of April 1970, the team was entered in the Monza 1000Km and competed with number 23. It did not finish because of engine trouble, but the car proved to be very fast indeed, even when compared with Porsche 917K, the 907, Ferrari 512 and Alfa Romeo 33.

On the 17th of May 1970 it was entered in the 7th Coppa Città di Volterra with race number 382 in the up to 2-litre class. It won with Mario Casoni and also won on the following 24th of May in Spain at the 7th Montseny Hillclimb. This event did not qualify for the European Hillclimb Championship. The car did not start on the 3rd of May for the Targa Florio (it was registered, with Mario Casoni as driver, with number 42) but on the 7th of June it won with Hans Ortner (number 26) at Anderstorp Scandinavian Racing Circuit in Sweden. It was a DNF with radiator issues in its last race of the 1970 season, while being raced by Nino

Vaccarella at the Mugello Grand Prix on July 19th, 1970 (registered as number 52).

After the racing season was over, 040 appeared on the Abarth stand at the Salone dell'Automobile di Torino Show, which opened on October 28th, 1970. It was displayed with number 42 painted on the red bodywork among the most prominent factory race cars.

It is very difficult, if not impossible, to track down all the engines the car was raced with, but is likely that it used both four-valve per cylinder and the two-valve per cylinder versions, as suggested by the factory. Eight-valve engines were preferred for hillclimb use with the 16-valve better suited for circuit racing.

After the winter rest the car was back racing, although no longer as a works car but with the private team Squadra Corse Meda (Meda Racing Team) who took it back to Monza for the 1000Km race on the 25th of April 1971. Bearing race number 29, the car was



LEFT: During its career this Abarth SE 010 would have run with 2.0-litre engines. Currently it is fitted with a unit from a 1300 OT





piloted by gentlemen drivers Romolo Becchetti and 'Pal Joe', the pseudonym used by Gianfranco Palazzoli who in the following years would become one of the most respected voices of the Italian television team commenting on Formula 1 races. At Monza, 040 took an impressive 11th place finish overall, winning the 2.0-litre class just 35 laps behind the winner Pedro Rodriguez in his brutal Porsche 917. It was the last race for this chassis before being sold to its next owner.

Usually this is the stage when racing cars entered the second level races with average drivers who had little money. More often than not the cars were crashed and badly repaired but SE010/040 was much luckier and not only stopped racing, but entered the Fabrizio Violati Maranello Rosso collection in San Marino. It remained there unused but taken care of until two years ago. This is when Craig Brody, the current custodian, entered the scene. Craig is a classic





car restorer and collectible guitars trader. He is very clear in stating that when he bought this car he just followed his heart and not his head. "I always loved these kind of cars, the 'Rock & Roll' ones," he says, "and I was looking for something like this one. The problem with competition sportscars is that you often face an unclear history, heavily repaired cars and ruthless traders. When this car was offered at the auction as part of the Maranello Rosso collection I immediately felt something. It was not knowledge or something logical, but I was feeling a special attraction for this car. The history was not very detailed and much information was missing, but I knew that almost all the other cars of this series had a wonderful racing pedigree. Why should this car, I was repeating to myself, be different? That's why I was determined to purchase it, even sight unseen on the telephone.

"Since contacting the auction house, I received good news when they told me that the car was equipped with a 1.3-litre engine [likely from a 1300 OT. Ed]. I was very happy because I thought I would have less [bidding] competition to face. I even thought that the 1.3-litre engine would have been a perfect trading unit because the market evaluated it not much less than the [correct] 2-litre version. How wrong I was!

"After I was successful at the auction, I called my wife and we went celebrating. When I received the

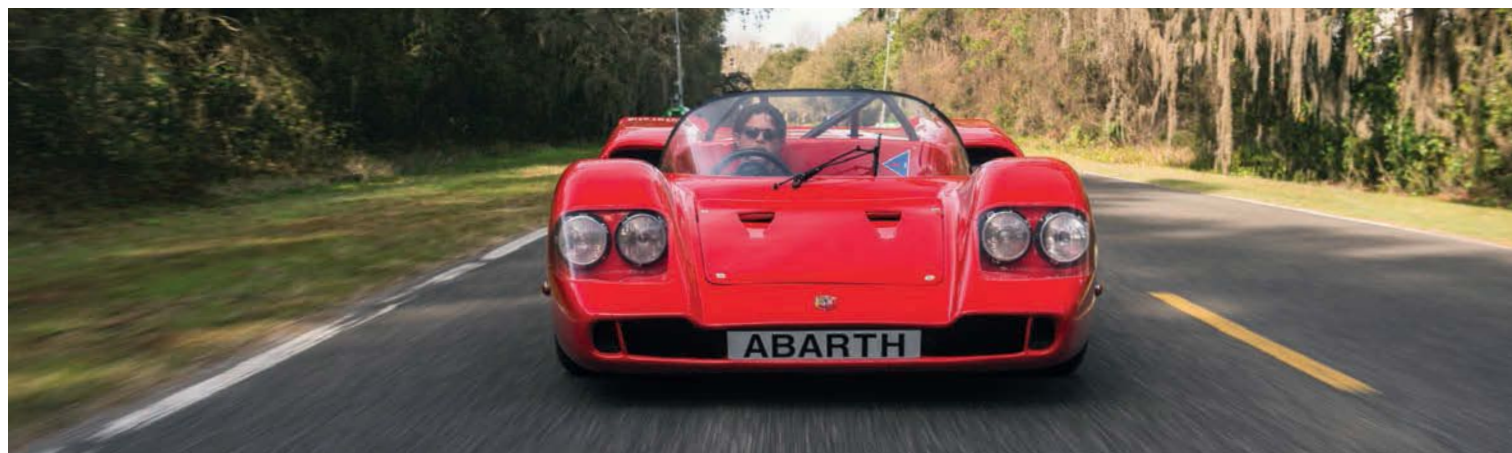
Abarth it was much better than I first thought and while dismantling it we soon realised how original it was. Everything was correct and in good condition too. The engine was perfect and all the components were present and in the correct specification.

"On discovering that this was a good engine for the car, the thought of trading it was gone, because it was so perfect. The most problematic area was the electrical system because the cables were fried, some items were missing and we had to refurbish the voltage regulator. The fuel tank, of racing specification, was life expired and we had to buy a new one, it cost a fortune. We also changed all the rubbers and the pipes."

It was during the restoration that Craig started to look for information and to investigate the car's history. "Internet help has been invaluable", says Craig, "and going deeper in my research, I've been able to discover a lot of the races that the car did and a lot of its past. Luckily an enthusiast had posted on YouTube many films taken in the period, as a young boy he was spectating at the racetrack with his father and uncle where my car appeared quite often."

After the restoration, that was finished in a rush against time in 40 hours, the car was ready for Amelia Island Concours in March 2016. The car has since been driven and runs as expected: noisy, smooth, and incredibly fast. Exactly as intended by Carlo Abarth. 🇮🇹

ABOVE: Last raced in 1971 the Abarth remained intact and unmolested in the Maranello Rosso collection



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The Main Event

Possibly the most appealing classic car gathering of the season took place far away from the glitzy resorts and media headlines

Story by Matt Zuchowski
Photography by Michael Ward



Just when you thought that after the Mille Miglia, Goodwood Festival of Speed, and Le Mans Classic, the season doesn't have much more to offer in terms of rambling round in your vintage racecar, there is actually an annual event that may be an even greater treat both for drivers and for spectators alike. Of course, regular *Auto Italia* readers are well aware of the Vernasca Silver Flag

hillclimb thanks to the thorough coverage provided by the staff each year, but the event is yet to get the attention of the general public. But if you ask us, the longer it keeps a (relatively) low profile, the better.

Since the first edition, held back in 1994, not much has changed, apart from an optional track day at the nearby Varano de Melegari track that was added for the first time this year on the day prior to the show as

a form of appetizer. It's still an event organised by the local Piacenza classic car club Club Piacentino Auto e Moto d'Epoca, which does a very good job at keeping the laid-back friendly spirit of the event. Here, a small piazza in front of a cafe is enough to serve as the paddock, the participants are on first name terms, while the spectator crowd is formed, to a large extent by locals who take their best shot at cultivating the



stereotype of arm-waving espresso-sipping Italian behaviour. So far, it sounds like another car gathering that Italy has aplenty each weekend, but in the medieval village of Castell'Arquato, where the race's base is located, the line-up is nothing short of world-class sensational.

The small Italian town is located a 40-minute drive south from Piacenza and once a year it witnesses an abundance of the

greatest racing car machinery. It's been like this for many years and between 1953 and 1972 the steep local roads hosted one of the rounds of the Italian Hillclimb Championship. Not as popular at that time as the Grand Prix of Piacenza or the grand races around Italy, it was still an event that attracted the works teams of Alfa Romeo, Maserati, Ferrari, and Porsche, and where the legends of Andrea de Adamich and Arturo Merzario were born. Like

most competitions of this type, in the early '70s the Vernasca hillclimb was deemed too dangerous and disappeared from the motorsport calendar.

It was not to be forgotten, though. Now for the 21st time, over the third weekend of June, the same 5.2-mile course fighting its way 290 metres up through the towns of Lugagnano and Vernasca was tackled by more than 200 classic performance cars. The



1965 Serenissima 308V Jet Competizione



rich starting grid spanned all of the automotive eras, ranging from a 1922 Fiat 501 S to a particularly intriguing 1995 Alfa Romeo Vittoria one-off powered by an Alfa Romeo 75-sourced 3.0 V6 engine and bodied by the then-revived Castagna Milano coachbuilding company. The mastermind and the financial supporter of the project was an Italian businessman Uberto Pietra, who named the car after his daughter. A somewhat challenging (and yet surprisingly similar to the latest Alfa Romeo Giulia looking at the front) design was given thorough refreshment in 2010 and since then Mr Pietra enjoys his car in regular use.



This rakish concept car was just one of the highlights of the Alfa Romeo celebrations that formed the main theme of this year's hillclimb edition. After commemorating the racing traditions of other makes and nations, it was the turn for Alfa Romeo to showcase the finest moments from its history. The participants surely didn't let the spectators down, bringing a line-up of the cars that had elevated the Milanese brand to the cult status it enjoys now. It was the Alfas that filled most of the pre-war class, featuring a wide array of 6Cs of all sorts, from the early 1500s, through the special 1750 Aprile barchetta of the Lopresto Collection, to the streamlined 1939 2500 SS Spider Siluro and 1950 SS Villa d'Este. The classes that followed contained some great Giulietta Sprints, Giulias of many sorts, GTAs and GTAm's and, finally, the last chapter of Alfa's racing history, 75s and 155s of Superturismo and IMSA fame. Not for the first time, the hillclimb was met with the interest of the Italian State Police, but again the racers could only applaud that, as the Squadra Mobile patrol joined them in their pristine 1963 Alfa Romeo 2600 Sprint.



The celebrations of Alfa Romeo were partially responsible for a particularly rich




Alfa Romeo was Silver Flag's featured marque for 2016 with many rare and interesting classics entered



representation of one of Alfa's greatest body suppliers, Atelier Zagato. From the impressive number of 25 cars clothed by this carrozzeria that came here, most were the well-known 6C 1750 GS, SZs, and various TZs, but an astute observer could spot such curios as Zagato-bodied Fiat 8V, Lancia Appia Sport, and a Bristol 406.

This being a mainly Italian affair, the starting grid was filled with Italian cars of all shapes and sizes, although both the Italians and a strong representation of foreigners showed some respectable competition in the form of Jaguar E-types, Fords, Porsches, Lolas, AC Cobras, Renaults, Opels, and Corvettes, or even some specialised competition tools from Ginetta, McLaren, Brabham, Matra, Tecno, and Sauber. The Italians proved, though, that in the past they had had the means to challenge these designs with the help of the successful prototypes and formulas coming from Abarth, Alfa Romeo (memorable 1977 33 TT 12), and the particularly fast Lancia LC1 from 1981.

Even if the purpose of the meeting is not to measure the times of the runs, but to award the participants on some more subjective grounds focusing on the 'rolling concours d'elegance' formula, some of these decades-old cars made most of the long straights of the course as they reached the speeds of approximately 155mph. If that's a rolling concours, it's a very fast one indeed.

Instead of going to one of the default car festivals next year, consider whether a trip to the Italian mountains in Emilia-Romagna wouldn't be more rewarding. 

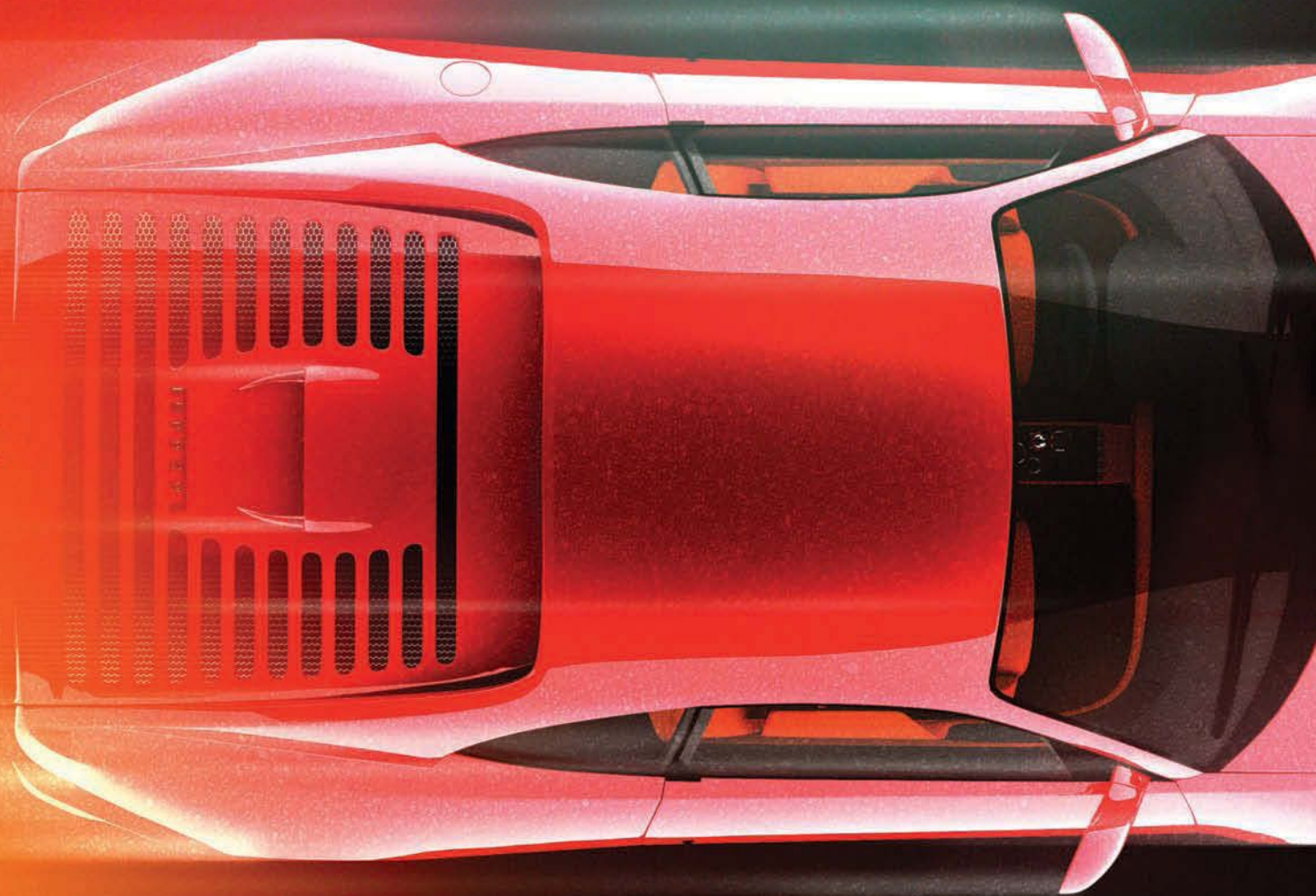


3.0-litre Alfa 75-based Vittoria by Castagna





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CLASSICS AT THE VILLA

Founded by four Italians passionate about food and cars, this year saw the second event, which is growing in both size and popularity. One thing that annoys us all at car shows is the catering, which often consists of cheap burgers in cheap buns (with expensive price tags) or lobsters and champagne (even more pricey) and ice cream vans. The food at Classics at the Villa is properly Italian. The 'Villa' is based on a successful event that has been 34 years in the running, an Italian 'scampagnata' or picnic, which sees thousands of Italians coming together to eat and get together socially. The idea is to raise money for Villa

Scalabrini, which is a residential care home in Elstree specialising in Alzheimers, Parkinsons and dementia care. It was originally founded by the Scalabrini fathers with support from the Italian community. All profits from the event go to the Villa.

Luckily we have over 25 acres of space in the rolling countryside as well as purpose built facilities, a hall, a fully equipped catering kitchen, double hog roaster and two proper purpose-built pizza ovens (most restaurants only have one!), not to mention large marquees. We have as many people visiting for the food as much as the cars. The menu was long with porchetta Romana (Roman roast pork), Neapolitan pizzaioli,

Italian ice cream, Sicilian cannoli, arancini rice balls, sausages from Parma, Neapolitan confetti, Salumi from Piemonte, a Neapolitan Pasta bar, the Prosecco and Peroni bar, olives and sundried tomatoes – as well as an Italian deli stand.

We knew in advance the Herts Ferrari club, the MV Augusta club and Abarth clubs were coming and we also knew from last year that a lot of people were so thrilled by the event that they were coming with friends with cars. As a result we prepared for a larger turnout, which was just as well because as the sun shone while the live band rocked out tunes such as 'Volare' and 'Fly me to the Moon', and the cars and bikes rolled in. Despite the show





not opening until 9am, by 8.15 the cars were starting to arrive.

Trophies were awarded to the three most outstanding cars chosen by an independent panel of classic or supercar owners. The cars chosen were a Ferrari 250GT PF Coupe, a Shelby GT350 and an Alfa Giulia 1600 Spider.

All said the 'Villa' this year was a great event, for a great cause, and we hope visitors will be back again next year, with a friend. Come hungry! **Franchi Seeds**

BEDFORDSHIRE ITALIAN CAR & BIKE DAY

The 10th Annual Bedfordshire Italian Car & Bike Day, held at the Sharnbrook Hotel &

Vesuvio Restaurant proved to be one of the unmissable automotive public events of the year. Along with the celebration of the event's 10th anniversary, the Lamborghini Club UK were also celebrating the 100th Birthday of Ferruccio Lamborghini and the 50th Anniversary of the first ever supercar, the Lamborghini Miura. Over 35 stunning Lamborghinis attended the event, which displayed 22 examples in chronological order of model and age beginning with hotel manager Ciro Ciampi's restored 1961 Lamborghini tractor – representing the history and roots of Ferruccio Lamborghini's fortunes. Sig Fabio Lamborghini, nephew of Ferruccio, also attended as honorary guest

on behalf of the family and unveiled the tractor which Ciro had aptly named 'Ferruccio', a fitting resurrection for a centenary celebration.

It wasn't all Lamborghinis though, the Three Shires Ferrari Club representatives, Derek Seymour and Mick Marriott, helped Ciro present a 36 car Ferrari timeline from the 1970 246 Dino to the 2016 California T, with everything in between including the big Ferrari five Hypercars – 288 GTO, F40, F50, Enzo and La Ferrari. A group collectively worth over £8m. Beyond Ferrari and Lamborghini, the array of stunning Italian cars included the Dino Coupe, AlfaSud, Maserati Merak and some real rarities like the Moretti





500 Coupe, Fiat 124 Special T and an astonishing Fiat 127.

Commenting on the event **Ciro Ciampi** said: "Our 10th annual event had to be extra special and we managed to pull off the spectacular. I am really proud of what we achieve here at The Sharnbrook, and the people I have had the privilege of meeting over the past 10 years who share my passion for everything automotive. They have been awesome and I am fortunate to call so many of them friends. We now host many spin off events for a variety of car clubs, which continues to feed my passion and to make each event bigger and better."

AUTOBELLA ITALIAN AUTOMOBILE FESTIVAL FIAT CAR CLUB OF VICTORIA

This year's Autobella was a wonderful event in every way. The beautiful autumnal day was fine but not too hot, the range of cars on display, both Fiats and other Italian marques, was amazing and the near capacity crowd of spectators made for an event to remember. Added to this we had excellent Italian food with wood-fired pizzas, Italian sausages, gelati, great cafe and the *Costumi d'Epoca* parade to entertain us.

The range and the quality of cars in the

Concorso Originale was outstanding, making the job of selecting a winner very difficult for the judges. The standard in the 'Show and Shine Popular Choice Category' was also excellent as was the large number of other Italian marques in attendance, further enhancing our event with the quality of their cars.

The featured model, the **Lamborghini Miura**, also attracted four wonderful examples of this classic, not an easy feat with the rarity of this model in Australia, and this attracted a lot of interest.

Our efforts to encourage our members to bring their Fiats, even if they were not in concours condition, was successful and many owners who had cars in their garages close to completion, or needing a clean-up, made the effort to bring them along.

None of this would happen without a dedicated Autobella Committee, led by **Sebastian Bongiorno**, who have worked tirelessly for most of the year to present this event. It is Sebastian's passion and quest for perfection that gives us the Autobella that we have come to expect and an outstanding event of which we should be extremely proud. An event of this size is never the work of one or two people but of a well directed team. **Peter Bartold**





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BUYERS' GUIDE

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT OWNING A TOP END CLASSIC

Maserati 3200 GT

With prices for this stylish GT currently at a very tempting level, Maserati specialist Andy Heywood offers some essential advice

Report by Andy Heywood
Photography by Michael Ward





One of Maserati's most successful comeback kids, the 3200 GT was the first product of the late-nineties amalgamation of Maserati and Ferrari. It debuted in 1998 with right-hand drive UK deliveries beginning in the middle of 1999 and stayed in production until 2002 when replaced by the outwardly similar but inwardly very different 'Coupe', unofficially known as 4200 GT.

All 3200s used the same 3.2-litre 32-valve all-aluminium V8 engine with twin turbochargers that produced 370bhp. Transmissions were either the 6-speed Getrag manual gearbox or the more popular BTR 4-speed automatic. The two-door coupe bodyshell was designed by Giugiaro, built entirely of steel and most memorable for its 'boomerang'-shaped rear lights. You know when you've been passed by a 3200GT in the dark.

The only special edition of the car was known as the Assetto Corsa, of which 75 examples were imported in 2001/2002, again in a mixture of manual and automatic. These were track-day focused cars, distinguishable by their lowered stance, darkened wheels, improved steering and brakes and Pirelli P Zero Corsa sticky tyres (sadly no longer available).

The most popular colours were safe silvers and blues but almost any external colour and interior leather combinations were available by special order. In all there were 877 cars imported to the UK, selling through Maserati's revitalised dealer network. To give

you an idea of how important this car was, that was more cars than they had sold in the UK in the preceding two decades.

On the whole, the car was well-received by the press at the time. There was criticism of the fly-by-wire throttle in manual gearbox versions (difficulty to modulate in town driving) and some prejudice. All, however, agreed that the 3200 GT took Maserati into a different league in terms of build quality. Seventeen years on, shall we see if they were right?

As with any exotic car, service history is crucial. On a 3200 GT there are many different types of service dependent on age and mileage. For instance, there should be annual engine oil and antifreeze changes carried out regardless of mileage. The anti-corrosion properties of fresh antifreeze in delicate aluminium engines should not be underestimated. A separate schedule exists in the service book to record these. It is worth noting that the engines do use oil and therefore must be checked and topped up between services. Like the V6 engine that preceded it, this engine uses a mixture of cambelt and timing chains to drive the four camshafts. The main schedule suggests a cambelt change at 31,000 miles, though the common understanding is to renew every four years anyway on low-mileage cars. Breakage, however, is unusual. Unlike the V6, changing the timing chains at the rear of both cylinder heads (nominally at 68,000 miles) does not require engine removal but this





service is still expensive and checking that it has been done on a potential purchase which is close to this mileage would be wise.

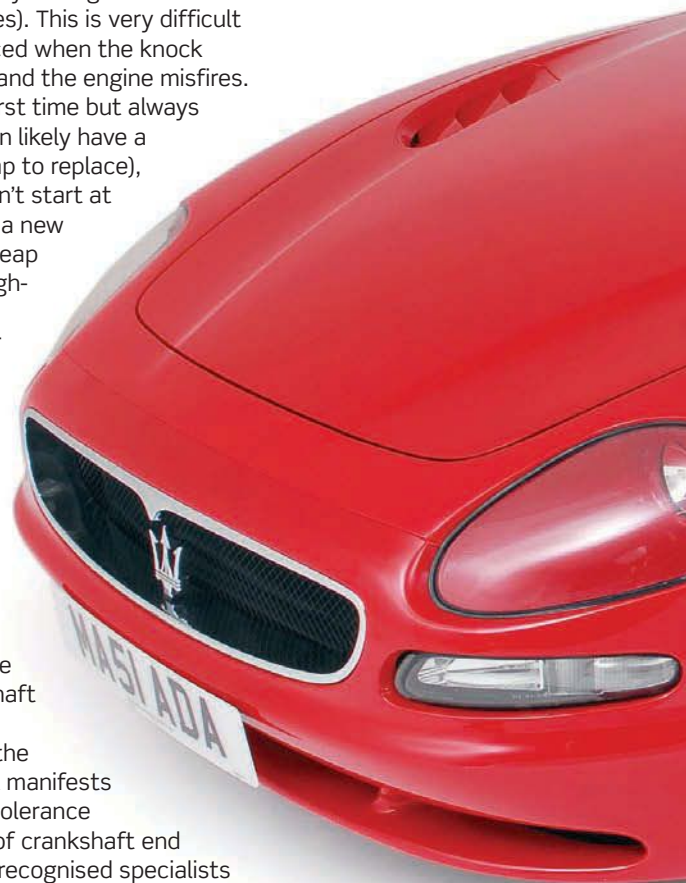
Other engine-related issues are surprisingly few but include some instances of poor quality case-hardening on valve clearance adjusting shims, meaning excessive clearance and noise and labour-intensive renewal of the shims. Occasionally, there is some coolant leakage into the 'V' of the engine (usually through aluminium corrosion having ruptured hoses). This is very difficult to see and is usually only noticed when the knock sensors become waterlogged and the engine misfires. An engine that doesn't start first time but always starts eventually will more than likely have a failing crankshaft sensor (cheap to replace), engines that hunt at idle or don't start at all will more than likely require a new throttle potentiometer (not cheap to replace). Apart from very high-mileage issues of head gasket failure and some starter motor failures, the engines are actually pretty robust.

There is one very serious engine problem to take into consideration if you are buying a manual gearbox car. The thrust action of using the clutch (especially starting with the clutch depressed and therefore before oil circulation) can cause premature wear of the crankshaft thrust washers. If not repaired immediately, this can destroy the crankshaft and the oil pump. It manifests itself initially as a larger-than-tolerance reading for the measurement of crankshaft end float; something which all the recognised specialists will check externally on every service inspection. The worst-case scenario would involve renewing the crankshaft but stocks have now been depleted and this part is no longer available from Maserati. Even catching it early means a partial rebuild costing £6000+, though some specialists have identified the root of the problem these days so at least once rebuilt, it should not re-occur.

The clutch itself can also wear quite quickly. The aforementioned difficulty in town driving because of the tricky fly-by-wire throttle makes slipping the clutch inevitable. This causes wear which initially manifests itself as heaviness in operation, in turn exacerbating the original problem to the point where the car is almost undriveable. Cars driven mainly in town can require a new clutch in as little as 20,000 miles. It is worth noting as well that at the time of writing, replacement clutches are not available for these cars. Needless to say, neither of the above problems afflicts the automatic version.

Moving further down the driveline, neither gearbox is known to give problems, save for the tail flange retaining nut sometimes undoing itself on the auto 'box, which is something that is difficult to feel when driving but should be checked for on an inspection. No problems are known in the axle or driveshafts, either.

Most 3200 GTs will by now be on their second set of





still available and in my opinion, still the best.

The suspension on all 3200 GTs is by double wishbones at each corner with coil over dampers. Most cars also had the optional electronic adjusters. Premature suspension ball joint wear is very common and at the front especially, the lower ball joint has even been known to break if not renewed once worn. At the rear, the rose joint in the track-adjusting arm (which is part of the lower wishbone) wears first, giving odd handling at the back, but the ball joints soon follow. To compound this problem, Maserati has now identified a further issue with cracking where steel bushes, pressed into the aluminium wishbones, have corroded and expanded. This has been the subject of an official notification to all registered keepers by Maserati GB and requires careful checking (sometimes by removal) of all the wishbones.

The cost of these replacements is high and can mount up to the point where if a set of eight wishbones was required, it could equal the value of some of the lesser cars. To complete the ensemble, the front anti-roll bar links also wear, which while less serious, can cause an annoying rattle over bumps.

The most common damper

exhaust rear silencers. The majority of the system is taken up with the catalyst sections, which so far have no specific problems but the rear silencers do corrode to the point where the inlet pipe becomes detached from the silencer. This is one

part of the car for which there is choice on the aftermarket, with silencers available from a number of stainless steel exhaust manufacturers as well as performance companies like Tubi. Be aware, however, that not only is quality variable (you get what you pay for!) but also that most of these systems are noisier than the original Maserati items. On automatic cars in particular, some systems resonate uncomfortably at certain rpms. Original silencers are





TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

MASERATI 3200 GT

ENGINE:	90° V8
CAPACITY:	3217cc
BORE & STROKE:	80mm x 80mm
POWER:	370bhp @ 6250rpm
TORQUE:	362lb ft @ 4500rpm
TRANSMISSION:	6-speed manual or 4-speed auto, rear-wheel drive
BRAKES:	330mm ventilated discs (f), 276mm solid discs (r)
SUSPENSION:	Double wishbones with anti-roll bar (f), Double wishbones (r)
TYRES:	235/40 ZR18 (f), 265/35 ZR18 (r)
DIMENSIONS:	4511mm (l), 1821mm (w), 1305mm (h)
KERB WEIGHT:	1587kg
0-62MPH:	5.1sec (5.7sec auto)
TOP SPEED:	174mph (168mph auto)
PRICE (UK):	£61,000 (new in 2000)



problem is a seizure of the adjusting mechanism (which is a separate servo motor mounted on top of the stem of the damper). Any problems here will be flagged up with the 'Error' light on the dashboard. Another less common problem is caused by badly placed hoseclips on the front brake ducting actually wearing through the aluminium body of the damper, allowing the fluid to escape. Yes, really! Rear shock absorbers are also currently not available.

Tyre wear is high due to the 3200's performance but also the vulnerability of the sidewalls to kerb damage. The standard wheel design means that the tyre sidewall and the spokes actually make contact first but any problems here are easy to spot. Any car fitted with less than the highest quality tyres should be considered a potential death trap. Many cars have upgraded to the Assetto Corsa wheels, which in turn were fitted on the 4200 (albeit with a different paint finish), although this also requires changing the wheel bolts.

Braking is by large Brembo discs all round, which suffer more from corrosion than wear. In order to aid cooling there are no backplates, which means they are exposed to the worst of the weather. Aftermarket replacements for the front discs have dried up now but the Maserati forums have commissioned replacements at reasonable prices. Handbrakes are by shoe inside the rear disc and are subject to the usual seizing up. The cost of replacing a failed ABS pump should also



not be underestimated.

The bodywork fares better, with no major issues. Check of course for accident damage but it seems that the majority of crashed cars are immediately written off and so, for the most part, repaired damage will be minor. The fit of the front bumper is difficult to get right again if it has ever been removed, so much so that the front end of the car was re-designed for the 4200, partly to get over this issue. The most common area for rust on the outer body is around the lips of the rear wheel arches, as paint adhesion in this area was poor. Some high-mileage examples are now starting to corrode in the normal places such as boot lid and door skin edges. In isolated cases, there has been corrosion to the front subframe mountings, which clearly requires a complicated repair. Both headlamps and rear light units (one of the first LED systems) are expensive to replace so attention should be paid to their condition and headlamps need to be ordered in the colour of the car as the coloured interior section is not accessible once the light has been sealed at factory. Inside the car the build quality is still good, though seat motors fail from time to time and there is now some deterioration of materials on the dash top, steering wheel centre and switchgear (sticky switch syndrome). Most of these parts are still available at reasonable prices.

In terms of electronics, the 3200 GT is quite complicated. Engine check light issues are common, with lambda sensor problems the most usual culprit. Again, like many cars of the same era, once a warning light is on, it sometimes has to be physically cancelled, which could mean a trip to the dealer to be plugged in. Electronically-speaking, there are two distinct 3200





RUNNING COSTS

PARTS PRICES

Front brake disc pair	£544.08
Front suspension wishbone lower	£1260.00
Water pump	£384.00
Front undertray	£238.78
Oil filter	£15.91
Cambelt	£57.60
Front bumper	£1203.05
Headlamp (made to order)	£515.32
Rear light unit ('boomerang')	£1238.16
Windscreen	£1483.94
Throttle potentiometer new	£2096.56
Throttle potentiometer recon	£720.00
Pedal potentiometer	£570.00
ABS pump	£2798.80
Rear bumper	£957.26
Front shock absorber	£588.17
Rear shock absorber	NLA
Rear lower wishbone, have to use	
GranSport type. Each at	£1424
Clutch kit	NLA

SERVICING


Annual service (including plugs change)	£647
4th year Cambelt service	£1731

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www.mcgrathmaserati.co.uk

types, as early cars came from an era before OBD II compliance and therefore most of the test and diagnostic equipment is Maserati-only. Later ones have an OBD II socket near the steering column and therefore can be plugged into generic testers. It is also worth noting that many of the electronic glitches can be traced to poor quality connections, some owners resorting to soldering bad connections to affect a permanent cure. This is especially true of the throttle pedal potentiometer; the connector plugs for which being a common failure point.

Now well and truly outside the dealer network, there are a small but dedicated band of specialists with more modest labour rates who look after these cars and have identified most of the issues we have covered. However, as the cost of repairs goes down in one sense, it is becoming increasingly difficult to obtain spare parts and supply has become more sporadic. There is no doubt that these are exotic cars and running costs are high so as always, have any potential purchase professionally inspected, don't buy anything without fastidious service history and remember that in Maserati terms, there are plenty of cars to choose from.

Notwithstanding that, the Maserati Club and Forums abound with enthusiastic owners willing to pool their experiences to keep the cars running and in fact the 3200 GT is reaching neo-classic status, with very low mileage and Assetto Corsa examples seeing rising values in recent years.

When it arrived, the 3200 GT was seen as the first of a new generation. As time goes on, it has become clearer that it was the last of an older one. The 4200 that followed is undoubtedly a better car in many respects but the cognoscenti still lusts after turbos and boomerangs! 

PRICES

Concours:	£30,000
Good:	£15,000
Average:	£10,000
Project:	£5000



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ALFA ROMEO



1973 Alfa Romeo Junior Zagato 1.6. 71,000 miles, red, two owners. One Swiss owner and me in the UK. Circa 71,000 miles, immaculate in all respects, cylinder head off and completely re-built 2015, £37,995. Please contact me by email in the first instance. Email: andrewmeeds@btinternet.com. A250/018



1990 Alfa Romeo Spider S4 2.0. 49,000km, metallic Burgundy, black leather and mohair hood with tonneau. Rare high specification imported from Germany December 1996, converted to RHD by Bell & Colvill, comprehensive service history. Concours winner, 50,000km, fine original condition. MOT to April 2017, AROC member, offers in the region of £13,500 ono. Tel: 01935 816822 (Dorset). A250/053



A 1970 Alfa 1300 GT Junior that has covered 62,000km and came over from Italy in 2003. Since then it has lots of bills totalling £34,000. Bodywork is exceptional as is the way it drives with no bangs or rattles, it handles very sweetly with help from an Alfaholics handling kit while still remaining smooth and compliant over bumps. A very original car. Tel: 07846 313250. A250/033



1999 Alfa 145 Junior 1.6. 104,000 miles, recent cambelt change and service. MOT April 2017, Verde Tropic metallic bodywork in good condition, clean grey/blue cloth interior, £795. Tel: 07703 029823. A250/057

Alfetta 2.0. A-plate. Complete car for spares, usual rot, good engine and set of Campagnola wheels, offers considered around £500. Tel: Martin Cullen, 01886 880241. A250/019



Rare classic Alfa 145 Cloverleaf. MOT March 2017, excellent throughout, driven daily, mileage 145,000, £1500, originally owned by this magazine's editor! Tel: 07976 153963. Email: peter.carter47@hotmail.co.uk. A250/056



Alfa Romeo Alfetta GTV/GTV6.

Breaking for spares. I am breaking my GTV and have lots of interior, exterior trim and mechanical parts available. Please contact Nick for details and any requirements. Tel: 07050 234693 or 01789 262539. Email: n.arthur@tyackarchitects.com. A250/054



2001 Alfa Romeo 147 T Spark 1.6 16V Lusso. 96,779 miles, 414 Nuvola Blue, iridescent paintwork, for repair, engine seized. New front tyres, discs, suspension components (timing belt and water pump were next), £offers. Number plate not included in sale. Tel: 07851 759631. Email: martin@melladesign.co.uk. A250/027

Alfa Romeo 156 Sportswagon 1.8.

117,000 miles, red, MOT until 9/2017, 4 new Pirelli P7 tyres, stainless steel exhaust system, good condition, £500 ono. Tel: 07921 199431 (located in Bedford). A250/026

Alfa GTV Lusso 1998. Metallic red, 66,500 miles, runs well, needs cosmetic attention, best cash offer over £900. Tel: 02392 413527 leave message (Hampshire). A250/015



2002 Alfa Romeo 156 GTA. Metallic black, tan and black leather interior, 100K miles, 12 mths' MOT, Q2 diff, equal length pipes, CF2 manifolds, BMC air filter, Scorpion SS cat back system, documented service history (Alfa, independents and self), 4 previous owners, recent full service and cambelt change, only negative is rust beginning to appear on the front wings (common issue). Ill health forces very reluctant sale, £6000 ono. Tel: 01981 580068 (Herefordshire). A250/031



Alfa Romeo 147 5 door. 53,500 miles, silver, MOT till May 2017, much money has been spent on this fab car. Leather interior, heated front seats, 4 new tyres, new clutch, new shocks etc. Genuine reason for selling, £1600. Tel: James, 07831 591526 (Rugby). A250/001



1994 Alfa Romeo 155 2.0TS Lusso. 140,000 miles, red. I am selling my 1994 155 2.0TS after 11 years of cherished ownership. Original N.I. car but currently on IRL plates, maintained by Alfa specialist in Dublin and extensive history file. All electrics and mechanicals in good order, rust areas repaired and undersealed, £4000. Tel: 0035 3872 908764 for further details. Email: gtjoe.oreilly@gmail.com. A250/020



2001 Alfa Romeo 156 Veloce Sportswagon 2.0 Twin Spark. 128,000 miles, metallic blue, well cared for, superb condition, very reliable, drives perfectly. Regular cam belt changes and servicing, MOT to November 2016. Recaro Alfa sports seats, electric sun roof, electric windows f & r, air con, onboard computer, complete Alfa tool kit. Upgrades include MP3 input, bluetooth hands free, dash cam and TomTom sat nav permanent mounting and wiring. A future classic for sure, £800 ono. Tel: 07545 085567. Email: bob@bstm.eu. A250/025

Next issue on sale 7 Dec



2004 Alfa Romeo 916 GTV 2.0 JTS Lusso. 76,000 miles, blue with tan leather interior, MOT end June 2017, FSH AlfaTechnico last 6 years, belts replaced @57K 3 keys all paperwork, reluctant sale, need space, £3950 ovno. Tel: Phil, 07803 086538 (S.Notts). A250/021



2001 Alfa Romeo 3.0 V6 Spider (916) RHD 3.0 V6 24v. 38,000 miles, Proteo Red, genuine low mileage V6 Spider in very good original overall condition. Totally standard without modifications. Recent tyres, new stainless exhaust, battery, mats and badges, electric hood air con and elec windows work fine. Recently serviced and thoroughly checked over by Monza-Sport (Alfa specialists), drives without fault, MOT 26/04/2017, FSH, £5750. Tel: Jason, 07768 913197. Email: jason.foord@tesco.net. A250/024



2011 Alfa Romeo Giulietta Lusso JTDM-2 1598cc diesel. 120,000 miles, red. MOT until January 2017, full service history, one previous owner from new, £30 road tax, R/H drive, excellent condition, drives superbly, £5000 ono. Tel: Nicole, 07846 363573 (Towcester, Northamptonshire). A250/030



Alfa Romeo Giulietta Cloverleaf 1750 Tbi Q2. 45,000 miles, 2011. New MOT, full ARSH. Alfa Red full Cloverleaf spec + glass sunroof, Tomtom port and bracket, heated seats, folding mirrors, rear parking, upgraded EBC brakes, BMC filter, mudflaps, window deflectors. Autolusso mods 265bhp and Quaife ATB LSD (Q2). Excellent original condition, Alloygators + new tyres, new clutch 15K, new Turbo 20K (faulty), all replaced under warranty. Tel: 07802 209109 (Dorset). A250/055



1999 Alfa Romeo GTV 3.0 V6. 82,000 miles, blue, comprehensive history, MOT Feb 2017. Tan leather interior, 17" teledial wheels, new cambelt in August 2015 at 79K, GTA clutch and flywheel and cat back quad exhaust. Looks drives and sounds fantastic, excellent condition inside and out and very clean engine bay. Upgraded stereo with CD, bluetooth music and phone, original head unit also included, £5500. For all enquiries, more photos etc, contact Robin. Tel: 07813 197020. Email: robinbaker1982@hotmail.com. A250/023



Alfa Romeo 916 Spider. 73,000 miles, 2004, this is a series 3 2ltr JTS Lusso +. One previous owner plus the dealership, purchased 2008, full service history, comes with a number of extras and has MOT to end April 2017. Runs beautifully and is a joy to drive especially with the hood down, £7000 ono. Tel: 01702 611468 or 07905 011884. A250/052



2001 Alfa Romeo GTV 2.0 TS Lusso. 116,600 miles, pearl white, over £8000 spent on the car, if it's rubber or it's a moving part it's been replaced, heated electric seats, handsfree, alarm, power tailgate, Xenon lights, stunning pearl white, all the invoices, way too much to list, comes with private plate, storm cover and rare Alfa dust cover for the GTV, £5450. Tel: Ian 07799 626462 (Bampton, Oxfordshire). A250/022



Alfa Romeo GT 3.2 with LPG system. Full service history from Alfa specialist and in good overall condition, 80,000 miles, with new MOT, £6445 ono. Tel: Claudio, 07592 380187 (Hertfordshire area). A148/013



1978 Alfa Romeo 2000 Spider Veloce
Body rebuild and repaint, new brakes,
low mileage factory RHD
£19,995



1961 Alfa Romeo Giulietta Sprint
New interior, bumpers and service.
Lovely, LHD.
£44,995



1970 Alfa Romeo 1750GTV
UK RHD 2nd series, sympathetic restoration
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1972 Lancia Fulvia Sport 1600
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40 year ownership, well restored
£27,495



1973 Alfa Romeo 2000 Spider Veloce
UK RHD, 37 year ownership,
72k miles, rebuilt body,
lovely driver £19,995



1953 Lancia Aurelia B20 GT
All matching numbers, rare 3rd series,
bare metal repaint and retrim, 1 lady
owner 40 years, sensational £169,995



1970 Lancia Flavia 2000i coupe
Only 700 made, 4 speed, PAS, leather, Blaupunkt,
LHD, excellent car
£17,995



1975 Lancia Fulvia 1.35
Low mileage, structurally excellent, LHD,
rare colour marriane porfiro from new, good car
£11,995

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Alfa Romeo 4C. Purchased new December 2014, 6000 miles, has been used mainly as a show car hence the low mileage and excellent condition. The 4C is a pure raw sports car and great fun to drive, comes with a made to measure exterior cover, £45,000. Tel: Dave Taylor, 07905 011884. Email: david.taylor31@virgin.net. A250/051

2002 3.0 V6 24V Alfa Romeo Spider. RHD, 58,000 genuine miles, owner from new, metallic navy blue, drives superbly, usual specifications for model, electric roof, mirrors, central locking, Alfa alarm. Serviced by Autodelta (Alfa specialist), MOT until 23/02/17, £5000 ono. Tel: Andrew, 07956 910317. A250/011

FERRARI

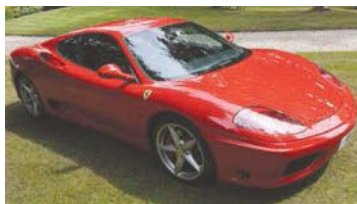


2014 Ferrari California 30. 5500 miles, bought new from Lancaster Colchester in June 2014 with full service history. Red with cream leather, in excellent condition, yellow brake calipers, Ferrari shields, embossed cream leather seats, red seat belts, for sale £125K. Tel: Paul, 07450 100500. Email: paulrichard55@gmail.com. A250/034

Ferrari 360 Coupe. 2004, Nero Daytona with black leather and blue stitching, shields, carbon racing seats, manual gearbox, Tubi exhaust, yellow rev counter, yellow calipers, immaculate. Full service history during my ownership by Graypaul. Approximately 43K miles, one of the best. Email: g11hammad@googlemail.com. A243/023



Ferrari 599 GTB. 2009 (58), 18,500 miles, for sale with one year remaining Ferrari warranty, upgrades: Carboceramic brake system, carbon fibre driving zone, yellow brake calipers, Scuderia Ferrari shields, Nero Alcantara carpets, leather rear shelf, parking sensors (front and rear), full electric seats with memory, Nero contrast stitching, Daytona seats, radio navi system, telephone Bluetooth, iPod connection, NavTrak anti-theft system, cover, charger, will be serviced for sale at main dealer, £124,990. Email: mhammond@mlhondon.com. A250/065



2000 manual Ferrari 360 Modena. Red with Daytona electric seats. 23,000 miles with full service history, three previous owners, this car has been impeccably looked after. Cambelts replaced 2015, clutch replaced 2014, I have owned the car for the last 6 years, the car currently has a Novitec sports exhaust but it will be sold with the original system, the Novitec can be included in the sale at a mutually agreed price if required. I am happy to answer any questions you may have. Email: davidball360@googlemail.com. A250/064



Ferrari 360 F1. 2000, 38K miles. Have to sell due to moving, great sounding 360 with sports exhaust and upgraded suspension package. Email: arjan.stoof@hotmail.com. A250/035

Beloved 1996 Ferrari 355 GTB for sale. Red with cream interior, 27,000 miles, never been tracked to my knowledge, owned by me for last twelve years, just had service, belts, MOT, two new tyres and original exhaust replaced for similar, all bills and service history, purchased myself from Graypaul and serviced by Shiltech, the car also is sold with 355 number plate. Priced to sell because just not used, £110,000. Tel: 07989 686737. A250/058

1993 Ferrari 456GT. Left hand drive, 150,000km, manual, full service history, good condition, my car for 12 years, used regularly. New cambelts, alternator, major service, 4 new Bridgestone tyres July 2016. Colour Argento Nurburgring, interior Nero, £35,000. Tel: 07797 716124. Email: hw.winchcole@gmail.com. A250/059

FIAT



Fiat 500 Abarth. 2009 (59), 58,200 miles, 1.4 TJet, 12 months' MOT, well maintained, new rear exhaust, upgraded music system, in very good condition, private plate not included, £6150 ono. Tel: Martin, 07867 771203. Email: martindwyer01@hotmail.com (located in West Yorkshire). A250/066



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Fiat Barchetta for sale. £3500 open to offers, 102K, drives spot on faultless, 11 months' MOT, loads of work done and all undersealed etc. Mag featured by Auto Italia, respray and roof in 2008, leather seats and twin airbags. MOT advisories: inner cv boots perished and slight oil leak from driveshaft seals, easy job, been quoted £150, and rear brakes rattling shim kit is £10 so will knock this off the asking price, could do with some paint on the rear arches but that's me being OCD. Only selling as purchased a new car, private plate not included. Email: craigdmjv@live.co.uk. A250/032

LANCIA



Lancia Flavia Coupe 1800. 1964, 93kms, 4 owners, MOT, nice car, strong straight body, £13,300. Tel: 07999 403552. Email: roger.sthildas@gmail.com (North Yorks). A250/016



Lancia Gamma Coupe 2500. 1979, beige, brown interior, LHD, time warped, needs some tickling, some rust bubbles, Belgian car, 5 speed, air con, alloy wheels, engine refurbished, £4950, exchange possible. Tel: 0032 475 476288 (Brussels). A250/017

MASERATI



1989 Maserati Spyder 2.8 RHD. It has not been out of the garage for eight years and although started it regularly during that time, it would not start when it was tried recently. The tyres, although good, are fairly flat and it could not be pushed out of the garage to take proper photographs suggesting that the pads may be stuck to the discs. It is believed it needs a new compressor, the interior is good, the hood is good and the bodywork, including the chrome, is good. There is with it most of its service history, old MOTs, service manuals, handbook and a comprehensive list of work done on it in the last eight years. The original registration number was 'G538 TVR' and the mileage is 90,275, the car is located in Cheshire, offers over £5000. Email: rsc100@hotmail.co.uk. A250/004



2003 (53) Maserati Coupe Cambiocorsa. Nero Carbonio, black leather with avorio cream piping and stitching, carbon fibre trim, avorio leather head lining. Purchased from Meriden in July 2006, only casual mileage since 2010, garage parked since purchase, cherished and enjoyed over past 10 years, selling to move onto something different, £16,000. Tel: 07976 275039 any time. A250/003

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Maserati 4200 CC. Beautiful specification and attractively low mileage example, this beautiful 4200 Coupe with Cambiocorsa gearbox was first registered in June 2003. The colour scheme is Rosso Bologna exterior with a combination of light tan and Bordeaux leather interior, all in immaculate condition. Since new the car has covered only 35,500 miles and has been serviced regularly, first by Lancaster Colchester and latterly by McGrath Maserati. With the current owner since late 2005, it is now available for sale, this is an unusually low mileage and stunning example of its type and the price is £20,000 or offers, please contact John Jordan. Tel: 01279 771790 (east Hertfordshire). A250/002



1992 Maserati Biturbo Spyder E. Black with wood, ivory leather and alcantara interior and grey trim. Beige carpets and black Maserati mats with red piping, full stainless steel exhaust system. Styled by Zagato of Milan, a lovely well maintained low mileage car, 4 former keepers, current actual mileage 46,681 (speedo head was changed at 2605 miles). MOT expires July 2017, last service (260 miles ago) by Autosshield Maserati, Manchester, including new cambelt. Two new front tyres in April 2014, two new rear tyres in June 2014, new spare tyre in May 2016, all five wheels refurbished between 2014 and 2016. Full history of services, repairs and MOTs, stored in a dry clean well-ventilated garage, soft top works properly, the car can be viewed on request, £15,750. Tel: 01759 304050. Email: sm1234569@hotmail.com (East Riding of Yorkshire). A250/007



2005 Maserati Quattroporte V 4200. Petrol, 20-inch wheels, less than 31,000 miles. The bodywork and interior are in immaculate condition, fully serviced in October 2012 at Autosshield Maserati and again in January 2016 at JCT600 in Leeds, new battery fitted July 2016, MOT valid until September 2017. Many additional features, two keys will be supplied with the car, private plate not included, too much spec to list here, contact for details, £20,000. Tel: 01759 304050. Email: sm1234569@hotmail.com (East Riding of Yorkshire). A250/008



Maserati Ghibli SS LHD. 1972, known history from 1988, my ownership for 20 years. Just about everything rebuilt/restored/replaced, near concours condition, but for me reliability and usability is more important than shiny bits! On the button, and ready to go, would be happy to jump in and drive to south of France! Well known car within the Maserati club, £22,500. Tel: 01233 840371. Email: jim@deringarms.com. A250/009

PARTS

Gearbox and differential for Alfetta 1.6 GT 1978, £50 or best offer, collection only. Please contact Joe for further info on 01228 522226. A250/014

Mondial T rear wheel. Part no. 137087. Tel: 07778 565047. A250/044

Ferrari 328 factory original exhaust. I have a 328 original exhaust, removed from my 1987 328GTB at 20K miles. In perfect condition, £350. Tel: 07788 778891. Email: nhc1@hotmail.co.uk. A250/045



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Autobianchi A112 Abarth and all makes A to Z, please see www.abarth-exhausts.com. Email: info@abarth-exhausts.com. A250/012



Alfa Romeo Alfetta GTV alloy wheels x4. 6J x 15CH Campanatura 45, four stud/hole alloy wheels, excellent condition, £195. Tel: 07050 234693. Email: n.arthur@tyackarchitects.com (Warwickshire). A250/067



430 Challenge Centerlock wheels.

Genuine Ferrari BBS wheel set, Centerlock race wheels, perfect condition, unused since professional repaint, no buckles/ flatspots, £1800. Tel: 07976 395271. A250/036



Alfa Romeo four five hole alloy wheels. Fitted good treaded tyres 205/50/16, best offer. Tel: 01564 772714 (Solihull). A250/068



Staggered alloy wheels 550/575 Maranello. I have rare Ferrari staggered alloy wheels, 550/575 Maranello, new set up and tyres. Email: woody.santoro@gmail.com. A250/037



Ferrari 360 Spider 18 3 wheels. Only 400+ miles, bought direct from Ferrari, £1200 ono, see photo. (FOC member). Tel: Peter, 07770 688749. A250/043



Ferrari 575 wheels. I have a set of 575 wheels with Bridgestone Potenza tyres (6mm on two, 4mm on the others), they have been taken off my 456 as I have put the original wheels back on so these are now surplus to requirements, £2000. They are at Foscars in Kent to view etc as that's where the car is, I have a some pics that I can send anyone who's interested, just email me. Email: ajcleeds@gmail.com. A250/039

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Ferrari F430 and 360 CCM package. 2x front 380mm front CCM discs (aluminum centre version ie lighter), 2x front 380mm front CCM calipers in Giallo, 1x set of front pads, 1x brand new CCM master cylinder. Brakes were weighed by Ferrari when I purchased the car and classed as 20% worn ie 80% left, so very little use. I will copy the workshop advice note and supply with the brakes. These will fit 360s and could be used with the iron rear brake setup as a temporary solution. Email: mw.stewart@gmail.com. A250/038

Alfa Romeo GTV speed/rev counter module, black, vgc, £40. Tel: 01564 772714 (Solihull). A250/060
Ferrari 456GT clutch for sale. Cover and plate, part worn but still usable 'as is' or simple reline. Fitted and then gearbox failed soon after! £100. Tel: 07973 924746. Email: l.kimber12@tiscali.co.uk. A250/040

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Alfasud ti instruction book. 1977, vgc, only £3.50. Tel: 07399 359072 (Canterbury). A250/061

218 issues of Auto Italia from Feb 1999 onwards, £50 or best offer plus postage and packaging. Please contact Joe for further info on 01228 522226. A250/013

Ferrari 275 GTB /GTS maintenance manual. Genuine Ferrari owner's manual handbook supplied new with my car. Factory publication number 01/65. All complete with some cover and spine wear, inside nice and original, very rare, £2750. Tel: Nick, 07775 913442. A250/042

'288 TTT'. This was on one of my cars for some while, I have kept it on a retention certificate ready for transfer but never found the car for it! So here it is for sale, sensible offers please. Email: mike.heaney@btinternet.com. A250/047
'488 FNE'. I am looking to sell my Ferrari 488 number plate here. It's FNE as are the Ferrari press cars. Anybody who knows about their Ferraris will have seen 458 FNE, F12 FNE etc in all the various media (pictures and video are all on the net). So I have '488 FNE' a superstar plate for a supercar, serious offers please. Tel: Austin, 07487 834795. A250/049

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Pre-war Maserati spares. I realise that this is a long shot, but if anyone has any pre-war Maserati spares I'd be interested in purchasing them. Tel: 07733 007858. Email: adamkpainter@uk2.net. A250/005

Selenia Open Cup information/automobilia/parts, anything relating to the 1995/95 Maserati Ghibli Selenia Open Cup series. Tel: 07733 007858. Email: adamkpainter@uk2.net. A250/006

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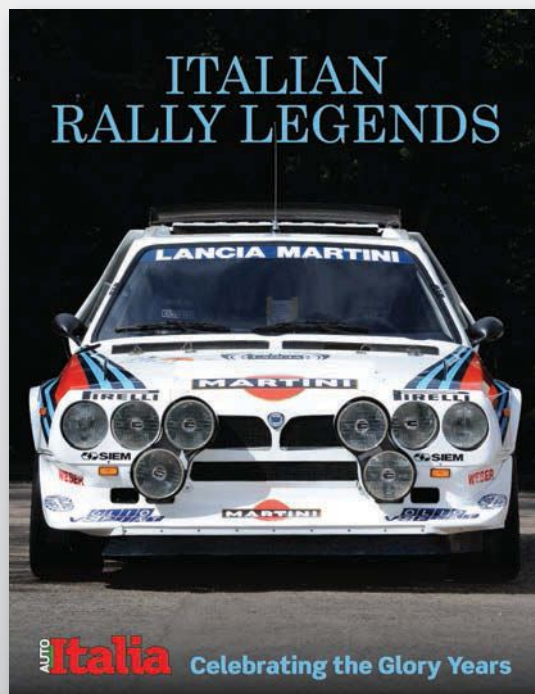
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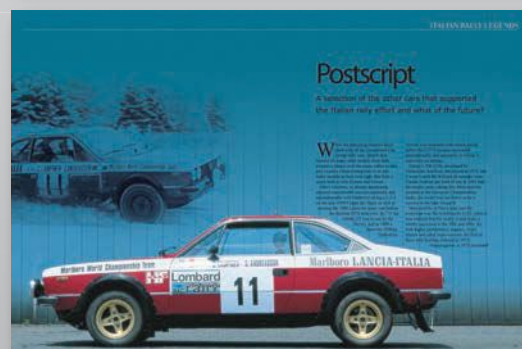
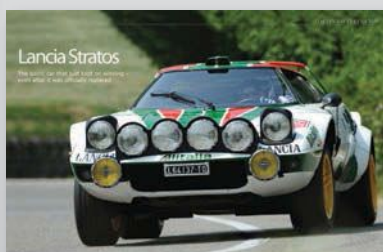
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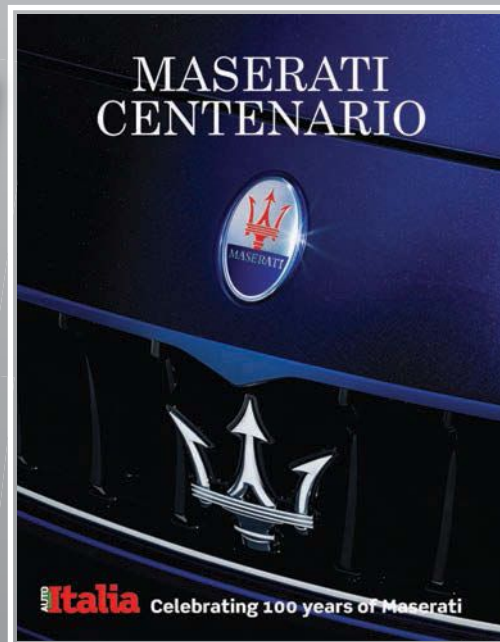
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Auto Italia Buyers' Guide Modern Classics





The Alfa Romeo V6

Hailed as the best V6 engine ever produced, the Giuseppe Busso-designed power unit is revered by every Alfa Romeo enthusiast. We consider what makes it so special and look at the cars that are destined to be 'keepers'

Adapted from a story by Tony Soper
Photography by Michael Ward

When Giuseppe Busso designed his V6 he could never have imagined that his name would be associated with arguably the most charismatic Italian engine ever produced. Since it went out of production in 2007, Alfa Romeo has been unable to equal the veneration by enthusiasts who eagerly await the new Giulia Quadrifoglio. After the last 3.2 GT rolled off the production line there was a gap in the model range that was never filled by the 159 and Brera, handsome though they both are, the GM based V6 engine never quite equalled its predecessor and the high bodyweight of cars didn't help either.

Such is the popularity of the Busso V6 that the final model ranges are becoming a very attractive proposition. Low mileage cars are beginning to attract a premium, although it is still possible to find good cars at attractive prices – but for how much longer? To introduce these future classics it is worth taking a look back at the V6 concept.

The 1970s were a difficult period for Alfa Romeo, with resources strained by the world economic situation, industrial relations problems and headaches from the Alfasud manufacturing operations. Consequently Alfa's V6 did not come to the market until two years after its architect, Giuseppe Busso, had parted company with the organisation.

Like Francesco De Virgilio who penned the Lancia Aurelia V6 in the 1940s, Busso chose a classic 60° V inclination between the two banks of three cylinders and an over-square bore to stroke ratio. He had the foresight to

be generous with internal dimensions to allow room for growth from the original 2492cc. Subsequently this engine was to be offered with capacities ranging from 1997cc up to 3179cc in production specification, and even up to 3800cc for specialist aftermarket or motorsport attention. For taxation reasons the initial displacement was very nearly 2200cc, but it was eventually felt that this was too close to the 2000cc of Alfa's own twin cam four, and would eat into their sales.

Why a V6 and 60° angle? There are compelling reasons for both. A six-cylinder engine is smoother than a four because the power strokes overlap with each piston forced down every 120° of rotation as opposed to the 180° on a four pot. Of course eight and twelve cylinder engines offer even greater benefits in this respect, but cost and packaging issues often preclude their use. So a V6 is a good compromise for a mass market vehicle with sporting overtones. The 60° V angle was chosen to minimise unwanted vibration. Any reciprocating engine is subject to internal forces, known as primary and secondary. Primary forces are those resulting from the up and down motion of the pistons while secondary forces result from the non-sinusoidal motion of pistons combined with inertia due to offset rotating masses. While an in-line six may be perfectly balanced, with primary and secondary forces cancelling each other, it is difficult to package within a vehicle. This compact V6 was designed with counter balance weights on the crankshaft, flywheel and auxiliary drive pulley to cancel the unbalanced primary couples inherent

with the configuration, and the secondaries were small enough to mask by securing the powertrain on damped mountings.

The block and heads were cast from an aluminium silicon alloy, with wet liners containing the pistons. These liners were originally sealed to the cylinder head using aluminium fire rings with a conventional gasket only around the perimeter of the waterways, however this solution was short lived and later variants reverted to a more familiar cylinder head gasket. The oil pan and camshaft covers are also aluminium, contributing to stiffness of the overall structure. The short rigid four bearing crank forging was dynamically balanced and case hardened by nitriding, with robust journals which are lubricated by a lobed pump driven by the timing belt. In initial 12v form each hemispherical combustion chamber contained two opposed valves inclined at 46° from each other. With just the one camshaft per bank it acts directly on the inlet valve via a vertical bucket and shim, while the sodium cooled exhaust valve is actuated via a horizontal bucket and very short pushrod and rocker mechanism.

A toothed belt links each cam pulley to the crankshaft, driving a small auxiliary pulley to operate the oil pump and distributor drive. The belt is guided over an oil pressure actuated tensioner, which should perhaps be more accurately described as a de-tensioner. Belt tension was obviously of some concern for Busso as he designed his engine, so much so that he filed a patent in 1975 for a device to 'automatically regulate the tension of a

crenellated timing belt (Italian patent ref 26189/75). It's worth reminding ourselves that synthetic timing belts were largely uncharted territory in the '70s, particularly on an all aluminium engine.

Busso's concern was that as the engine became hot, expansion of the block would result in excessive belt tension. His multi-spring device would maintain the tension as close as possible to the calibration value when the engine was fully warmed, and also in freezing conditions when relaxation could occur. While the engine is running, oil pressure overcomes the effects of the main spring, but once stopped this subsequently applies a force to the belt to maintain correct tension as the engine cools and contracts.

In practice this device was to be a constant source of irritation to many owners of 12v powered cars. The design was fundamentally sound, but its oil feed relied on a small 'O' ring which could leak depressingly quickly, and replacement meant stripping lots of components from the front of the engine to access it. However, belt failures for 12v variants are very uncommon, so perhaps Busso was right to be worried because when the engine was later migrated to 24v heads his hydraulic de-tensioner did not form part of the design, and he would probably have been rather concerned that the belt to pulley contact arcs were reduced by virtue of the

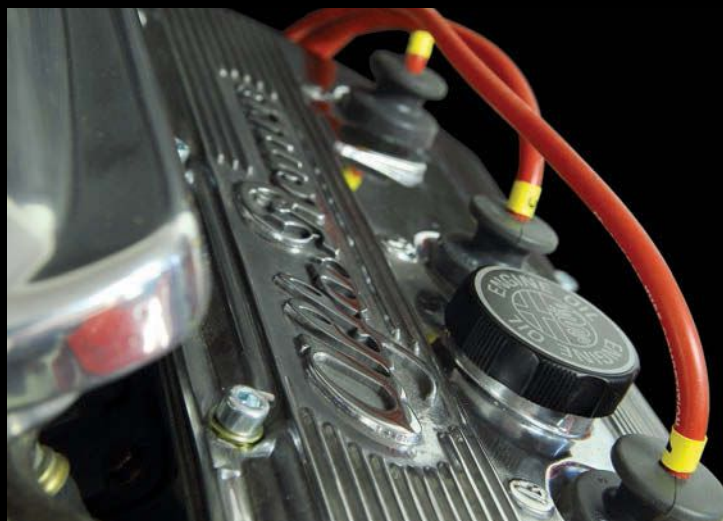
two additional cams. Unfortunately belt failure rates much increased.

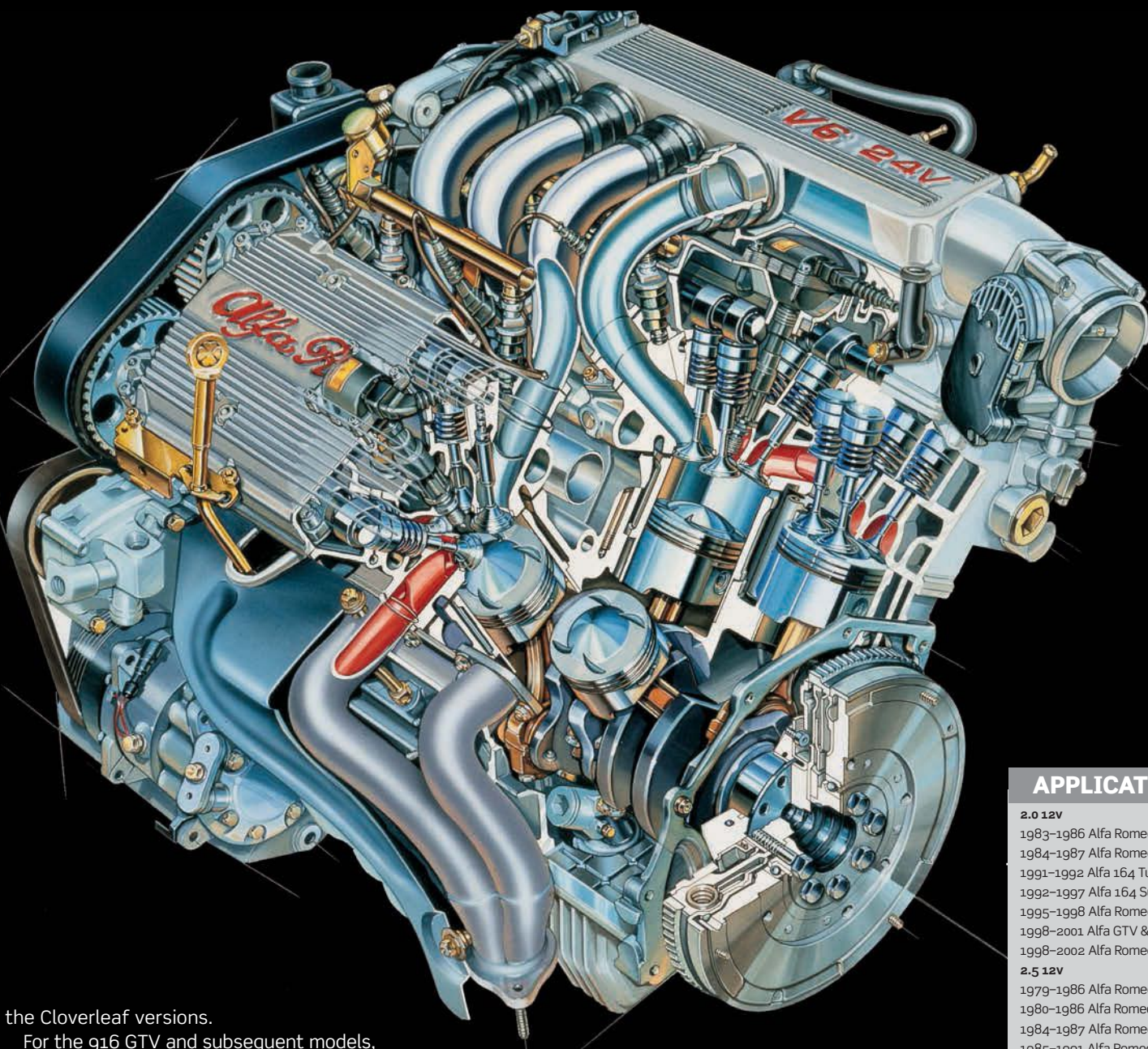
First manufactured in Milan's Arese plant in 1979, the Alfa 6 was the first recipient of the new engine. It was longitudinally mounted and mated directly to a five-speed manual or three-speed automatic transmission. In this inaugural form it displaced 2492cc with an 88mm bore, 66.2mm stroke, 9.0:1 compression ratio and offered 156bhp.

This first variant of the V6 was fed by six Solex or Dellorto FRPA40 carburettors with cylinder heads that featured integral manifolds. Down below, a big wing oil pan sat forward of the front cross member allowing a generous 8.5-litre capacity of lubricant. In addition to uninspiring looks the Alfa 6 was roundly criticised for heavy fuel consumption and lacklustre performance, so the new V6 engine got off to a somewhat shaky start. However, the engine's reception was rather better in the coupe-styled GTV6 which received a comprehensive makeover to make it ready for its 1980 upgrade with bonnet bulge, bigger brakes, 15-inch wheels and twin plate clutch as well as Bosch Jetronic fuel-injection. Outright power was unchanged, but performance of the coupe was most acceptable for the period and compared very favourably with cars such as Ford's 2.8i Capri. Thereafter, the engine was fitted to the Alfa 90 and 75 in familiar rear transaxle

configuration, but the world was changing and front-wheel drive became the new strategy within the Fiat group. Busso's original design proved adaptable to being turned through 90° to sit transversely within the engine bay and by 1986 was offered in the new 164.

For the Alfa 75 the engine had been enlarged to 2959cc (bore 93mm, stroke 72.6mm) with 182bhp at 5600rpm and these dimensions were carried over to the 164, but with more efficient inlet and exhaust manifolding coupled with the Bosch Motronic engine management system, power was upped to 197bhp. Part of the brief for the 164 facelift in 1993 included increased power and torque, without compromising refinement. This meant fundamental engine changes, the V6 was re-engineered to accommodate quad cams in order to operate 24 valves. Hydraulic tappets replaced the earlier adjustable system, and to accommodate four-valves per cylinder the inclination angle was reduced to 37°10'. Gone was Busso's de-tensioner, the new longer timing belt was fed over idler and tensioner bearings with a damper to prevent oscillation. The engine was good for an effortless 210bhp, readily upped to 220bhp simply by fitting 45mm intake runners between the intake plenum and cylinder head, which was the only performance enhancement required for





the Cloverleaf versions.

For the 916 GTV and subsequent models, Alfa made further upgrades. Responsibility for turning the oil pump was taken away from the timing belt and a crankshaft-driven chain connected to a new pump incorporated within the oil pan. The final part of the story was the 3179cc version (bore 93mm, stroke 78mm), which required a new crankshaft, con rods, pistons, valves and cylinder heads, with power topping out at 250bhp for the 147/156 GTA models. The engine block was carried over from the 2959cc engine, the extra capacity gained purely by a longer throw on the crankshaft. Those timing belt issues never quite went away, from slipping belts on the 24v 164 installation to a run of collapsed tensioner bearing pulleys on the later 3.2s, they mar an otherwise pretty much unblemished history of reliability and performance, because with just routine maintenance this engine will easily cover a quarter of a million miles. 🇮🇹



APPLICATIONS

2.0 12V

1983-1986 Alfa Romeo Alfa 6
1984-1987 Alfa Romeo 90
1991-1992 Alfa 164 Turbo
1992-1997 Alfa 164 Super Turbo
1995-1998 Alfa Romeo GTV Turbo
1998-2001 Alfa GTV & Spider Turbo
1998-2002 Alfa Romeo 166 Turbo

2.5 12V

1979-1986 Alfa Romeo Alfa 6
1980-1986 Alfa Romeo GTV6
1984-1987 Alfa Romeo 90
1985-1991 Alfa Romeo 75
1992-1997 Alfa Romeo 155
1985-1996 Fiat Croma

3.0 12V

1987-1991 Alfa Romeo 75
1989-1991 Alfa Romeo SZ
1992-1994 Alfa Romeo RZ
1992-1994 Lancia Thema
1988-1997 Alfa Romeo 164
1995-2001 Alfa Romeo Spider

2.5 24V

1997-2005 Alfa Romeo 156
1998-2007 Alfa Romeo 166

3.0 24V

1992-1997 Alfa Romeo 164
1997-2003 Alfa GTV & Spider
1998-2005 Alfa Romeo 166
1994-2001 Lancia Kappa
2001-2002 Lancia Thesis

3.2 24V

2002-2005 Alfa Romeo 156 GTA
2002-2005 Alfa Romeo 147 GTA
2003-2005 Alfa Romeo 166
2003-2005 Alfa Romeo GTV
2003-2005 Alfa Romeo Spider
2003-2006 Lancia Thesis
2004-2007 Alfa Romeo GT

Alfa Romeo GTV & Spider

Pininfarina designed and Arese built, the stylish and collectable g16 series Alfas offer cost effective V6 motoring

Story by Keith Seume
Photography by Michael Ward





Launched at the Geneva show in 1995, the g16 series GTV attracted a lot of media attention. The new model was based on the underpinnings of the Fiat Tipo, although in reality very few components ended up being used. Basically the Alfa utilised the floorpan, the front bulkhead and the two main chassis rails in the engine bay, but that's about all.

The multi-link rear suspension was all new, consisting of an upper wishbone with a welded steel lower arm, coil springs with separate dampers, and an anti-roll bar, all mounted on a light-alloy subframe, which was then, in turn, bolted to the monocoque. The design is such that, when the car is thrown into a corner, centrifugal forces result in a barely-perceptible touch of rear-wheel steering, in the opposite direction to the front wheels. Then, as cornering forces increase, this rear-wheel steer shifts to mimic the action of the front wheels. The end result is a noticeable increase in stability both when entering a bend and then when powering your way out of it. By comparison, the front suspension is far more traditional, with MacPherson struts and an anti-roll bar. Be aware, though, that there is a multiplicity of rubber bushes used throughout the front and rear suspension system, all of which can conspire to thoroughly mess up the GTV's otherwise exemplary handling if allowed to become too worn. The braking system consists of vented discs back and front, those at the sharp end being 305mm in diameter on four-cylinder models and 310mm on V6s, as opposed to 240mm at the back. The V6 also benefited from four-pot Brembo calipers at the front.

But what of the heart and soul of the GTV – the engine? At the UK launch in 1996, we were offered just two options: the 2.0-litre 150bhp Twin Spark, as used in the 146 and 156, among others, and later a stunning 3.0-litre 220bhp V6. The Italian market also saw a turbocharged 2.0-litre V6 offering a useful 202bhp at 6000rpm, which was designed to take advantage of Italian tax laws that penalised cars with engines

greater than 2.0-litres in capacity. In 2003, to coincide with a styling facelift, the V6 was punched out to 3.2-litres, with the power output increasing to 240bhp at 6200rpm, and an equally impressive 213lb ft (289Nm) of torque. At the same time, the 2.0-litre TS engine was upgraded to the new JTS unit, with 165bhp on tap.

The engines are backed up by either a five-speed manual transmission, or a six-speed in the case of the later V6 models. There was no automatic, or semi-auto Selespeed available – the GTV was always meant to be an enthusiast's car, and that means having to work hard if you want to get the best out of it.

However, no matter how stunning a car's engine, how faultless the handling or how slick its transmission, at the end of the day what attracts most customers to the showroom in the first instance is the styling. Now this is where the GTV really comes into its own, with a shape that is truly striking. It's been likened by some to a mini-Ferrari or, in the case of the Spider, with its more rounded tail, a Lamborghini. Whichever piece of exotica floats your boat, there is no denying that the Pininfarina stylists got it dead right when they penned the GTV's distinctive lines. From any angle, it's dramatic: the coupe's high-kicking sliced-off rear end with its full-width light and reflector panel is perfectly balanced by the aggressive corporate treatment of the nose. A deep swage line, which sweeps sharply from below the rear window to the trailing edge of the front wheel arch, makes the GTV look like it's doing the proverbial hundred miles an hour when it's standing still. You'd have to be a real Philistine not to be moved by the GTV.

The Spider is still one of the most attractive open cars on the road and, if you drive it with the hood down, it's definitely not a car for a shrinking violet. The Spider turns heads and everyone will want to see who's behind the wheel.

Both models underwent two facelifts, the first of which occurred in 1998 with the launch of the so-called Phase II model, which gained chrome trim around the



FUJI RVP



grille, and colour-coded side-skirts and bumpers. Inside, the centre console was refinished in silver. The six-speed gearbox was also introduced at this time on the V6 models. The Phase III revamp was unveiled at Geneva in 2003, with a new deeper 147-inspired grill, necessitating the relocation of the front number plate to one side. Incidentally, all four-cylinder models came with 16in wheels, with 17-inch rims as an option, whereas all V6s came with 17-inch alloys as standard.

The GTV came to the end of its life in 2005 with the launch of the new Brera, while the Spider soldiered on for another year before making way for its Brera-based successor. Diehard enthusiasts regard the V6-engined GTV as the last pure Alfa Romeo sportscar.

COUPE ON THE ROAD

When climbing into a GTV, the first thing that will probably strike you, often literally, is how low the roofline is. Indeed, tall drivers may find that profile painfully low as they smack their foreheads on the edge of the roof. And once inside, if you're over six feet tall, you might find it a bit of a squash, more so if your chosen GTV is fitted with the optional electric sunroof. Visibility can be improved, however, by removing the driver's side sun visor.

But don't let that put you off, for the GTV was designed as a driver's car, through and through. The leather-clad seats are comfortable, although not overly supportive. The higher-spec Momo interior trim is better in this respect, and lasts well. Don't forget, though, the GTV really is a coupe in the truest sense, with little consideration given to rear seat passengers.

The low roofline, and almost total lack of legroom, means that the GTV should be regarded as a two-seater. Actually, using it for luggage accommodation is probably the best bet as the boot space is minimal – make that zero – and only really suited to what are euphemistically referred to as 'weekend bags'. Things did improve slightly when Alfa dropped the spare wheel and included a puncture repair kit instead.

The driving position is great – that expression 'driver's car' springs to mind yet again – with all instrumentation aimed squarely at the pilot, and all controls falling easily to hand. Anyone familiar with the 147 or 156 will feel at home in a GTV, as the dashboard layout clearly shares the same DNA. Visibility is better than some rivals (notably the Audi TT) but still restrictive compared to a regular saloon. But, hey, live with it, OK? It's a small price to pay for such style.

If you're lucky enough to test drive a GTV Cup then we guarantee when you turn the key, you'll feel goosebumps all over. The sound should be bottled and available on the National Health – some even believe it sounds better than a V8 Ferrari engine, and not without reason – but the problem with that is the engine seduces you into wanting to make full use of the throttle at every opportunity. So what's the problem with that? Well, there's not one problem – there are two major problems. Firstly the fuel economy (not the GTV's strongest point) will suffer dramatically; the other is that you'll shred the front tyres in no time at all. The V6 GTV really is a torque monster and tyre scabble is a way of life if driven hard. Except in the case of the 3.2 V6s, there's no traction control, no ESP, no flashing lights to warn you of imminent rubber burning, just plain unadulterated

ABOVE: The GTV and Spider were facelifted in 2003. New engines included the 3.2 V6 and the less than impressive 2.0 JTS

ALFA ROMEO 916 GTV & SPIDER



fun – and that's just the way we like it.

And let's make no bones about it, the GTV in all its forms is a great performer. The last of the line 3.2-litre V6 stormed from 0–60mph in a shade over six seconds and headed on to a top speed of just under 160mph. Fuel economy suffers, though, with 23–24mpg commonplace. The original Twin Spark fairs a little better in that respect, returning around 30mpg, although it's nowhere near as quick as the V6, reaching 60mph from rest in just over eight seconds, before reaching a top speed of around 135mph.

The GTV's handling characteristics are largely determined by the engine choice, too. The V6 can easily be pushed into a near terminal understeer

situation with injudicious use of the throttle, especially in the wet. Top branded tyres make a world of difference here. Driven with due regard for road conditions (and, it has to be said, driver ability) the GTV – even the four-cylinder model – will reward you with a sublime driving experience.

Alfa's chassis engineers clearly knew what they were doing when they designed the GTV's unique suspension system – after all, they could oh so easily have retained the Fiat Tipo's less sophisticated set-up, thereby saving some Lira (or was it Euros by then?) but opted, instead, to start with a clean sheet and do things properly. All hail to them for making that decision.





SPIDER ON THE ROAD

All car bodies flex. Open cars flex and twist more than closed cars and the Alfa Spider is no exception. To feel the flexing you need to be pressing on hard on rough surfaces. Even then you need to be sensitive to vehicle dynamics. Chassis flex is also related to suspension stiffness. Soft springs and high profile tyres will keep the chassis taut at the expense of handling. The Spider's stiff springs, dampers and 50 profile tyres (205/50R16), give the chassis a lot of work to do, although buyers of open cars usually care little of the minutiae of torsional rigidity. The ride is not too firm – a good compromise, but it would benefit from softer seats. The Momo leather seats also need a little more lateral support around the shoulders. Sitting position and driver comfort are excellent, despite a steering wheel only able to adjust up/down and not in/out. Wind noise is low in closed mode and not too buffety in open mode. Tyre noise is louder than you would like in a saloon car but then one has to remember that this comfy car is an open two-seater.

The high rear deck is one of the styling features that gives the Spider its chunky look. It does, however,

make reversing tricky. You need to have truckers' skills with door mirrors and even then you are never quite sure whether the local council have placed one of their low concrete boobey-traps (bollards) in the way. Space for baggage is limited to the tiny boot and the shelf behind the two seats. The multi-link rear suspension has encroached on boot space. A partial solution has been offered in that the spare wheel can be replaced in favour of a small emergency high pressure tyre inflator.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Rust shouldn't be an issue as all body panels were galvanised from the factory – and the bonnet's an injection moulding. If there are any signs of corrosion on high-mileage cars look along the edge of the floorpan, about three inches in from the sill.

Mechanically, a meaningful service history is worth its weight in gold. Although they have no major faults, 916s still need to be cared for by knowledgeable technicians. The V6 engine is generally very reliable and less prone to cambelt problems than the 'four' but you still need to look for evidence of regular servicing.

Transmissions don't generally cause any problems,

ABOVE: Grey is good colour choice for the GTV. Red cars suffer from body panels fading to a variety of different shades



PRICE GUIDE

Alfa Romeo GTV Cup, 2001, red, 39k miles.	£7500
Alfa Romeo GTV, 2000, blue, 50k miles.	£6995
Alfa Romeo GTV, 1999, red, 49k miles.	£6495
Alfa Romeo GTV, 2001, black, 88k miles.	£5250
Alfa Romeo Spider, 2001, black, 96k miles.	£6990
Alfa Romeo Spider, 2001, red, 63k miles.	£5750

although you need to check for clutch slip, or grabbing, especially on V6s. A broken or weakened diaphragm in the pressure plate is likely to be the main culprit. Check, too, that the gears select smoothly – harsh use can damage the synchros. The nut holding fifth gear can work loose, causing selection problems, but this is relatively easily sorted.

It's fair to say that the GTV and Spider's weakest link is the suspension, at least in terms of longevity. At the front, the lower wishbone bushes gradually fail, leading to premature tyre wear and, if left too long, knocking while driving over bumps. At the rear, slightly different problems afflict the four- and six-cylinder models. In the case of the former, suspension bushes are made from rubber, with steel inserts. As the rubber wears, inserts can begin to rub on the aluminium rear subframe. Replacing the affected suspension arms is, fortunately, a straightforward job. The V6 GTVs came with spherical joints, rather than rubber bushes, which are less prone to wear. However, if they do require replacement (you'll know when, for they'll start squeaking), you'll need to replace the entire welded lower suspension arm, which doubles as a mount for the coil spring.

BEST BUY

The most desirable GTV is the Cup with prices at a premium over the normal version, even though the differences are purely cosmetic. Cups have been known to be offered at over £10k. Paying around £6-7k for a really good, regular GTV makes more sense. While a late facelift 3.2 might appear to be a good



proposition, this engine is less torquey than the earlier 3.0-litre engine. There are higher servicing costs attached to the 3.2s as well, in particular clutches and cambelt changes. The GTV has the better driving experience while the Spider which has scuttle shake – and worn hoods are expensive to replace. 🇮🇹

VERDICT

- Better looked after than Twin Sparks
- Strictly a two seater
- Service history essential
- Pre-facelift dated styling
- GTV looks good with a rear wing
- Great value



Alfa Romeo 156 GTA

The ultimate incarnation of the Alfa V6. The biggest problem is finding an owner who will part with one

Story by Auto Italia
Photography Michael Ward



First offered for sale in February 2002, the 156 GTA was powered by a 3.2-litre four-cam V6 developing a shade under 250bhp and came in both saloon and Sportwagon body styles. To differentiate the new model from its siblings, Giugiaro's Italdesign studio was called in to wave its magic over the 156's already stylish lines. The result was a more aggressive stance, with a revised front valance-cum-airdam, widened wheel arches, deeper side sills and a new rear-end treatment. The combined effect of this was to increase downforce by between 50% and 60% compared to the 156's optional rear wing. Larger 17-inch – or optional 18-inch – 'Quadrafoglio' (cloverleaf) alloys with 225/45 tyres completed the external make-over, while the interior was treated to new leather-trimmed sports seats, revised instrumentation and various other GTA-only details, such as a new gear knob and drilled foot pedals.

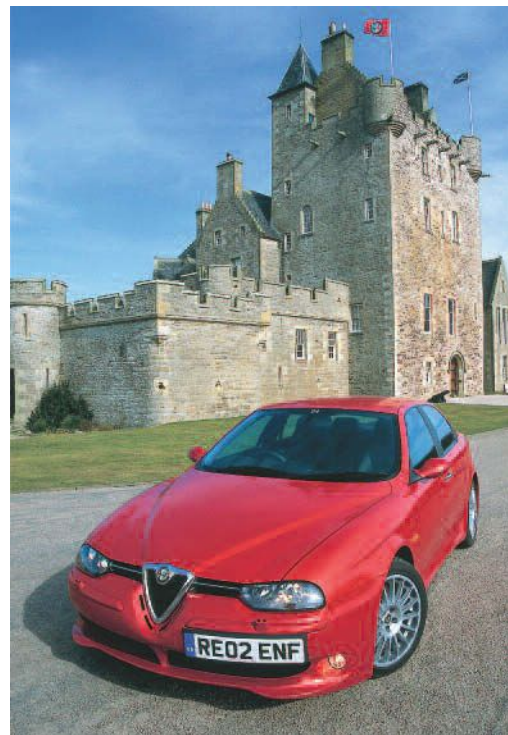
But the real visual magic is to be found under the bonnet. Here the Alfa engineers appear to have been given free rein to make the GTA as, to be frank, sexy as possible. Open the bonnet and you're in for a treat, with polished manifolds nestling between the brushed aluminium rocker covers, the rearmost of which bears the legend 'GTA 3.2 V6'. You will be left in no doubt that this is something special – and a twist of the ignition key only stands to reinforce this, for the GTA's muscular V6 has an exhaust note to die for. You'll find yourself looking for an excuse to drive through a tunnel, window down, foot to the floor.

The GTA never got the facelift that the rest of the 156 range did in 2003, and continued with the original-shape front end until its demise in 2005.

THE BEAST WITHIN

How does the combination of 247bhp and front-wheel-drive sound? Fun? Oh yes – and in spades! It's the exhaust note that will grab your attention first, followed by the deep, rasping induction roar as you accelerate through the rev range. Despite being red-lined at around 7000rpm, the V6 pulls like a train from as little as 2000rpm, even in sixth gear. Zero-to-sixty comes up in just under 6.5 seconds, while the top speed is a healthy 155mph. OK, not as quick as some but more than adequate for most conditions. But drive the GTA hard and you'll pay the price in terms of fuel economy – or rather, the lack of it. The official figures don't make great reading, and it goes without saying that a hard-driven example will be thirstier still. Claimed urban consumption is 15.6mpg, with an overall (combined urban/extra-urban) figure of just 23.3mpg. Even taking it easy, you're unlikely to do much better than 32–33mpg.

The six-speed manual transmission is fitted with well-chosen ratios which make the most of the V6's torque curve. It is a delight to use in every way. The rare Selespeed option is something of a curate's egg, in as much as it inevitably takes the edge off the performance but, on the other hand, arguably makes the car more pleasurable to drive in an urban environment. However, it is probably true to say that most people who find themselves attracted to a car like the GTA will prefer the manual gearbox over any 'flappy paddle' set-up.





ON THE ROAD WITH A GTA

The Alfa 156 GTA is really an extraordinary car, its whole package is just so good. Statistics do not do this car justice, a quoted 0-62mph acceleration time of 6.3 seconds looks quick but a Fiat Coupe Turbo can match that. What the Fiat, or indeed virtually any other performance saloon, cannot match is the way this Alfa delivers its 250bhp to the road.

The first thing you notice is that this front-wheel drive saloon does not understeer. On a race track it may be different but I simply could not unsettle the GTA on the road. Think about it, front-wheel drive and 247bhp – you should not be able to give full bore exiting a roundabout on a wet road without dire consequences. Ah, you say, it's the electronics and indeed the GTA is fitted with ASR (anti-slip regulation). Traction control systems on poorly designed cars are horrible, often giving unwanted intervention in throttle control and as a result, grip loss. This GTA is one of the few cars where you don't feel compelled to switch off the ASR. As a direct result of racing and winning in the European Touring car

championships the many suspension enhancements made to the GTA mean grip levels are very high and wet weather ability is superlative; the ASR warning lamp glows softly, killing instability due to aquaplaning, but otherwise remains mostly inactive. Indeed grip is so massive that even under emergency braking you are hard pressed to provoke the ABS to engage.

As a result of such grip, handling on real roads is superb, the GTA goes where you want, when you want. At 1.75 turns lock to lock, steering is racing sharp, and the car is always on the move. It feels as if it has built-in instability like a Eurofighter which needs to be tamed by electronics, but the result is extraordinary agility. Ride is inevitably somewhat harsh but this is a performance orientated car, a fact reinforced by an aggressive stance which is 20mm lower than lesser 156s, combined with an integral frontated car, a fact reinforced by an aggressive stance which is 20mm lower than lesser 156s combined with an integral front splitter and flared wheel arches which extend to body coloured side skirts.

The V6 engine traces its ancestry back some 20 years and this 3.2-litre variant must surely be the ultimate configuration. At around 4500rpm the exhaust note hardens and the engine delivers a devastating punch to allow rapid and safe overtaking. The GTA is really is an





ABOVE: In production specification, this is the ultimate incarnation of the Busso V6 engine

extraordinary motor car, its whole performance package is just so good. The 247bhp for the GTA could have easily been achieved just by altering valve timing and engine management, but credit must go to Alfa because they chose to put driveability as a priority. By increasing the stroke to give an extra 36.6cc per cylinder they have achieved an engine with tractability from low speeds

and a linear delivery of power up to 7000rpm red line. At around 4500rpm the exhaust note hardens and the engine delivers a devastating punch to allow rapid and safe overtaking. The GTA will whisk you to 120mph in 4th gear; if you've any sense you will never reach the limited 155mph 6th gear maximum in this country.

Alfa's engineers really have exceeded their design aim of providing "racing car sensations, but with flexibility and docility". The downside of such effortless

performance is that it does like fuel, but this is redressed by reasonable economy at legal motorway speeds where the motor is happy to spin at 2500rpm in sixth.

This Alfa is a precious thing, a car to buy and keep because there will come a day when they won't be able to sell cars like







ABOVE: Three AROC GTAs pose on the track at Goodwood. Far right is a rare Mira Red version

this. Whilst there are probably cars that individually will do everything better, I know of none that have it all in one package.

IMPROVING THE BREED

The first port of call for any GTA owner is the differential. We strongly suspect that every 156 GTA left in the UK probably has the Q2 diff installed. Why? It's not just because the standard set-up has lots of torque steer, but that the original Alfa diff has a worrying propensity to explode.

The results of installing a Q2 diff are dramatic: it simply lets you put the power down much more easily, massively increasing grip as you exit corners, and it also improves turn-in.

Many cars now have larger 330mm front brake discs fitted. This was an improvement that Alfa eventually rolled out on the GTA, after the GTV-type 305mm discs fitted to early cars were found wanting, and many older cars have had 330mm discs retro-fitted. They're clearly much better.

Most GTAs have six-speed manual transmission. You could order Selespeed semi-automatic, but not many people did. You could also buy a GTA in Sportwagon estate form, but again this is much rarer than the saloon: it's thought that, of the approximately 350 GTAs imported into the UK, just 112 were Sportwagons.

Today, you can buy a decent 156 GTA from around £6000. Even the very best examples won't cost you more than £9000. That's a lot of car for the wonga, but sadly the low prices have started to attract the 'wrong' sort of buyer and GTAs are starting to disappear into crash barriers and knackers' yards. That makes an already rare car even scarcer.

THE ALTERNATIVE 156 V6

While the GTA is the best of breed there is another 156 that has a Busso engine – the 2.5 V6. This silky smooth power unit is mated to either a six-speed manual or Q-System semi-automatic gearbox. Produced in both saloon and Sportwagon form from 1998 the V6s were dropped from European markets when the 156 was

facelifted in 2003. The 190hp 156 2.5 V6 is perhaps the most affordable and practical way of enjoying the classic engine. The Q-System version has mixed reviews, mainly due to it only having four ratios. The 6-speed manual is the better choice with its well spaced ratios perfectly matched to the 2.5 V6 that likes bvieng kept on the cam.

Currently there are still some low mileage, well cared for examples available at very reasonable prices, representing very good value, although their values are sure to climb.

When looking to buy any Alfa Romeo with a Busso V6 engine that was built after 2005, buyers should be aware that the UK road tax fee almost doubled under the 2006 emissions regulations. This also applies to imported cars even though they might have been manufactured before 2006.

PRICE GUIDE

It is hard to track the values of 156 GTAs because they don't stay for sale for very long, however some cars have the habit of reappearing on a well known auction site. Following the forums it is evident that these are cars that have been abused or have a damage repair history. The very best cars can achieve £10-12k. Anything below £6k will need some kind of attention or be high mileage. 🇮🇹

VERDICT

- The best V6 on the market
- Deserved the 2003 facelift
- Definitely a keeper
- High milers, high costs
- HPI check essential

CARS FOR SALE

Alfa Romeo 156 GTA, 2002, Grey, 73k miles.	£5995
Alfa Romeo 156 GTA, 2002, Red, 74k miles.	£9250
Alfa 156 GTA Sportwagon, 2003, Black, 44k miles.	£9800



Alfa Romeo 147 GTA

John Simister test drives the hottest of hatchbacks – the car with a heart of gold

Story by John Simister
Photography Michael Ward





This is a lot of engine for quite a little car. The Alfa 147 GTA has 247bhp, which makes it the most powerful compact hatch in production, now or ever, but it is front-wheel drive, which is asking a lot. So, either it will be a screeching, tugging, wheel-spinning, torque-steering piece of devilment, or a combination of electronics and suspension geometry will keep the power flowing where it should and the spirit will be tight on the leash. If the latter, then, at what cost in the driving feel?

The recipe for the 'gran turismo alleggerita' – not that this particular GTA is lightened, exactly, at a portly 1360kg – is much as you would expect. Its engine is the ultimate incarnation of Alfa's fine 60 degree V6 as already used in that other GTA, stroked to 3.2-litres but still very oversquare in its bore/stroke dimensions.

The six-speed gearbox that goes with the V6 engine has been strengthened, as have the driveshafts, and there's a bigger clutch. Other changes are mainly to the suspension (lower and stiffer, with revised geometry for a more consistent rear-steer effect), the brakes (bigger and Brembo-built) and, obviously, the bodywork.

Yes, the bodywork. Subtle but very assertive, that's the theme. The face has gained some extra features, a pair of nostrils either side of the shield-grille which somehow makes the grille itself seem more of a feature. The whiskers below it have grown, too, all of this with the aim of increasing airflow to an engine hungrier for induction and cooling air. The widened bumper/valance moulding that incorporates all this leads into new front wings, their arches fatter and more boldly swaged to cover the wider wheels.

Brake air-exit ducts in the rear lower edges of these wings lead into widened sill panels, which in turn flare into broadened rear arches and thence to the new rear bumper and valance. This now contains three air apertures for the efficient extraction of underbody air: like the 156 GTA before it, the 147 looks the way it does as much for reasons of aerodynamic efficiency as road presence. It makes a better job of it, though. The 156 GTA looks a touch overdone and aftermarket, but the 147 GTA hangs together as a harmonious whole. No rival looks tougher.



Why does the Alfa Romeo V6 sound so perfect? I have just turned the key and heard the engine whip itself into creamy life, ready to whizz into the hills near Fiat Auto's test track at Balocco. And off we whoosh, throttle responding to perfection, creaminess turning slightly edgy and grainy now as the revs rise.

Maybe it's such an aural treat because the mechanical elements add their own contribution to the soundscape, instead of being insulated away as they might in something not so personality-infused. Whatever, be it the low-speed burble or the high-speed howl, this engine sings an inspiring tune. And it just loves to rev – annoyingly so, actually. The limiter cuts in, at about 7000rpm, while it's still in a rich seam of power. That annoyance is compounded by the engine's baffling lack of energy at low revs, despite its ample capacity, so you have to work it hard. It pulls cleanly enough, but there's little enthusiasm compared with what awaits higher up the rev range. That the torque peak of 221lb ft doesn't arrive until 4800rpm, and that there's a big step in the torque curve just before 4000rpm, could explain why. Bizarrely, though, a 156 GTA feels torquier

despite the engines' nominal identity.

So you just have to make maximum use of the slick six-speed gearchange, very heavy clutch notwithstanding, and let the V6 sing. From standstill to 60mph takes 6.2 seconds, by the way, and the top speed is 153mph. Both statistics are mighty impressive in themselves, but it's odd that the slightly bigger 156 GTA is fractionally quicker on both counts.

So I'm seeing the tachometer needle spending a lot of time near the end of its scale. That scale looks rather different from that of a regular 147 because, in an inversion of the usual sportification treatment, the GTA gets black dial backgrounds in place of white ones. There's other blackness, too: pillar trims, sunvisors and boot lining, plus almost-black for the roof lining and dark grey elsewhere.

The GTA is a lot of fun. Just a wrist movement is enough to trigger the ultra-quick steering into pointing the GTA's nose into a fast bend. Then you feel the outside rear wheel load up, and help spear the Alfa further round the corner in fine understeer-resisting fashion. So far, so very good indeed. Should that outside rear wheel be having to work too hard, the



PRICE GUIDE

Alfa Romeo 147 GTA, 2004, Pearl White, 33k miles.	£12,500
Alfa Romeo 147 GTA, 2005, Black, 47k miles.	£12,490
Alfa Romeo 147 GTA, 2003, Green Metallic, 95k miles.	£9990
Alfa Romeo 147 GTA Selespeed, 2005, Red, 42k miles.	£8999
Alfa Romeo 147 GTA Selespeed, 2005, Silver, 74k miles.	£7989



VERDICT

- Lively handling
- Younger owner profile
- Keep it – don't crash it!
- The hottest hatch
- Deserved the facelift
- HPI check essential

VDC (Vehicle Dynamic Control, Alfa Romeo's usual interpretation of ESP) subtly intervenes to rein the Alfa in, but all you feel from the driving seat is a suspension system apparently displaying an enjoyably interactive balance. The suspension copes well with most bumps, too, provided they are neither too sharp nor so big that they use up the suspension travel.

In making the ride acceptable, the chassis engineers have deprived the steering of the knife-edge precision that would suit its quick gearing. It's a little too rubbery, depriving you of the finer points of road feel, although that is also the result of suspension geometry which is designed, mainly successfully, to tame the tug and torque-steer expected in a potent front-wheel drive car. Some gets through, but it's not a problem.

More fundamental is that a big engine up front makes for an ultimately less agile 147 than, say, a 2.0-litre, four-cylinder version. However hard the systems and geometry tricks try to disguise it, you're always aware of that nose-weight. Not that it matters much, in the end. After all, with all that grip and such a revvy, sonorous engine, how could you not have a good time? A Ford Focus RS might thrill more profoundly, and a Golf R32 might distribute its abilities more evenly. But chances are the car you'll enjoy most for longest is the one with the Alfa badge.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Once you've been bitten by the GTA bug, you'll need to take a test drive, naturally. Listen out for those clonks and rattles that are the trademark of worn suspension bushes, while checking the brake pedal on an early example for signs of 'pulsing', a sure sign of warped front discs. Quite simply, everything should feel taught and rattle-free, although you can expect some minor squeaks and rattles from the dashboard and centre console. The front anti-roll bar bushes wear, allowing the bar to move from side to side, resulting in a rather unpleasant knocking.


Some specialists recommend fitting Eibach uprated anti-roll bars, but to make the most of the performance you really need to think about replacing

the stock springs and dampers. Koni FSD dampers with Eibach springs might be expensive but this is probably the single best upgrade you can carry out on a GTA. Wave bye-bye to the stock underdamped suspension, say hello to track-day handling without any trace of a teeth-rattling ride.

To tame the front end, Alfa's own Q2 torque-biasing differential can be retrofitted and is available for around £400 – installation is pretty straightforward. Another weak link is the clutch – it is generally reckoned that 50–60,000 miles is about the limit before you need to think in terms of replacement. The problem here is that replacement requires dropping the front subframe, along with part of the front suspension, so is not a DIY job to be taken on lightly.

As far as the GTA's engine is concerned, the golden rule is, as always, adhere to the cambelt schedule without fail. However, before you entrust this task to your local 'all makes' garage, note that the GTA requires the use of CNC-machined cam locks that, while similar to those used on most other Alfa engines, are unique to the 3.2-litre V6. While you're having the cambelt changed, have the water pump replaced, too. It's prone to failure thanks to the use of a plastic impellor and replacement requires removing the cambelt anyway. A cambelt change is around £600.00, plus the cost of the water pump itself.

WHAT TO PAY

Don't expect to find any real bargains out there as the 147 GTA is relatively rare and sought after model. You can buy a decent 147 GTA from around £8000. The very best examples will cost you more than £10,000, which makes it more expensive than the 156. It's a lot of car for the money, but sadly the low prices have started to attract the 'wrong' sort of buyer and GTAs are starting to disappear into crash barriers and breakers' yards. That makes an already rare car even scarcer. 



Alfa Romeo GT 3.2 V6

It started life as a interim model utilising parts from the end of range 156 and 147, but became successful in its own right

Story by Auto Italia
Photography Michael Ward



Alfa Romeo launched the GT at the 2003 Geneva Motor Show. Alfa knew the world's press would be assembled to see its latest offering and there was an air of expectation hanging over the stand. What was revealed certainly looked good and the press seemed to give the new car a collective nod of approval. But it would be another ten months before the Alfa Romeo GT went on sale in its home market.

The Bertone-designed GT was blessed with the new corporate look, an angular version of the distinctive Alfa Romeo grille

thrust forward between two smaller air intakes popularised on the out-going 156 range. Ah yes, the 156 connection. Although the GT was seen as a new model in the line-up, it was in fact based on the floorpan of the 156 Sportwagon, with the bulkhead and dashboard of the 147. This may sound a little disappointing as these two models were getting long in the tooth, but it was a good way to save money and speed up the production process. To match up to the GT's sporting pretensions, the floorpan was in fact beefed-up, adding a claimed 15 per cent to the torsional rigidity.

Looking back, though, the GT was destined to be rather overshadowed by its more sporting brother, the Giugiaro-designed 159-based Brera, which appeared on the market little more than a year later. Cynics might say that because Alfa needed a coupe model in its line-up to take over from the GTV, it hurried the GT into production to give it more time to get the Brera right. But the fact is that the GT and Brera ran side-by-side until the 156-based model was finally wound down in 2007. In the end it turned out not to be a stop-gap model, but actually complemented the then-current GTV.



Using the 156 floorpan allowed the GT to use the same tried and tested suspension as its saloon/estate siblings, with double wishbone front suspension and a multi-link rear set-up using struts and coil springs. However, the coupe styling meant that there had to be certain changes to the inner body structure, with the use of the bulkhead pressing of the aging 147 being the most obvious – this made it possible to use the 147's dashboard, along with other interior appointments.

OWNING A GT 3.2 V6

Auto Italia reader Martin Hudson is a true Italian car enthusiast. From the moment he bought his first Italian car (a Bertone coupe in the 1960s), through a string of Alfasuds in the 1970s and right up to his current day, he's always had Italian cars. In his garage currently is a modern Alfa pairing: a Spider 2.2 JTS and this GT 3.2.

"I love the GT's ageless design," he says, "and it's just so practical – I can fit the grandkids and a whole load of luggage in the back. It's very easy to drive at 130mph on the autobahn, too. I bought it for its looks, but the reason this car is for keeps is because I just love the engine."

It's hard to disagree. That Busso 3.2-litre V6 engine, even in completely unmodified form with a bog standard exhaust, is one of the all-time greats. "Every time I drive an Alfa with this V6, I'm reminded just how glorious it is – in my view the pinnacle of V6 engineering in a road car, full stop," Martin explained, "while the GT's 240bhp may not be quite as potent as the 156 GTA's 250bhp, it's willing, silken and gruff all at once. Accelerating from 30mph in sixth gear poses no problems, so even is the torque curve. But when you want full acceleration, dropping it into third and flooring the accelerator provides a rush of power all the way to its redline. The transmission isn't quite a match for the engine, though: it can be a bit notchy in cold weather."

What really makes this car so good, though, concerns a little badge on the boot that says Q2. While Alfa fitted its Q2 diff to

diesel-powered GTs, it never saw fit to offer it in the model that needed it the most – the V6 – so it's been left to owners to do the sensible thing. The Q2 Torsen unit adjusts the amount of power directed to each of the front wheels, and in the dry conditions it really works well to rein in torque steer. Martin reports that it makes the biggest difference in the wet, though.

So how's the ownership experience? Martin bought his 2005 example when it was two years old, and it remains low mileage (50k). It's had cambelts at 25,000 and 50,000 miles, plus a new radiator and a new set of tyres at £750, but other than that it's been a dream.

"This is the most reliable car I've ever had," says Martin, flying in the face of an oft-repeated mantra that the GT is one of the more problematic Alfas of modern times, in terms of reliability. It could, in fact, be the last of the great Alfas.

WHAT GOES WRONG?


From a servicing point of view the GT V6 shares the same issues as its 3.2-litre 156, 147 brethren, in particular the suspension issues, clutch wear and strict cambelt replacement schedule. However, a problem unique to the GT is a problem with rattling tailgates. This may be down to little more than loose hinges or dry seals, but there is a known problem on pre-2006 models caused by the body flexing due to poor or missing

SAMPLE PRICES

Alfa GT 3.2 V6, 2005, silver, 25k miles.	£8799
Alfa GT 3.2 V6, 2004, red, 68k miles.	£8000
Alfa GT 3.2 V6, 2005, blue, 66k miles.	£7490
Alfa GT3.2 V6, 2005, silver, 74k miles.	£6250

spot welds on the cross-member above the tailgate. This is a problem acknowledged by Alfa Romeo and there was a dealer fix available. Another common problem is related to the electric windows, which have been known to wind themselves down while the car is left unattended.

PRICE GUIDE

There is some variation in GT prices where tired older cars can sell for less than £4k while the best ones can fetch £8-9k – or more in exceptional cases. The GT V6 has the privilege of being the last model to have the classic Busso V6 having stayed in production until 2007. Swingeing UK vehicle tax changes in 2006 mean that owners of late GTs pay double the rate than earlier cars. This should be reflected in the sale price, but likely isn't mentioned by the seller – so beware! 

VERDICT

- Versatile GT car with space
- High vehicle tax on late cars
- Red ones go pink – like all Alfas
- The last Busso V6



Fiat 20v Turbo Coupe

With unique, Ferrari-esque styling that has withstood the test of time, the Fiat Coupe's tough 5-cylinder engine combines strong performance with four-seater practicality

Story by Keith Seume
Photography by Michael Ward





The Fiat Coupé's roots can be traced right the way back to 1990 when the company's central styling department began penning designs for a new sports car. At the forefront of the design team was a young American stylist by the name of Chris Bangle, later to gain notoriety at BMW and who clearly had a passion for origami as a child. Fiat also contacted Pininfarina, whose own styling department threw back a number of ideas, none of which were considered as dramatic as Bangle's. However, Pininfarina did get to build the car hence the company's logos being proudly displayed on the Coupé's flanks and dashboard.

As the Coupé was built on the Fiat Tipo platform it shared the majority of its mechanical components with the Alfa Romeo 155 and GTV, and Lancia's Delta. Early cars came with the tried and true Lampredi-designed four-cylinder 2.0-litre 16-valve twin-cam and was available in either normally-aspirated (137bhp) or turbocharged (192bhp) form. The latter was essentially the same unit as used in Lancia's all-conquering Delta integrale. However the subject of this feature is the far more desirable 1998cc 20v Turbo which, as the '20v' in the title suggests, runs a five-cylinder engine. This all-new unit was assembled at Fiat's new factory at Pratola Serra in Italy, and was shared with Fiat's Brava HGT and Marea, and Lancia's Kappa saloon.

In normally-aspirated form, this engine produced a healthy 152bhp at 6700rpm, but it really came alive when Fiat added a Garrett turbo system, boosting the power output to a heady 217bhp at a considerably lower 5750rpm. Peak torque rocketed from 137lb ft at 3750rpm to a mighty 214lb ft at 3400rpm. If anyone wanted proof of the benefits of turbocharging, they need look no further.

From its launch in 1996 until 1998, the 20v Turbo featured a five-speed transmission, but this was then swapped for a new six-speed unit, which remained in use until the model's demise in September 2000. As one

might expect, pushing out well over 200bhp through a front-wheel drive train results in tyre-scrabbling torque steer. This ultimately could lead to some heart-stopping moments on twisty wet roads, but Fiat was one step ahead of the game. Turbocharged models came equipped with Fiat's own 'Viscodrive' limited-slip differential system in an effort to control the beast within, and it proved to be very effective.

In terms of suspension, the Coupé's Tipo-derived layout is, frankly, nothing out of the ordinary, with MacPherson struts and lower wishbones mounted on a subframe at the front, along with trailing arms and coil-springs at the rear, augmented by anti-roll bars. Braking is by discs all round, those at the front vented, and drilled on certain models, for increased efficiency.

MULTIPLE CHOICES

To begin with, the whole Fiat Coupé range can appear pretty confusing, with a variety of turbo and non-turbo models on offer. Even when you narrow the selection down to just the 20v Turbo, it doesn't get much easier. To begin with, things were simple – the 'Plus' specification used on the earlier 1.8 16V Italian market models was dropped and just one 20v Turbo model was available. But in August 1998, a new model, the LE (Limited Edition) was introduced. This boasted bright red Brembo brake calipers, Recaro sports seats (in black leather with coloured inserts), drilled Sparco pedals, a strut brace, and a special range of paint colours: black, red and no fewer than three shades of grey. That wasn't all, for 'titanium-look' wheels, mirrors, fuel cap, grille and dash panel added even more bling. In terms of sheer class, a Grigio Vinci 20v Turbo LE, with black and red interior, is pretty hard to beat.

When the short-run Coupé LE (actually 1600 were produced) was dropped in January 1999, it left a void until August the same year when the facelifted range was introduced. Identified by their colour-coded





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bodywork and new grille, the model range included the 20v, 20v Turbo and 20v Turbo Plus. The new 'Plus' was an extra-cost model with a higher spec, which included a redesigned front spoiler, side skirts, red Brembo calipers, a Sparco strut brace, red cam cover and leather Recaro seats, all of which will have seemed rather familiar to the owner of an LE model.

LIVING THE TURBO LIFE

As we've said, 220hp and front-wheel drive makes for a heady mix, and you'd have to be pretty hard-hearted not to smile at the wheel of a 20v Turbo. As with virtually all modern turbo set-ups, lag is not a major problem with the 20v Coupé. Plant your foot almost anywhere in the

rev range and the car picks up its skirts and simply flies, torque-steering its way down the road. Even though slightly muffled by the turbo, the exhaust note is raspy and typically Italian. After all, sportscars should sound good as well as look good, right?

The gear change is slick and allows the driver to make the most of all that power (and torque), while the brakes are just about adequate, despite the fat Brembos. Handling is exemplary, being relatively roll-free and with great lateral grip. Only that ever-present torque-steer is likely to give you any cause for concern, and then only when playing the hooligan or driving on damp roads. The steering is nicely weighted with plenty of feedback. This is a real driver's car in every way.

Performance figures are just short of impressive. A top speed of 155mph made the 20v Turbo the quickest Fiat of all time, while the 0-60mph sprint, which took a shade over six seconds, made it one of the quickest front-



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wheel drive cars on the market.

As far as running costs are concerned, you'll need to budget for sub-30mpg fuel economy, which may be a bit of a disappointment if you're more used to Teutonic or Oriental motoring. However, you ought to be able to eke out a little more on a longer journey, as long as you go easy on the throttle. That, however, is easier said than done – turbo power is very seductive.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Like all Fiats and Alfa Romeos of its generation, the 20V Turbo Coupe needs careful and regular maintenance to survive. It is imperative you stick rigidly to the service schedule, and that means oil changes every 6000 miles. Keep to the service schedule and you should have no real worries. At the risk of repeating ourselves, that really does mean 36,000 miles between cambelt changes. If there is one weak point on 20V Turbos it's the brakes. Their effectiveness is marginal and hard use can

distort the discs causing vibration.

Cracked exhaust manifolds were not unknown in the early years, although Fiat did eventually change the design in an effort to cure this problem. Watch, too, for blue smoke at idle – this is a sure sign of failed oil seals in the turbocharger. Replacements with uprated seals are available from aftermarket sources and may be a worthwhile addition when the original unit fails, usually around 60,000 miles.

A fall-off in performance, often accompanied by a misfire, can be attributed to a failing Lambda sensor. Another cause can be an ineffective fuel pump caused by a high resistance in the power feed relay. A burnt out pump relay will prevent the engine from starting at all.

You shouldn't really expect any problems from the gearbox, unless the car has been well and truly abused, and the Turbo's Viscodrive limited-slip differential system shouldn't give any cause for concern, either.

As the floor pan is shared with the Tipo, Alfa 155 and GTV, you'll probably not be too surprised to hear that suspension bushes are a weak point, requiring replacement more frequently than you might imagine.

Lower front wishbone bushes suffer most on Turbos due to the stresses put through the suspension under hard



BELOW: A Turbo Plus in Sprint Blue is the most sought after version and commands premium prices





PRICE GUIDE

Fiat Coupé 20V Turbo Plus, 2000, Moon Grey, 76,000 miles.	£6995
Fiat Coupé 20V Turbo Plus, 2000. Metallic Red, 116,500 miles.	£6500
Fiat Coupé 20V Turbo Plus, 1999, Energy Green, 106,450 miles.	£5995

acceleration and braking. Worn rear bump stops can become dislodged and make their absence felt by clonking over speed bumps and potholes. Watch, too, for worn rear wheel bearings – a common MOT failure.

Electrical glitches can be a bit of a pain at times – errant warning lights can often be caused by nothing more than a sticking switch – and you'll need to make sure the cooling fan is fully operational. In this regard, watch for faulty relays damaged by turbo heat, blown fuses or a failed slow-speed resistor in the circuit.

Central locking problems can be traced to faulty signals from the door switches.

Pininfarina's excellent build quality and galvanised panels meant corrosion wasn't a major issue, unless the car has been poorly repaired following an accident. Outer body corrosion is rare expect for minor dissimilar metal corrosion on the rear light bezels and door pillar around the locks. On some higher mileage cars chassis rust can be evident around the front and rear subframe areas, so the underside should be checked carefully.





ABOVE: Brembo brakes are marginal on effectiveness and can squeal annoyingly at low speeds

While cars recording mileages below 100k, and in good condition, are currently still available at attractive prices, restoring a tired car is uneconomical.

BEST BUYS

The LE and facelifted Turbos, in particular the Plus, command the highest prices. However, the normally aspirated versions are half the price, mechanically less sophisticated and more practical to run. On the downside, some parts are becoming harder to locate. Servicing on all Coupes is best carried out by Coupe specialists that have the experience in maintaining these cars. At the time of writing Midlands Car Servicing are leading the field in spanner work, detailing and restoration.

There are some owners who have a passion for extracting huge power from their Coupes, up to 600bhp has been recorded. The cost of achieving these outputs is considerable and the longevity of the engines is at risk. Despite the investment in these modified cars, their values are unlikely to match a good low mileage standard example. To most people 220bhp is enough! 🇮🇹

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VERDICT

- Individual styling
- Practicality of a full four seater
- Good build quality
- Strong 5-cylinder engine
- Turbo power – marginal chassis
- Ferrari looks – Fiat prices
- Buy the best today and invest for tomorrow



Lancia Delta HF integrale

From its humble beginnings as family five-door hatch back the Lancia Delta was transformed into a rally champion and a highly developed road car

Story by Auto Italia
Photography by Michael Ward





The integrale line evolved from Lancia's Delta hatchback, initially introduced at the Frankfurt show in 1979. In 1982 Lancia revealed the Delta 4x4, and this line of development reached the public at the Turin show in 1986 when the HF 4WD was announced. Lancia's competition department was winning rallies with the so-called Delta S4 so the HF 4WD was the civilised face of the company's sporting activities. From this car the natural progression was for more power and a developed transmission, thus the 'integrale' appeared for 1988. With a 20bhp increase, to 185bhp, from the 8-valve 2-litre it continued the winning ways of its predecessor.

Sixteen valves were the next evolution with the introduction in 1989 of the integrale 16V. A different turbocharger was also included in the package which saw power go up once again to 200bhp. The final major change to the model came about in 1991 with the introduction of the Delta HF integrale. This model has

become known as the Evoluzione as the factory introduced new ideas to keep the model at the forefront of World Rallying. Track was increased, a rear spoiler was added, wheels were different and front end and interior styling were altered. Power went up to 210bhp although the car put on weight. This was the final set of dynamic developments. These cars subsequently became known as Evoluzione 1 as cosmetic differences were later unveiled thus creating the Evoluzione 2 but underneath these latter cars were virtually identical to their predecessors. Cars for Switzerland, which has stricter emission laws, were only ever fitted with 8-valve engines which eventually developed 180bhp, so beware. Also, Delta HF integrale sold in England were badged 'Montecarlo' and in Germany, 'Sedici', even though they were identical standard production models.

As far as Evolutions are concerned, there are only ones and twos. The Evo 2 differs from the 'Evo 1' in having 16-inch rims, gutter mouldings, high back Recaro





front seats, no sunroof as air-conditioning was standard, standard tinted glass, a Momo steering wheel, a catalytic converter and a smaller turbo with remapped chip. This endowed different torque characteristics and five more bhp to make up for the cat.

Much confusion seems to have arisen regarding the titles that each model has had bestowed upon them, particularly Evoluzione 1 and 2. The factory at Chivasso always referred to the version introduced in 1991 as 'Evoluzione'. Thus, when the next one appeared at the end of 1991 the model was retrospectively dubbed 'Evoluzione Uno'. The official listed name of both remained Delta HF integrale. The 'Evoluzione' epithet was never included in any official Lancia publications

BUYING AN INTEGRALE

The integrale was only ever produced in left-hand drive

format, so any right-hookers you may see advertised will have been converted in the UK. This wasn't a huge task as the dashboard moulding could be transplanted from a regular RHD Delta, but the problem is that the swap also involved changing the steering rack to one from a Fiat Regata, which many feel had a detrimental effect on the handling. You shouldn't expect to pay a premium for a converted car, despite what the vendor might suggest.

The first thing you have to realise is that these are cars which beg to be driven hard. That is their whole *raison d'être*, and means there is a good chance that many cars offered for sale may have been subjected to body damage at some point, or suffer from stress cracks brought on by the use of overly-stiff suspension kits. If the horror stories are to be believed, the




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integrale you're about to check out may have been stolen. The bottom line is get an HPI check done and, if at all possible, have the car looked at by an expert.

You can be forgiven for thinking that being a car of Italian origin, the Delta HF integrale is likely to be rusty. But, for once, that isn't necessarily the case. Certainly you need to take a good look round. Rotted boot floors are not uncommon, thanks to leaking

tailgates. Look for signs of blocked sunroof drain holes (all integrales bar the last of the air-con-equipped Evos came with a sunroof as standard) and take a moment to examine the sills and wheel arches for corrosion. You may also find some rust in the seams round the top of the tailgate opening where three layers of metal are welded together. Oh, and check the scuttle below







the windscreen, because blocked drainage holes (often caused by careless use of mastic when fitting a new windscreen) result in yet more corrosion.

The interior generally lasts well, but can look a little shabby if uncared for. Check to see if all the gauges work, and the warning lights come on (and go off) as they should. 16v models came with an 'emergency' operating warning light which illuminated if there was a problem with the fuel-injection system.

ENGINE & TRANSMISSION

The Fiat-derived twin-cam motor is generally reliable and, as long as it's maintained correctly, should perform like new for years. But it is vital to pay attention to oil and cambelt changes. Turbocharged engines are notoriously hard on lubricants and need to be treated to a degree of pampering if they are to live. Modern synthetic oils are recommended as they are designed to withstand a turbo's high operating temperatures.

Surprisingly, running costs are not as bad as you might think. As far as belt changes are concerned, the manual tells you to replace them at 36,000 miles but that's too long. Think in terms of around 20,000 if you want the engine to survive. A belt change will set you back around £250-£300, and a full service from £300. Ask to see evidence of the last belt change and also look to see if all the covers have been replaced correctly. It's not uncommon to find such parts missing – a sure sign of a careless mechanic.

Look for signs of exhaust smoke. Blue smoke at idle can indicate turbo failure and a replacement will set you back £400-£500, and keep an eye on the oil level, too. Cars which are driven hard can consume oil at a far greater rate than you might expect. Under normal driving conditions oil consumption should be around





PRICE GUIDE

Lancia Delta 16v integrale, 1990, Red, FSH, 106k miles.	£12,500
Lancia Delta integrale Evo 1, 1993, Red, 62k miles.	£35,995
Lancia Delta integrale Final Edition, 1995, Red, 28K miles.	£39,000
Lancia Delta integrale Evo 2, 1993, Yellow, 74k miles.	£47,994
Lancia Delta integrale Evo 2, 1994, Lagos Blue, 23k miles.	£70,000

integrale





one litre per 6-7000 miles.

Listen out for clonks and whines from the transmission and drivetrain. The gearbox differential units are generally robust but can be expensive to replace. The best option is a replacement gearbox (new around £1800 or £750 rebuilt). The gearchange should feel light and positive and, in general, the gearbox should give little cause for concern, although third gear can be a weak point on a hard-driven example. Listen, too, for rumbling – a sure sign of worn bearings. A heavy clutch pedal, especially on 16v models, indicates the clutch pressure plate is on its way out. A new clutch assembly will set you back around £575, including parts and labour, depending on the model.

Suspension-wise, the weakest link is the design of the front anti-roll bar – or more specifically, the drop links and their spherical joints on Evos. They need replacing every 5000 miles and cost around £120 each. Other problem areas include the suspension bushes in general, which can need replacement on an annual basis on a well-used example. Expect to pay £80 for the Powerflex wishbone bushes. Look for signs of leaky dampers and wear in the rear units. This can lead to uneven tyre wear as the geometry gets out of kilter.

As far as the braking system is concerned, for some reason all integrale – especially Evoluzione models – suffer from noisy brakes. Watch for seized rear calipers. These can be rebuilt and exchange units cost around £120 each. New discs vary from £35 (Brembo) to £95 (Tarox) front and under £30 for the rear.

Replacement body panels are no longer available, well, not new, anyway. Some companies offer replacement sills and a rear cross member, but that's about your lot. There are plenty of used panels around, but you'll need to make a few calls to track them down.


DRIVING THE INTEGRALE

Such is the traction of the four-wheel drive integrale that to blast off the line you need to be brutal with the revs, murder the clutch and ignore the scrabbling tyres. Boost arrives at 3500rpm. By 6000rpm it is time to shift

the gear lever into the next cog. Better to use the torque than overspeed the turbo. Acceleration is generally wheelspin-free and soon the integrale is up to warp speed. ABS, a big servo and ventilated discs make stopping the rally-inspired machine idiot-proof. With the dampers in 'soft' mode, handling is front-wheel drive-esque but without wheelspin, torque steer or lift-off oversteer. It behaves too sensibly. Because it refuses to break traction we call it dull when a sane person would acclaim its inherent safety. The Evo shows its age by keeling over in the turns with too much bodyroll. A much stiffer rear end would kill the understeer and sharpen turn-in. Roberto Giordanelli.

PRICES

The days of picking up a reasonable integrale for less than £10k are now long gone. Currently £20k is more likely to be the base price for an 8v or 16v, while the Evos are being offered from between £35k and £40k. However, some exceptional examples, like the special editions, can command anything up to £70k. A zero mileage car sold at auction this year for an extraordinary £136k.

From a collectors' point of view cars that have not been modified are the best bet. Modified cars, despite the big money often spent on them, are a gamble unless they have been prepared by reputable outfits like Walkers Garage. It's a good idea to buy something today you can sell tomorrow! 

VERDICT

- Superb handling and performance
- Pre-purchase inspection advised
 - HPI check advised
- Requires expert servicing
- 24-year-old Italian bodywork!
 - Buy cheap – pay twice



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Maserati Ghibli Cup

The resurgence of the Maserati marque has served to increase the values of collectable cars, however it is still possible to buy a future classic for reasonable money – but only just

Report by Andy Heywood
Photography by Michael Ward

Launched in Italy in 1992, the first right-hand drive Ghiblis arrived in the UK at the end of 1993. The engine was a four-valve per cylinder, four camshaft version of the original Biturbo V6 in 2.8-litre form as opposed to 2.0-litre on the home market. Four-valve versions had previously been available in the 'Racing' and 222 4v but in the 1994 Ghibli (the retrospective name applied to the first UK market version) the engine management system was all-new, with direct ignition (i.e no distributor) and a separate ignition and fuel ECU for each bank of three cylinders. So equipped, the 2.8-litre developed 284bhp at 6000rpm and 42.1kgm of torque at 3500rpm (306bhp for the standard 2.0-litre version). The two turbochargers were still Japanese IHI units, fed through twin intercoolers.

Transmission was via a new ZF five-speed standard pattern manual gearbox (not the dog-leg box of the earlier Biturbo) and a ZF four-speed automatic was also available. The final drive was the same Torsen differential from the Biturbo, modified to incorporate an oil cooler.

The suspension was by MacPherson struts front and rear, and differed from the Biturbo in that

the shock absorbers (developed by Koni) were electronically adjustable through four settings on a key pad sited next to the gear lever. The wheels for the first model were 16-inch diameter (a flat seven-spoke design made by both OZ and Mille Miglia) and allowed fitment of larger ventilated discs front and rear than had been possible with the Biturbo.

While changes to specification on the home market took place for the 1994 model year, it was 1995 before the addition of Bosch ABS and still larger wheels (17-inch) marked a change in name to Ghibli ABS in the UK.

A year later, further changes were made, centred mainly around the adoption of the new Quattroporte axle, tubular rear suspension and a Getrag six-speed gearbox. Automatic transmission was still an option. There were few external clues to the new specification apart from another change in wheel design, still 17-inch but now with a ribbed spoke design by Mille Miglia. Another clue was that the backing for the one piece headlamps changed from the silver of the 94/ABS cars to black for this new version, known as Ghibli GT.

The GT was the final version of the model, the only other version being the Open Cup race replica which was sold alongside the GT from

1996 to 1998. The Ghibli Cup (as the road cars were known) used





all the upgrades of the GT but with a two-litre engine only, even in right-hand drive form, though three hybrid 2.8-litre GT engine 'Cup' cars were also built at the time. The 2.0-litre Cup engine used roller bearing turbos – different from any other model – modified engine management mapping, and a freer-flowing exhaust system which helped it to develop 330bhp. At the time it enjoyed the title of highest specific output per cc of any road car. Further changes were made to suspension bushing, and larger Brembo brakes were also fitted. Externally, the Cup was

distinguished by its use of five-spoke split rim Speedline wheels and single outlet per side exhaust pipes, as opposed to twin tailpipe per side on all other models. It also had a badge on the lower doors and a racing style aluminium fuel filler cap. Internally, the differences were greater, the wood being exchanged for carbon-fibre inserts on most cars. Drilled pedals, Momo Corse steering wheel and aluminium gearknob completed the racing car ambience.

While the Cup was a limited edition, the GT continued until 1998 when the Maserati factory closed for





refurbishment and the installation of the 3200 GT production line. On re-opening in early 1999, another 250 Ghibli GTs were made using remaining bodysells and parts before the 3200 GT took over.

In total, around 150 Ghiblis were imported into the UK by the then importer Meridien in Bournemouth (including 26 2.0-litre Cups) and then a few more through Maranello Concessionaires, who were importers after 1998. This was always a rare car and not all of them have survived. For a few years, there was a differential in price between the UK and Italy in our favour and a number of cars were imported. However, the Italians now value the cars at least as highly as we do and trade has slowed. If you can't find a home market car now, one other option at the moment is the Japanese market. Some specialist dealers have recently started bringing cars in.

SERVICING SCHEDULE

The service interval on all Ghiblis is 6000 miles or one year with a cambelt change every fourth year or 24,000 miles. However, the four camshaft engine only uses the cambelt at the front of the engine to drive the exhaust camshafts. The inlet cams are driven by chains, looped over from the exhaust cams at the back of the engine. Every 48,000 miles the chains should be changed and this can only be achieved correctly by removing the engine. The



book time for this service is therefore 30 hours.

MECHANICAL COMPONENTS

If serviced regularly the 2.8-litre engine is very reliable and capable of high mileage. The 2.0-litre version has suffered a few failures due to excessive bore wear, meaning a full rebuild but the ones that failed were early on and if it hasn't failed by now, it probably won't! All Ghiblis seemed to require the radiator reconditioning because of the appalling quality of the leaky originals. Another common problem is with the charging system. The alternator is sited low in the engine bay and collects road debris and salt which shortens its life

considerably. However, neither are expensive to repair.

The engine management system is basic by modern standards and requires a specific Maserati tester to read fault codes. Most common of these faults are lambda sensor failures and glitches from corrosion in the fuses and relays, but otherwise they are reliable.

The electronic shock absorbers are, unfortunately, not particularly reliable. Problems with leaks or seized motors are common and they are no longer available. If the red warning light on the key pad is permanently on, there is a problem.

Compared to later Maseratis, the running costs for





suspension, brakes and tyres are very low. There isn't much choice of quality tyres for the earlier 16-inch wheels and the brakes tend to corrode as they are not protected by any backplates (to aid cooling originally) but otherwise there isn't much to report.

Parts supply is now becoming a problem all round though, with Maserati recently making many items obsolete. At the time of writing, there are no bumpers or front wings available for instance and the supply of headlights is very limited.

BODYWORK & CHASSIS

The most critical area to check today is the body. Most cars developed cracks in the chassis legs above the steering rack early in their lives and will have been repaired in this area. Checking for the good quality of

this repair and the straightness of the chassis legs is essential. The chassis legs themselves are delicate and can be damaged by potholing wheels.

This happens on all cars but the first ones (1994 and ABS models) started to develop severe corrosion underneath quite early on. There is such a marked difference between this era and the later GT and Cup that it must be due to a difference in underbody protection or quality of steel. It is essential to have an early car checked thoroughly underneath as externally it could still look presentable. Some have even been bodged as carrying out correct repairs sometimes involves a huge amount of work.

The outer body suffers in a few areas, specifically the windscreen surround, which was not properly protected underneath the screen bonding, the double-



SERVICING COSTS

Annual service:	£597
4th year cambelt service:	£1744

PARTS PRICES (Inc Vat):

Front brake disc pair Cup	£336.00
Front suspension wishbone lower (replacement ball joints £210.00)	NLA
Water pump	£289.80
Oil filter (non genuine)	£16.80
Cambelt	£58.80
Front bumper	NLA
Headlamp black surround	NLA
Rear light unit	NLA
Windscreen	£570.00
Rear bumper	NLA
Front shock absorber electronic	NLA
Rear shock absorber	NLA
Clutch kit	NLA

Prices for labour and parts provided by McGrath Maserati
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skinned bonnet grille surround, which corrodes at its base, the edges of the front wings and rear wheel arch lips and the bottoms of the doors. With the supply of panels very limited, these are becoming cars that need to visit skilled coachbuilders for repairs.

INTERIOR TRIM


Ostensibly similar to the late Biturbo interiors, the Ghibli range benefitted from much higher quality materials and although seat bolsters lose their shape eventually, repairs can be made. The carbon inserts on the Cup models go opaque after a while but the wood inserts of the others tend not to suffer.

BUYING A GHIBLI

A potential purchaser must check the car thoroughly and although every buyers' guide may say so, service history is very important. A sheaf of invoices may initially scare you, but ultimately it gives piece of mind that the car has been looked after. If there are any doubts about condition or value for money then talk to one of the Maserati specialists, some of whom offer a pre-purchase inspection service. The Maserati world in the UK is a small one and most cars are known to one or other of these specialists. And that is key to how one approaches a Ghibli today.

These are definitely classic cars now and most lead a very cosseted life. However, until recently, prices did not reflect this. In the last few years though, values have bottomed out and started to rise.

The top of the range is undoubtedly the Cup. It

offers not only a racing pedigree but also a fantastic driving experience for the enthusiast. It is no more expensive to maintain than any other in the range and due to its rarity will always have a market when you are selling, which you won't want to, of course, because the tactile pleasure of its dynamics makes every trip an occasion and that addiction will be hard to give up. This is one of the best-driving Maseratis ever made. 



BELOW: This Ghibli Cup, well known in the UK Maserati Club, was specially ordered in yellow

PRICE GUIDE

	Cup	1994/ABS	GT
Excellent	£14,000	£20,000	£40,000
Good	£10,000	£12,000	£30,000
Average	£7000	£8000	£20,000
Poor	£3000	£3500	£15,000

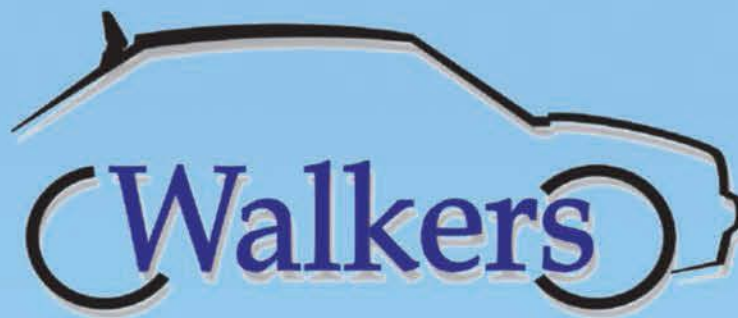
TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

MASERATI GHIBLI CUP

ENGINE:	90° V6. 24-valves
CAPACITY:	2790cc
BORE X STROKE:	94mm x 67mm
FUEL SYSTEM:	Twin IHI turbos and intercoolers
POWER:	285bhp @ 6000rpm
TORQUE:	305lb ft @ 3500rpm
TRANSMISSION:	6-speed Getrag
BRAKES:	Front/Rear Ventilated discs ABS
KERB WEIGHT:	1395kg
TOP SPEED:	160mph
0-62MPH:	5.7sec
PRICE:	£49,000 (in 1997)







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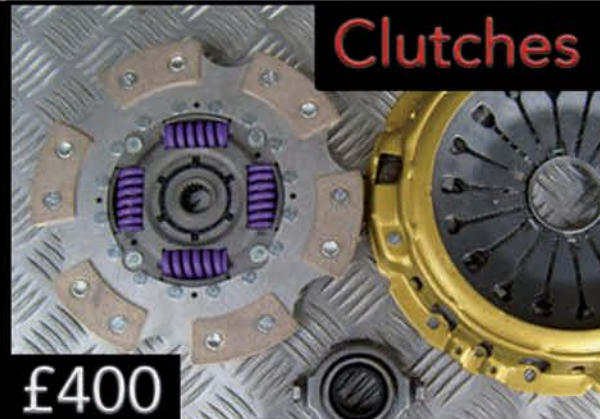
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