

BUMPER 20TH ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL EDITION

# AUTO Italia

Issue 229 March 2015 £4.70 US\$10.50



INSIDE!  
48 page  
Alfa Romeo  
Buyers' Guide

## ALFA ROMEO

ESSENTIAL  
GUIDE TO  
LIVING THE DREAM

**ALSO**

Ferrari 212 Ghia-Aigle • Abarth 695 Biposto  
Fiat Ritmo Grp 2 • Ex-Mussolini Alfa Romeo 6C 2500  
Maserati V4 • Carrozzeria Monterosa • Alfa 4C Spider Launch



*Giulietta*

*MTJ*



*Brera*

159

*t*

47

156

*Glv Cup*

*S.Z.*

ARESE MUSEUM TO RE-OPEN IN SUMMER 2015





1991 Ferrari Testarossa - 1,545km from new  
Estimate (£): 130,000 - 150,000



1991 Ferrari Mondial T - 2,088 km from new  
Estimate (£): 50,000 - 70,000



1991 Alfa Romeo SZ - 808km from new  
Estimate (£): 50,000 - 70,000

## The Race Retro & Classic Car Sale

21<sup>st</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2015

Stoneleigh Park  
Nr Coventry

CLASSIC CARS >> SPORTS CARS >> COLLECTOR CARS >> MOTORBIKES >> AUTOMOBILIA >> LIFESTYLE



**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, Sean Carson, Peter Collins, Elvio Deganello, Luca Gastaldi, Roberto Giordanelli, Richard Heseltine, Andy Heywood, Chris Hrabalek, Keith Seume, Simon Park, Chris Rees and Tony Soper

**Art Editor** Michael Ward

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

**Advertisement Manager**  
David Lerpiniere Tel: 01732 445325  
david@talkmediasales.co.uk  
**Auto Vendo classifieds email:**  
liz.solo@ntlworld.com

**Accounts:** Josie Ward  
**Managing Director:** Josie Ward

**Printed in England**  
Warners Midlands PLC; Tel: 01778 391000  
**Worldwide Retail Distribution**  
Seymour Distribution Ltd, 2 East Poultry Avenue,  
London, EC1A 9PT



Auto Italia® is published twelve times a year by:  
Ginger Beer Promotions Ltd,  
Morningside House, 1 High Avenue,  
Letchworth Garden City, SG6 3RL  
Email: enquiries@gingerbeerpromotions.com  
ISSN 1357 - 4515

While every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of this publication Ginger Beer Promotions Ltd cannot accept liability for any statement or error contained herein. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or part, without written permission, is prohibited. © Ginger Beer Promotions Ltd, 2015

## 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



Peter Collins



Elvio Deganello



Luca Gastaldi



Chris Rees



Ed McDonough



Sean Carson



Michael Ward



Liz Smith



To celebrate 20 years of publishing *Auto Italia* we decided to make this issue something of an Alfa Romeo themed special edition. Our core readership are Alfa Romeo owners and I am sure that they will be delighted to read our feature on the re-opening of the historic collection at Arese. There was a real worry that the collection would be broken up, and the Fiat management did have plans to do so. The public and local government response was so great that Fiat relented, in fact the result is even better than expected. Not only will the collection be safe but the whole Arese factory area is being redeveloped to include a demo track and exhibition area for the Milan Expo 2015, all of which will coincide with the launch of the new Alfa Romeo 'Giulia'. Book your flights now!

The main Alfa Romeo element in this issue is the 48 page buyers' guide section dedicated to Alfa Romeo coupes and saloons from the mid-1990s onwards. What we have done is to consolidate our previous series of guides into one complete section with updated information. This will be a benefit to readers new to the marque but I am sure regular readers will enjoy seeing Michael Ward's excellent studio pictures for a second time. You will notice that there is an exception because the 159 TI Sportwagon was not shot in the studio, which has since closed, so I hope that we will be forgiven for running the splendid images taken at sunny Saltburn up on the North East coast.

I am often asked how we started *Auto Italia* so I have included a short story on how it all began, plus some highlights of the many interesting cars we have covered over the years. It just remains for me to thank everyone involved in the magazine's production, past and present, and the generous custodians of the rare and valuable machinery seen on these pages.

**Phil Ward**  
Editor

philward@auto-italia.net



# Foskers

The UK's oldest independent Ferrari specialist



**1972 Ferrari 365 GTB/4 'Daytona' Berlinetta**

**£725,000**

Immaculate example of Ferrari's most iconic GT car. Presented in its rare and original colour of Blu Dino Metallizzato with beige hide. One of just 158 UK RHD cars. Superb history file; well-documented 50000 miles.



**1973 Dino 246 GT**

**£325,000**

A truly stunning Dino GT with extensive Foskers restoration. Fantastic history; wonderful condition. The very best available.



**1980 Ferrari 308 GT4**

**£75,000**

An unrepeatable example. 2013 FOC concours class winner. Original specification; 14,000 miles from new. Outstanding car.




**Contact our sales team - T: 01474 874 555 M: 07921 430 430 E: [sales@foskers.com](mailto:sales@foskers.com)**

Conveniently located at the world famous Brands Hatch motor racing circuit, four miles from the M25 Jct 3

 @foskers

[www.foskers.com](http://www.foskers.com)

/foskersferrari 



# CONTENTS

# ISSUE 229

MARCH 2015

## FEATURES

- 16 Abarth Biposto**  
Hot shot 695 for the brave
- 24 Alfa Romeo QV-Line**  
Revised MiTo and Giulietta
- 32 Ferrari 212 Inter**  
Unique Ghia-Aigle bodied coupe
- 38 Alfa Romeo 6C 2500 S**  
Mussolini's present to his mistress
- 46 Maserati V4**  
Monster 16-cylinder car restored
- 52 Italian Coachbuilders**  
Carrozzeria Monterosa
- 60 Fiat Ritmo Group 2**  
Rare official Fiat team car survivor
- 68 Museo Storico**  
Arese Alfa Romeo collection saved
- 74 20th Birthday**  
Celebrating 20 years of Auto Italia

# SUBSCRIBE

AND SAVE UP TO £10.40!

SEE PAGE 52 FOR DETAILS

## REGULARS

- 06 News**  
Alfa Romeo 4C Spider Detroit launch
- 12 Design**  
Ferrari 458 Speciale Aperta
- 86 Events Diary**  
Italian car club contacts and events
- 88 Auto Vendo**  
Pre-loved readers' cars for sale

## CLUB ITALIA

- 82 Hampton Court Concours**  
Premier event – high profile location
- 99 Alfa Romeo Buyers' Guide**  
Special 48 page guide on saloon and coupes



16



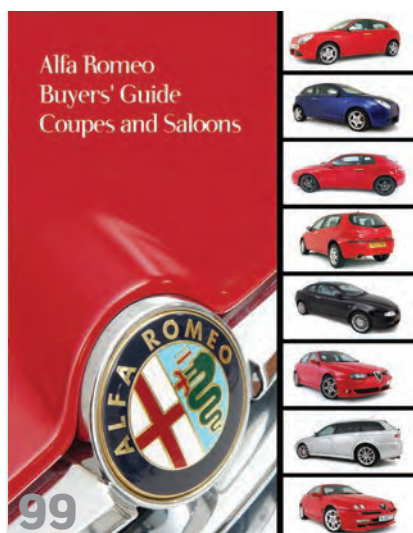
24



32



46



99



38



60



# NEWS & VIEWS

## ALFA ROMEO 4C SPIDER REVEALED AT THE DETROIT SHOW



**T**he production version of the Alfa Romeo 4C Spider combines scintillating performance with open-top thrills and the unmistakable soundtrack of an Italian, performance-tuned engine and exhaust.

The 4C Spider shares much of its exterior design with its award-winning Coupe sibling – the changes are focussed purely on the metamorphosis from fixed- to open-top. The Coupe's glazed engine cover and flowing coupe shape gives way to a more traditional spider form, with pronounced buttresses and a body-coloured engine deck-lid with three functional heat extractors and an aerodynamically tuned spoiler. The rollover structure is housed in a black (or optional carbonfibre)

'halo', creating visual harmony with the carbonfibre windscreen frame, where the attachment points for the removable, stowable cloth roof (or optional carbonfibre hardtop) can also be found.

Other new features to debut include an all-new titanium exhaust system mounted centrally with switchable modes, which can be altered depending on the driving environment and driver's mood. Developed by world-renowned exhaust specialists Akrapovic this beautifully crafted system consists of two centrally-mounted tailpipes and computer-optimised asymmetrical mufflers with a dual-mode exhaust valve system and link pipe with a resonator to eliminate in-cabin droning. This optional system is finished with







carbonfibre bezels on the exhaust tips.

In addition to the existing colours available on the 4C a new Giallo paint scheme is also offered (with matching accent stitching for the seating, steering wheel and doors available), while a new Tobacco leather interior option is also planned for later in the year.

Four all-new wheel designs also debut, either in 17-inch (front)/18-inch (rear) or 18-inch (front)/19-inch (rear) sizes in Silver or Dark finishes.

Powered by the same, all-aluminium, 240hp 1750 TBI engine as the Coupe, performance for the US launch model is on a par with the hardtop version, with a top speed of 160mph and a 0-60 time estimated at 4.1 seconds.

For the North American market, the Alfa Romeo 4C Spider is designed with stiffer springs, larger front and rear anti-rollbars, and re-tuned shock absorbers. The technical specification of European models will be announced closer to its launch later in the year.





# ALFA ROMEOS AT BONHAMS PARIS AUCTION

## 6C 1500/1750 GRAN SPORT

An ex-works 1930 Alfa Romeo 6C 1500/1750 Gran Sport (8513028/30) once raced by exiled Russian Imperial Guardsman, Boris Ivanowski, is to star in Bonhams Grand Palais Paris auction on 5 February.

Boris Ivanowski was an officer of the Russian Imperial Guard who went on to make his fame in the 1920s as a racing driver. His career excelled when he became a works driver for the Stiles British Alfa Romeo Team, leading him to compete in several major events including the Brooklands Double Twelve, in which he came 8th overall and was class winner while driving the Alfa Romeo 6C 1500. To understand the car's dual identity see Lot 381 in the Bonhams catalogue.

Under British ownership for 84 years, the short-chassis Alfa is offered with an estimate of €1,200,000 - 1,600,000 (£930,000 - 1,200,000).



## ALFA ROMEO 6C 1750 GRAN SPORT

Previously owned by Giuseppe Campari, the 1931 Alfa Romeo 6C 1750 4th Series Supercharged Gran Sport Spider (AR 108 14314) is another Alfa Romeo starring in the Bonhams Paris sale.

Campari established himself as a formidable competitor on the racetrack, finishing 4th in the 1914 Targa Florio. Post-war, his first major victory was achieved at the 1924 French Grand Prix driving an Alfa Romeo P2, and he would go on to win the Coppa Acerbo (1927 and 1930), Mille Miglia (1928 and 1929) and the Italian Grand Prix (1930). Tragically, after joining Maserati for the 1933 season he was killed in an accident at that year's Italian GP.

Campari didn't own the 6C for very long, as by the 31st December 1931 the car was registered to one Mario Vanoni of Portoferraio, Elba. Described by Michael Frostick (Alfa Romeo Milano) as, "Among the finest ever made both from the point of view of engineering and driver satisfaction," the 6C is among the rarest of pre-war Alfa Romeos.

Sale price is estimated at €1,800,000 - 2,400,000 (£1,400,000 - £1,800,000).

## ALFA ROMEO 6C 2500 CABRIOLET

This extraordinary 'modello esclusivo' 6C 2500 Alfa Romeo Sport Cabriolet was designed by Mario Felice Boano in 1947. This is the last of four unique Art Deco convertibles, only two of which currently survive.

Described as 'stylish' this example is fully restored and duly won the Gentleman's Sports Car class at the Villa d'Este Concours d'Elegance in 2012. Perhaps it was fate because 65 years prior a sister car won the Coppa d'Oro e l'Artistica Cerbiatta as a brand new design in 1947.

The car for sale in Paris is one of the exceptional, and exceptionally rare, Boano cabriolets. All four cars differ in detail, but are notable for the superior quality of their construction. This is the last of the four to be built and the only one in Europe. One was destroyed, one was unrecognisably remodeled, and the other resides in Japan.





F E R R A R I P A R T S S P E C I A L I S T

**S U P E R F O R M A N C E**



CELEBRATING  
32 YEARS

**THE POWER  
TO DELIVER**

UNIT G1 RD PARK  
STEPHENSON CLOSE  
HODDESDON  
HERTFORDSHIRE  
EN11 0BW

CALL +44(0)1992445300

FAX +44(0)1992441866

ADMIN@SUPERFORMANCE.CO.UK

**WWW.SUPERFORMANCE.CO.UK**



Ferrari



## OAKLEY DESIGN LAMBORGHINI HURACÁN

The latest offering from Oakley Design is their uprated Huracán LP610-4. The first customer car is known as the HM 680-4, 'HM' to record the initials of Oakley's client in Saudi Arabia and '680' to indicate the power output – which is actually 688bhp!

Both the exterior and interior are completely formed from carbonfibre using pre-impregnated resin to guarantee strength and stability. The front nose cone, rear wing and rear diffuser aerodynamics have been developed inside the Mira wind tunnel. The top and lower side air vents are opened up to increase

airflow to both the engine airbox and the cooling system.

A weight reduction programme has saved 107kg from the factory weight. Key areas are the exhaust system and even changing the battery to a 2.5kg Braille lithium version. Oakley have also fitted lighter centre-lock wheels of its own design so that Aventador sized tyres can be used.

Performance for the 0-60mph dash is recorded at 2.5 seconds and the rev limiter cuts in at 215mph.

Huracán styling kits are available to order from [parts@oakleydesign.eu](mailto:parts@oakleydesign.eu) website [www.oakleydesign.eu](http://www.oakleydesign.eu)



## MASERATI QUATTROPORTE PLUS

Tunit Diesel Performance is the first tuning company in the UK to give the diesel powered Maserati Quattroporte even more of what already makes it a fantastic sports saloon.

Unique software is what sets Tunit apart as each unit is loaded with bespoke settings written specifically for each engine to obtain the best performance gains, without exceeding the safety parameters of the vehicles own ECU. Unlike remapping or chip tuning, a Tunit 'plug and play' system means that no settings are altered or removed and the vehicle cannot operate outside of what the manufacture installed settings record as safe. It is the easiest

and safest method of enhancing the power, performance and fuel economy of any diesel engine.

Brake-horsepower is increased from 271bhp to 333bhp but improved torque is what this car benefits from most. For any heavy luxury saloon car, torque is the feature component of any engine to help carry the extra weight up to speed and make the whole car as responsive and fun as a sporty coupe. Tunit increased torque in the Quattroporte from

440lb ft to a massive 535lb ft. The way it is delivered is also altered as previously usable power was only available from 1900rpm. It even sounds the way you expect a Maserati to sound thanks to its active exhausts emulating a fiery V8.

With the performance expected of a Maserati and the exhilaration of extra power and a respectable fuel economy with Tunit, a diesel engine becomes a perfect fit, even for a powerful Italian sports car. For more information and the specifics of what Tunit can do for your own diesel vehicle visit:

[www.tunit.com](http://www.tunit.com)





## *Let us show you why we are different!*

Our Renowed expertise of over 50 years have seen many satisfied customers in the areas of servicing, restorations & race preparation of Italian marques.

Autofficina specialises in  
Ferrari, Lamborghini & Maserati products.

Autofficina provides a comprehensive portfolio of services including:

- scheduled maintenance & service requirements
- full engine re-builds
- trim & electrical work
- restoration
- bespoke modifications
- re-engineering projects
- remedial work
- on-going maintenance packages
- full valenting & detailing service

## *Important News for our Customers*

*We are moving to a new larger site with even more facilities. Less than 10 minutes away from our current premises.*

*We are still open for business at our current Oakcroft Road Site.*

*Our new Ruxley Lane site will be open end of March 2015.*

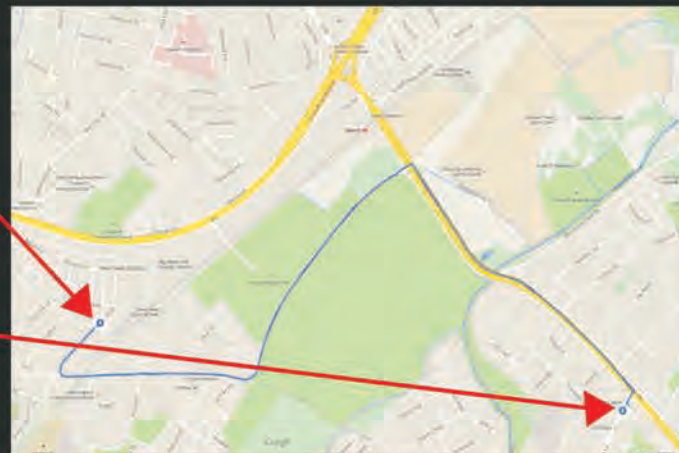
### **OakCroft Road Premises**

**Merlin House  
Oakcroft Road,  
Chessington  
Surrey KT9 1RH**



### **Ruxley Lane Premises**

**5 Ruxley Lane  
Ewell  
Surrey KT19 0JB**



are you  
**totally**  
happy with  
your  
**SERVICE**  
centre?



If you are interested in learning more about Autofficina and our services, please do not hesitate to contact Elias Elia or one of the Team.



# DESIGN

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

## Ferrari 458 Speciale A

CHRIS HRABALEK

**Age:** 37

**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



Ferrari has recently launched its very latest iteration on the 458-

series, the Ferrari 458 Speciale A ('A' for Aperta, Italian for 'open'), offering – probably without knowing – not only the very best automotive investment currently out there, but also one desirable, and above all impressive, piece of kit.

In 2014 Ferrari have dominated the classic car market, finishing in the top nine spots of the top 10 auction records and setting a new benchmark with the \$38.115 million sale of a 1962 Ferrari 250 GTO. Ferrari is, without doubt, the most powerful of all automotive 'currencies' and one that is happily exchanged for cash all over the world;

very similar to a steel sports-model Rolex.

The Speciale A did not come as a surprise. A logical successor to the Ferrari Scuderia Spider 16M, it was only a question of time for the open-top version of the 458 Speciale to break cover. Described by anorak cynics as a Ferrari tradition of 'cleaning out their excess parts inventory' towards the end of the model life-cycle, this time around it may be a very different proposition.

Not only is the Ferrari 458 Speciale A the last of the naturally aspirated mid-engine V8 models, but also the very last of the Montezemolo-era production cars. This combined with the fact that it is limited to only



499 units – thus being as scarce as LaFerrari – arguably makes it an investment no-brainer and in return one of the most desirable automobiles to own. Full stop.

Apart from the obvious appeal with regard to the multiplying of ones capital, below the bottom-line awaits also a technical marvel with the Ferrari 458 Speciale A showing-off one jewel of an engine: striking out with the power of 605 horses, at a cog-twisting 398lb ft of torque, all the way until a high-pitched screaming 9000 rpm timeout. Stuff for

goosebumps.

Stylingwise, the open-top Speciale is a near carbon-copy to its fixed-head mass-production brother. Differences were reduced to a new set of rims and a more eccentric choice of colour and trim options. A graphical theme in the form of a mirrored hockey-stick was applied, leading to the rear spoiler in top-view and which is also repeated on each respective seat and backrest.

Despite the expected configuration parties at Dubai and Moscow dealerships, the very best way to celebrate this

future icon is probably in the

favourite colour of the former il padrino: Pozzi Blue; without the vulgar go-faster stripes and useless carbon-add-ons. Instead, to celebrate this car as something very special, its interior is specified in monochrome-red and its wheels finished in satin gold. Visual perfection.

In terms of creating a dead-cert 'triple A' long term automotive investment, Ferrari couldn't have given its most loyal customers a better gift. Possibly only topped through limiting the A's availability even further – perhaps by offering this final model to FXX K customers only and in similar two-digit numbers – but then, again, there is always the F60America.







## **Specialists in Ferrari, Lamborghini and Maserati**

**We pride ourselves on offering a wide range of services to the highest standard for your Ferrari, Lamborghini or Maserati, both classic and modern.**

- Full restoration up to concours award winning standards
- Servicing and repairs
- Full suspensions rebuilds
- Engine and gearbox appraisal and rebuilds
- All trim work
- Full Ferrari, Lamborghini and Maserati Diagnostic equipment
- Bespoke project work
- Race support
- Vehicle Storage

**[www.hoylefoxclassics.com](http://www.hoylefoxclassics.com)  
[info@hoylefoxclassics.com](mailto:info@hoylefoxclassics.com)  
Tel: 01621 841444**



WRITE TO THE EDITOR AT: AUTO ITALIA, GINGER BEER PROMOTIONS LTD,  
MORNINGSIDE HOUSE, 1 HIGH AVENUE, LETCHWORTH, HERTFORDSHIRE,  
SG63RL OR EMAIL PHILWARD@AUTO-ITALIA.NET



## DELAYED ALFAS

I read your piece in Team Cars about your 156 with great interest. I was especially interested in your stories about its registration delay.

I own a 147 GTA with a similar back story. It was manufactured in 2005 but not registered in the UK until 2008, with registration number RX08AZW. The RX prefix denotes Reading and it is interesting that it is common to both cars.

The story that came with my car was that it was part of a batch of five 147 GTAs that accompanied a number of other cars (166s and 156s were also mentioned) that were shipped to Malaysia in or about 2005/6. I was told that the importer/dealer went bust before unloading and the cars spent a couple of years in a ship off the coast. They were then allegedly imported into the UK because they were RHD cars. My car has a KPH odometer rather than a MPH one, which supports the story, because Malaysia apparently measures distance in kilometres

rather than miles. The car also has a Selespeed gearbox which the UK spec cars did not have.

The similarities in our stories are significant, but apparently separated by a couple of years. Does this make the stories a bit suspect, or do Malaysia-bound cars do this regularly?

Keep up the good work! *Auto Italia* has a special place in the magazine market that nobody else reaches. As a serial Alfista I read it avidly.

**Clive Baker**

*I have heard the Malaysian story before but this is the first time anyone has put a date on it. Since my 156 is a 2002 model registered in 2006 then I suspect that it was part of the Australian consignment. The first owner purchased it from Quickcars in Gerrards Cross. Several cars were imported so if a reader has a similar car and can confirm the story please let me know. Ed*

## HAPPY CHAP

Happy New Year! I hope 2015 is a fruitful and enjoyable year for you all. I have a feeling that you'll

look back on 2014 and realise that it was a vintage year for *Auto Italia*. You've enhanced the website (the extra photos from your events are very welcome for those of us who live just a few kilometres away from the UK!); produced a wonderful calendar; provided a very enjoyable summary of the Maserati marque in an excellent publication and all the while *Auto Italia* itself continues to exceed expectations with its high standards of writing, photography and layout.

Thank you for the great pleasure you continue to bring to us Italian car nuts around the planet.

**David Pine**  
New Zealand



## PRODRIVE BRERA

Having owned a Brera for almost five years I was more than interested to read your feature in the latest edition of *Auto Italia* and wholeheartedly agree that it is a car with great style and presence.

While the article rightly points out that the V6 and diesel cars have a lot more power and grunt than the smaller engined versions, there is a down side – more weight carried at the front end affecting the handling.

My particular car was a petrol 'Prodrive' 2.2 JTS and I would argue that what may be lost in straight line performance is made up for in the handling. Each wheel on the Prodrive car is significantly lighter than on a 'standard' car so there are fewer gyroscopic forces to work against when turning into a corner. Add this to the lighter engine and I believe one has a good compromise for everyday enjoyable motoring. Of course should you be wanting more power I am sure the likes of Mangoletsi would be keen to oblige.

**Barry Daborn**

## INFORMATION NEEDED

As an avid long-time reader of *Auto Italia*, I was wondering if you may be able to help me find some additional information, or photographs of my Ferrari Mondial 3.2 cabrio?

The '86 model (chassis number is 64747) was sold by Nigel Mansell Sports cars to a Peter Inston. It was apparently handed-over at a champagne ceremony at the Ritz hotel and later driven onto the railway station platform adjacent to the Orient Express. Peter Instone, accompanied by a reporter from the *Sunday Times*, then drove the car along the route of the train, culminating in a barge ride along the Grand Canal in Venice to park outside the railway station (apparently arriving 20 minutes before the train).

I would be most appreciative if any *Auto Italia* readers are able to contact me regarding any photos, newspaper articles, etc which document this journey.

Attached are a couple of photos, one taken in the UK before shipping to Australia and the other here in Perth with BBS wheels to replace the original metric size wheels for driving. The originals are in my garage, to be used when displaying the car.

**Rob Nagel**  
Australia





# SPECIALIST VEHICLE INSURANCE

*Cherished by you*  
**Insured by us**



- ✓ Over 35 years' experience
- ✓ No broker administration fees
- ✓ Choose a vehicle repairer you trust
- ✓ UK & European accident & breakdown recovery including home service
- ✓ Free and automatic salvage retention\*
- ✓ Cover for drivers from 18 years of age and no upper age limit\*
- ✓ Agreed value\*

**Call our friendly UK team for a quotation**

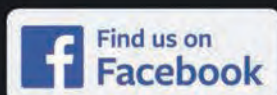
**01277 206 911**

**[www.rhclassicinsurance.co.uk](http://www.rhclassicinsurance.co.uk)**

\* Subject to our standing underwriting criteria. Please refer to the policy documentation on our website, or call, for further information.

Photography courtesy of Michael Ward, Auto Italia magazine.

RH Specialist Insurance is a trading name of Willis Limited, a Lloyd's Broker. Registered office: 51 Lime Street, London, EC3M 7DQ. Registered number 181116 England and Wales. Willis Limited is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. The RH Specialist Insurance schemes are arranged and administered on behalf of Willis Limited by ERS Syndicate Services Limited, an appointed representative of ERS Syndicate Management Limited which is authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and the Prudential Regulation Authority: Number 204851



Classic Car



Modern Car



Classic Bike



Multi-vehicle



Military







# Abarth Hot Shot

We celebrate Abarth's new extreme, track-inspired 695 Biposto two-seater at Italy's Varano circuit

Test by Chris Rees  
Photography by Michael Ward





**W**hat is it about the Italian language that prosaic names can suddenly sound so sexy? In what other language could the humdrum word 'four-door' – 'Quattroporte' – sound quite so appealing? Now we have a new name to contend with from Abarth: its factory-fresh Biposto ('two-seat') doesn't just sound sexy, it's got a spec sheet that's the equivalent of an R18 rating.

Abarth demonstrates immense courage in building a stripped-out two-seater 500-based road car. In itself, that's something a bit special. But in reality, Abarth has gone way beyond this and created something that is totally bonkers. This is so much more than a stripped-down lightweight Abarth 500 with two seats. It's a properly mental, ultra-petrolhead model with a specification that will get the red needles of your heart bouncing on their bumpstops.

It's no overstatement to say that, arguably, the Biposto is the

most focused hot hatchback ever seen. But before we get too carried away that this might become an iconic new performance car of the people... sadly, it has an absolutely enormous price tag that will keep production exceedingly low-volume.

Let's get that one out of the way first, shall we? Abarth is charging £32,990 for the Biposto. Pretty steep for a 500-derived machine. But wait: it doesn't end there. Most customers will probably tick several boxes on the options package list, because some of Abarth's options are so darned special, like the dog gearbox and Lexan side windows. And if you go for every option on this car, the price goes up to – wait for this – £53,615.

OK, so what do we have here? It's an ultra-focused, track-orientated iteration of a car that's been striking a resonant chord with UK buyers for years, the Abarth 500/595/695 series. Abarth has really gone to town on it, aiming to make this the quickest road car



it's ever offered. To achieve this, all unnecessary weight has been stripped out. Out go the rear seats – hence the Biposto name – to be replaced by a titanium rear brace by Poggipolini, which looks a bit like a kids' climbing frame, but also happily stops your luggage from flying around. Also deleted from the spec list are the air-con, audio system, xenon headlamps, foglights and electric mirrors. Various other Biposto bits are made of lightweight materials, too, like the plastic door panels.

The result is a 'dry' weight of 997kg, which is pretty amazing for a modern hatchback. It's even possible to shave off more weight if you go for the optional Lexan/polycarbonate sliding side windows (the world's first Type Approved plastic windows) – great as a talking point down at the pub but costing an eye-watering £1775. The Carbon Kit probably saves some extra weight, too (carbonfibre dash, interior panels, mirrors and window trims, £3700 to you, sir), as does the 124 Special Kit, whose double-hump aluminium bonnet is inspired by the classic 124 Abarth, with lightweight titanium fuel/water/oil caps thrown in (at £2950).

While we're on the subject of kit, the Biposto has loads of bespoke (and rather lovely) parts. How about unique OZ 18in alloys shod with 215/35 Goodyear Eagles, a new front bumper, rear diffuser, wider wheelarches, new skirts and a bigger roof spoiler? Colour: anything you like as long as it's matt Performance Grey. Inside, the cockpit gets that rear brace already mentioned, together with leather-and-Alcantara Sabelt seats with solid shells (offering plenty of support), plus aluminium pedals and flooring. Another very appealing option is the £3700 Track Kit, which gives you carbon seat-backs, four-point harnesses and an Aim MXL2 digital datalogger.

The weight-loss diet is only part one of the mix. The other main trump in the pursuit of speed is squeezing

extra power out of Abarth's 1368cc Turbo T-Jet four-cylinder lump. We've already seen 180bhp in Abarth specials such as the Tributo Ferrari, but the Biposto turns it up to 190bhp, courtesy of a lump taken straight from Abarth's 695 Assetto Corsa racer. The extra 10bhp comes courtesy of a unique turbo, 9.8:1 compression ratio, a larger front intake with a BMC oval trumpet airbox and bigger front-mounted intercooler. In addition, an Akrapovic active dual-stage exhaust with twin titanium tailpipes makes it sound like a pukka rally car when the flap opens up (which happens after you press the Sport button on the dashboard).

190bhp is a very impressive figure for a 1.4-litre unit: indeed, 139hp per litre is claimed to be a world record for this engine size. How does that translate in reality, though? No question, the Biposto is a very quick car in a straight line – by Abarth 500 standards, it's in a different league. The claimed 0-62mph time of 5.9sec is a full second quicker than the regular Abarth 695, and it feels a lot feistier than I was expecting – if not sensationally so. If I have one issue, it's that the power curve is affected by turbo lag, particularly at low revs.

So to the bit of kit that everyone's talking about: the optional dog-ring gearbox. This motorsport-derived item, developed by Bacci Romano, is also claimed to be a world first in a production car. What exactly is a dog-ring 'box'? It refers to the way that the gears engage, using a 'dog-ring' rather than baulk-ring synchromesh. Just to clear up some of the confusion that's appeared about this 'box', it doesn't have a dog-leg first gear, it's not a sequential 'box' (just a regular five-speed H-pattern), and neither does it have straight-cut gears. OK?

What it does have to be, though, is convincing if someone is prepared to tick the option box at a considerable £8500. But is it? In the cockpit, it looks incredible, with a long, slender aluminium Ergal shaft extending down to a Ferrariesque metal open gate.







*ABOVE: 190bhp from 1368cc is quite an achievement, but only a privileged few will find out what it feels like*

Grasp the lever and the movement initially feels odd: slightly rubbery and with a copper clutch that I'm unsure has actually engaged to start with. In traffic jams it would be a pain, but its fast-acting nature comes into its own on the track. Get into the swing of it and the very mechanical feel starts to become second nature. It definitely pays to move as sharply and precisely as possible through the 'box, which is helped by a lightened flywheel. Downchanges also need precise timing to avoid crunching. But if you anticipate the revs correctly, the dog 'box's party trick comes into play: you can change up gears without using the clutch at all, which makes gearchanges ultra-fast (the whole point of the dog-ring system). It's quite forgiving if you don't match the revs precisely, although I have a feeling that the cogs may wear pretty quickly if you're not sympathetic with it. Nor does it sound like a Moulinex mixer full of nails, being surprisingly refined in use.

One big advantage of specifying the dog 'box is that you get a mechanical self-locking diff thrown in. I found that it very much pays to disengage the electronic traction control to get the best out of the Bacci box. Compared to the standard car's set-up, there's sharper turn-in and less torque steer through fast corners.

Ah yes, torque steer. It's a definite issue on full throttle with the steering wheel turned to any degree,

but then that's kind of part of the fun. Too many cars these days have had any sense of what's happening through the helm dialled out of them.

The Biposto's posture is a fatter than standard Abarths (an 11mm wider track up front, 14mm at the rear), which gives it a marginally more planted feel. Abarth has also fitted Extreme Shox hydraulic dampers which can be adjusted very easily, although all the cars I tried were kept on a medium setting – odd, as I would have thought a firm setting would suit track work. One benefit is that the ride quality is pleasingly compliant on this medium setting, although on a very brief sojourn down some bumpy public roads, it did 'crash' quite a lot. As for the steering feel, it's at its best in Sport mode, but not really on a par with the best in the business. Brembo floating vented/perforated front discs with four-pot aluminium calipers perform very confidently.

Ninety-nine per cent of my road test was on the Riccardo Paletti circuit in Varano, near Parma, which has some killer-tight corners that suit the Biposto very well. Unfortunately the track was damp and very greasy, highlighting a certain tendency for the car to snap oversteer. But with the surface drying out, grip came back strongly and the feeling is of an assured, chuckable little toy with sharp manners. I can happily declare that the Biposto is the first 500 derivative





## TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

### ABARTH 695 BIPOSTO

ENGINE:	1368cc 4-cylinder petrol turbo
BORE X STROKE:	72mm x 84mm
COMPRESSION RATIO:	9.8:1
FUEL SYSTEM:	Fuel injection
POWER:	190bhp @ 5500rpm
TORQUE:	184lb ft @ 3000rpm
TRANSMISSION:	Five-speed manual, front-wheel drive
BRAKES:	305mm perforated vented discs (front); 240mm perforated discs (rear)
SUSPENSION:	MacPherson with anti-roll bar (front); torsion beam with anti-roll bar (rear)
TYRES:	215/35 18
DIMENSIONS:	3657mm (L), 1627mm (W), 1488mm (H)
FUEL CONSUMPTION:	45.5mpg (combined)
KERB WEIGHT:	997kg (dry)
TOP SPEED:	143mph (claimed)
0-62MPH:	5.9sec (claimed)
PRICE:	£32,990

whose handling feels like a hot hatchback should.

Certainly, it makes a great track day toy. But will Abarth honour the factory warranty if you drive it on track? Many brands don't. Yes, Abarth told me, as long as the strict schedule of servicing is adhered to.

So who exactly is going to buy the Biposto? At £33k, your average petrolhead is definitely priced out of it, and I can't help feeling that an Alfa Romeo 4C for around the same price would be more fun on a track. I suspect most Bipostos will end up in the stables of well-heeled serial car collectors (Abarth calls them 'black-tie racers'), for whom the attractions of so focused a toy will be irresistible. They're also the type who will probably go for the dog 'box, even at its huge price, simply because it's something no-one else will have.

Biposto buyers will be rewarded with one of the craziest-specced cars ever to have made it into production. Should the rest of us celebrate such a barking mad projectile? Well, yes – and Abarth should be applauded for having the courage to produce something quite so extreme. Particularly as it's about to usher in a new era in Abarth-world. While I was in Italy, more than a few hints were dropped that some of the Biposto's philosophy is going to trickle down into new Abarths – in particular, the roadster model that will appear this year with Abarth badges. You heard it here first...







# ULTIMO 500

## The original Abarth 695

A misconception regarding the Nuova 500 of 1957 was that it was the replacement for the much-loved Topolino 500 of 1936-1955. This is not the case as the four-cylinder 600 took on that role and yet, today, the smaller car is held in considerably higher esteem. 'Twas not always thus, though as in period the 600 had found immediate success, the Nuova 500 was received with indifference.

Perhaps Dante Giacosa had over-estimated the requirement for a modern four-wheeled car that incorporated fundamentals and no more. Even in Italy,

a country hungry for industrial development after war devastation, the increasing affluence of even its lowest paid workers dictated that they wanted something more than a car that could barely drag itself around. At initial launch, the 500's two vertical cylinders of 479cc mustered just 13bhp at 4000rpm. Midnight oil was burned at Lingotto and by November 1957 a relaunch at the Turin Show resulted in the standard car boasting 15bhp and that original 13bhp offering becoming the economy version.

There was still a clamour from the younger generation for something with more zip and so in 1958 Fiat themselves introduced the 21.5bhp Sport complete with red stripe down the body. Examples came 1-2-3 in that year's Hockenheim 12 Hours race and a legend was born. Incidentally, original survivors of this model are now like hen's teeth and are possibly







the most valuable version of any 500.

Inevitably Carlo Abarth saw the possibilities of the new car and had an elaborazione version debuted in October '57 at Monza, delivering a claimed 22bhp. By February 1958 this had become 26bhp and a team of drivers drove one of these latter versions at the same venue to take several records, such as a week at 108km/h covering 18,000km. But when Fiat announced their own Sport in the summer, although there is no record of the reaction at the Corso Marche factory, no further 500 based Abarth saloons appeared until 1963.

By this time, Fiat had introduced the 'D' version of their 500 which effectively standardised the 499cc capacity engine and Carlo could see a way of creating a version that would fit into the up-to-600cc class of Touring Car racing. He had special liners cast with an increased bore of 73.5mm and fitted higher compression pistons along with hotter camshafts and a larger Solex carburettor to produce 28bhp from 594cc. A cast sump, wheels, Abarth valve covers and exhaust were added while Jaeger instruments enhanced the interior. An SS version – the Esse Esse – with higher compression, gave 32bhp.

In the European Touring Car Championship there was a very popular class for up-to-750cc saloons (for

Saabs and BMW 700s), so Carlo created an even bigger capacity 500 in 1964, which resulted in the ultimate 695 version as you see here.

The engine was now square with a bore and stroke of 76mm, thus making the capacity 689cc in total. This produced 38bhp, just shy of three times the power of the original feeble Fiat version. The first 695s were based on the 'suicide door' 500D model because Fiat didn't introduce front-hinged doors on the 500 until March 1965 with the 500F. Wheels were the standard 10in diameter rollers but by 1970 the available width choice had grown to 7in. Limited-slip differentials, close-ratio gearboxes and heavy duty suspension all became part of the options list while disc brakes were introduced at the front.

As with all Abarths in the UK, 695s were not cheap, being listed in *Autocar* in 1967 at £696 (a coincidence?). Standard 500s were £417, a Mini Cooper £631.

There was one final throw of the dice with 500-based cars and that was the introduction of a Radiale head on the 695, increasing power even further. By the end of 1970, the range had outsold 600/750/850/1000 saloons and became the largest-selling Abarth production models of all. And it all started with 13bhp. **Peter Collins** 🇮🇹

*ABOVE: Equally rare, this original Middle Barton Garage-prepared 695 carries the same value as the latest Abarth Biposto*







ABARTH WITH



PERFORMANCE IS A STATE OF MIND.

# CONCENTRATED **ABARTH.** JUST ADD **DRIVER.**



**THE ABARTH 695 BIPOSTO - THE FIRST  
ROAD-GOING CAR WITH DOG-RING GEARBOX.  
LEGAL FOR THE ROAD. LIVES FOR THE TRACK.**

**2-SEATS**

**DRY WEIGHT: 997 KG**

**BEST POWER/WEIGHT IN THE CATEGORY: 5.2**

**FIND OUT MORE AT [ABARTHCARS.CO.UK](http://ABARTHCARS.CO.UK)**



RANGE OF OFFICIAL FUEL CONSUMPTION FIGURES FOR THE ABARTH 695 BIPOSTO: URBAN 34.5 MPG (8.2 L/100KM); EXTRA URBAN 55.4MPG (5.1 L/100KM); COMBINED 45.6 MPG (6.2 L/100KM) CO<sub>2</sub> EMISSIONS 145 G/KM. FUEL CONSUMPTION AND CO<sub>2</sub> FIGURES BASED ON STANDARD EU TESTS FOR COMPARATIVE PURPOSES AND MAY NOT REFLECT REAL DRIVING RESULTS. THE ABARTH 695 BIPOSTO STARTS AT £32955. MODEL SHOWN IS THE ABARTH 695 BIPOSTO AT £53,620 WITH OPTIONAL DOG RING KIT AT £8500, 124 SPECIALE KIT AT £2990, CARBON KIT AT £3700, TRACK KIT AT £3700 AND RACING WINDOWS AT £1775.



# Top of the Line

The latest versions of Alfa Romeo's current sporting saloon car range are tested on road and track

Test by Sean Carson  
Photography by Michael Ward



**T**he legend of Alfa's Quadrifoglio Verde emblem risked being tarnished when the marque announced it would introduce a new QV Line trim "capturing the essence of the Quadrifoglio Verde" alongside the full-fat MiTo and Giulietta Quadrifoglio Verde hot hatchbacks back in early 2014.

What would Alfa racing great Ugo Sivocci, who pioneered the luck-bringing cloverleaf moniker, make of the Milanese marque potentially pillaging its history in the quest to shift a few more cars?

It's inevitable, though, that with a motorsport heritage steeped in splendour like Alfa's it has and will continue to use it to promote the rest of the range. But anyone doubting what Alfa Romeo has done here should kerb the cynicism and objectively analyse this QV Line brace for what it is – the pick of the respective ranges.

Remove the Quadrifoglio Verde connotations from the equation for a minute and compute the details: bar for the range-topping hot hatchbacks, the QV Line MiTo and Giulietta models represent the most exclusive and best equipped models that tread the line deftly between everyday usability and welcome sporting potential.

## SMALL AND MIGHTY

We'll start with the smaller MiTo – here it's endowed with Alfa's punchy 1.4-litre turbocharged TB MultiAir engine that now kicks out 140bhp, mated exclusively to the Italian manufacturer's six-speed TCT dual-clutch transmission.

In no uncertain terms, this is the pick of the MiTo bunch. It's no secret the car is ageing – the MiTo is in the figurative queue to pick up its bus pass, having been released back in 2008 – but the engine adds an





effective veneer to the stylish hatch. It pulls from zip with gusto, growling its turbocharged gargle in the mid range before whipping round the rev counter, only slightly losing vim as engine speed rises due to its force-fed nature.

It's best to click the steering wheel-mounted paddle to initiate a crisp shift from the TCT 'box, then, rather than rev it out, dropping the motor back into the heart of the power. Maximum torque of 170lb ft is available from 2250rpm, so on the road and on the track the MiTo QV Line pulls hard out of corners, delivering acceleration that belies its official 8.1-second 0-62mph sprint time.

To extract the best from the powertrain you'll want to make sure the DNA system is set to Dynamic (Natural feels subdued, All weather positively flat), which sharpens up the throttle, livening the turbo unit in turn with an over-boost

function, and adds more weight to the steering. It's here the gearbox comes alive, too. The dual-clutch transmission is sweet to use. Upshifts are completed with pleasing speed and potency, downshifts are a little more sluggish in terms of response to the paddle pull, but zip through once on their way.

The transmission is smooth and refined in everyday driving, even in Dynamic mode – and it's in this setting when exploring the MiTo's performance that the car reveals its more playful side. The warm hatch is safe and secure when bumbling along on everyday roads – exactly as you'd want it – but push a little harder and the chassis comes alive. This is not a car that will be driven on a track very often, if at all, but it's nice to know it can be. Brake late or lift the throttle mid-corner and the MiTo wants to rotate around its central axis – not in an alarming way, just a touch to tighten the line and tuck the nose in a few more degrees, the





electronic Q2 differential tenaciously fighting for grip. Sure, it'll default to understeer and the steering isn't bristling with feel, but this isn't a full-blown Quadrifoglio Verde, so the decent grip levels, agility and solid body control are solid and welcome traits. The only down side is slightly firmer suspension coupled to large 17-inch wheels causes a bit of road din and some crashy responses to the worst bumps a wintery British B-road can throw at you.

### SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

There's more to the MiTo QV Line than the way it drives, however. It's differentiated from lesser MiTos by those 17-inch burnished alloys, with gloss burnishing for the mirrors, grille, headlights and door handles. The tweaked rear bumper and QV Line badging complete the exterior makeover.

Inside, there are a few more flourishes as well: a dark headlining, black leather steering wheel with

contrast stitching and a matt black insert, and special 'Quadrifoglio Verde' upholstery. This is on top of the 5.0-inch colour touchscreen infotainment system, Bluetooth, cruise and climate control, parking sensors, electric windows – and just about every other possible gadget you'd want on a premium Italian supermini – that are fitted to the entry-level Sprint and mid-grade Distinctive MiTo models.

The QV Line's seats are firm but supportive, and the seat heaters seemingly powered by depleted uranium – nice and toasty in the depths of winter. It's a pleasant place to be, but is it worth the £18,370 asking price? Although it's stocked with kit, the cabin is showing its age in terms of design and material quality in areas leaves something to be desired. And yet...

There's a palpable essence in the MiTo reinforcing that, despite being small, this is special; that there's history here of making effervescent, sporty cars; that it's imbued with the characteristics you seek in

*ABOVE: A clear case of getting it right. Matching the superb 1.4 TB engine with the TCT gearbox works very well in the MiTo*







*ABOVE: Revised trim, attractive new body colours and enhanced specifications successfully bring the MiTo up to date*

an Alfa. Minus – hopefully – any traditional reliability woes. It's the engine and transmission that set this character off, like a shaving of the finest gourmet truffle on your favourite pasta dish.

### PUNCH AND GIULIETTA

It's a shame the same can't quite be said of the Giulietta QV Line here. In isolation the spec on our purple-blue hued test car is attractive: a 175bhp 2.0-litre turbodiesel engine offering strong performance with everyday usability – including a quoted 67.3mpg combined – and a stylish, sporty exterior that'll still get you fired up when you catch sight of the Giulietta's chiselled cheek bones in the supermarket car park. However, next to the 1.4 turbo petrol MiTo it feels heavy and lethargic. The engine delivers a solid slug of torque, kicking out 258lb ft (the same as the 4C) from just 1750rpm, but you know about it. Rev it harder and the JTDM-2 unit's aural signature isn't attenuated as

well as it could be. Despite the noise though, it is a smooth unit and feels eager to rev.

You do sense the weight of that diesel engine in every manoeuvre you make – although the extra mass over the nose seems to improve the ride quality and damp harsh suspension movement, it also makes the car feel less responsive than the MiTo. There's still plenty of grip to exploit, but the Giulietta is less playful than the smallest Alfa. The trade-off is that it's a much more mature feeling car, with strong levels of refinement if you impose an arbitrary rev ceiling and keep the engine lower down and in the thick of the torque. By doing so you exploit the TCT transmission's potential to the full, utilising those quick shifts with a flip of the paddle. This way you'll make surprising progress, but you can't help feeling the crisp 150bhp 1.4 petrol turbo from the Giulietta Sprint would be better suited here. That is until you stop driving like a Neapolitan (a special mention must go to the











**ABOVE:** Photographers' nightmare? Tedious to clean Giulietta alloys  
**LEFT:** 'V' shaped steering wheel is a subtle QV Line branding reference

powerful, four-piston Brembo brakes that deliver plenty of stopping power and nice feel when doing so) and settle down. Then the low-down torque of the diesel and flexibility offered by the six-speed TCT automatic begin to click.

In everyday traffic it's easy to live with thanks to the effortless turnkey performance. Like the MiTo, it's best left in Dynamic mode for the aforementioned reasons, and like the MiTo you have to remember that this isn't a full-blown Quadrifoglio Verde. Rather a chic trim level that aims to capture some of Alfa's halo car's style, inside and out.

### EVERYDAY EXCITEMENT

By that brief, both cars succeed, although we can't help yearning for a little more involvement from the

Giulietta. However, what the larger hatchback loses in dynamics it makes up for in quality. The Giulietta's interior is much nicer, with higher-grade plastics, better ergonomics and a generally fresher air to the design – even if it is entering its sixth year of production.

The QV Line cars benefit from a larger 6.5-inch colour touchscreen infotainment system and everything inside the cabin feels much posher and more robust. The leather and Alcantara sports seats are sumptuous and it's easy to manipulate them into a comfortable driving position. Electric lumbar support is a bonus.

It's these minor details that show why the QV Line has a place – because they've been thought of and offer the customer what they want everyday, with the extra aesthetic draw. And the price for this forethought and those extra touches? In our test







car's spec, fitted with the 175bhp diesel and six-speed TCT gearbox, £27,380. Not inconsiderable, especially when a 240bhp Giulietta Quadrifoglio Verde costs just £740 more, but not everybody wants petrol performance. Some people want style and efficiency. With its 18-inch 'Spoke' design alloys, typically attractive Giulietta styling and a nod to the company's heritage with the classy QV Line cloverleaf badging, the diesel QV Line caters for them.

### I DON'T LIKE MONDAYS

On a rainy Monday morning commute you'll be glad of this car's fuel economy, and as a company car driver frugal CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of 119g/km will be a boon. Yet you don't have to join the legions of motorists trudging the carriageways of Britain in their ubiquitous German hatchbacks and generic Japanese five doors. On a Sunday afternoon blast you'll relish the chassis' blend of capability and maturity, while the easy-on-the-eye looks mean you'll be enthused to

drive and own it. It's practical and safe, too, with a full five-star Euro NCAP crash test rating. These things matter in an everyday car, even if it is one with a reputation like Alfa's to uphold. The MiTo is similar, small enough to work city centres and a giggle when outside them. It's punchy and characterful enough to entertain in the right surroundings.

Both cars have their shortcomings, but – with the MiTo especially – Alfa has managed to capture something meaning the highlights outweigh any niggling negatives that may be buzzing around.

The MiTo and Giulietta have come in for criticism over the years, with some levelling accusations at the cars that they aren't proper Alfa Romeos, merely designed to make money. Ugo Sivocci might have been a pure blood when it came to performance, but with the spirit of Alfa encapsulated in the QV Line pairing before you – and Alfa's performance lineage back on track with the 4C and the QVs proper – I think he'd be content with a QV Line for the daily grind. 🇮🇹

*ABOVE: When is a Cloverleaf not a Cloverleaf? When it's a QV-line! 'Q' in this application means Quadrifoglio. Confused?*





Alfa Romeo with



# THE FUTURE, BUILT ON THE PAST.



Everything has changed. And nothing. Despite world leading innovations rendering the 2015 Alfa Romeo Giulietta Sprint almost unrecognizable to the engineers and designers of the 1954 original, one thing remains. The spirit that lives in every Alfa Romeo. Unchanging. Unmistakable. Unmatched. Now available with 0% APR Representative and from just £239 per month\*.

**0%  
APR**  
REPRESENTATIVE

THE NEW GIULIETTA *Sprint*

SEARCH 'ALFA ROMEO PROMOTIONS'



Model shown is the Giulietta 1.4 MultiAir 150 bhp Sprint at £21,000 OTR including Alfa Red paint at £510. Range of official fuel consumption figures for the Alfa Giulietta range: Urban 28.8 - 56.5 mpg (9.8 - 5.0 l/100km); Extra Urban 53.3 - 83.1 mpg (5.3 - 3.4 l/100km); Combined 40.4 - 70.6 mpg (7.0 - 4.0 l/100km). CO<sub>2</sub> emissions 162 - 104 g/km. Fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> figures are obtained for comparative purposes in accordance with EC directives/regulations and may not be representative of real-life driving conditions. Factors such as driving style, weather and road conditions may also have a significant effect on fuel consumption.

\*£2,969 customer deposit, £6,798 optional final payment, 48 month contract. Promotion available on new Giulietta 1.4 MultiAir Sprint models registered by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015. Only available in conjunction with Alfa Romeo Preferenza PCP. With Alfa Romeo Preferenza you have the option to return the vehicle and not pay the final payment, subject to the vehicle not having exceeded an agreed annual mileage (a charge of 6p per mile for exceeding 6,000 miles per annum in this example) and being in good condition. Finance subject to status. Guarantees may be required. Terms and Conditions apply. At participating Dealers only. Alfa Romeo Financial Services, PO BOX 4465, Slough, SL1 0RW. \*On the road price includes 12 months' road fund licence, first vehicle registration fee, delivery, number plates and VAT. Figures and prices are correct at time of publishing. Retail sales only. Terms & Conditions apply & are subject to exclusions.



# Swiss Role

A rare Ferrari 212 Inter comes on to the market with bodywork by the Swiss carrozzeria Ghia-Aigle

Story by Peter Collins  
Photography by Simon Clay







The first ten years of Ferrari road car construction, until Pininfarina became Enzo's favoured carrozzeria, bore witness to many new Maranello chassis appearing clothed in bodywork designed by scores of different couturiers. Some were of minuscule numbers, others, such as Vignale and Touring, gained a strong foothold for Enzo's favours in the late 1940s and early '50s.

Perhaps the country outside of Italy most associated with alternative, original, carrozzeria for Ferraris and, indeed, many other marques was Switzerland. The car featured here is a fine example built by the Swiss carrozzeria Ghia-Aigle, and is now available for sale at the exclusive emporium of Talacrest. It is a 212 model bearing chassis number 0137E and is a fascinating example of this alternative country of origin.

Ferrari's first car was designated a 125, the number referring to the cubic capacity of each cylinder of its V12 engine, that had been designed by Gioachino Colombo, one of Enzo Ferrari's co-conspirators at Alfa Romeo in the 1930s before the latter fell or was pushed, depending on your view. Twelve times 125 comes to as near as dammit 1500 – 1496.77 to be pedantic – so that first unit was of 1.5 litres. Developed power was not going to shift paradigms with 72bhp at 5600rpm but for immediate post-war Italy, and this was winter 1946/7, it was a seriously important achievement given shortages of almost every basic resource.

The story of those early cars has been told many times, but if you investigate more closely, given the previously mentioned shortages, it is remarkable that by May 11th in the Spring of 1947, only 6-7 months after conception, hot shoe Franco Cortese was at the wheel of a Ferrari car 100km west of Modena, down the via Emilia at Piacenza and led his race there before retirement with a seized fuel-pump. Not only that, but by this time and still in 125 form, the V12 was putting out 118bhp at 6800rpm. These early cars enjoyed a bore and stroke of 55mm x 52.5mm.

If truth be told, Enzo had little time or interest in the

road car genre and even less time for the people who started clamouring to buy them but needs must and, if the rise and rise of Ferrari Automobili was to continue, then the boss needed a source of cashflow to keep the racing development going.

That development meant that the V12 was increased in capacity through the 159 version to the 166 and 2 litres. Carrozzeria Touring came up with the first, sublimely pretty and practical Barchetta body style and the Ferrari road sports car was born.

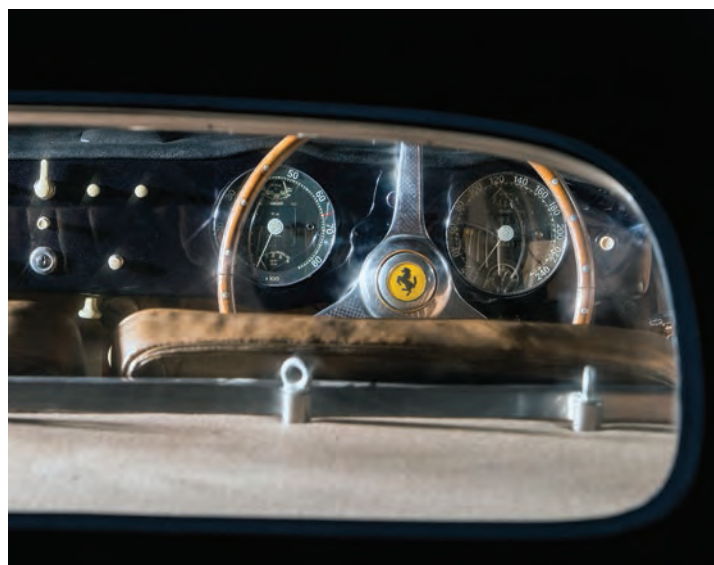
The tradition of chassis numbering that perpetuated for decades at Maranello of utilising odd numbers for road or stradale cars and even numbers for competition cars started after early racers were endowed with three digit numbers, and Grand Prix cars with two digit numbers, but it wasn't until the 166 MM that road cars started to be given four digit identities.

Some cars also received a letter suffix but, in the true traditions of tiny volume constructors in Italy, there appears to be no fixed plan to all this. For instance, 'E' refers to Export and 'EL' to Export Lungo, but 'EU' appears on some 212s referring to Inter. These various suffixes generally refer to power output or chassis length and thus whether the cars were destined to be of competition or sporting type, or simply touring cars.

In 1950, the next stage of development was revealed as the 195, with capacity increased to 2341cc. Sport and Inter versions were produced with 180bhp and 130bhp respectively. Later in the year a further increase in bore to 68mm, resulted in a capacity of 2562cc and the 212 was born. Ferrari's own brochure printed that October listed Inter and Export versions as available. The former, with a 2600mm chassis, on a 7.5:1 compression ratio and a 36 DCF Weber carburettor, delivered 130bhp at 6000rpm, while the latter, with shorter 2250mm chassis and compression raised to 8:1, boasted 150bhp at 6500rpm.

By late 1952/early 1953, evidence suggests that Tipo 212 Inter were also being referred to as





Europas, which may explain why our car here is a 212 Inter but with chassis number 0137 EL. It was also right-hand drive in the well-established tradition of all high-quality Italian touring cars but as described earlier, although its chassis and running-gear originated in Maranello, its body most certainly did not. This car was a product of Ghia-Aigle.

At first glance Ghia is a familiar enough title, but the additional second name of Aigle is not that well known. By way of explanation, as the story goes, a physician by the name of Pierre-Paul Filippi, resident in Turin, decided to move to the town of Aigle in Switzerland to start a carrozzeria and asked well-established Ghia if he could obtain the rights to use the name. This was granted and the new company was set up in April 1948.

Along with the name, Filippi also secured the services of Ghia's designer Mario Felice Boano for a while and from 1951, Giovanni Michelotti. The latter continued to be a consultant/designer for the company until 1957.

Totally independent of Ghia, the Swiss company relocated to Lugano in late 1954, restarted in January 1955 and then, with design help coming also from Frua, returned to Aigle in 1958. Production beyond that was confined to building ambulances and bespoke commercial vehicles. The company was finally wound up in 1988.

Chassis 0137 EL was not the only Ferrari dealt with by the company in period as they also bodied chassis 0187 EL (possibly) and 0195 EL (certainly). While the details of 0187 EL remain uncertain, and the car might



#### FERRARI 212 INTER PRODUCTION

- 1 Abbott Cabriolet
- 1 Ghia-Aigle Coupe
- 12 Ghia Coupe
- 4 Ghia Coupe 2+2
- 2 Pinin Farina Cabriolet
- 15 Pinin Farina Coupe
- 1 Stabilimenti Farina Berlinetta
- 1 Touring Barchetta
- 5 Touring Berlinetta
- 5 Vignale Berlinetta
- 4 Vignale Cabriolet
- 26 Vignale Coupe
- 1 Vignale Spyder
- 78 Total





no longer exist, it is known that 0195 EL was, conveniently, a 195 model. Chassis 0137 EL, by virtue of its 2563cc engine, is a 212 model and as such is a unique Ghia-Aigle bodied car.

The featured 0137 EL was duly delivered as a bare chassis to Aigle in 1951 and sold as a complete car to Henri Gustav Thiebaud of Bellmund in Switzerland. A picture of the car is reproduced in Fitzgerald and Merritt's *Ferrari The Sports and Gran Turismo Cars* where it is described as 'an early Michelotti design, built by Ghia Aigle of Switzerland, with a split windscreen'.

What may be the first Ferrari by Vignale carries similar bodywork suggesting that it was also the work of Michelotti who was considered an innovator at this time, in particular with his trademark recessed, elliptical radiator apertures and, it would seem that 0137 EL was the first Ferrari to display his other feature, the concave egg-crate texture radiator grille.


On the car's bonnet was a small air-intake and a flowing wing-line leading into a gently sloping boot after a slim 'C' pillar. In all it was a pretty, homogenous shape, easily comparable to some of the peculiar, rather gawky offerings by other, home-grown carrozzeria that were mounted on some of Enzo's chassis of the period and it would appear that, by the late 1950s/early '60s, the car had found its way to the UK. When next recorded, the small air-intake on the bonnet had been enlarged and the two-piece split windscreen had been replaced by a single curvature example.

Under the stewardship of one F J Buckland and registered, appropriately perhaps as EAM 212L, it is recorded as having taken part in the Ferrari Owners Club class at a Prescott hillclimb in 1974 and was later recorded as being part of the stock of that doyen of London historic car dealers of the 1960s

and '70s, Dan Margulies.

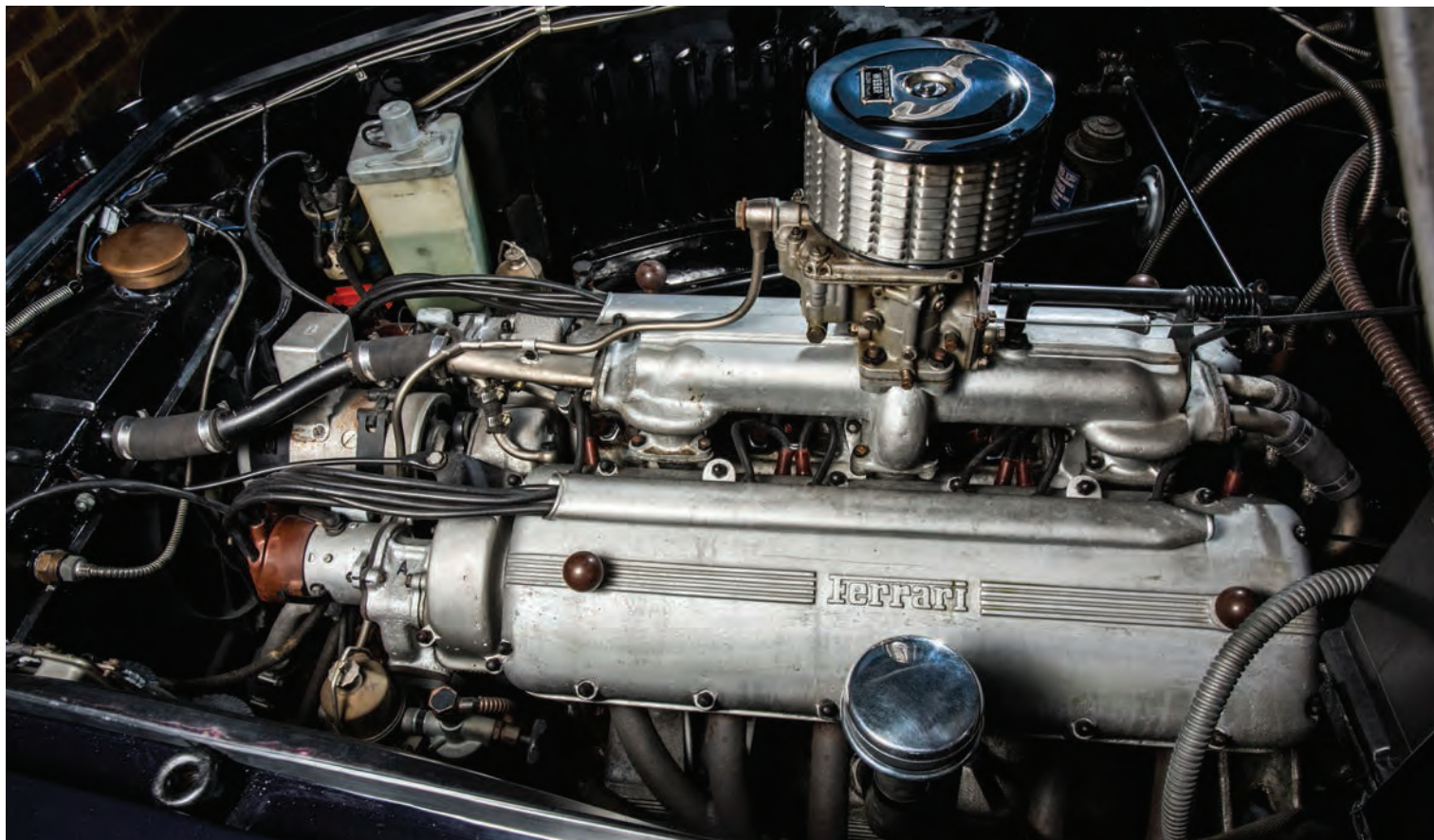
By May 1985 0137 was reported as being in the USA and in the hands of Robert Marceca late in that decade before a Mark McClintick exhibited it at a Concours in Columbus, Ohio. By 1995, Symbolic had sold it to Japan, where it seemed to have gone via Yamano to prolific collector Matsuda.

Into the 21st century, 0137 EL had migrated to New Zealand and Warren de France, in whose hands it covered the Mille Miglia in 2007, took part in the Philip Island Historics in 2009 and ran in the Melbourne Grand Prix Historic support race in 2010.

A member of an exclusive breed and designed by one of the world's greats, it is wholly apposite that it should become available from Talacrest, to be added to the list of important Maranello products that have passed through their hands. 



BELOW: By Ferrari's identification system, the 2562cc V12 qualified this Inter as a 212 version







TALACREST



1965 FERRARI 365 P2/3



1951 FERRARI 212 INTER AIGLE



1963 FERRARI 250 GT LUSSO



1963 FERRARI 250 LUSSO



1959 FERRARI 250 GT SERIES I CABRIOLET



1967 FERRARI 275 GTB 4 CAM ALLOY NART



1966 FERRARI 275 GTB 2 CAM ALLOY



1964 FERRARI 330 P



1950 FERRARI 195 INTER



1969 FERRARI 365 GTC

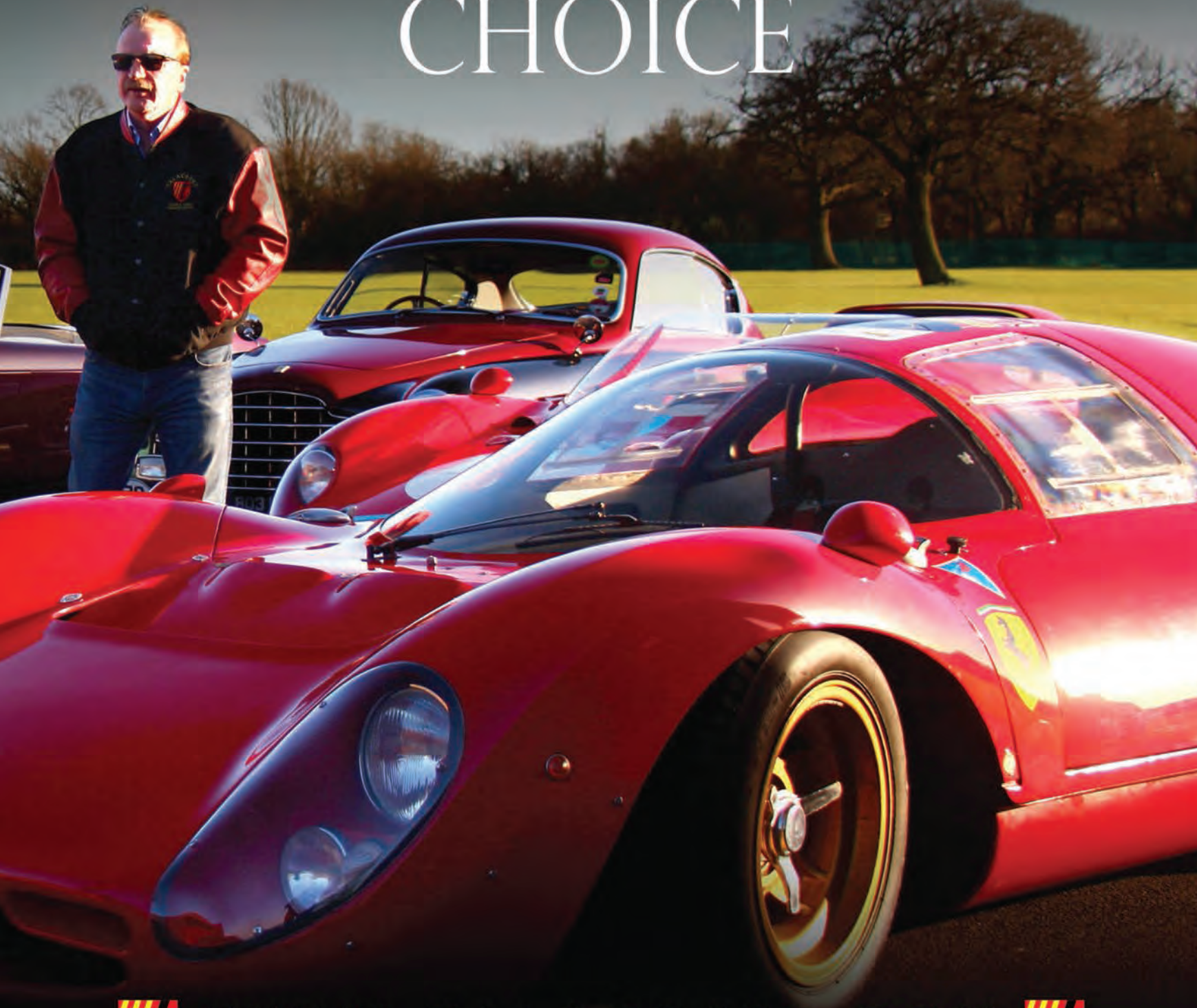


1964 FERRARI 250 GT LUSSO

TALACREST ARE THE BIGGEST AND MOST EXPERIENCED BUYERS OF CLASSIC FERRARI IN THE WORLD AND TO DATE WE HAVE SOLD OVER \$1 BILLION WORTH OF THOROUGHbred CLASSICS INCLUDING EIGHT FERRARI 250 GTO'S MANY PROTOTYPES AND NUMEROUS OTHER DESIRABLE ROAD AND RACE CARS. IF YOU ARE SERIOUSLY LOOKING TO BUY OR SELL A CLASSIC FERRARI, THEN MAKE TALACREST YOUR NUMBER ONE CHOICE.



# TALACREST. THE COLLECTORS CHOICE



[WWW.TALACREST.COM](http://WWW.TALACREST.COM)

T + 44 (0)1344 308178 M +44 (0) 7860 589855 E [john@talacrest.com](mailto:john@talacrest.com)



NUMBER ONE IN THE CLASSIC FERRARI MARKET



# My Girlfriend's Car

The story of an Alfa Romeo 6C 2500 Sport that was once the property of Benito Mussolini

Story by Ed McDonough

Photography by Tom Wood for RM Auctions







Not many people will recognise the name Clara Petacci on first glance, unless you are keen on Alfa Romeo history and the exploits of one Benito Mussolini.

And the names of Angelica Balabanoff, Ida Dalser, Margherita Sarfatti, Leda Rafanelli and Rachele Guidi, the latter who became Signora Mussolini, are even more obscure. It could be argued that several of these were far more influential than Clara Petacci, who is mainly remembered for her body being displayed next to Mussolini's in Piazzale Loreto in Milan on April 28, 1945.

Sarfatti was a wealthy, married Milanese woman who was mainly responsible for moving Mussolini from socialism to fascism in the 1930s. Dalser gave birth to the one illegitimate child he acknowledged as his, and Rafanelli was probably his earliest political 'mentor'. All of these women were treated badly... Mussolini was a boastful sexual sadist, but nevertheless maintained some of his odd relationships with these and other women for many years. All of the women in his life, with the exception of Clara Petacci, were unattractive,

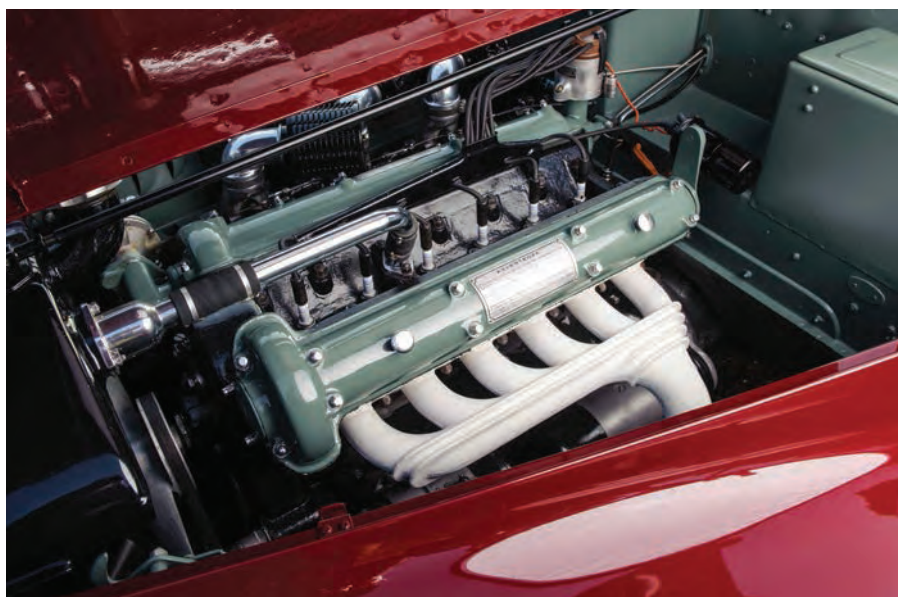
and were often described as 'ugly' in historical memos by his associates. Petacci, later known by her pet name 'Claretta', was different.

She was 19 when Mussolini started a long-term affair with her in 1932, and was married to Riccardo Federici during this period. Though Mussolini often treated Clara very badly, she stayed with him until the end in 1945. Though some documentation claims that the only night Mussolini and Clara were together was the night before they died, this is untrue. She had official quarters as his mistress in the Palazzo Venezia, and her own chauffeur, though the public had known little about the relationship until it had gone on for ten long years. Clara's husband was sent off to Japan in 1942 to keep him out of the way, and Mussolini's wife Rachele did not discover the truth about Clara until 1944, at which time she made life very uncomfortable for the Italian dictator.

So it is perhaps not surprising, that Mussolini would lavish gifts upon his 'beautiful Claretta'. She was 28 years his junior and he boasted about his sexual prowess with her. It was indeed his behaviour with





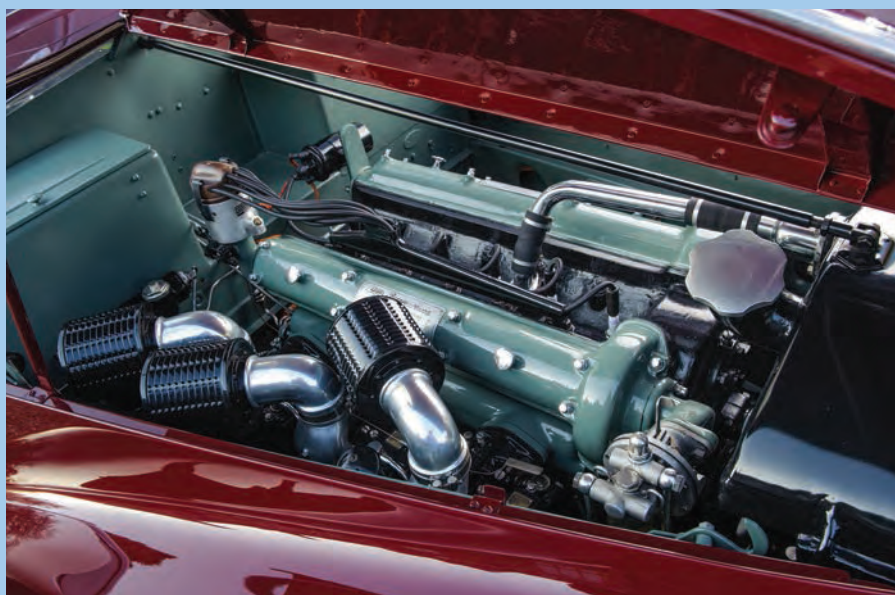


Clara, from about 1942/43 which began to damage his relationship with his public supporters. His elaborate gifts and life style caused resentment, and the police particularly saw this as alienating people from fascism, and used this to increase their own power. So it is probably not fondly remembered at Alfa Romeo, that Mussolini had considerable influence there. He was known to be on 'friendly' terms with Enzo Ferrari which kept motor racing going when there was supposedly no fuel available for such luxuries. Mussolini was very fond of beautiful cars, and overlooked Alfa Romeo's slow move away from building cars to constructing military vehicles.

In 1939, as the general motor industry was rapidly slowing down in Europe, Alfa Romeo was still producing road cars, particularly luxury cars. The company had first developed a 2500cc engine as early as 1925 and that engine would remain in production up until 1953. The 6C 2500 Turismo appeared in 1939 and, as a five-seater saloon, continued through 1940, with the addition of a seven-seater saloon that year as well. In 1942 the chassis was modified, and was strengthened with an X-shape cross-member. Brake drums were improved and front suspension was modified. The 6C 2500 Sport had been presented at the 1939 show in Berlin. Though development continued on this range of cars, the war meant that very few cars were actually produced. Of the sport model, there were 40 in 1939, and 68 in 1940. Some 6C 2500 models and specials for racing were being produced right into 1943.

The 33rd 6C 2500 Sport came off the production line in 1939 and was sent to Benito Mussolini. At the time, the standard sport had a 95bhp engine and a bit later these would be modified so the engine produced 110bhp. However, some of the early cars had these modifications as well, including the featured car chassis 915033. It had a lightweight berlinetta body in aluminium made by Carrozzeria Touring of Milan with a body number of 2305. Sixteen cars in this format were produced in that early period. These cars had a 'kit number' and this





**ABOVE:** The 6C 2500 underwent a meticulous two-year restoration by Francesco Bonfanti at a cost of €500,000

car's number was listed as SS15 and indeed a plate with that number is located on the firewall. The car retains its original engine as well, number 923865.

Though historical records support the story that the car was 'given' to Clara Petacci, it would appear to have been based at the Palazzo Venezia though she had free use of it. Her chauffeur, most of the time during the war years, was Franz Spogler, who fortunately was able to confirm the history of the car for its owner in 1975.

In the final days of the war in Europe, Mussolini saw the end coming and opted for a rather non-heroic exit from Italy. There were several possible plans, but he seemed to hope he could make his way into Switzerland. Petacci had been staying either with or near Mussolini at Lake Garda. At some point towards the end of April 1945, Spogler had been driving Clara Petacci when 915033 broke down. A group of German SS soldiers lent Spogler a tool kit so that he could repair the car, both Mussolini and Petacci were being protected by German troops while at Lake Garda.

On April 18, Mussolini left Garda for Milan. There had been thoughts about him escaping to Japan by submarine, or to fly to Spain or Argentina. As allied troops were entering Bologna and the Russians were in Berlin, Mussolini decided he would go to the house of the Archbishop of Milan for a talk with partisan leaders who might negotiate a trial for him. A defeated and energy-less man at this point, he discovered the Germans had made plans for surrender without telling him. He then headed for Lake Como hoping his band of fascists would make a last battle, but they had mostly disappeared. Thus, he again headed for Switzerland, with his aids Pavolini, Buffarini, Farinacci and Starace. They were joined in the convoy by Clara Petacci in 915033 being driven by her brother Marcello, and the car had Spanish diplomatic plates and embassy flags. The motorcade was stopped at a partisan roadblock near Dongo. There were many German troops in the group, and Mussolini had donned a Luftwaffe greatcoat and helmet. The partisans agreed to let







*With such an important and emotive history, this 6C 2500 would be a highly desirable addition to an Alfa Romeo collection.*



the convoy through if they could examine it for Italian fascists. Thus Mussolini and Petacci and the others were discovered and taken back to Mezzagora a few miles away.

Although there are the tales of their 'one night together', they were probably all shot immediately by communist irregulars as that was April 27, and on the next day, the bodies were on display in Milan. Clara stood with Mussolini and made no attempt to escape from the convoy, and thus she was hung upside down with him in Milan.

Unusually for a car with this rather special war-time history, 915033 has been seriously documented over a long period of time. The car was taken in hand by the existing post-war Italian authorities and went into a depot for storage until being discovered in 1946 by Major Charles Pettit, an American Army Air Corps officer who was still serving in Italy at the Camp Derby near Livorno. He used it as his personal car and in 1949 shipped it back to his home in New York. He used it regularly for a number of years until a con rod broke and it sat unused until 1967 when Pettit's uncle Albert Harris bought it and started to dismantle it for restoration. That didn't happen and in 1970, a New York antique dealer, Ron Keno, saw an advertisement for the car and bought it for \$300. It was Albert Harris who said to Keno that the car had been 'owned by Mussolini's mistress'.

During his first few years of ownership, Keno contacted Mussolini biographer Richard Collier who was able to put Keno in touch with former chauffeur Franz Spogler. Now, Mussolini's name has been associated with a number of Alfa Romeos, as he used many including several Coloniale models for military use, and was often seen in public in a 6C 2300. Spogler eventually went to the USA in 1975 to meet Keno. He immediately recognised the car and found in it something which the owner did not know about... the German made package of tools which had been given to Spogler by German soldiers in 1945 when he had been driving Clara Petacci. Further







research at the time then produced more documentation about the car's history.

Towards the end of the 1970s, Keno sold the car to collector Donnie Morton in Connecticut who then passed it on to the Imperial Palace Auto Collection, which did a 'surface' restoration and put it on display where it sat for 20 years. The Imperial Collection is part of the Harrah empire in Las Vegas...the Alfa BAT cars can be seen there too!

The car was then sold again in 1999 and the new owner had the engine rebuilt by the well-known Italian restoration figure Francesco Bonfanti. The car was entered for the retro Mille Miglia in 2001 and it was then decided that the Bonfanti Garage would restore the car fully. By amazing coincidence, it was at this point that I and Auto Italia's Peter Collins were visiting the Bonfanti Museum and accepted an invitation from Francesco to visit the workshop. I was discussing my interest in 'Mussolini Alfas' when Francesco took me to the corner where sat a dismantled vehicle... chassis

915033. He said I should come and drive it when it was finished. That project took two years and sadly I never got to drive it... but the coincidence still shakes me.

During the work on the car Anderloni himself from Touring came and recorded the work and brought along the original drawings. 85 to 90% of the metalwork has been preserved, and the 1939 tax disc and the Touring logo in the rear-view mirror are original. The drawings made it possible to replace exactly the bits of missing floorpan and door sills so the beautiful swept shape of the car is totally retained. The car subsequently won its class at the ultimate concours at Villa d'Este in 2007 and took best in show at Salon Prive in 2011.

The car will come up for auction at Retromobile on February 4 in Paris, complete with all the history, Spogler's testimony that it is indeed the 'Petacci getaway car' and that notable German tool kit. Will it set a record for a pre-war Alfa Romeo, and break the two million euro mark? And will it be the car for you to buy for your girlfriend? 🇮🇹

*ABOVE: Access to Carrozzeria Touring's drawings helped recreate missing parts, although the car is 85-90% original*







# SUPER FLEX<sup>®</sup>

## POLYURETHANE



It came to light that there are two size options on the rear spring pan arm outer bush, so we offer both shell size options 39.9 & 42.2 mm OD, so please be aware of this option when ordering. The spring pan arm outer bushes are designed to rock as the original greased steel ball, whilst minimising radial movement – hence the hour glass profile & suitable stainless shell. The sharp edges of the arm housing would be detrimental to a conventional flanged bush.

**Intelligent thinking from SuperFlex**

We are pleased to announce our range of SuperFlex Rear End Bushes for Alfa Romeo GTV & Spider 9/94 onward.

Developed with our 20 years plus experience, these are precision engineered using top quality grades of Polyurethane & Stainless Steel Tubes.

We are able to offer these as a rear end set SF430RK at a discounted price of £298.08 inc 20% VAT, or as separate kits which can be viewed on [www.superflex.co.uk](http://www.superflex.co.uk)

SuperFlex products are available from stockists:

EB Spares, Westbury, Wilts, tel: 01373 823856; Classic Alfa, London SE22, tel: 020 8688 4443; Highwood Alfa, Swansea, 01792 234314; Alfa-Service - Bonene, Germany, tel: 0049 2383 93640; Bertelsbeck Automotive, GMBH Luedinghausen, Germany, tel: 0049 2591 89270



# The Big Roar

Thought to have been lost, this rediscovered monster 16-cylinder Maserati has received a new lease of life

Story by Massimo Delbo for Ruoteclassiche  
Photography by Dirk de Jager







*Borzacchini in the V4 in the 1929 Grand Prix of Tunis*

Imagine how thrilled and excited the inhabitants of the peaceful countryside around Cremona would have been 85 years ago, when they witnessed a four-litre 16-cylinder Maserati engaged in breaking the world speed record, instead of some special bodied Fiat 509. Heart stopping indeed.

Although the Maserati V4 may not look as impressive today as it did 85 years ago, and its speed may no longer be that exceptional, this big roadster is still as striking as ever. It was silenced for far too long, but once the carburettors were filled up, the mighty roar came out of the exhaust once again.

The Maserati V4 takes its name from the total displacement of the two 2-litre 8-cylinder in-line engines coupled together to form a V, the same engines featured in the Tipo 26B.

#### **RECORD BREAKER**

Alfieri Maserati's desire was to break the world speed record with a car that would be reliable and not too expensive to manage, as he was always running on a shoestring budget. The results would soon be achieved. The first record was broken during the first lap at the Grand Prix of Monza in 1929. Fifteen days later the car was ready to run for the world speed record. On September 28 the V4 was in Cremona for the Giornata dei Record (Day of the Records). 'Baconin' Borzacchini was behind the steering wheel. It was a 10km-long test and the V4 covered twice the stretch between Gadesco Pieve Delmona and Sant'Antonio d'Anniata, which today is under the name of strada provinciale 10 Padana Inferiore, at an average speed of 246.069km/h.

After this triumph, and for the following two years between 1930-31, the V4 raced with the drivers alternating between the brothers Alfieri and Ernesto Maserati and Borzacchini, with varying results. The V4 easily won the Grand Prix of Tripoli in 1930, which represented the first international award ever received by Maserati. However, on many occasions it dropped out from the races, usually due to the tyres which were simply unable to bear the mighty horsepower developed by the V4.



## THE V5 VERSION

In the winter of 1931-32 Maserati manufactured a V5 version by combining two 8-cylinder 2.5-litre engines. The car raced until the 1934 edition of the Grand Prix of Tripoli, when it was involved in a bad accident and was severely damaged.

The V4, meanwhile, found a new life. While keeping all the mechanical parts unchanged, Maserati developed a road version and called it the V4 Sport. The car was completed in November 1932 and it was registered in Rome one month later by Ludovico Tomeucci, a Maserati and Weber retailer. One year later the car was purchased by Riccardo Galeazzi, a wealthy doctor with a passion for racing who, in 1939, would become the personal physician of Pope Pius XII. Galeazzi raced under the pseudonym of 'Maometto' (Mohammed) and parked his Maserati in a secluded garage. His secret, however, was not to be kept for long.

## REBODIED BY ZAGATO

In August 1934, after the Grand Prix of Tripoli, in which the V5 also participated (imagine the roar produced by the two 16-cylinder cars racing aside), the V4 changed ownership again to Secondo Corsi. Corsi had an accident during the Coppa Acerbo and gave the car back to Galeazzi. At that point, the Roman physician decided to call coachbuilder Zagato and had them dress up the V4 in a new livery. Zagato did not alter the front end, which remained the same up to the front wings. They totally rebuilt the interior, transforming the V4 as a two-seater sports car. The original red colour

was abandoned for a more sophisticated and unusual colour combination of two shades of green, which reappeared below the many layers of paint, during the subsequent restoration work.

## CONFISCATED

In 1940 the car was crossing the Belgium border, driven by car dealer Felice Bonetto when for some unknown reason the car was confiscated while clearing through customs. It was quickly sold to a Belgian trader in September 1940 who sold it in turn to Dutch gentleman driver Erick Verkade. Verkade knew that his 'new' 16-cylinder car represented a much desired trophy for the German army that had already invaded the Netherlands. He decided to dismantle the car and hide the pieces away. The engine ended up in a bedroom and the hood, painted in black, served as a roof for the garden shed. Five years later, in May 1945, Verkade rebuilt his V4 and drove it back to Italy, to the Maserati factory in Modena to pick up a 4CL he had ordered before the war. To the great surprise of the Maserati mechanics, he towed his new purchase back to the Netherlands behind the V4. He would continue to transport his 4CL to many race meetings in such a fashion.

## BRITISH SOJOURN

In 1946 the V4 landed in England and in 1947 it found a new owner in Londoner Charles Lewis who kept it until 1956. By that time the car was in really bad shape and fell into disrepair. Along came a Mr John Howell who

*BELOW: The V4's 16-cylinder engine was made up of two 8-cylinder Tipo 26 units coupled together in a common crankcase*





## MASERATI V4 SPORT





## TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

### MASERATI TIPO V4

ENGINE:	<b>22.5° V16, 2 x 8-cylinder in-line blocks</b>
	<b>2 valves per cylinder</b>
CAPACITY:	<b>3961cc</b>
BORE X STROKE:	<b>62mm x 82mm</b>
COMPRESSION RATIO:	<b>5.5:1</b>
FUEL SYSTEM:	<b>2 x Weber DO carburetors, 2 x Roots superchargers</b>
FUEL CONSUMPTION:	<b>5.7mpg</b>
POWER:	<b>260bhp @ 5500rpm</b>
TRANSMISSION:	<b>4-speed, rear-wheel drive</b>
CHASSIS:	<b>Ladder frame with C-section crossbar</b>
DIMENSIONS:	<b>3784 (l), 1380 (w), 1152 (h)</b>
KERB WEIGHT:	<b>1050kg</b>
TOP SPEED:	<b>119mph</b>

discovered it by chance during the demolition of the garage in which it was stored, and he rescued it. The new 'owner' took it to some vintage car racing events in 1958 and started a legal dispute with the former owner, which went on until 1968. At that point the car was no longer functioning due to a major engine failure.

### SOLD TO THE USA

In 1998, Howell was old and unwell and decided to sell the V4 to a Texan who, a few months later, sold it again to the current owner, the Italian-American Lawrence Auriana, who is one of the world's most prominent Maserati collectors. Auriana entrusted the talented and experienced Adolfo Orsi with the restoration of the V4. Today, after almost 85 years, the car is back to its former splendor and is surely one of the most fascinating cars in the world.

Visitors to Villa d'Este and Villa Erba in May 2014 were able to view the car during the Concorso d'Eleganza. It was also part of the Maserati Centennial exhibition at Casa Enzo Ferrari Museum in Modena after which it returned to the United States.

Our thanks to Adolfo Orsi of Historica Selecta for his contribution to this feature. 🇮🇹

### TECHNICAL DETAIL

From a technical point of view, the V4 is less complex than you might expect. Each one of the two engines is independent, with its own camshaft, carburettor, compressor and magneto.

A mechanism connects the two crankshafts inside the common crankcase. One engine rotates to the right, the other to the left to keep the exhaust manifolds on the outside. Technicians ran into difficulties with the carburetors, which are located a long way from the air intake; the mixed section – square and circular – suction duct did not make things easier.

Instead of consulting with Memini or Solex, the two leading companies in those years, Alfieri contacted Edoardo Weber, who had just set up his own company in Bologna to produce special carburetors for small displacement Fiats.

Weber designed a boosted diffuser plus an additional pickup jet to solve the carburation problems, but they reappeared at the Indianapolis 500 in 1930. As a matter of fact, the fault was not completely caused by the car, but by the enforcement of restrictive regulations. Compressor-equipped cars were not eligible for the race, which was announced just before the start. Technicians rushed to remove the compressors, but after a few laps the V4 failed and withdrew from the race.

The car's farewell to racing in its first configuration is dated 1931, after the Grands Prix of Monza and Rome (Circuit of Littorio), that were won by Ernesto Maserati. Fagioli won again with the V5, in 1932.







MASERATI

QUATTROPORTE

## MASTER OF SURPRISE



### MASERATI QUATTROPORTE DIESEL FROM £69,235 ON THE ROAD

Maserati has a long tradition of surprising the automotive world with innovation and unconventional thinking. The introduction of our new state-of-the-art V6 diesel engine in the Quattroporte is just the latest example. This 3.0 V6 unit produces 275 HP and the performance that befits the company's flagship, whilst clever engineering has managed to reproduce the distinctive and much loved Maserati exhaust note.

For more information on the new Maserati Quattroporte Diesel, call 01943 871660 or visit [maserati.co.uk](http://maserati.co.uk)

Official fuel consumption figures for the Maserati Quattroporte Diesel in mpg (l/100km): Urban 36.2 (7.8), Extra Urban 54.3 (5.2), Combined 45.6 (6.2). CO<sub>2</sub> emissions 163 g/km. Fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> figures are based on standard EU tests for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results. Model shown is a Maserati Quattroporte Diesel at £71,647 On The Road including optional metallic paint at £660, electric sunroof at £1,560 and extended key-less entry at £192.

[www.maserati.co.uk](http://www.maserati.co.uk)



# KEEP IT EXCLUSIVE



## **METHODS OF PAYMENT (MAGAZINE VIA MAIL)**

Credit Card – Debit Card – PayPal  
BACS Transfer (email for details) – Direct Debit  
Cheque payable to: Ginger Beer Promotions Ltd  
Email: [enquiries@gingerbeerpromotions.com](mailto:enquiries@gingerbeerpromotions.com)

## **POSTAL ADDRESS**

Ginger Beer Promotions Ltd  
Morningside House,  
1 High Avenue,  
Letchworth Garden City,  
SG6 3RL, UK

## **GLOBAL ACCESS**

Auto Italia is available at  
the App Store or on-line at  
[www.pocketmags.com](http://www.pocketmags.com)  
Save money on shop prices and  
postal costs and view the latest  
issue as soon as it is released  
and from anywhere in the world

## **APP PRICES**

App Store:	£2.99
6 issues on-line:	£14.99
12 issues on-line:	£28.99





**SUBSCRIBE ON-LINE TODAY**  
**SAVE! SAVE! SAVE!**

**Save up to £10.40  
for 12 issues plus  
receive a free calendar  
[www.auto-italia.net](http://www.auto-italia.net)**



Available on the  
**App Store**



Available on  
**pocketmags.com**



Available on  
**facebook**

## SUBSCRIPTION OFFER

**Yes, I would like to subscribe for 12 issues**

- ☐ **Quarterly Direct Debit** £11.50 (£46 per year)  
☐ **Annual Credit/Debit Card/Cheque** £48  
☐ **Europe** £65  
☐ **USA Special offer** £70  
☐ **Rest of World** £78

### Your details

Name: .....

Address: .....

Postcode: .....

Telephone: .....

Email: .....

**Instruction to your Bank or  
Building Society to pay by Direct Debit**



**Service User Number** 2 7 5 3 7 4

**Account Name** .....

**Account Number** .....

**Sort Code** .....  
.....

**Name and postal address of your Bank or Building Society**

.....

.....

**Postcode**

**Instruction to your Bank** Please pay FastPay Ltd Re Ginger Beer Promotions Ltd t/a Auto Italia Direct Debits from the account detailed in this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with FastPay Ltd Re Ginger Beer Promotions Ltd t/a Auto Italia and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my Bank/Building Society.

**Signature** .....

**Date** .....

### The Direct Debit Guarantee

- This Guarantee is offered by all Banks and Building Societies that accept instructions to pay Direct Debits.
- If there are any changes to the amount, date or frequency of your Direct Debit, FastPay Ltd Re Ginger Beer Promotions Ltd t/a Auto Italia will notify you five working days in advance of your account being debited or as otherwise agreed. If you request FastPay Ltd Re Ginger Beer Promotions Ltd t/a Auto Italia to collect a payment, confirmation of the amount and date will be given to you at the time of the request.
- If an error is made in the payment of your Direct Debit by FastPay Ltd Re Ginger Beer Promotions Ltd t/a Auto Italia or your Bank or Building Society, you are entitled to a full and immediate refund of the amount paid from your bank or building society. If you receive a refund you are not entitled to, you must pay it back when FastPay Ltd Re Ginger Beer Promotions Ltd t/a Auto Italia asks you to.
- You can cancel a Direct Debit at any time by simply contacting your Bank or Building Society. Written confirmation may be required. Please also notify us.



# Carrozzeria Monterosa

Another Turin coachbuilder that followed the elaborazione route and later developed strong connections with Japan

Story by Elvio Deganello, Noboru Tazawa and Yuko Noguchi  
Photography by Archivi Deganello and Bell System 24



Following research of the registers at the Chamber of Commerce of Turin, records show that the limited liability company Carrozzeria Monterosa was incorporated on January 11, 1946. The headquarters were in Turin at Via Sant'Agostino 12 and the declared purpose of the business was the repair and construction of bodies for motor vehicles. The registered capital of 400,000 Lire was paid in three equal parts by Edgardo Barbero, who assumed the position of President; Tommaso Sargiotto, who assumed the position of director, and Giorgio Sargiotto who assumed the position of second administrator. Among the three partners, only Giorgio Sargiotto had expertise in bodywork.

Born March 6, 1915 in Turin, Giorgio Sargiotto gained his experience at Bertone. When Sargiotto was still young he became Head of the Department of Ferradori Bertone. On July 27, 1942 Sargiotto was promoted to

First Class Technician with the role of Deputy Chief of the workshops. On November 19, 1943 Giorgio Sargiotto reached the pinnacle of his career and was promoted to chief of the workshops at Bertone.

The background of Tommaso Sargiotto, cousin of Giorgio, was with the company of Anelli & Bosio in Turin where he had become a talented mechanic. Edgardo Barbero, partner and president of the newly formed Carrozzeria Monterosa, had no experience in vehicle construction, but had an interest in business management.

By consulting the records of the Archivio di Stato Italiano it was revealed that Barbero had worked as a trader, an officer in the Regio Esercito (Royal Army) and a travelling salesman. From 1939, he was an employee of the Società Scientifica Radio Brevetti Ducati. Back in 1930 Edgardo Barbero was declared bankrupt by judgment of the Court of Biella, but he



was granted an amnesty and the sentence was cancelled. The 'colourful' Barbero was also known to the police. A report from the Biella Police records reads: "On February 3, 1931 Edgardo Barbero had his National Fascist Party membership card suspended" – for unstated reasons. It is thought that the cause of the suspension was due to Barbero's risky life style, including his association with ladies of dubious reputation. After WWII Barbero changed his life and put his irrepressible vitality at the service of Carrozzeria Monterosa.

Monterosa's activities were based on the specialised construction of giardinieri (estate cars) and immediately became very successful during the period of the post war reconstruction. The demand for working vehicles was strong and Monterosa's multi-purpose giardinieri were well built and users could move elegantly from business to leisure on holidays.

The bodies of Monterosa's giardinieri imitated a wood finish by painting and surface treatment, but they were actually built from metal with all the advantages that metal construction permits. The rapid growth in customer numbers allowed Carrozzeria Monterosa to move to larger premises in Turin's Moncalieri district at Via Cesare Battisti 3.

Monterosa worked mainly on Fiat 1100 and Fiat 1400 chassis, but also built some giardinieri on Lancia and Alfa Romeo chassis. In 1954 Monterosa presented a Fiat 1100/103 coupe designed by Giovanni Michelotti, which proved to be fairly successful.

Success increased in 1955 when Italian enthusiasm for the Fiat 600 enabled the Carrozzeria to put into production three different 'elaborazione' versions of the series Fiat 600. The basis of the Fiat 600 build process was always two-tone paint with bright metal decoration.

The first level of the Fiat 600's enhanced appearance was the contrasting body colour was only applied to the roof. Decorative accessories included the fake radiator grille, special hub caps, chrome window seals, door sill cappings, bumper overrides, bonnet hinges and chrome side strips. The second level of improvement included two-tone paint, wind-up windows, seats with custom-coverings and a shelf for oddments under the dashboard. The third and the most complete level of trim offered tail fins on the rear wings, a different arrangement for the indicator

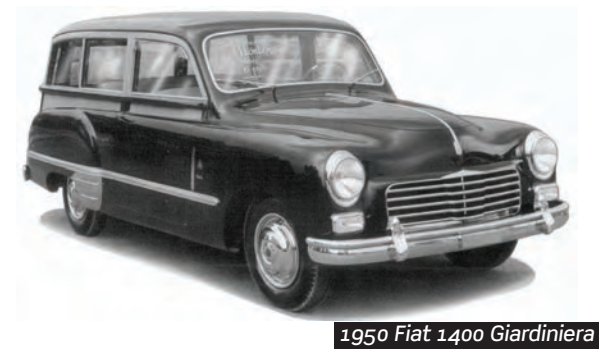
*LEFT: Monterosa's stylish 1950 Fiat 1800 Coupe  
BELOW: Fiat 600 with typical elaborazione treatment of the period*



1949 Fiat 1100 Giardiniera



1949 Lancia Aprilia Giardiniera



1950 Fiat 1400 Giardiniera



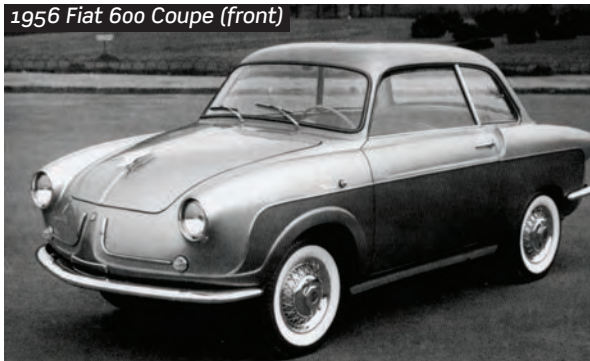
1953 Lancia Aurelia Giardiniera



1955 Fiat 1100 Familiare



1956 Fiat 600 Coupe (front)



1956 Fiat 600 Coupe (rear)



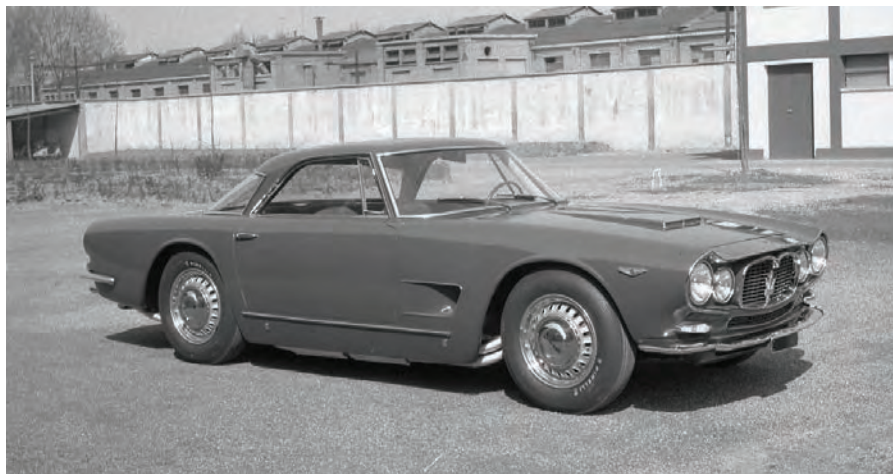
1957 Fiat 500 Cabriolet



1958 Fiat 600 Coupe 2+2



1958 Fiat 1100 Giardiniera



ABOVE: 1960 Maserati 5000 GT chassis 103.012  
Picture courtesy of Historica Selecta

flashers and a greater allocation of chrome strips.

The development of the first level of improvements cost 60,000 lire, and each additional level cost a further 60,000 lire. 60,000, 120,000 and 180,000 lire do not seem like large sums of money, but the income generated from the Fiat 600 modifications brought economic prosperity. In 1956, this achievement allowed Carrozzeria Monterosa to put into production a Giovanni Michelotti-designed sedan and coupe on the Fiat 600 platform.

The basic style was the same but the sedan had more rear windows. At first the rear window was a panoramic design for both the coupe and sedan, but the coachbuilder replaced this with a more conventional rear window that improved habitability and simplified construction.

In 1958, still based on drawings by Michelotti, Monterosa refreshed the Fiat 600's style and instead of building two models of the usual sedan and coupe, they built just one model – a fresh looking 2+2 coupe with a more composed and spacious style.

Monterosa increased its portfolio by introducing its own version of the Fiat 1100/103 in the form of a new 2+2 coupe and a giardiniera. Both models could even be delivered with the new Fiat 1200 engine.

At the beginning of 1959 Lancia asked some selected coachbuilders to develop the body for its Series II Appia saloon. Monterosa put significant development into its version of the front and rear design for the Appia and those changes are considered to have set the style for the Appia Series III. In the autumn of the same year the Carrozzeria

BELOW: This 1958 Fiat 1200 Coupe was among the many Fiat based derivatives bodied by Monterosa







ABOVE: The Monterosa Maserati 5000 GT was shown at the Pebble Beach Concours in 1999 and 2002

put a Fiat 1500 S coupe and van into production, both were designed by Giovanni Michelotti. The same designer also drew the body for a unique Fiat 1800/2100 convertible.

In 1960 Monterosa updated its Fiat 1500 S with minor adjustments such as bumpers without overriders. More significant was its one-off stylistic development of the Maserati 5000 GT chassis No. 103.012. This glamorous Maserati is cited by historians as being the last custom-built car by Carrozzeria Monterosa.

Traditionally historians consider that Carrozzeria Monterosa ceased operations in 1961 due to financial difficulties. However, we consulted the Chamber of Commerce in Turin and we discovered a different reality. The register records that on 17 July 1961, Carrozzeria Monterosa srl became a limited company and changed its activity to the administration of real estate and its financial transactions. In effect they were receiving income from leased properties acquired by the company over a period time.

For Giorgio Sargiotto this arrangement worked very well. In fact, he had a flight ticket to Japan in his pocket paid for by the Prince motor company who wanted him to go to Tokyo and start production of the Skyline Sports Coupe designed by Giovanni Michelotti.

At the end of 1961 George Sargiotto was back in Italy for a short period and then on January 22, 1962 he founded Carrozzeria Giorgio Sargiotto & CSas, its mission was to build bodies for motor vehicles and to produce automotive parts. His company was established in via Attilio Buffa in Nichelino on the outskirts of Turin. It was here that Sargiotto formed an

BELOW: A surviving Michelotti-designed Prince Skyline Sports Coupe. Note the headlight treatment similar to Triumph Vitesse



1958 Lancia Appia Series 2



1959 Fiat 1800 Cabriolet



Restored 1960 Fiat-Osca 1500 S



1968 Isuzu 117 PAgo Coupe



1963 Sargiotto-Scaglione Lamborghini 350 GTV





excellent agreement with the designer Franco Scaglione who operated at the via Buffa premises, partly for his work for Prince, but he also found time to do some work for other Italian clients.

From this point on it becomes difficult to follow the frequent movements of Giorgio Sargiotto. During his stay in Italy in 1962 Sargiotto built a prototype aluminium coupe together with sheet metal worker Leo Filippone. The car was the Intermeccanica Apollo, designed by Franco Scaglione. This prototype was followed by a series of 25 examples with steel bodywork.

In 1963, still using designs created by Franco Scaglione, Sargiotto created prototypes for the Prince 1900 Sprint and the Lamborghini 350 GTV. The cars were not made by him in series because he did



not have sufficient production capacity.

A couple of years later, while Sargiotto was in Japan again, he contributed to the realisation of the Prince R380 and laid the foundations for his collaboration with Isuzu. Sargiotto was the person who suggested to the management at Isuzu that they should consider Giorgetto Giugiaro as the designer for the Isuzu 117. At the time Giugiaro was drawing for Ghia.

In 1968 the Isuzu 117 was ready for production with machining plans designed by Giorgetto Giugiaro and Aldo Mantovani of Italdesign. But in Tokyo it was necessary for someone to help the Japanese at Isuzu understand Italian production methods. Giorgio Sargiotto entrusted his son to be a long-term envoy in order to teach the Japanese technicians how to build cars the Italian way.

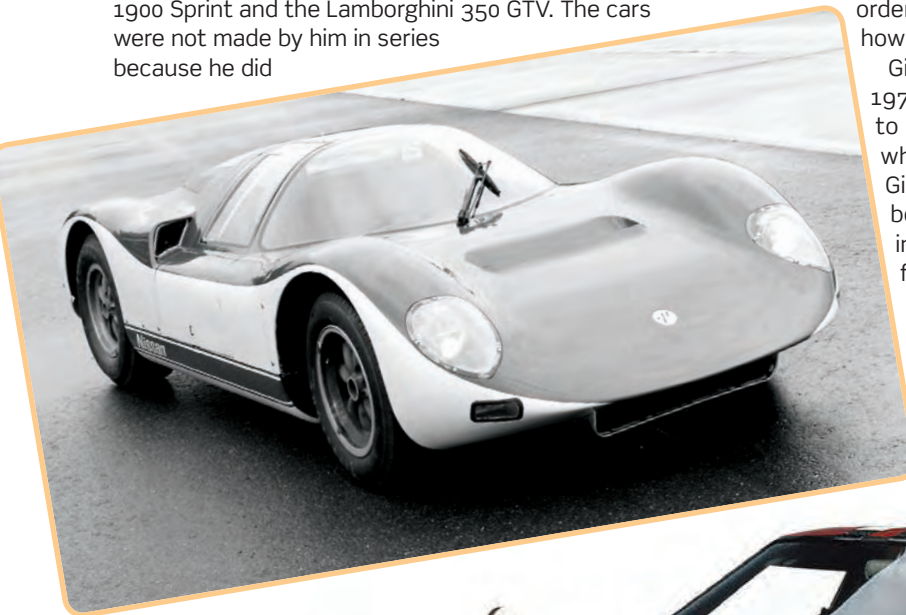
Giorgio Sargiotto worked for Isuzu until 1971, after which Suzuki called upon him to productionise the Fronte Coupé, which was also designed by Giorgetto Giugiaro. At this point Sargiotto had become the ideal partner for Japanese industries that relied on Italian design for their cars.

Giotto San Sal, as they call Sargiotto in Tokyo, became very popular in Japan and even today, 15 years after his death in 1999 in Turin, Japanese fans remember him with respect and admiration. 🇮🇹

*ABOVE LEFT: Scaglione-designed Intermeccanica Apollo 2+2 of 1963*

*ABOVE: Prince 1900 Sprint*

*BELOW: Prince/Nissan R380 with tuned Skyline engine*







## CHESHIRE CLASSIC CARS



### 1988 Lamborghini Countach 5000 QV

This stunning LHD Countach is the highly desirable 88 1/2 version, which featured a 48 valve engine on carburetors, improved suspension geometry and more subdued body styling. It has had one (company chairman) owner and is in superb condition throughout, having travelled only 55,000 kms from new with comprehensive history. The Rosso Siviglia paintwork and Senape interior are in excellent condition, and the car drives exactly as it should.

Benefiting from a specialist engine refresh and factory gearbox rebuild less than 5,000 miles ago. Fitted with a sports exhaust and recent tyres on special order white wheels.

Acknowledged by experts as the best driving version of this fast appreciating and iconic 'poster car'

£299,995



# RHYTHM AND BLUES

The Group 2 Fiat Ritmo was a lesser-known official 'works' car that proved to be a competent rally weapon

Story by Luca Gastaldi  
pictures by Luca Gastaldi and Michael Ward







TO S97073 M. Perissinotto Alitalia colours

Even the humble Fiat Ritmo is silently entering the world of the classic car collector. Especially among the younger enthusiast, the Ritmo evokes memories of childhood and travel and generates the desire that motivates people to look at alternative cars.

The Ritmo (translated as rhythm) mobilised hundreds of thousands of families between the 1970s and 1980s as they began to live a life in economic stability. But the modern and innovative everyday car from Mirafiori became the unlikely participant of a brilliant sporting career while carrying the colours of the official Fiat team.

The commercial launch of the Ritmo (Strada in the UK) dates back to 1978. The original models were the 60, 65 and 75. All had four-cylinder engines of various capacities including 1100, 1300 and 1500cc respectively. The Turin management immediately recognised its competition potential, they were quick to react and instructed its Abarth racing department to begin preparing cars with a view to mounting a racing debut in the Giro Automobilistico d'Italia that would be run in October of the launch year. The Abarth technical department led by Mario Colucci opted for the preparation of a Group 2 2-door Ritmo 75. The regulations of the category allowed a generous freedom of development. Two cars were prepared, one in a black and red fluorescent livery for Riccardo Patrese, the other with reversed colours for Jody Scheckter.

A significant amount of modification to the standard specification was possible. For the engine, Group 2 regulations allowed modification to the fuel system, so a long Alquati inlet manifold was fitted combined with a sliding throttle and mechanical Kugelfischer injection.

Dry sump lubrication was supplied by pumps next to the oil pan, the oil tank was mounted within the engine compartment above the gearbox. The cylinder head received bigger valves and the camshaft profile was sourced from the available range at Abarth.

The transmission included a Sachs racing clutch and a series of close ratio gears, which were coupled to a self-locking differential.

Considerable revisions were made to the suspension. In addition to the use of Bilstein shocks, a stabilising bar connected the strut and track rod assembly, all

were fitted with rose joints. The suspension top mounts were also reinforced and the wheel hubs and bearings were sourced from the Lancia Beta to cope with the greater loads. At the rear, the cross member was mounted with coaxial coil spring and gas shocks.

The front brakes were from the Renault 17, which were the only parts available on the market that were compatible with the front wheel geometry. The rear brakes were derived from the X1/9 1300. The competition handbrake was constructed by fitting an additional Brembo motorcycle caliper that was operated by an independent circuit.

Bodysheet preparation to include the additional Group 2 elements included a front spoiler, extended wheel arches to widen the track and accommodate larger wheels, and a full roll cage.

The Ritmo's debut in the Tour of Italy resulted in a creditable 3rd place for Patrese's black car. Unfortunately Scheckter's car was forced to retire when it came off the road at the end of a special stage in Ciocco, Tuscany, damaging the dry sump lubrication pump. In order for the car to complete the stage, a mechanic had the bright idea to recover the car by completely filling the engine with oil. Once cooled, the engine returned to life and with the main bearings lubricated the car continued. This action managed to save the engine so that the oil pump could be replaced at the next service stop with parts transported from Turin.

The Ritmo was also run in the Rally della Valle d'Aosta in 1978 and then in the Rallye Monte-Carlo in 1979, driven by Attilio Bettega. For the Tour of Italy in 1980 a lighter version was prepared with lowered suspension and fitted with 15-inch wheels and 225/25-15 tyres.

From a technical point of view, there was an interesting change in the suspension concept introduced from 1 April 1979. A new front arrangement was devised with improved arms and uprights, specifically with the intention of reducing the ride height and also to benefit the steering reaction. These were the years when the advantages of power steering had not been realised and would eventually improve handling and driver comfort. These improvements were to be used on the later Ritmo 125/130 Abarth series to cope with the use of higher torque twin-cam power units.





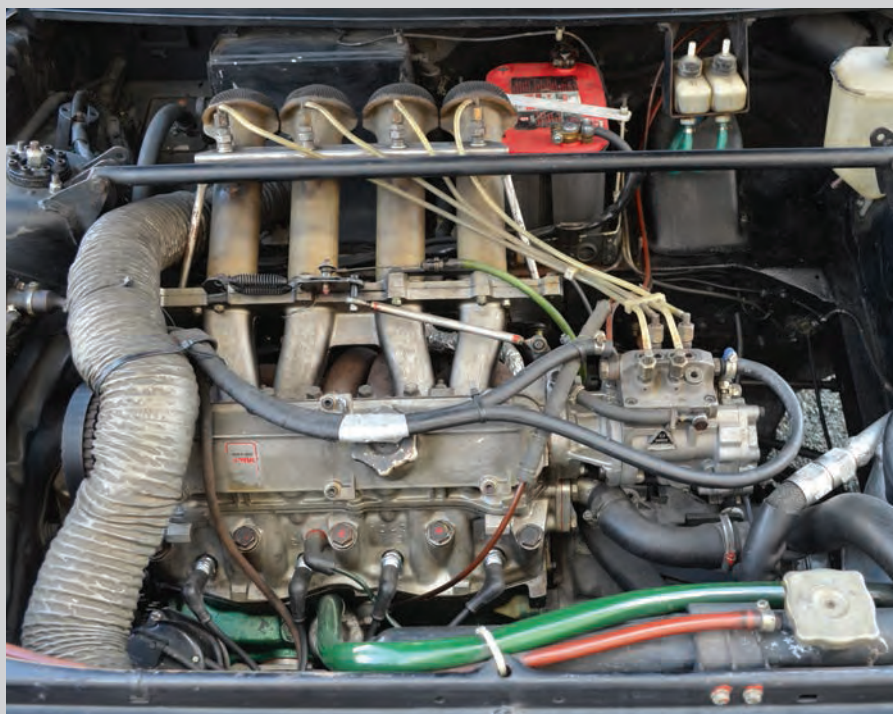
## RITMO WORKS CARS

From the workshops at Abarth Corso Marche in Turin, between 1978 and 1980, eight examples of the 'official' Fiat Ritmo 75 in Group 2 configuration appear to have been built. The first prototype was registered as TO S9479, while successive plates were almost in sequence: TO S61354 and TO S61355 (both at the start of the 1979 Giro d'Italia for Riccardo Patrese and Jody Scheckter), TO S97073 and TO S97074 (stars of the 1979 Monte Carlo Rally with Per Eklund and Attilio Bettega), and finally TO U22645, TO U22646 and TO U22647. These last cars were entered respectively in the 1980 Monte Carlo Rally with Bettega, the 1980 Giro d'Italia for Carlo Capone and the 1981 Monte Carlo, again with Bettega.

TO S97073 1979 Sanremo Rally



TO S61354 Patrese 1979 Giro d'Italia







## TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

### FIAT RITMO GROUP 2

ENGINE:	4-cylinder, sohc
CAPACITY:	1498cc
BORE X STROKE:	86.4mm x 63.9mm
COMPRESSION RATIO:	11:1
FUEL SYSTEM:	Kugelfischer indirect injection
POWER:	157bhp @ 8200rpm
TORQUE:	16.1 kmg @ 5200rpm
TRANSMISSION:	5-speed, FWD, LSD
SUSPENSION:	Front and rear independent with lower control arms, coil springs, gas shocks
STEERING:	Rack and pinion
DIMENSIONS:	3937m (L), 1740mm (W), 24480mm (H)
KERB WEIGHT:	800kg



BELOW: The featured ex-Attilio Bettega Ritmo is a regular at Italian events like the Silver Flag hillclimb





### FIAT RITMO PRODUCTION HISTORY

The Fiat Ritmo was launched in 1978, a product of Sergio Sartorelli's design department at Fiat Centro Stile. It was badged in Great Britain and North America as the Fiat Strada.

In 1979 Seat Ritmo production started in Spain and was replaced by a facelifted version in 1982, the Seat Ronda.

The Ritmo reused most of the front-wheel drive running gear from its predecessor, the 128. It also inherited the single overhead cam 1100 and 1300 engines that were also joined by a 1500 unit. In 1979 a Fiat Brazil 1050cc unit was available in some economy markets. In 1980 the Ritmo diesel was introduced with a 1714cc engine.

In 1981 the Ritmo Super (Fiat Superstrada in UK) was introduced with a variety of small changes and, most significantly, revised engines with increased power achieved by a revised camshaft profile, twin choke carburettor and a twin exhaust. In May that year the first sporting Ritmo, the 105TC, was launched along with the Bertone-styled Ritmo Cabriolet. The 105TC enjoyed a 1585cc Fiat twin-cam engine that developed

105bhp. A few months later the 1995cc Ritmo Abarth 125TC was introduced in mainland Europe, but not in the UK. Right-hand drive markets had to wait until the facelifted range appeared in 1982 for a 2-litre Strada in the form of the Strada Abarth 130TC. This 'proper' hot hatch had either twin Solex ADDHE or Weber DCOE40 carburetors and ZF gearbox.

A saloon version, the Regata, was launched in 1983, with limited success outside Italy however the useful Regata Weekend arrived in 1984.

The final Ritmo revisions arrived in 1985 with updates to the bodywork and a 1697cc Fiat Uno-sourced diesel engine that replaced the old 1714 unit. In 1986, a new diesel version was launched with a 1929cc intercooled turbodiesel badged as the Ritmo Turbo DS. While marketed across continental Europe, this model along with any of the later fuel injected Ritmos were not sold in the UK or Ireland.

1988 saw the last Ritmo roll off the production line and the more conventional Tipo take its place as Fiat's C-Segment Car. During the Ritmo's production from 1978 to 1988, a total of 1,790,000 units were made.

ABOVE: Two rare examples of surviving UK 105TC and 130TC Stradas showing the front end facelift details







### HISTORY OF TO U22645

The competition history of the Ritmo Group 2 was pretty intense with two full seasons, during which quite significant results were obtained. The featured example is chassis number 02077918, registered in December 1979 and carrying the plate TO U22645. It was the first of the final three Ritmos prepared by Abarth to be used by the official racing team. A month after it was completed it faced one of the toughest rally events, the 1980 Monte Carlo Rally, crewed by the unforgettable Trentino Attilio Bettega and the experienced navigator Mario Mannucci.

At the time Bettega was not a well-known driver outside Italian borders. He had proved his talent by winning the 1977 A112 Abarth Championship and then driving for the official Lancia and Fiat teams. His status resulted in him being co-driven in 1980 by Mannucci, the navigator who for years had been regularly crewed with Sandro Munari.

The start of the rally proved to be very promising. After the first six special stages the little Ritmo was third overall behind much more powerful cars like the 131 Abarth of Rohrl and the Stratos of Darniche. Unfortunately, technical problems befell Bettega and Mannucci who were faced with a bad choice of tyres and the engine going out of phase after the water pump failed.

Eventually the problems were rectified and the Ritmo was soon back to full efficiency and Attilio Bettega was able to demonstrate his talent. The conditions were optimal for the car, the streets were covered with snow and the agile front-wheel drive – aided by an ideal set up – fought head to head with

the big names. Indeed, it did much more – it managed to beat them. During the final night on the legendary Col de Turini, Bettega set the fastest time, pulling four seconds ahead of Darniche and fourteen in front of Rohrl. It was not a dream, in fact in the second section of the same special stage, Bettega – incredibly – stopped the clock at the same time. At that point, everyone began to take notice of the young, shy and reserved driver who had the makings of a true champion. The rally ended with the Ritmo finishing in sixth place overall.

Bettega joined Lancia in 1982 to drive an 037 and after mixed results his best podium result was second place in the 1984 Sanremo Rally. For the 1985 season he entered the Safari Rally and the Tour de Corse. Regrettably, in Corsica, on the fourth stage of the rally, Bettega was fatally injured when he lost control of his Lancia and crashed into a tree. 🇮🇹





EUROPE'S PREMIER WINTER CLASSIC MOTORSPORT SHOW



INTERNATIONAL  
HISTORIC  
MOTORSPORT  
SHOW 2015

# race retro

20th-22nd February – Stoneleigh Park CV8 2LG

In association with



STEWART  
MILLER  
INSURANCE  
PETER  
JAMES



MEDIA SPONSORS

**MOTORSPORT**

**Octane**  
MAGAZINE

**Classic Bike**

Featuring Motorsport Guest Celebrities

**CLASSIC COMPETITION CARS & BIKES ON ROAD, OFF-ROAD AND ON TRACK**

- Hundreds of Exhibitors
- Live Group B Rally Stage
- Race Bike Fire Up Paddock
- Featured Marques Celebration
- Live Auction
- Motorsport Autojumble
- Guest Celebrities
- Classic Kart Racing
- Retro Racer Cafe

TICKETS NOW ON SALE AT **[www.raceretro.com](http://www.raceretro.com)**

For further information telephone 01775 768661 or email [info@livepromotions.co.uk](mailto:info@livepromotions.co.uk)



# SHARE THE EXPERIENCE

## CONSIGN TODAY



### EARLY HIGHLIGHTS

2002 FERRARI ENZO Chassis no. ZFFCZ56B000129581

1985 FERRARI 288 GTO Chassis no. ZFFPA16B000052475

Around the world, RM Auctions is known for its incredible reach in the collector car market. Our in-house photography, design, marketing, and PR teams ensure every consignment is presented to a prime audience in the best possible light and with the widest possible exposure. Whatever your automobile is worth, it will have the best chance of achieving an excellent result with RM.



## VILLA ERBA

LAKE COMO, ITALY • 23 MAY 2015

**BMW  
GROUP**  
Classic



[www.rmauctions.com](http://www.rmauctions.com)

Europe +44 (0) 20 7851 7070  
Milan +39 02 9475 3812  
Corporate +1 519 352 4575

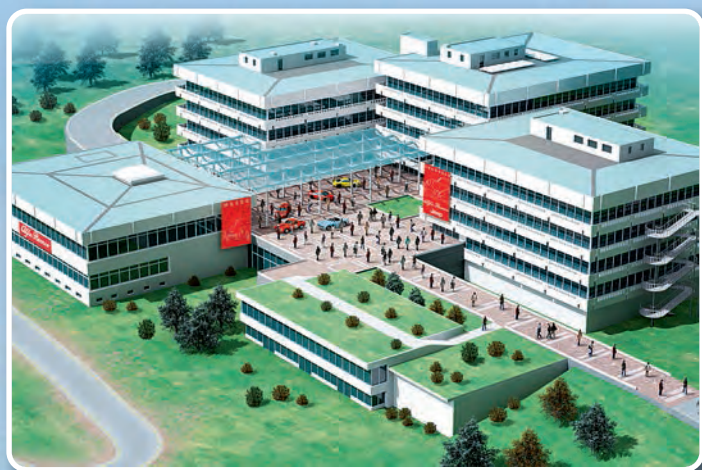
**RM AUCTIONS**



# Resurrection

After years of speculation, the future of the historic Alfa Romeo collection has finally been secured

Story and photography by Ruoteclassiche and Alessandro Barteletti







**T**his summer, the former Alfa Romeo plant at Arese will come back to life to coincide with the Milan Expo and the marque's relaunch.

An agreement has finally been reached between Fiat and the Ministry of Cultural Heritage for the reopening of the Alfa Romeo Museum. The minister himself, Dario Franceschini, sent a letter to the Mayor of Arese, Michela Gym, to confirm it. Alfa Romeo fans rejoiced, together with all those who had lost hope in visiting the collection again.

In 2011, the Superintendent of Cultural Heritage of Lombardy put the museum cars, the archive and the building itself under a court restraining order. Soon after that, Fiat closed the collection and simultaneously appealed to the Regional Administrative Court of Law against this decision. It was the start of a long legal controversy, which went on for three years and seemed destined to go on forever. In March 2014 the Court rejected the request for suspension of the restraining order and postponed its decision until late October.

Surprisingly, secret negotiations led to the settlement of the controversy between the parties which actually marked a victory for the Superintendent of Cultural Heritage. The new museum will, in fact, host all 257 cars included in the list filed by the ministry. This list includes the eight 'duplicates' that Fiat wanted to release from the inventory and sell to make money for the renovation of the museum. In addition to the renovation of the rooms and the headquarters of the Historic Motoring Centre (which will be 25% larger), the project also includes a show room for new car display and delivery, a coffee shop, restaurant, shop and even a small test track.

Work started in Autumn in a fight against time to be ready for the Milan Expo opening on May 1st, but unfortunately it will not be completed. Everyone is striving for June 24: the day in which Alfa was founded in Milan back in 1910.

Fiat's decision to reopen Arese is reported to be firstly based on the unique occasion of the Milan Expo, whose headquarters will be located only a few

*ABOVE: A 1974 Alfa Romeo Alfetta returns to its abandoned birthplace  
BELOW RIGHT: Currently a storage area for dealer cars, the silo will become part of Expo 2015*







kilometres away from Arese, and secondly the ambitious plans for the relaunch of Alfa Romeo announced by Sergio Marchionne in May. Marchionne's plan made it unnecessary to dispose of the eight duplicated cars, albeit of considerable value, to offset the cost of renovating the four buildings.

The revival of the area surrounding Arese is combined with the reopening of the museum which is within the perimeter of the old plant. The newly announced Arese Shopping Centre will be a multi-purpose site including the historic factory test track (1600 metres in length) and a new exhibition space for activities related to the world of motoring, including rallies, exhibitions and more. The track and service facilities will cover a total surface of 86,000 square metres. Apparently, the Expo seems capable of miracles even before its opening.

### HOW IT WAS

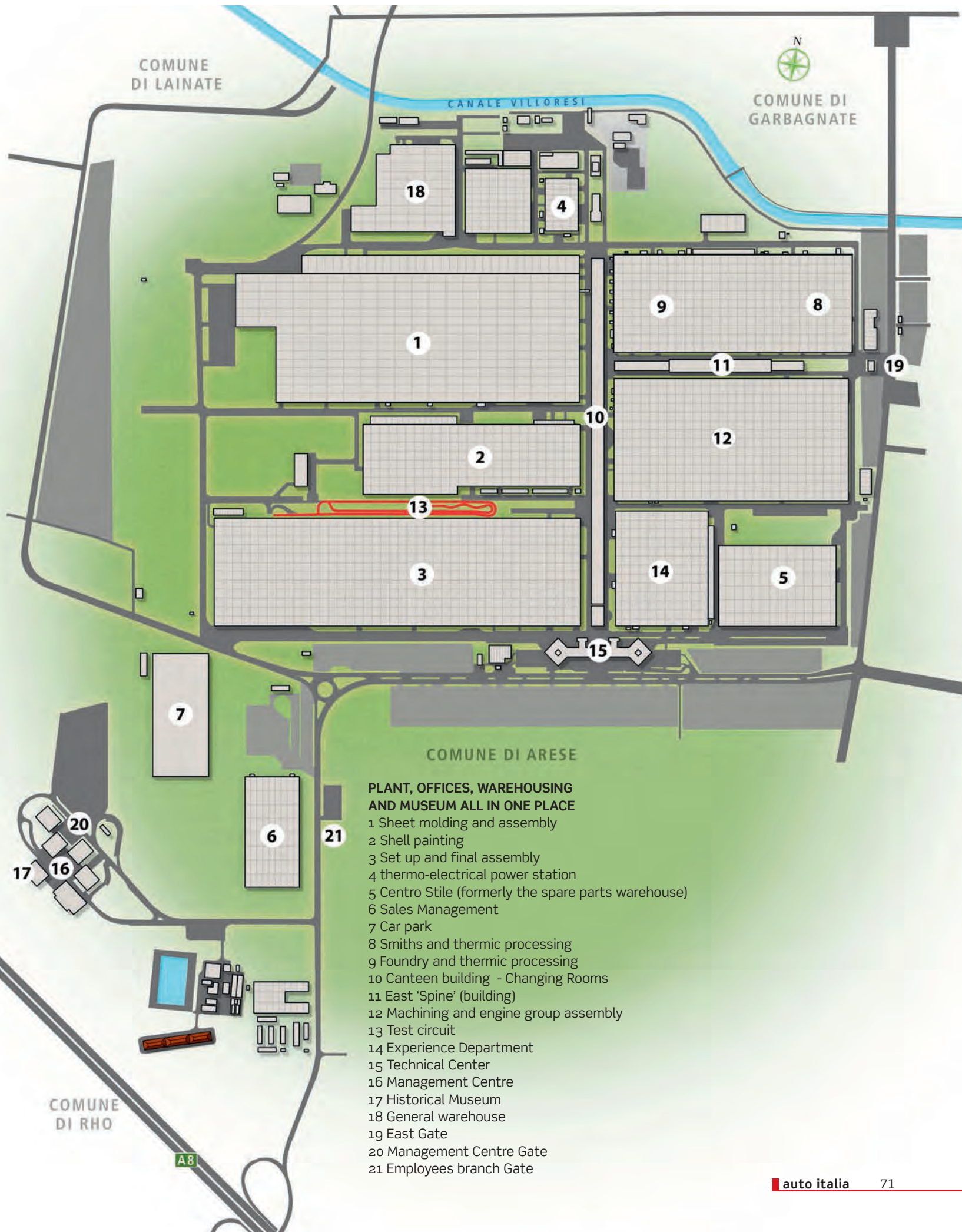
The Arese plant was established in 1963 when the original Portello factory in Milan had become too small. In the golden age of the 'Biscione' almost 20,000 employees worked for Alfa Romeo.

Arese was progressively abandoned when Alfa Romeo passed into the hands of the Fiat Group. The car assembly line was closed in 2000 and the last cars manufactured there were the GTV and the Spider. The engine production, including the glorious Busso designed V6, shut down in 2005.

*FAR LEFT: The test track, production line and the former Alfa Romeo Centro Stile that was under designer Walter Da Silva*









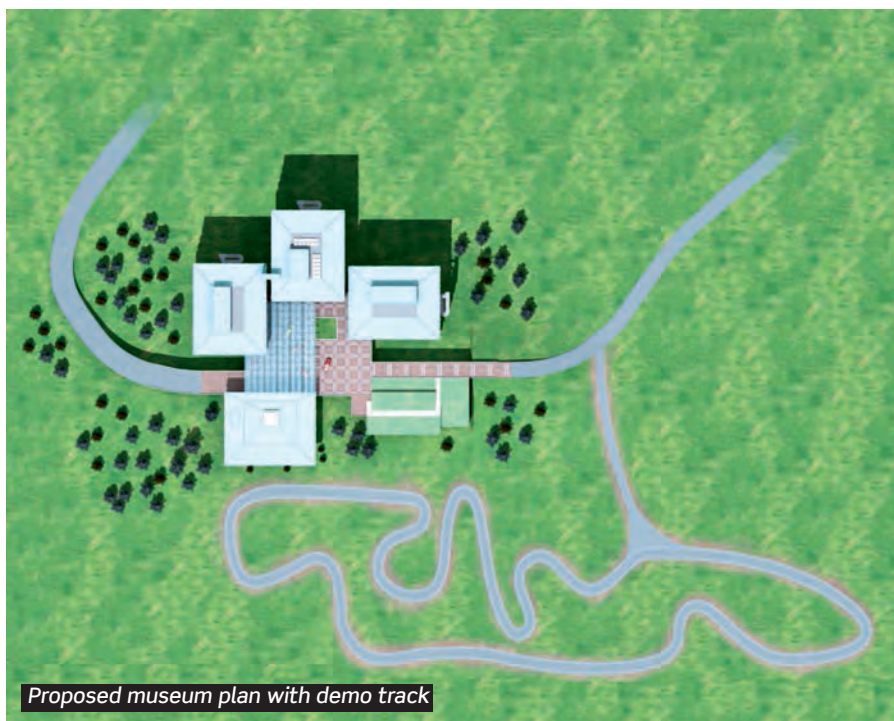
## HOW IT WILL BE

Italian designer Michele de Lucchi has designed the Arese shopping centre. The building will extend across an area of over 90,000 square metres and includes 200 shops and 25 restaurants. The piazza will have two multi-functional buildings and an area for events will be built near the test track. The exhibition centre will be a two-story building with three glass modules



## THE MUSEUM

Opened in 1976, the Alfa Romeo museum was dedicated to the great engineer Orazio Satta Puliga. It presents a wonderful collection of cars, including the first Alfa, the 24 HP, and legendary winners of the Mille Miglia like the 6C 1750 Gran Sport driven by Tazio Nuvolari, the 8C Touring, the Alfetta 159 driven by world champion Juan Manuel Fangio, and the 33TT12 Sport prototypes of the 1970s. In addition to the main car display, there are 15 aviation engines, 25 car engines, and about 1000 car models in different scales.







*Southwood*  
CAR COMPANY



**Alfa Romeo Giulietta Spider 1961**



**Specialist supplier of exceptional Alfa Romeos,  
see our website for other interesting examples**



We are always looking to purchase good quality Alfa Romeos  
Please contact us if you have something of interest

**T:** 01883 344226 **M:** 07442 506123 **E:** [info@southwoodcarcompany.co.uk](mailto:info@southwoodcarcompany.co.uk) **W:** [southwoodcarcompany.co.uk](http://southwoodcarcompany.co.uk)  
M25 J6 - 5 mins | Gatwick 20 mins | Heathrow 40 mins | Central London 19 miles



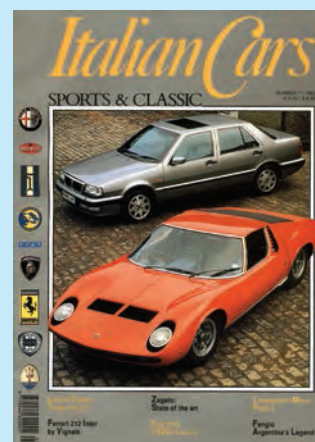
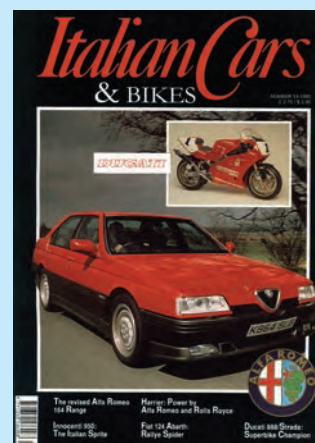
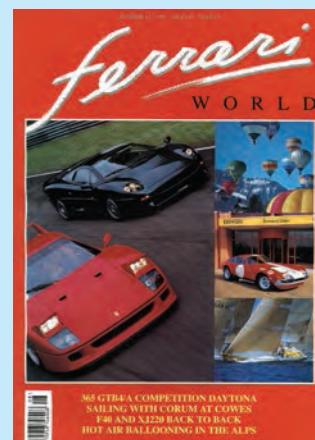
# The story so far . . .

A look back at 20 years in magazine publishing with some of the memorable moments

Story by Phil Ward  
Photography Michael Ward







Auto Italia's first edition was published in March 1995 which means the magazine is now exactly 20 years old. I am often asked how the magazine started and this anniversary seems like a good opportunity to reveal all.

My background was primarily as a photographer in the Royal Air Force. I was trained in all aspects of photography, ie taking pictures, darkroom work, machine film processing and aerial cameras. I elected to specialise in the latter and spent most of my career as a technician installing and maintaining cameras in photo reconnaissance, bomber and fighter aircraft. It was while serving in Germany that I purchased my first Italian car, it was a Fiat 125 saloon. Having previously owned a succession of staid British cars like an Austin A55, Mk1 Ford Consul and Ford Escort, one day I was given a lift in a friend's Fiat 125 and I couldn't believe how well it performed. The twin-cam engine was superb and, unbeknown to me the old grey 125 I purchased was to be the key to my future.

When the 125 began to dissolve I bought a red 124 Spider and, after my posting in Germany ended, drove the car back to England. 124 Spiders were very rare in the UK in the late '70s and information on them was scarce. Curious about the car I joined the Fiat Twin Cam Register that had just been formed by enthusiast and 124 Coupe owner Tom Foster. The information gathering process began and, although I had no writing experience, I eventually took over as editor to the Club's magazine, *Bialbero*.

I left the RAF in 1983 and continued my association with film cameras as a technician and later as a manager at the BBC's Ealing Film Studios in West London.

In 1986, together with members of the Fiat Twin Cam Register, we launched the UK's first Italian Car Day at

Syon Park. The event became highly successful and eventually out grew Syon Park and we moved to Brooklands where the event is still held 29 years later.

During my time as *Bialbero*'s Editor I realised that I enjoyed writing and, having gathered together a substantial amount of information on Fiats, realised that a book might be a possibility. I contacted John Blunsden at Motor Racing Publications and he agreed to publish a book based on all the cars that were fitted with the Lampredi designed twin-cam engine entitled *Fiat and Lancia Twin Cams*. The book was written in collaboration with Lancia owner Brian Long and engine tuner Guy Croft. I provided most of the photography. The book is still in print in revised form and entitled *Twin Cam Italia*.

In 1991 I was attending a Fiat Motor Club event when I was approached by the Advertising Manager from Hyde Park Publishing, a company based in Putney that produced *Ferrari World* and *Italian Cars Magazine*. In conversation he said that Hyde Park were looking for a freelance editor for both of its titles. It was at this time that the BBC decided to sell Ealing Studios and that I would have to relocate to keep my job, so the prospect of a career change was attractive and timely.

The set up at Hyde Park was interesting to say the least and on these pages it is sufficient to say that there were many colourful characters pursuing their own agendas.

*Ferrari World* and *Italian Cars Magazine* were bimonthly and the scheduling meant that I had a magazine to prepare each month. *Ferrari World*'s material was a re-run of the parent Italian edition. We would be supplied with the colour separations on sheet film. For readers not familiar with what is now an obsolete process there were four colour sheets comprising cyan, magenta, yellow and black. From these combined separations the printer made the



metal plates. Re-using the Italian edition's colour sheets, we produced a new black sheet that carried English text to replace the Italian words. As the Editor I was required to make the English translations fit the exact areas left from the removed Italian text. Anyone involved in translating Italian will know that the story length shrinks. I had to make up the difference by adding extra wordage, which was not easy and the finished edit needed to make sense.

*Italian Cars Magazine* did not have an Italian version so the material came from *La Manovella* magazine which was published at that time by Giorgio Nada Editore.

As a part timer, the work was very demanding but I was immersed in Italian cars which I soon realised was becoming an all consuming passion. But all was not well. Hyde Park appeared to be in trouble, the company was failing, the revenues were down and the creditors were piling up. I soon realised that as an observer I was learning a great deal about how not to run a company but by default I was also learning how publishing could work. Hyde Park owed me money and they were going to dispose of the titles.

In the meantime my BBC career was disappearing fast so I worked out my plan. I would create my own magazine from the remnants of *Italian Cars*. I would take a year off to give it a go. If it didn't work then at least I had tried. The directors at Hyde Park were eager to do a deal. In lieu of my outstanding payment I inherited the Mac equipment, the subscriptions database and the back issues stock. And so, with the help of my fellow Italian car enthusiast and co-director Peter Collins, *Auto Italia* was born.

Hyde Park kept *Ferrari World* going and it was

eventually edited by future *Auto Italia* contributor Keith Bluemel. When the Italian edition stopped publishing the UK one followed. The German edition of the title is still being published.

By a rough calculation, I knew that there were around 10,000 Italian car club members in the UK, surely they would all be clamouring for a magazine to fuel their passion. On this basis Peter Collins and I decided to launch *Auto Italia* as a bi-monthly, subscription only publication.

*Italian Cars Magazine* had managed to reach 14 issues and issue 15 was in preparation when Hyde Park closed the title. Issue 1 of *Auto Italia* (and some of issue 2) was based on the unpublished features. I had no idea how to operate the Mac so I enlisted the help of a former Hyde Park employee who created the new layout. In the meantime I went on a two day course to learn how to use the Mac and edited the features.

Months later, when issue 1 had finally been printed, Peter Collins joined me to collect the magazines using a hired closed trailer pulled by contributor Roberto Giordanelli's Range Rover. The 15,000 copies were offloaded at my flat in West London and stacked up along the stairs. Having congratulated ourselves on our achievement our euphoria was shortlived when we discovered that all the centre pages fell out. So, we loaded all the mags back into the trailer and took them back to the printer. Eventually we collected them again, the printer having rectified the problem.

The production of issue 2 went better and number 3 followed. It was while we were preparing Issue 4 that we realised that our subscriptions revenue was not covering our costs. We were in trouble. We decided to contact a number of publishers to see if they would

**RIGHT:** Reiter Engineering's rotating GT1 Murciélago at the Salzburgring  
**BELOW:** The 38 minute lap with Hartmut Ibing's exotic Ferraris on a very frosty Nordschleife







Talacrest Ferrari 512M evicted from Longcross



Back firing Ferrari 750 Monza at Longcross



Ferrari 288 Evoluzione ride on the Nordschleife



Ferrari 250 MM Mille Miglia co-drive



High speed camera car duty at Catalunya







take the magazine on. As it happened our advertising agency were also publishers of several motoring titles and they offered to become our business partners. We agreed and control of the title passed to them and Issue 5 became our first, monthly newstrade issue.

With the title secure and flourishing the arrangement lasted until 2008 when *Auto Italia* was sold to another publisher. In 2012 the title came back to me. I have edited all 229 issues.

In the early years nearly all the features were written by myself, Peter Collins, Brian Long or Roberto Giordanelli. Roberto was an experienced racing driver and restoration engineer and could be entrusted with some very potent and expensive cars. Not far from our 'office' was Talacrest, whose premises displayed the most exotic Ferraris imaginable. We struck up a relationship with owner John Collins who very kindly allowed us to feature his fabulous cars. His super rare Ferrari 330 LMB was on the cover of Issue 1. Eventually we were able to drive some of his cars at the nearby Longcross (Chobham) test track. John's faith in us was remarkable considering how valuable the cars were. This unique relationship continues to this day and we are very grateful for his support.

The location for photography and test driving for a great deal of our early features was at Longcross. It was originally a military test track and in the early days it was not uncommon to have a tank rumble out of a blind turning into the path of a hurtling Ferrari. We managed to avoid any incidents, even when the front suspension collapsed on a Ferrari F355 during a fast cornering shot. The main problem was the members of the golf club that was adjacent to the track within the circuit. Invariably, if we were testing a noisy car, there

would be complaints from the golfers who would have our session terminated. We got wise to this and undertook our static photography and low speed camera car runs first. Any test driving would be done at the end of our session.

When we featured the Sunoco Ferrari 512M we knew we would have a problem because the car was outrageously noisy with its 620bhp bellowing out of those lovely short white pipes. Sure enough an irate golfer had the circuit's red lights switched on and he had us removed. We got our own back though.

One day we had a bright yellow Ferrari 500 Mondial from Talacrest being driven by writer Ed McDonough. Four cylinder Ferraris have a load bark anyway but this one had a misfire as well. Part of the inner circuit runs really close to one of the main golf course tees. 'Mr Angry' was playing again and he was about to tee off as Ed drove past on the Mondial. The misfiring car let off an enormous back fire and the golfer missed his shot, in fact he visibly left the ground in fright. Amid the peels of laughter in the passing camera car I could see the golfer furiously waving his club at us.

We have quite a lot of control over our photoshoots in the UK but in Europe its very different. Having booked flights you are committed to local conditions and you have to accept the circumstances or return home empty handed. Shooting at the Nürburgring always has its uncertainties, indeed on one occasion we arrived to cover a Ferrari only to find the circuit was closed. Weather was also an issue as we found out when a very generous reader invited us to test drive two of his priceless Ferraris on the Nordschleife. These cars just happened to be a 250 GTO and a 250 LM.

The owner agreed to have them removed from their

*BELOW: Silver Flag was a rare opportunity to test the full potential of the Ferrari 458 Speciale*





cosy accommodation in the circuit museum so we could drive them on the track. Came the day and the cars were duly waiting for us in the open on a sunny but massively frosty morning. The trackday we were attending had been suspended while waiting for the frost to clear. The deal was that we were on no account to get the cars covered in grime, in which case we had to run on the dry but frosty circuit before the trackday session commenced.

As it happened we had dispensation from our insurance company to drive the cars, but everyone concerned was super nervous about the conditions. Nevertheless we ventured forth and the results were some of the most evocative photography we have undertaken. I was driving the camera car for Michael Ward and even at a walking pace the ABS would kick in with very little provocation. We survived the outing and can surely claim that we set a Nordschleife lap record, for the slowest ever lap at 38 minutes!

And finally, the test drive that never was! Undertaking editorial in Italy is a bit of a gamble and you never really know what is going to happen, until it has actually happened. When it all works, the enormous sense of achievement is mixed with great sighs of relief. Our plan was to shoot and drive the stunning Alfa Romeo Tipo 33 Stradale at the Arese museum. The intention was to take moving pictures of the car, something that has rarely been achieved, if ever at all. We were assured that this would be OK and the car could be driven within the museum area. Unfortunately, on the day we arrived our contact was not on site, although the car was parked outside the

main building waiting for us. The minders refused to start the car without permission and pointed out that it was devoid of all vital fluids.

Given that we had travelled to Milan specifically to shoot the Tipo 33 it was agreed that we could take moving pictures of the car but without the engine being started. After much head scratching photographer Michael Ward came up with a plan. There is a very short ramp that leads down the museum's underground garage. We ran the Punto camera car in front of the Tipo 33 with a minder at the wheel. We only had one chance to take the picture because nobody was going to push the car back up the ramp. As you can see we got the shot.

It would be impossible to record all the highlights during *Auto Italia's* 20 years, they would fill a book – now there's thought! A short list of my most memorable experiences include two Ferrari co-drives in the Mille Miglia, fast laps at the Nürburgring in a Ferrari 288 GTO Evoluzione, 330 LMB, 250 LM and F50 with Tony Dron, a ride with Michele Alboreto at Monza, a ride with Peter Kox in a Lamborghini Murciélago GT1 at the Salzburgring (we spun), a scary ride taking pictures while hanging out of the back of a fast camera car at Catalunya circuit in front of a Ferrari F1 T3, a trip on the 70 foot Maserati racing yacht at Monaco, and driving a Ferrari 458 Speciale in the Silver Flag hillclimb.

The list of people who have been involved in producing *Auto Italia* over the years is a very long one. So, to all our writers, clients, generous car owners, club members, family and friends, who have contributed to the magazine's success, my sincere thanks. 🇮🇹

*BELOW: 'On days like these'.  
Ex-Alboreto F126C with  
Roberto Giordanelli driving  
at Franciacorta circuit*





# MONZA

## SPORTS TUNING

APPROVED SERVICE DEALERS FOR ALFA ROMEO AND ABARTH



**2013-63. ALFA-ROMEO GIULIETTA 1750 TBI CLOVERLEAF 5DR**  
8C Red paintwork option (£2200 new), Black Leather Sports Seats, Bose Hi-Fi, Heated Seats. Rear Parking Sensors, Tom Tom preparation and Sat Nav unit also included. Lowest mileage, youngest Cloverleaf manual in the UK with over £5k extra specification. Price £22,995.



**2014 ALFA-ROMEO 4C TBI LAUNCH EDITION**  
1500 miles. White. TCT. One owner.  
£POA



**2010-60. ALFA-ROMEO GIULIETTA JTDM-2 LUSSO 5DR**  
One owner, 26475 miles. Full Alfa Romeo service history in this economical, beautiful performance diesel hatchback. Includes Alfa DNA system with three different driving modes. Price £10,490.



**ALFA-ROMEO GT 3.2 V6 24V**  
36,000 miles Alfa Romeo GT 3.2V6 in Lipari Grey with Black leather interior, Bose Hi-Fi, 18" Alloys. ONE. ARFSH. Q2 diff by Monza Sports and is now ready for it's second owner to enjoy. The last incarnation of the Busso V6 in 240BHP form. Price £8,995



**Officially No.1 in the UK\* (again & again)**

\*No.1 out of 34 dealers for service in Alfa Romeo's customer satisfaction survey, carried out by JD Power, Nov 13 - Jan 2014.  
\*No.1 out of 34 dealers for service in Alfa Romeo's customer satisfaction survey, carried out by JD Power, Oct 13 - Dec 2013.  
\*No.1 out of 34 dealers for service in Alfa Romeo's customer satisfaction survey, carried out by JD Power, Sep 13 - Nov 2013.



**London Road Ashington West Sussex RH20 3DD**  
**Tel: +44 (0) 1903 893052 monzasport.com**



# CLUB ITALIA

PREVIEWS AND REPORTS ON INTERNATIONAL  
EVENTS AND ITALIAN CAR CLUBS

## Down at the Palace

**Report on the exclusive Hampton Court concours**

Story by Tony Bagnall

Photography Gary Harman







On Sunday, 7th September, my wife and I visited the third international UK Concours of Elegance held in the grounds of Hampton Court Palace. We travelled down in my 1964 Alfa Romeo 2600 Sprint, which as we live in the Wirral, is normally a round trip of approximately 400 miles, although as explained later we covered more than that.

In addition to the main event, a two hour morning tour had been arranged from Cliveden House Hotel (formerly the Astor family home) through 'the leafy lanes and back roads' of Berkshire and Surrey, including a section through Windsor Great Park, and aimed to arrive at Hampton Court Palace in time for lunch. A couple had travelled all the way from Zurich in their Porsche and received an award for the furthest distance travelled to the event.

Having driven down on Saturday and spent the night at nearby Marlow, we set off at 8.15 am. and arrived at Cliveden House some 20 minutes later. As we approached up the drive we were confronted by a row of Ferraris, Aston Martins, Bentleys, Porsches, Alfa Romeos and other exotica. In fact, there were just three Alfas, a 1933 8C 2300 Touring Spider, a Montreal and my Sprint. I gingerly parked my car alongside the 8C; this car was purchased by Paul Gregory as a virtual wreck in America (previously it even had an American V8 engine!) and has been painstakingly restored. It is truly magnificent.

Following a light breakfast and drivers' briefing, we were flagged off at about 9.30. I managed to follow the 8C for most of the tour; it really looked and sounded fantastic as Paul drove it in a most spirited fashion. Having negotiated the lanes, a short section of the M25 and numerous suicidal cyclists, we duly arrived at Hampton Court Palace just before noon. We were parked in a semi-circle that surrounded the main Concours event in front of the palace.

Entrants for the Concours competition had been on display since the previous Friday and consisted of 60 cars from around the World. The oldest car on display was an 1896 Lutzman Victoria and the youngest was a 2014 LaFerrari. Italy was well represented with examples of Ferrari, Alfa Romeo, Fiat, Maserati, Iso, Siata, and Lancia. There were eight Ferraris ranging from a 1949 166 MM to the 2014 LaFerrari.

I found the cars with a competition history especially interesting. The 1949 166 MM Touring Barchetta was driven to victory in the 1949 Spa 24 hour race by Luigi Chinetti and Jean Lucas. The 340/375 MM Vignale

Spider was driven by Alberto Ascari and Giuseppe Farina to victory in the 1953

Nürburgring 1000km race.



BELOW: Dramatic Fulvia-powered Stratos Zero  
LEFT: Fabulous Alfa Romeo 1750 Flying Star







**ABOVE LEFT:** Nigel Allen receives the Club Trophy for his superb Ferrari 275 GTB/4 from HRH The Duke of Kent

It was presented in the format in which it participated in that year's Carrera Panamericana. Also worth mentioning is a 1957 250 TdF which had taken part in the Reims 12 hour race finishing third.

A real highlight of the event was the presence of the winner of the last Mille Miglia road race. In 1957, Piero Taruffi drove this 315S Scaglietti Spider single handedly to victory. It was Taruffi's final motor race as he had promised his wife that he would retire from motor racing should he win the famous motor race. The final competition Ferrari was a 1961 250 SWB 'hot rod' which had taken part in several Tours de France and a Targa Florio in the early 1960s.

There were just two Alfa Romeos, the all-white 1931 6C 1750 'Flying Star' by Touring and a well-used 1933 8C 2300 Monza sporting numerous stickers from events in which the car had participated. There was a sole Maserati, which was a 1938 Tipo 8CTF that was a works car driven by Count Felice Trossi during the 1938 Grand Prix season. In 1939 this car was lent to Paul Peitsch for the German Grand Prix in which he eventually finished third, having actually led for most of the race before pit stops slowed him.

Fiat were represented by a 508S Balilla Sport. Iso had two examples, a 1964 Bizzarrini A3C and a 1968 Grifo GL 350 S1. Lancia also had two entries, which were a 1985 Delta S4 and the 1970 Stratos Zero Bertone Concept. Finally, there was a 1953 Siata 8V 208 Bertone Spider Corsa. Also, there was a 1957 Jaguar XK140 that can be classed as Anglo/Italian as it was a prototype designed by Zagato and featured at the 1957 Paris Salon.

It is pleasing to record that the all-white Alfa Romeo 6C 1750 Flying Star was voted 'Best of Show'. This car was built specially for a young heiress (apparently her father had made a fortune from coal) and first appeared at the 1931 Villa d'Este Concorso d'Eleganza, where it won the Coppa d'Oro di Villa d'Este.

The Club Trophy was awarded to Nigel Allen with his superb, Barkaways restored, Ferrari 275 GTB/4. Part of the prize is an invitation into the main concours in 2015 as one of the 60 entries.

Thus ended a very interesting day during which I was pleased to receive many complimentary comments regarding my 2600, despite the range of magnificent vehicles on display. 🇮🇹





# BF BARKAWAYS

— FOR YOUR FERRARI —

Driven by you.



At Barkaways we pride ourselves on award winning service and restorations.

Come and meet Ian and the team to discuss how we can help you enjoy your Ferrari.

01622 862259  
[info@barkaways.com](mailto:info@barkaways.com)  
[www.barkaways.com](http://www.barkaways.com)





## CLUBS

### Alfa Romeo Owners' Club

[www.aroc-uk.com](http://www.aroc-uk.com)

### Alfaowner.com Club

Web based Alfa Romeo club  
[www.alfaowner.com](http://www.alfaowner.com)

### Alfa Romeo Association of California

[www.alfaromeoassociation.org](http://www.alfaromeoassociation.org)

### Alfa Romeo Club Quadrifoglio Belgium

[www.clubquadrifoglio.be](http://www.clubquadrifoglio.be)

### Alfa Romeo Owners' Club of Canada

[www.alfabb.com](http://www.alfabb.com)

### Alfa Romeo Owners' Club Australia

Victoria Division. The most active and passionate owners in Australia. 6 hard copy magazines, 6 E magazines. Great website and forum. Monthly meetings, great social and competitor events. Join us today.  
[www.alfaclubvic.org.au](http://www.alfaclubvic.org.au)

### Abarthisti

On-line club for owners, fans and enthusiasts of the Abarth brand [www.abarthisti.co.uk](http://www.abarthisti.co.uk)

### De Tomaso UK Drivers' Club

[www.detomasodc.co.uk](http://www.detomasodc.co.uk)



### Ferrari Owners' Club

Gary Dearn, Silverstone Innovation Centre, Silverstone Circuit, NN12 8TN  
[gary.dearn@ferrariownersclub.co.uk](mailto:gary.dearn@ferrariownersclub.co.uk)  
[www.ferrariownersclub.co.uk](http://www.ferrariownersclub.co.uk)

### Fiat Motor Club

The original UK club for owners of all Fiat models. [gavin@fiatmotorclubgb.org](mailto:gavin@fiatmotorclubgb.org)  
[www.fiatmotorclubgb.org](http://www.fiatmotorclubgb.org)

### Fiat Club Africa

[www.fiatclub.co.za](http://www.fiatclub.co.za)

### Fiat Club of New South Wales

[www.fiatclub.com.au](http://www.fiatclub.com.au)

### Fiat Club of Victoria

[www.fiatclub.org.au](http://www.fiatclub.org.au)

### Fiat 500 Club

[www.fiat500club.org.uk](http://www.fiat500club.org.uk)  
[www.fiat500enthusiasts.co.uk](http://www.fiat500enthusiasts.co.uk)

### Sporting Fiats Club

[www.sportingfiatsclub.com](http://www.sportingfiatsclub.com)

### Fiat Barchetta UK Owners' Club

[www.fiatbarchetta.com](http://www.fiatbarchetta.com)

### Fiat Forum

[www.fiatforum.com](http://www.fiatforum.com)

### Fiat Bravo and Brava Owners' Association

[www.fiatboo.co.uk](http://www.fiatboo.co.uk)



### Fiat Multipla Owners' Club

[www.multiploowners.co.uk](http://www.multiploowners.co.uk)

### Fiat Cinquecento & Seicento

[www.clubcento.co.uk](http://www.clubcento.co.uk)

### Fiat X1/9 Owners' Club

[www.x1-9ownersclub.org.uk](http://www.x1-9ownersclub.org.uk)

### Fiat 127 Forum

[www.fiat127.com](http://www.fiat127.com)

### Fiat 131 Mirafiori Forum

[www.131mirafiori.com](http://www.131mirafiori.com)

### The Fiat Coupe Club UK

[www.fccuk.org](http://www.fccuk.org)

### Fiat Punto Forum

[www.puntosports.co.uk](http://www.puntosports.co.uk)

### The Other Dino (Fiat)

[Brian.Boxall@maxxium.com](mailto:Brian.Boxall@maxxium.com)

### Fiat Scotland

Scotland's dedicated Fiat community  
[www.fiat-scotland.com](http://www.fiat-scotland.com)

### Fiat & Lancia Club of Western Australia

[www.fiatlancia.org.au](http://www.fiatlancia.org.au)

### Lamborghini Club UK

Contact: Lynne Bull, Membership Secretary, Barnside, Wrotham Road, Meopham, Kent, DA13 0AU  
[Lynne@Lamborghiniclub.co.uk](mailto:Lynne@Lamborghiniclub.co.uk)  
[www.lamborghiniclub.co.uk](http://www.lamborghiniclub.co.uk)

### Lancia Motor Club

Contact: Diana Williamson, 6 Halifax Road, Ainsdale, Southport PR8 3JU  
[www.lanciamotorclub.co.uk](http://www.lanciamotorclub.co.uk)

### Lancia Montecarlo Consortium

[www.montecarlo.org.uk](http://www.montecarlo.org.uk)

### International Association of Lancia Clubs

[www.viva-lancia.com](http://www.viva-lancia.com)

### Club LanciaSport

[www.lanciasport.com](http://www.lanciasport.com)

### Stratos Enthusiasts Club

[www.stratosec.com](http://www.stratosec.com)

### Maserati Club

Contact: Dave Smith, 2 Sunny Bank, Widmer End, Bucks HP15 6PA Tel/Fax: 01494 717701  
[admin@maseraticlub.co.uk](mailto:admin@maseraticlub.co.uk)  
[www.maseraticlub.co.uk](http://www.maseraticlub.co.uk)

### Northern Ireland Italian Motor Club

[www.niimc.net](http://www.niimc.net)

### Italian AutoMoto Club

[www.italianAutoMotoClub.co.uk](http://www.italianAutoMotoClub.co.uk)

### Yorkshire Italia

[www.facebook.com/YorkshireItalia](http://www.facebook.com/YorkshireItalia)

### Scuderia Italian Car Club

South Australia

[www.scuderiaitaliancarclub.asn.au](http://www.scuderiaitaliancarclub.asn.au)

## DIARY DATES

### 2015 EVENTS

#### February 4-8

40th Retromobile, Porte de Versailles, Paris  
[www.retromobile.com](http://www.retromobile.com)

#### February 13-15

#### Automotoretro

Lingotto Fiere Turin  
[www.automotoretro.it](http://www.automotoretro.it)

#### March 20-22

#### Milano Autoclassica

Fiera Milano Rho  
[www.milanautoclassica.com](http://www.milanautoclassica.com)

#### April 16-19

#### Terra di Canossa

International Classic Car Challenge  
Emilia, Liguria, Tuscany  
[www.gpcanossa.it](http://www.gpcanossa.it)

#### April 18

#### Goodwood Track Day

Lancia Motor Club  
[www.lanciamotorclub.co.uk](http://www.lanciamotorclub.co.uk)

#### April 26

#### Spring Alfa Day

IWM Duxford  
[www.aroc-uk.com](http://www.aroc-uk.com)

#### May 29 to June 1

#### Sliding Pillar Rally

Molsheim, France  
[www.lanciamotorclub.co.uk](http://www.lanciamotorclub.co.uk)

#### May 22-24

#### Villa d'Este Concours

Lake Como  
concorsodeleganzavilla  
[deste.com](http://deste.com)

#### May 2

#### Brooklands Italian Car Day

Brooklands Museum  
[www.auto-italia.net](http://www.auto-italia.net)

#### May 31

#### Bergamo Historic GP

Bergamo  
[www.bergamohistoricgranprix.com](http://www.bergamohistoricgranprix.com)

#### June 2-7

#### 15th Modena Cento Ore

Rome to Modena rally  
[francesca.azzali@canossa.it](mailto:francesca.azzali@canossa.it)

#### June 12-14

#### Cholmondeley Pageant of Power

[www.cpop.co.uk](http://www.cpop.co.uk)

#### June 21

#### Classics at Sharnbrook

Sharnbrook Hotel  
Bedfordshire

#### June 25-28

#### Goodwood Festival of Speed

Goodwood House  
[www.goodwood.com](http://www.goodwood.com)

#### June 28

#### Summertime Classics

Stanford Hall  
[www.auto-italia.net](http://www.auto-italia.net)

#### July 5

#### British Grand Prix

Silverstone  
[www.silverstone.co.uk](http://www.silverstone.co.uk)

#### July 19

#### Supercar Sunday

Brooklands Museum  
[www.auto-italia.net](http://www.auto-italia.net)

#### September 26-27

#### Spa Italia

[www.spaitalia.be](http://www.spaitalia.be)

#### October 11

#### Motorsport Day

Brooklands Museum  
[www.auto-italia.net](http://www.auto-italia.net)

**Auto Italia**

### EVENTS 2015

May 2 Italian Car Day – Brooklands Museum

June 28 Summertime Classics – Stanford Hall

July 19 Supercar Sunday – Brooklands Museum

October 11 Motorsport Day – Brooklands Museum



**Alfa Romeo Owners Club**  
*'Serving Alfa enthusiasts since 1964'*

[www.aroc-uk.com](http://www.aroc-uk.com)

Visit the AROC Club Shop.  
A whole range of clothes  
and accessories for the  
Alfa Romeo enthusiast.  
[www.arocshop.co.uk](http://www.arocshop.co.uk)





- OVER 23 YEARS' EXPERIENCE •
- LOAN CARS AVAILABLE •
- ALL WORK IS CARRIED OUT USING GENUINE PARTS •
- WORK UNDERTAKEN BY FACTORY TRAINED TECHNICIANS •

## ALFA ROMEO & FIAT/ABARTH SERVICE CENTRE

### **Fiat 20V/20V Turbo** (unbeatable deal)

Timing belt and tensioner supplied & fitted  
£375.00 + VAT

### **Alfa Romeo Twinspark**

Timing belt, tensioner & variator supplied & fitted  
£385.00 + VAT

### **Alfa Romeo & Fiat JTD Diesels**

Timing belt & tensioner supplied & fitted from  
£270.00 + VAT

### **Alfa 2.5 & 3.0 24V v6 inc. 3.2 GTA**

Cambelt and tensioner supplied & fitted  
£475.00 + VAT



“We can service cars still in warranty at a fraction of Main Dealer prices – Does not affect warranty!!”

**REMAPS & BRAKE UPGRADES AVAILABLE**



**Tel: 01386 555523**

**WWW.NJSALFAROME.CO.UK**

Unit 23b, Pershore Trading Estate, Station Road, Pershore, Worcs WR10 2DD



# AUTO VENDO

SELLING YOUR ITALIAN CAR? FREE SERVICE TO READERS.  
EMAIL LIZ.SOLO@NTLWORLD.COM

## ALFA ROMEO



**Alfa Romeo GTV 6 2.5 GR.A.** One of ten built, chassis no. ZAR116C0000010195. Second car built by Autodelta and subsequently purchased by Mirabella Racing approx three years later. Original docs, original period 'technical passport', period documentation, 230 CV engine, open exhaust (plus silencer for road use), torsion bars 35mm, Speedline wheels (+ 8 spares), Lockheed brakes (4 front - 4 rear), Autodelta gearbox and differential. Special Koni shocks for this type of car, rose jointed suspension, hydraulic handbrake, original Bosch GR.A air flow meter, original Autodelta bumpers, period roll cage, original seats also available. Visit Berni Motori Race Shop at [www.bernimotori.com](http://www.bernimotori.com). A229/031



**Alfa Romeo GT 1600 Junior.** 1976, red. MOT, tax, 98,000 miles. Work in my ownership includes bare metal respray (needed outer sills, small amount of welding underneath), front Konis, front and rear springs, front spring pans, radiator, reconditioned front brake calipers, braided brake hoses, clutch, carburettor rubber mounts, Blaupunkt Turin FM radio, recoil seatbelts, new carpets, Alfabolics stainless front grille, 4 recent Michelins. Alfa 156 leather seats (very comfortable and easily changed bolt in), £11,000 ono. Tel: 01844 279170. A229/032



**Alfa Romeo Alfetta GTV Strada 2.0.** 1980, Ruby metallic. This car has been owned by me for 25 years. Much mechanical work has been carried out by me over this time. MoT until September 2015. Guide price of around £3250 for what has now become a rare Alfa model. For further details contact me, Don Lloyd: 01159 278381 (Nottingham) between 6 pm and 8pm if phoning during the week. A229/037

**Alfa Romeo Alfetta GTV.** 1985, 99K, for renovation, spares/repair, £795. Tel: Martin, 01737 769887. Email: [airmart@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:airmart@hotmail.co.uk) (Surrey). A229/021



**1992 Alfa 75 LE Twin Spark.** Red, no.2497/2500. In my ownership 7 yrs, 132K. Full Recaro interior. Looked after by Tony Favarin 'Road & Race Developments' Witney. Mechanically good with recent clutch, doughnuts, brakes and new quality battery. Daily driver and reliable, strong and smooth engine, faultless gearbox. Good history file. Like many of its colour and period, it has paintwork issues. New MoT and tax till May, £1950 ono. Tel: Tony, 07704 883367. A229/041



**Alfa Romeo 75 Twin Spark LE.** 1992. Red, no.1186, 2nd owner from 28.03.96, 61,000, FSH, MOT, receipts for everything, featured in *Auto Italia* Aug 2003, concours winner Stanford Hall 1999, fabulous condition, £2550. Tel: 07878 357043 (Kent). A229/016



**Alfa Romeo 33 1.5 IE.** 1991. 27,500 miles, Champagne. A much loved very low mileage 33 in mint condition both inside and out. Factory fitted sunroof. Has full service history and maintained by Rusper Alfa in recent years, taxed and MoT'd. Have never seen a better example of this model, photos available, offers. Tel: Paul, 07917 830842. Email: [pmck4y@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:pmck4y@hotmail.co.uk) (Reigate, Surrey). A229/039

**Good home for old friend wanted.** Alfa Romeo 145 2 litre Cloverleaf, S-reg, metallic red, 135K, long MOT, new clutch, ideal investment, worth a look, £750. Tel: 01903 205139 (West Sussex). A229/010



**Alfa Romeo 145 1.6 T Spark.** 1999, 76,000 miles, for spares/repair. MoT failure due to rust, I was quoted £700 for repair, new discs and pads fitted all round in September, new clutch April 2013. I haven't the space to break it for spares myself so whole car has to go. Drives fine, dent on N/S/R panel, £250. Tel: Paul, 07909 631542. Email: [schiapa@aol.com](mailto:schiapa@aol.com). A229/040



**Alfa Romeo 147 1.6 Lusso 3 door.** 2004, 52,300 miles, red. Low mileage, FSH (Alfanet), new cambelt, 2 new tyres, leather seats. MOT May 2015. Genuine reason for sale - purchase of newer Alfa GT. A very smart, tidy car with immaculate interior, a/c, cruise control, £1650 ono, further details from 07976 850618. A229/024



**Alfa Romeo 147 1.6 Lusso.** 2002. 102,000 miles, grey. This is a lovely example of a timeless design 147 TS. It has been sparingly used as a 2nd Alfa in recent times, yet a great deal has been spent on the car. MoT until August 6th 2015. Front suspension overhaul with new wishbones and drop links, new exhaust box, cambelt replacement and many other items replaced. Service at 100,500 miles. A car with very minor bodywork blemishes, £1395. Email: [winspa@btinternet.com](mailto:winspa@btinternet.com). A229/042



**Alfa 156 GTA Sportswagon.** October 2003 registered. 110K miles, silver, new timing belt/clutch/shocks, springs/brake pads, discs, tyres, FSH. Sports exhaust, leather interior, 10 CD multiplayer, ring for full spec. Tel: 07940 095198. A229/043





**Alfa Romeo 156 Selespeed 2lt Twin Spark.** 2000, 4 door saloon, 36,000 miles, one owner (myself), garaged all its life, electric windows front and rear, auto air conditioning, leather seats, alloy wheels, 6 CD interchanger, Selespeed, good boot space, colour red, power steering, stunning condition for age. Untouched original paint work, £1250. Tel: 07762 210306. Email: p.baines2@btinternet.com (located in Leadenham, Lincolnshire). A229/027



**Alfa Romeo 156 V6.** 1999(V). Red with black leather, MoT to 20th Dec, 138,000 miles, £350. Tel: Chris, 07872 911678. Email: chris.cousins@hotmail.co.uk. A229/036



**Alfa Romeo 156 Sportwagon 2.0 JTS Veloce.** 2004. 82,000 miles, red. 54 plate, black leather interior, CD auto-changer, telephone, boot liner and luggage nets. Sportpack, MoT Oct 2014, 6 mths RFL. 2 keys, 82K miles, belt and tensioners replaced at 65K. Service history by Alfa specialists, lovely example, £1495. For further information please telephone Phil: 07963 367950 (Gloucestershire). A229/038



**Alfa Romeo 916 Spider 2.0 JTS.** 2003, 73,500 miles, black. MOT September 2015, full document service history inc two cambelt changes, new clutch with lots of receipts of work done. My ownership new rear arms with Powerflex bushes, new drop links, new front wishbones, new discs and pads all round, air con regassed, three sets of keys with two remotes. This Spider is in excellent condition with stunning terracotta leather interior, £3500. Please ring Dino for more details 07791 509613 or 01554 755245. A229/023



**Alfa Romeo 159 SW 1.9 JTDM Lusso.** 2009, 44,000 miles. A beautiful example of this car in dark bronze metallic, Barley leather throughout and full Bose sound system. Very reluctant sale, in excellent condition, only 44,000 miles, registered in 2009. Looked after by Alfa Romeo club member. Two new front tyres Pirelli and new battery Bosch, five year guarantee. Just serviced and MOT and tax. Very good mpg, get 48mpg on run and 40mpg around town. New mats fitted everything electric and full working order. Manual six gears, hi-spec alloys, 17-inch Alfa spoke. CD player and FM radio great sounds. Looks and drives great. A rare car indeed. Time for a true driver's car? Priced at £9500 to sell. Tel: Ray, 07886 002482 (Essex) anytime. A229/034



**Alfa Romeo 159 1.9 JTDM Limited Edition.** 2009, 37,000 miles, Carbonio Black, full black leather interior with dark alloy wheels. In excellent condition, FARSH plus interim oil and filter changes, only 37,000 miles, 2nd owner (1st owner Alfa Romeo) owned for last three years, AROC member. Cambelt and rollers and 84K service at 27,207 miles Feb 2013. Last serviced at 33,259 miles March 2014. MOT until end of March 2015, £9000 ono. Tel: John, 07885 239291 (Croydon). A229/026

**Alfa Romeo 156 Lusso 2.0 16V Twin Spark.** 2001. 116,000 miles, silver, 5 speed manual, full black leather interior, electric windows front and back, a/c, 2 keys, remote central locking, alarm/immobiliser. Full service history with bills, new MOT Sep 2015, 4 previous owners, very good condition throughout! £1100 ovno. Tel: 07809 774098. Email: sargyrou72@gmail.com. A229/018



**Alfa Romeo GTV 3.0 V6.** 2000, 84,000 miles. Rosso Red, W-reg. Documents, service history, complete with 3 keys. Previously owned and modified by Alfa workshop manager. I've owned for 3 years. V/fast, lovely sound, fab road holding, great fun to drive. 5 months' tax, 11 months' MOT. Excellent example of much sought after and getting rarer enthusiast's car. It will appreciate, hence £4500 ovno. Tel: 07515 396211 (Bucks). A229/030



**Alfa Romeo GTV JTS Lusso.** Excellent metallic blue body, leather trim, air con, alarm, CD, full service history, recent cambelt, new tyres, battery, 83,000 miles, 2005, MOT till 05/2015, this car is a genuine bargain, £1750. Tel: 07860 328609 (Staffs). A229/033



**Alfa Romeo 916 GTV.** 2001. 68,000 miles. Nuvola Green/Blue (414). This beautiful compact sports car designed by Pininfarina, one of the great Italian styling studios, is an absolute delight to look at from any angle. The 3ltr V6 engine is also one of the classic Alfa engines and is rated at 218bhp at 6300rpm with a top speed of 238km/hr. So not only does this car have great looks but it also has sparkling performance. It is a rare and excellent example that has been lovingly looked after from day one. This car has won awards every year of its life. In past 12 months it has won Best Everyday Car and been the 916 Class Concours runner up. It has a complete service history. People often comment on how beautiful it looks. Full year's MoT. This car will bring a smile to your face every time you drive it. Unfortunately I have to let it go. The price is £5500. Tel: Dave Taylor: 07905 011884. Email: david.taylor31@virgin.net. A229/035



**Alfa Romeo 916 Spider 3.2 V6.** 2005, 49,500 miles, red. Excellent condition. Always garaged and covered. New cambelt, water pump, idlers, radiator, battery, complete clutch, Q2 diff, rear bushes etc. New ECU early this year. A properly maintained and looked after car. Serviced by Peak Alfa. Speak to Roger there for more servicing and maintenance info, £8500. Want more info? Tel: Paul, 07970 903876. A229/025



**Alfa Romeo Spider 2.2 JTS.** First registered 29 Dec 2009, 40,000 miles, Rosso Red, recent service including brake pads and new cam belt. FSH, dealer maintained, 12 months' MOT, 2 years' mechanical parts and labour warranty. Black leather interior, professionally applied ceramic body work protection. Gun metal grey powder coated 5 hole alloy wheels. Beautiful example of this iconic car, £11,950. Tel: 07941 192818. A229/063



**Alfa Romeo Brera 2.4 JTDM.** 2009, 94,000 miles. Beautifully presented and looked after car, red Pessio Frau upholstery, owner from new, big spec, please contact to discuss, pedal powered, re-mapped and chipped, new cambelt and water pump all by Mangoletsi, probably only Brera with fitted detachable tow bar(for kit car trailer). Reluctant sale as I drive a Discovery too, will let someone else have the joy, £8550. Tel: 07799 264041. A229/065

## FERRARI

**Ferrari 360 Spider.** Manual, 2004, Rosso/Crema. Daytona seats. Red carpet, factory shields. Full and comprehensive service history. Only 11,580 dry miles. Absolutely immaculate, virtually as new condition, £59,500, this car will not disappoint! Tel: 01248 851032 or 07957 882121. Email hip.kins360@gmail.com. A229/044



## FIAT



**Fiat Panda 100bhp.** Fitted Turbo conversion 160hp, only one in UK! As featured in issue 184 of *Auto Italia*, 5 page spread, will email on request. Basically a 2008 Fiat Panda 100hp 1.4 16v 6 speed in black but with a Turbo conversion producing 160bhp and 0-60 in 7.5 sec. Huge list of performance conversion items fitted as part of totally unique conversion. Stunning performance with exhaust note to match. MOT to June 2015, no advisories on last MOT cert, 47,000 miles with FSH, meticulously maintained by its three previous enthusiast owners! Excellent condition, fabulous fun car for only £3750. Text: 07772 785927. Email: funkyphilip@gmail.com (Kent). A229/017

**Fiat Tipo TDSX.** Minor sorting required, spares/repair, £895. Tel: Martin, 01737 769887. Email: airmart@hotmail.co.uk (Surrey). A229/022



**Garage sale!!** Fiat, good 903cc engine conversion, MOT'd, offers. Fiat Panda 750L, MOT'd, vgc, offers. Tel: Nick, 07720 115557 (Bedford). A229/012



**1964 Fiat Abarth 595.** Based on 'D' chassis, rare and in excellent condition. 10" wheels, anti-roll bars front and rear, tuned 500D-based engine, chassis original with no.1520. Parts package includes original Abarth oil sump and valve cover/inlet manifold with carburettor to complete 'Essece' spec. Rare opportunity to purchase an original example of these fast appreciating little Abarths. Visit Berni Motori Race Shop at [www.bernimotori.com](http://www.bernimotori.com). A229/066



**Fiat Coupe 20V Turbo.** Dry stored for the last 6 years, the car is nearly 17 years old, it is in excellent condition. The car was never driven during the winter. MOT March 2015, 92,400 miles, cambelt change 70K, 3 keys, sunroof, £2800. Tel: 07935 830055. Email: arturobrogna@yahoo.co.uk (Carmarthenshire). A229/011



**Fiat 500 Abarth 2011.** In Pasodoble Red with black leather interior, mileage 26,000, fuel type petrol, transmission manual. This Abarth 500 has a full service history and has been loved and carefully looked after and driven since new by 2 lady owners. Both the interior and the exterior are in excellent condition. It has 17" alloys with PZero Neros and an MoT until May 2015, a personalised number plate is included in the price, this is a reluctant but genuine private sale, £8995. Email: janebull@hotmail.co.uk. A229/064

**2015 CAR SHOWS AT The Sharnbrook Hotel \*\*\***

**Sunday 19th April 2015** **Sunday 21st June 2015**

**Breakfast Meeting & Driveout**

**BLOW OFF THOSE WINTER BLUES**

All vehicles welcome

- Classics • Vintage • Americana •
- Italian • Sports • Supercars

**2015 Car Show Season Start**

**Eat as much as you can Breakfast £10**

**Sunday 19th July 2015** **Sunday 6th Sept 2015**

**BEDFORDSHIRE ITALIAN CAR AND BIKE DAY**

**SUPERCAR Sunday**

**FIRST**

**TVR**

**Live German Grand Prix**

**Live Italian Grand Prix**

For more info please email: [info@thesharnbrookhotel.com](mailto:info@thesharnbrookhotel.com)

Telephone: 01234 783142 [www.thesharnbrookhotel.com](http://www.thesharnbrookhotel.com)

A6/Park Lane, Sharnbrook, Beds MK44 1LX

**FIAT COUPE SPECIALIST SPARES**

SPARES, SERVICING, RESTORATION & SALES

[WWW.FIATCOUPESPECIALIST.COM](http://WWW.FIATCOUPESPECIALIST.COM)

**01684 593187**

Unit 3 Buckmans Ind Est Longdon Heath Upton upon Severn Worcestershire WR8 0RJ



## MASERATI



**Maserati Biturbo 430.** 1989. Black with light grey interior, 2.8 manual gearbox, bodywork restored last year. Regularly serviced at McGrath Maserati. A fast excellent car that needs no work, change in circumstances forces sale, £5000. Tel: Malcolm, 01462 769492. Email: malcbarton55@gmail.com. A229/002



**1987 Maserati Biturbo Spyder 2.5.** Manual. Red/beige leather, MOT to Dec '14, 2 owners, only 28,700 miles, service history, original handbook and invoice, workshop manual, £8950. Tel: Peter Plant, 01283 702245. A229/061



**January 1990 Maserati Biturbo Spyder 2.8.** Swan White with blue leather interior. All in excellent order. This is an automatic version with up to date air conditioning and Pioneer stereo. Runs very well with full service history. Owner needs garage space, £8500. Tel: Nigel, 01534 743064. Email: sueguenier@hotmail.com. A229/062



**Maserati 4200 Cambiocorsa.** 2004. Immaculate, unmarked and maintained regardless of cost by fastidious owner. Metallic green with beige leather interior, 25,000 miles. First registered 28.09.04. Kept garaged. FSH, last serviced August 2014. New clutch at 18,000 miles. Leather interior completely re-Connollyed 2013. Sports exhaust system, Tracker, alarm and immobiliser fitted. MOT until 20.08.15. New gel battery fitted summer 2013. Skyhook suspension, traction control, 6 CD multichanger, sat nav and integral car phone, electric windows, driver and passenger airbags, height adjustable driver and passenger seats, steering wheel height and rake adjustment, Alloygator wheel rim protectors fitted, 1 previous owner. Private plate not included, £17,495. Tel: 07810 883264. Email: howard.cornes@gmail.com. A229/059

## MOTORCYCLES

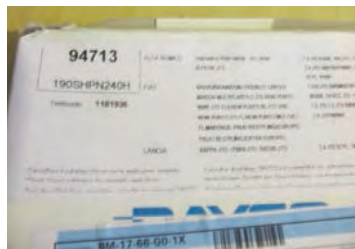


**Garage sale!!** Vespa small frame, MOT'd, big bore kit, offers. 1960 125 Vespa VBB, blue, MOT'd. Tel: Nick, 07720 115557 (Bedford). A229/013

## PARTS



**Alfa GTV four five hole alloy wheels,** fitted good treaded tyres, 205/50/16, oiro £200; Alfa g16 GTV speedo/rev counter module, black, vgc, oiro £50. Tel: 01564 772714 (Solihull). A229/060



**New and unopened** Dayco cam belt 94713 to fit Alfa 1.9 or 2.4, Fiat Bravo/Brava, Punto 1.9JTD or 2.4JTD, £5. Tel: 01246 464926. A229/004

**Lancia Dedra 1990-94.** New radiator, headlamp, badges, and literature. Used grilles. Any Dedra owners still out there please phone or email for more details. Tel: Bob, 01684 892906. Email: bobhirschhorn@gmail.com (Malvern, Worcs). A229/003

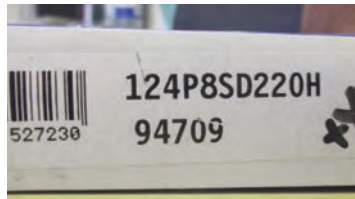
**4 Borrani RW3344 Record 15x4.5K wire wheels.** Fully refurbished with new spokes, polished centres and rims. Tel: 01531 650181. A229/028

**Alfa wheels.** 4 no 16" teledial graphite grey with tyres, suit 147, 156, 916 GTV etc, make me an offer. Tel: Roy, 07954 099482 (collect from Sawbridgeworth, Herts). A229/045

**Brembo brake calipers.** Refurbished Brembo 305mm brake calipers, seal dust caps and painted, £200. Email: richardmorrill@yahoo.com. A229/046

**Stainless steel exhaust GTV 916.** Bespoke GTV 916 3.0, used quad, excellent condition, collection only, £150. Email: richardmorrill@yahoo.com. A229/047

**Alfa 75 Saloon parts.** Doors, bonnets, boot lids, bumpers, roof panel, rear NS quarter panel. Tel: 07802 934278. Email: dalley@dalleypeter1.orangehome.co.uk. A229/048



**New and unopened** Dayco cam belt 94709 to fit Fiat Brava/Bravo, Punto 98/99 1.2 16v, £5. Tel: Daniel, 07425 012945. A229/005



**Marelli rear brake pad set.** Fits Alfa 145, 146, 155. Also Fiat Bravo and Bravas, and Lancia Dedras. New and unused, £10 plus carriage. Tel: Richard 07818 715502. Email: ricloon@yahoo.co.uk (Bexhill, East Sussex). A229/008



**A pair of rear window seals** for a Punto 3dr with one small split, otherwise perfect condition, hardly used, £5. Tel: Daniel, 07528 594013. A229/006



**Any ideas, Fiat 132?** Window winder mechanism. If I am wrong please let me know. Brand new, £10. Email: dannyuno123@hotmail.com. A229/007

**105 Series parts.** Large quantity of 105 Series parts for sale, collected over 40 years. GT, Super, Berlina: engines, gearboxes, carbs, lights, plus many other rare bits and pieces. Prefer to sell as one lot. Tel: Ian, 07796 955148. Email: ducati.rider@hotmail.co.uk. A229/049

**Alfa 75 exhaust.** Brand new offside front pipe for Alfa 75 3ltr, purchased in error from EB spares. Inclusive cost was £135, will accept £80. Tel: Steve, 07788 905152. A229/050

**Alfa Romeo parts.** Mainly Giulia 105 Series and Alfasud, for sale at www.autotreasures.co.uk. Also books, prints, posters and other memorabilia. A229/051



**Original Abarth exhausts (NOS).** All makes A to Z, sixties, seventies, also ANSA Fiat 600, see www.abarth-exhausts.com. Email: info@abarth-exhausts.com. A229/009



## MISCELLANEOUS

**Auto Italia magazines for sale.** From issue 1 1995 till 2012. Full sets, £900 ono, good condition, some still in wrapper. Tel: 07917 607163 or 01492 546168. A229/014

**Lancia collection for sale.** Owner's club magazines, motoring magazines, photos, brochures, books and more! Please contact me if you are looking for anything on Lancia cars. Tel: 01273 583057. Email: mrmakyt@hotmail.co.uk (East Sussex). A229/052

**Cherished registration number for sale 'S8 FRX'.** On retention certificate, £135 including DVLA transfer fee. Tel/text: David, 07710 543576. A229/019

**Auto Italia issues** from 1995 to 2014, 168 issues, £60, vgc. Tel: Bill, 07958 636202 (Lancashire). A229/020

**'M7 MAS' registration.** MY MASerati registration (M7 MAS) for sale. If you would like to have the ultimate registration for your Maserati, please call 01525 221635 for further information. A229/053

# Sell your Italian car, bike or spares here\* FREE OF CHARGE!

\* PRIVATE ADS ONLY. FOR TRADE RATES CALL 01732 445325

**Colour photographs are free for PRIVATE advertisers!** You can include up to 30 words free, too; thereafter it's 30p per word. Advertisements can be submitted by email, or posted using this form. Send your advert together with your remittance if applicable to: **Auto Italia Private Classifieds, Morningside House, 1 High Avenue, Letchworth SG6 3RL, United Kingdom, (email: liz.solo@ntlworld.com)** to arrive no later than **13th February** for inclusion in the **April issue**. May issue deadline: **13th March**. All adverts received after the deadline will be inserted in the following issue.

Private adverts cannot be submitted by telephone. For **TRADE RATES** please email: **david@talkmediasales.co.uk** or call: **01732 445325**.

PLEASE USE BLOCK CAPITALS

NAME:

ADDRESS:

POSTCODE:

EMAIL:

TEL NO:

VISA/MASTERCARD/EUROCARD/DELTA No:

Expiry date: Issue no: Remittance enclosed (if applicable): £

WORDING FOR ADVERT:


CLASSIFICATION REQUIRED:

TICK AS APPLICABLE

PICTURE ENC: ☐

TRADE IDENTIFICATION: ☐

**HOW DO I SEND A PHOTO TO GO WITH MY ADVERT?**

1. Email a jpeg file to **liz.solo@ntlworld.com**

2. Send a good quality photographic print (non-returnable). Post to above address

**YOU CAN INCLUDE A PHOTOGRAPH WITH YOUR ADVERT  
FREE OF CHARGE!**

**Adverts received before 13th February will go into April issue**

**MAY DEADLINE: 13th MARCH**

The publishers accept no responsibility for the quality of goods sold through these pages although the greatest care will be taken to ensure that advertisements accepted are bona fide. Advertisers should take note of the requirements of the TRADE DESCRIPTIONS ACT 1968 when preparing their advertisements for publication.



**Early owner's manual(s) 1920s.** 1928 Alfa Romeo 6 cyl 1500 maintenance manual. Alfa Romeo Turismo 17/75 6 cyl 1750 maintenance manual, offers. Email: **rosking@freentname.co.uk**. A229/029

**Auto Italia issues** 2, 3, 5, 20, 21 and 49, two hardback Abarth books and lots of Alfa sales brochures etc for sale. Please ring Alan: 01635 202521 for more details (Berks). A229/054

## WANTED

**Parts wanted for Maserati QP IV:** driver side front door kick plate (mine is scratched and scuffed), accelerator pedal rubber, silver Maserati plastic sticker which is on the central console above the air con/ashtray in rear (daughter broke it when swinging her leg over). Tel: Christopher Johnson, 07788 203143 or 01787 242136. Email: **christopher@meritas-international.co.uk**. A229/055



**Wanted by young enthusiast.** Any pre war Alfa Romeo parts for helping my ongoing project. Worn out, damaged or broken, everything gratefully considered along with any information. Please telephone James, 07779 423847. A229/001

**Wanted by classic car enthusiast.**

Long term classic car enthusiast is looking for a sensibly priced Khamsin, Sebring or 3500GT in very good condition. Looking forward to you making contact. Tel: +49 1728 104109. Email: **wgeisler@gmx.de**. A229/056

**Wanted vintage Alfa Romeo 6C 1750 or 1500 parts.** Super enthusiastic

younger person trying to assemble a vintage Alfa requires everything from wheels to hooter! Any offers or information gratefully received, thank you. Tel: James Miers: 07779 423847. A229/057

**Wanted for a 1997 Quattroporte.**

Headlights, front bumper, front door stays. Tel: Steve Rogers, 01707 261232 or 07563 552500 mob. Email: **steverogers47@btinternet.com**. A229/058

We support [www.suorry.org](http://www.suorry.org)

**THE HOBBY SHOP**  
Est. 1988  
Tel. 01795 531666  
[www.hobb-e-mail.com](http://www.hobb-e-mail.com)

Trade enquiries welcome on some ranges

**WEST S Faversham, Kent, ME13 7JB**  
SMS Text no. 07889 818727

**brumm**

**12**

**Gilles Villeneuve**  
Grand Prix Van Nederland  
F1 World Championship 1979

**AS59**  
**Gilles su tre ruote...** in 1/43rd scale  
**Ferrari 312 T4**  
**G.P. Olanda 1979** £40 + P&P  
**Gilles Villeneuve #12**

## ADVERTISEMENT INDEX

Alfa Romeo	31	NJS	87
Alex Jupe	146	Oakley Design	148
Autoficina	11	Omicron	95
Autodelta Services	93	R H Willis	15
Barkaways	31	R M Auctions	67
Classiccaro	95	R Proietti	95
Cheshire Classic Cars	59	Ross Pistons	95
David Thomas Garages	98	Rusper	146
Days of Milton Keynes	93	Silverstone Auctions	02
EBC Brakes UK	147	Southwood Car Company	75/145
Fiat	23	Superflex	45
Foskers	04	Superformance	09
Gonnella Brothers	146	Swissvax	98
Hoyle Fox Classics	13	Talacrest	36/37
Italia Speed	146	Torque Automotive	93
Longstone Tyres	97	<b>CLASSIFIEDS</b>	<b>88-92</b>
Maserati	51	FCSS	
Monzasport	81	Hobby Shop	



**Autodelta**  
Ultimate Alfa Romeo Performance



If your standards in life are set as high as ours, you always desire the very best quality. The best is exactly the quality that we have always envisioned, throughout our 28 year history.

Due to the quality and exclusivity of the ALFA ROMEO brand and our determination to distinguish ourselves from others, we are proud to offer a unique level of maintenance and tuning services at a competitive price.

Servicing | Maintenance | Tuning

**25<sup>th</sup>**  
1987 - 2012

At Autodelta, we have only one goal:  
To exceed your expectations.

28 Years of Ultimate  
Alfa Romeo Performance

Forza House | St. Leonard's Road | London NW10 6ST  
T: 020 8838 3535 | sales@autodelta.co.uk | www.autodelta.co.uk

check  
out our  
parts shop on  
**ebay**



**TORQUE**  
**Automotive**

Unit 59, Murdock Road, Bedford, MK41 7PL

We are a family run business specialising in Alfa Romeo/Fiat cars, parts & accessories. We dismantle vehicles on site and can supply used or brand new genuine oem parts worldwide as well as offering a fitting service.

We are proud to be Bedford's first independent Alfa Romeo/Fiat specialist, so whether you need a specific part supplying, refurbished or fitted we can help!



Our refurbishing service will give your parts a new lease of life!

info@torqueautomotiveltld.co.uk

call: 01234 268550

www.torqueautomotiveltld.co.uk

f www.facebook.com/Torqueautomotiveltld t www.twitter.com/torqueautomotiv



**Days**  
Mk ltd



**We will take care  
of your baby!**

**The Fiat and Alfa Romeo Specialist  
in Milton Keynes**

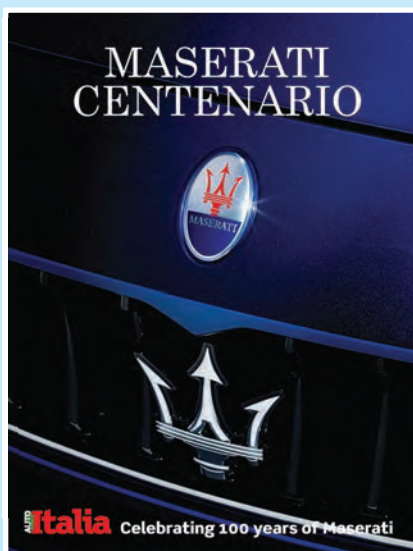
**01908 610700**

**www.daysmk.com**





# Auto Italia Back Issues and Binders



## PRICE LIST

## Back issues

UK £4.75\*, £6.00 EU + USA, £7.50 RoW

\* Special UK offer any 3 for £10

Tell us which subject you are interested in and we will search our database to locate suitable issues

## Binders

£9.95 UK, £12.00 EU + USA, £15.00 RoW

## Calendar

£6.95 UK, £7.95 EU + USA, £8.95 RoW

## Maserati Centenario

£11.05 UK, £12.45 EU + USA, £13.45 RoW

Prices include postage and packing

Payment by cards or PayPal

For multiple orders we will calculate postage at cost. Please email your requirements to:

**josie@gingerbeerpromotions.com**

## 2015 CALENDAR

Printed using high quality materials, the A3 sized calendar features some of the most iconic images from Auto Italia's archive





**ROSS**  
racing pistons

FORGED ALUMINUM  
ALLOY **PISTONS**

BECAUSE POWER COMES FROM WITHIN!



**MADE IN THE USA**

- Forged from 2618 T61 aluminum alloy
- Custom designs for racing and restoration
- Ultra flat and precise ring groove finishing
- High performance coatings available
- High strength and lightweight wristpins
- Steel and ductile rings available
- Quick turnaround and reasonable prices
- We encourage consultation by phone or e-mail

FACEBOOK.COM/ROSSPISTONS

**WWW.ROSSPISTONS.COM 310.536.0100**

With thousands of applications to choose from & unmatched quality and service, Ross Racing Pistons have become the piston of choice for drivers both on and off the track!

# Omicron

Lancia spares and restorations





- ✓ **Parts** new, reproduction and secondhand
- ✓ **Restoration** full or partial concours restorations
- ✓ **Bodywork** panelwork, paintwork and trim
- ✓ **Engines** standard or higher specification
- ✓ **Suspension** also gearbox, brakes & steering
- ✓ **Competition** competition preparation
- ✓ **Mail order parts** we ship to over 65 countries!
- ✓ **Also** servicing, inspections and more...  
...all to the very highest standards




**Omicron Engineering Ltd.,**  
The Long Barn, Mulbarton, Norwich, Norfolk, NR14 8JS, UK  
sales@omicron.uk.com • www.omicron.uk.com  
Tel: +44 (0)1508 570351 • Fax: +44(0)1508 570795

**CLASSICARCO**  
the classic car specialists



*"Competenza, Expertise e Passione"*  
*"Knowledge, Expertise & Passion"*

Fabrication and Spares  
Full Restorations and Body Work  
Servicing and Repairs

+44 (0)1204 579949  
theworkshop@classicarco.com  
www.classicarco.com

Established for over 25 years

**WWW.FIAT500.CC**

MAIL ORDER PARTS  
AVAILABLE ONLINE  
FREE VALUATIONS  
SERVICING  
REPAIRS  
CRASH REPAIRS  
RESTORATION

AUTO ELECTRICS  
DIAGNOSTICS  
TUNING  
PERFORMANCE  
CONVERSIONS  
MOT PREPARATION  
WELDING

**BUY PARTS ONLINE**

SPECIALISTS IN ALL ITALIAN MARQUES  
ALFA ROMEO FIAT LANCIA

2 BLUNDELL STREET LONDON N7 9BJ  
T 020 7607 0798 F 020 7619 0001  
E SALES@FIAT500.CC



**R.PROIETTI LTD**  
ITALIAN CAR SPECIALISTS EST. 1965



COMING SOON

ISSUE 230 ON SALE MARCH 4TH 2015

# Ferrari 330P

The full story behind the Ex-Graham Hill and former Maranello Rosso collection Le Mans car



**ALSO Alfa Romeo 1900 - Two rare Alfas back to back**

Some features may appear in a later issue

If you are having trouble finding your favourite magazine, call us on 01462 678205. Auto Italia is available at [WHSmith](#). If you cannot find the magazine remember that you can reserve your copy under the Just Ask! scheme so, well, just ask!





**PIRELLI**  
**CINTURATO™**  
**CN36**

+44(001302711123  
longstone.com



**Longstone**  
**CLASSIC**  
**TYRES**



Photography: GF Williams



**GOT A SUPERCAR?  
GET IT PROTECTED.**

SWISS WAXMAKERS SINCE 1930



**SWISSVAX™**  
HIGH PERFORMANCE CAR CARE  
HAND MADE IN SWITZERLAND



**CLEANER FLUID  
REGULAR**  
100/250/470ML

A non-abrasive paint preserving solution containing heavy polishing oils that will nourish and refresh the paintwork.

**SCUDERIA WAX**

A Premium wax for Italian vehicles  
40% by volume yellow Brazilian Grade one Carnauba wax  
Offering enhanced resistance against micro-scratches.



+44(0) 1423 860 022

WWW.SWISSVAX.CO.UK

SALES@SWISSVAX.CO.UK



**www.DAVID THOMAS GARAGES.co.uk**



**Alfa Romeo Specialists**



Newly Opened Site:  
David Thomas Garages Ltd  
Bury Lane, Bramfield  
Hertfordshire SG14 2QL  
Phone: 01992 536110

Over 25 years Alfa experience  
Ex-Alfa GB factory trained  
Fully equipped modern workshop  
MOT testing  
Very latest Bosch & Alfa Romeo  
examiner diagnostic equipment  
ASNU Injector testing & cleaning  
Service is our business



**Codicote Hertfordshire T:01438 820288 F:01438 820392**



# Alfa Romeo Buyers' Guide Coupes and Saloons

*Giulietta*

MTJ



*Brera*

147

GT

156

*Glv Coup*

S.Z.



# Flying the Flag

With just two models in Alfa's current saloon car range, much is expected of the Giulietta – how does it rate as a used car buy?

Report by Adam Towler  
Photography by Michael Ward

**A**lfa Romeo made some grand claims about the Giulietta at the launch, but they were not without solid foundation. The firm pulled out all the stops to make it the most tested and well-developed car in its history, basing it on a new 'Compact' platform and bequeathing it advanced multi-link rear suspension and a range of new engines.

## THE RANGE

Available as a five door only, the Giulietta's bodyshell made extensive use of very high strength steels (quoted as being 90% of the total material used in the structure) and extensive use of aluminium in the suspension front and rear to keep unsprung mass to a minimum.

At launch in 2010 Alfa proudly boasted of five new engines for the Giulietta, with each one employing turbocharging and cutting edge technology to reduce emissions and fuel consumption to a minimum, while retaining a sporting edge.

The base engine was a turbocharged 1.4-litre four cylinder producing a more than adequate 120bhp. Its more powerful twin, the 1.4 TB MultiAir, shares the same capacity but generates a superb 170bhp, with as much as 250Nm of torque generated from only 2500rpm. The most powerful petrol engine is reserved for the Cloverleaf model: branded 1750 Tbi, the return of this famed capacity in Alfa enthusiast folklore creates a 235bhp hot hatch with 150mph potential and a 0-60mph time of just 6.8 seconds. Thanks to stand out features such as direct injection and a variable geometry turbocharger, the Cloverleaf develops its considerable maximum torque of 350Nm at just 1900rpm.

At launch there were two diesel choices: the 1.6-litre JTDM-2 with 105bhp and the 2-litre JTDM-2 with 170bhp. Naturally, these engines are all about torque – 320 and 350Nm respectively – along with competitive running costs, particularly for company car buyers. The smaller of the two engines is rated at 64.2mpg and 114g/km of CO<sub>2</sub>, with the 170bhp variant registering 60.1mpg and 124g/km.

The engine choices were spread across different model lines: the entry-level Turismo and Lusso models

feature 'normal' suspension, while the more aggressively suspended and configured models are the Veloce and the Cloverleaf, the latter being a standalone model in the range.

All models were well equipped, with even Turismos featuring six airbags and air-conditioning. Lusso models add climate control, infotainment controls on the steering wheel and Alfa's Blue&Me connectivity system for smart phones, amongst other features. Moving to the Veloce specification brings the aforementioned sporting bent, with side skirts, sports suspension, leather and microfibre upholstery and 17in alloy wheels with 225/45 R17 tyres. Cloverleafs have 10mm lowered suspension, red brake calipers, dark tinted windows and 18in Spoke design alloy wheels with a dark titanium finish.







The character of the Giulietta is defined by Alfa's DNA control switch, which as per usual, offers a choice of Normal, Dynamic and All-weather modes. Depending on the programme selected, this system tailors the engine mapping, gearbox (if an auto), steering response, brakes and the Q2 electronic differential (that's standard on all models). For example, in Dynamic mode the response to an accelerator pedal input is more aggressive, the Q2 is enabled and the brakes are 'pre-filled' so that the pad is nearer to the disc for immediate braking response.

Perhaps surprisingly, the real fleet favourite engine – the 140bhp version of the 2-litre JD TM-2 diesel engine – wasn't available at launch, not appearing until February 2011 (with a Co2 rating of 119g/km and economy of 62.8mpg). A month later the TCT dual-clutch gearbox

was available, providing immediate and seamless shifts with improved economy.

### SPECIAL EDITIONS

The Sportiva special edition model arrived in August 2012 built upon the Veloce specification with big brakes, 18in wheels and sports leather seats. Effectively it gave the customer £3000 of additional equipment for £1860. The more recent Collezione special edition has a contrasting roof colour (black or dark grey on black cars), and was only available in either red, black or white. Chrome and titanium detailing further sets it further apart.

In October 2014 Alfa Romeo announced the first major update for the car since launch, with mild tweaks to the exterior including new wheels and colours, but a significant restyle to the interior with new door cards, centre stack, new dials, two new infotainment systems under the 'Uconnect' banner, and importantly, new seats. There's also a new engine – a replacement for the 140bhp JD TM-2 that now features 150bhp and 380nm of torque.

### WHAT TO LOOK FOR

The resounding response to asking the question 'what goes wrong with the Giulietta' seems to be "not very much at all". The Giulietta is built like no Alfa before it, and the more recent the build the better they are.





There is a belief in some quarters, although not substantiated by us it must be said, that the early cars on a '60' plate are not quite as impressive, and that Alfa may have even stopped production to sort these issues out. There are reports of transmission issues on early cars, but these should have been sorted out by now on any car that's being looked at as a potential purchase.

Minor issues have been reported with certain pieces of interior trim, such as gearknobs working loose, rattling door speakers and creaking seats, but the dealer network seems able to fix these faults.

Cars with the more sporty suspension set up can suffer from uneven wear on the inner edge of the rear tyres (particularly Bridgestones) that can sound as

though a wheel bearing has gone at speed. If you're buying a diesel listen to the take off in first gear – the dual mass flywheel can occasionally give trouble.

It's important to check the service history of a Giulietta, particularly the Cloverleaf variant. For starters, it should be serviced with Selenia Sport Power 5/40w oil, but that oil change needs to have been monitored separately from the standard two-year servicing schedule. Oil changes should be done every 10,500 miles, and naturally, there's a fair chance this mileage will be achieved inside the overall servicing schedule – some cars out there are well overdue an oil change. Diesel models should have an oil change when the light appears on the dashboard, again separate to the overall servicing schedule.

*ABOVE: The TCT gearbox provides a rewarding driving experience. Hopefully it can sustain high mileages like a conventional manual unit*







### DRIVING IMPRESSIONS

On the move the Giulietta is smooth and refined, whether powered by petrol or diesel engines. All have excellent torque thanks to their turbocharged delivery, and the only slight question mark over refinement is the usual diesel clatter on start up and plenty of road roar on some surfaces. The days of tuneful Alfa engines are past, sadly.

In the sportiest models, the driving experience is sure-footed and capable, with limited body roll and quick steering. The more powerful diesels and the 170bhp 1.4-litre petrol car offer strong acceleration, and powerful brakes, so it's possible to cover ground at a rapid rate. In fact, if you're after petrol power there's a strong case for going no higher than the 1.4 MultiAir: the Cloverleaf offers stronger performance, but it's not the bristling hot hatch that its name badge suggests.

### OWNERSHIP

Giulietta owners seem to be very pleased with their cars, citing the car's style combined with its inherent quality and ease of ownership as a major attraction. Many are now on their second Giulietta – always a good sign – and warranty claims seem to have been low. The car's extended servicing schedule makes a trip to the dealer a less frequent occurrence than in

days of old, and even tyre wear seems to be mild – a pair of front tyres can last for nearly 20,000 miles.

### BUYING ADVICE

Given their relative newness, a lot of Giuliettas are still within the official Alfa Romeo dealer network. Privately available, early cars tend to start at the £7000 mark, with dealer stock beginning around £10,000 (for typically cars with much lower mileage).

The innovative TCT transmission seems to command a £500 premium on the used market, so if you're doing a lot of driving around town in particular, this is well worth the money.

As with any car of this relative newness, you're looking for very few marks and a watertight service and ownership history. Anything else and we'd advise walking away and finding another example.

### VERDICT

The Giulietta is really a mid-range car and not a range topper like the previous 159, a new car will be launched this year. In that context it is good at what it does. The big capacity cars are front heavy and a bit harsh over speed bumps and with some tyre noise, while the rapid 1.4 TB MultiAir is better balanced with a nicer ride. This engine is an attractive option across the Group.



### PRICE GUIDE

**1750 TB QV Verde TCT**  
2014, 3500 miles, Matt grey, as new. £24,995  
**1.6 JTDM-2 Business Ed.**  
2014, 100 miles, as new, Ex demo. £17,995  
**1.4 TB MultiAir Veloce**  
2012, 25,882 miles, FASH. £11,145  
**2.0 JTDM-2 140 Veloce**  
2011, 40,699 miles, one owner. £10,000  
**1.4 TB MultiAir Lusso**  
2011, 30,445 miles, FSH. £9600



# Entry Level Alfa

Unmistakably an Alfa Romeo, the Grande Punto-based MiTo has a range of specifications to suit all tastes

Report by Keith Seume  
Photography by Michael Ward





Can it really be more than six years since Alfa Romeo's MiTo (**M**ilan-**T**orino) first took to the UK roads? The hatchback certainly grabbed everyone's attention back in 2008. By the time of its UK launch in 2009, there was a desperate need for a supermini to replace the ageing 147. The 147, which had itself replaced the 145, was a handy-sized car but never particularly spacious inside. The similarly-proportioned MiTo, on the other hand, is positively capacious by comparison.

Underneath that Centro Stile-penned exterior lays the heart of something altogether more prosaic, in the form of the platform of a Fiat Grande Punto. Now there's nothing ostensibly wrong with that – every manufacture raids the parts bin to save money – it's just that the ever-so chic and cheeky MiTo promises to be more than a rebodied Punto, Grande or otherwise.

The SCCS platform means the MiTo has a fairly conventional drivetrain, with a transversely-mounted four-cylinder engine driving the front wheels. The front suspension features MacPherson struts with lower wishbones, while the rear end is based around a torsion-beam axle with coil springs. The MiTo's steering is electrically-assisted, and the brakes, discs all round, are servo-assisted and equipped with ABS. The exact specification of the braking system varied according to model.

The MiTo bristles with modern technology, although one shouldn't necessarily be taken in by the buzzwords used by the sales team. A look through the brochure will tell you that the little hatchback comes with Q2 – electronic differential control to reproduce the effect of a self-locking diff – and EBD. That's Electronic Brakeforce Distributor, a system which balances the braking effort, front to rear. Then there's VDC (Vehicle Dynamic Control), ASR (Anti-Slip Regulation), a traction-control system that



adjusts the braking and engine output via the ECU. There's HBA – Hydraulic Brake Assistance – which comes into play in emergency situations, and MSR, or Motor Speed Regulator, which controls the engine braking when the throttle is released.

And don't forget the Alfa DNA system: D for Dynamic, N for Normal and A for All-weather modes. This is a selectable programme acting on the engine, brakes, steering and gearbox to suit road conditions and driving style, and is available with all but the 'basic' 1.4-litre petrol engine.

## VARIATIONS

There have been 34 variations of engine specification, suffice to say that there are 1.3-litre and 1.6-litre diesels, a petrol 1.4-litre and 1.4-litre Turbo and a 0.9-litre TwinAir.

The two diesels comprised a 1.3-litre (1248cc) 85bhp JTDm-2 and a 1.6-litre (1598cc) 120bhp JTDm-2. Earlier pre-MultiAir models were offered with 95- and 120bhp 16-valve 1.4-litre petrol engines, but the petrol engine line-up currently consists of a non-turbo 78bhp 1.4-litre (1368cc) eight-valve unit, and a range of similarly-sized MultiAir engines (first introduced in September 2009) producing 105bhp, 135bhp and 170bhp according to model, the latter two being turbocharged. In fact, these are the first turbo engines to be used in an Alfa Romeo since the days of the old 155 Q4. All are offered with a six-speed transmission, with the exception of the 1.3-litre diesel and the 78bhp petrol versions. Alfa's TCT semi-automatic transmission is also available with the 135bhp engine.

From 2011 the MiTo was available with the 85bhp 0.9-litre TwinAir engine first seen in the Fiat 500. In 2014 the uprated version boasted 105bhp. These TwinAirs qualify for zero-road tax.

To quote the MiTo's sales brochure, 'The MultiAir system controls the intake of air into the engine







directly as it enters the cylinders, based on actual power requirements. The results of this management system are,' claims Alfa, 'truly revolutionary'.

In real terms, valve opening and closing isn't governed solely by the profile of the camshaft but relies instead on an electro-hydraulic system. Again according to Alfa Romeo, 'The system is based on the insertion of an amount of oil between the cam and the intake valve, which can be varied through a solenoid valve. By electronically controlling the opening and closing of this valve it is possible to regulate the power of the engine with a greater degree of flexibility, with innumerable advantages that have never before been possible: reduced fuel consumption and carbon emissions, increased maximum power and maximum torque, optimised drive performance.'

Alfa claims that you get up to 15% more torque and a 10% reduction in fuel consumption. There is little doubt, though, that the MiTo not only feels good to drive, but is also pretty economical across the range – except for the 0.9 when driven in Sport mode.

## INTERIOR

The first thing that will strike a Grande Punto owner who might be tempted by a MiTo is that the seating position is much lower. The dashboard has a distinctly corporate Alfa look to it, with two large gauges (speedo and tach) in a binnacle directly in front of the driver, between which are two smaller ancillary gauges for fuel and water temperature. Below these is the computer display.

In the centre of the generously padded dashboard is a panel housing fresh-air vents, the sound system and, below that, controls for the air-conditioning. A bank of switches controlling the lights is to be found to the right of the steering column (to the left on left-hand drive models). The steering wheel itself is a chunky design, with large airbag pad in the centre of the three rather over-styled spokes which also

house controls for the sound system.

The seats are comfortable, supportive and, it has to be said, attractively styled – the 'Sport' design used in the lower-spec models may take a little getting used to, though, with its funky stitching in the backrest panels. Cloth, Alcantara and leather finishes are alternatives according to model – basically, the more you pay, the better you get.

Rear seat access is easy, as long as you remember to keep your head down – the relatively low roof line can catch you out. Rear passengers won't be too crazy about the legroom, and the lack of visibility makes anything but the shortest of drives a claustrophobic experience: the rear window is small, and the rear quarter windows even tinier. Having said that, MiTo passengers will find themselves better off than those travelling in the back of BMW's rival Mini.

The boot is larger than one might expect at 270 litres and will prove more than adequate for most owners. The only problem is that the boot floor is set very low, making it difficult to lift items over the high rear lip. A split-folding rear seat is available as an extra-cost option. The biggest letdown, though, is the lack of decent storage space in the cabin.

## ON THE ROAD

Turn the key and the main gauges flick round to 'max' before settling back to zero. The petrol models are particularly smooth, and the gear change silky – especially the six-speed version. Although the popular 1.4 petrol model is powered by Fiat's familiar T-Jet engine, it still manages to sound distinctively 'Alfa Romeo', with a pleasant rasp to the otherwise deep exhaust note.

With plenty of adjustment on the seats, it's not hard to find a comfortable driving position, but to be honest the MiTo isn't a car you'd buy for a luxurious ride. The seats are slightly on the firm side but the MiTo's weak points are wind and road noise. This lack of ride

*ABOVE: Later JTDM-2 versions benefited from the more refined diesel power units. Best performer is the powerful 1.4 Turbo. BELOW RIGHT: Some owners report a dead feel to the steering*



refinement is most likely due to the rather aging Grande Punto platform, although the larger 17in wheels and low-profile tyres on the sportier models don't help, but there's no real excuse for the wind noise.

The early petrol engines were accused of being a little sluggish off-boost, and unwilling to rev. The MultiAir models are a different ballgame, though, generally feeling gutsier than those first non-MA versions. In general, the engines feel willing, apart from the 78bhp 1.4-litre petrol and 95bhp 1.3-litre diesel engines, which both seem to lack power. The 135bhp MultiAir petrol engine is impressive, offering plenty of punch, which makes the MiTo feel like a 'real' Alfa Romeo.

The steering is sharp, although there is something of a dead feel in the straight-ahead position. Things improve when you select the 'Dynamic' option on the DNA control and step up the speed, but you still get the sense that you are making constant, almost imperceptible, corrections, even when driving in a straight line.

'Dynamic' mode also improves the throttle response, making the MiTo feel suddenly altogether more sporty, although it also means the MiTo is slightly heavier to drive than in 'Normal' mode. The 'All-weather' mode is intended for when road conditions are icy or slippery. The Q2 diff system works well, allowing the driver to punch hard out of corners, and helping to control the inevitable tendency to torque steer in a straight line when accelerating hard. The brakes are more than adequate for the performance, so no qualms there.

On the whole, the MiTo is well deserving of its Alfa Romeo badging – it feels 'special'. It's more than just a re-skinned Fiat, and definitely has more soul than most rivals. The BMW Mini and Fiat's Nuovo 500 are clear

rivals, in terms of styling if nothing else, but the MiTo succeeds in looking different without having to resort to sometimes-corny retro-styling.

### WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Early cars seemed to have been plagued with faulty alarm systems, because the alarm sounded for no reason at all. Sticking brakes were also a known problem on some of the first cars, with resultant excessive pad wear, while we've heard reports of sundry rattles from passenger seats and door locks, although all these problems should have been fixed under warranty by now. On the whole, though, there have been relatively few problems with the MiTo.

### VERDICT

The best engine in the range is the remarkably civilised 1.4 Turbo with a power output and performance that feels more like a 1.8-litre than just 1368cc. Later MultiJet 2 diesels are much improved over the earlier version and offer excellent economy. While the torquey 0.9 TwinAir seems like a good idea, in Sport mode it is very thirsty on fuel. In economy mode the car is lifeless and quite dreary to drive. **■**

### PRICE GUIDE

**MiTo Quadrifoglio Verde 1.4 TCT**

2014, 3000 miles, FSH, £15,990

**MiTo 1.6 JTDM-2 Distinctive**

2012, 46,000 miles, FSH, £8495

**MiTo 0.9 Sportiva TwinAir**

2012, 16,351 miles, SH, £8399

**MiTo 1.4 TB MultiAir 135 Lusso**

2010, 19,000 miles, SH, £7750

**MiTo 1.6 JTDM Lusso**

2009, 72,656 miles, FSH, £4750





# Alfa Romeo Brera

The stylish Italian coupe that was the product of Alfa Romeo's uncomfortable alliance with General Motors

Report by Keith Seume  
Photography by Michael Ward







The Brera project was unveiled to the public at the 2002 Geneva Motorshow, where a 2+2 concept based on the chassis and drivetrain of a Maserati Spyder was put on display on the Italdesign stand. It was a striking design, with what we tend to refer to these days as 'Lambo' or 'scissor-action' doors. And while this feature may make it sound like a flight of fancy, the Brera concept car was a fully-working, fully-driveable prototype powered by Maserati's thundering V8.

Fast-forward three years and we return again to Geneva for the 2005 Motorshow where this time it was Alfa Romeo which stole the limelight with the productionised version of Giugiaro's design. It was smaller than the original, being based on the GM/Fiat platform which was shared with Alfa's 159 saloon. The Brera was the natural successor to the g16-series GTV, in both its coupe and Spider forms, although the open-top 'Brera' Spider wouldn't appear until 2006. Pininfarina was given the task of turning the Brera into a production reality.

### ENGINES

For motivation, the Brera relied initially on a choice of three engines: a 185bhp 2.2-litre transverse four-cylinder unit, a frugal 200bhp JTDM diesel or the top of the range 260bhp 3.2-litre V6, of GM origins. Carried over from the 156 models, the 2.4-litre, five-cylinder, 20-valve turbo-diesel produced an impressive 300lb/ft of torque. The General Motors-derived V6 is generally accused of being less 'exciting' than the Alfa Romeo-designed V6 it replaced, but still made a great noise at high rpm, although it is undeniably less refined. At least the petrol models have timing chains, rather than toothed belts, so that's one thing less to worry about.

The first two engines were only available with a two-wheel drive drivetrain, the latter with Alfa's Q4 all-wheel drive system, based around a Torsen coupling.

The four-wheel drive system normally splits the power 43%-57%, with the bias to the rear. When the differential senses a lack of grip, it adjusts the split to allow some 78% of the torque to the front or rear wheels as needed. In 2008, however, the V6 models were also made available in Q2 two-wheel drive format. The Brera featured a six-speed manual transmission or similar paddle-shift 'Qtronic' semi-auto.

As it was based in part on the 159 platform (the front end, at least), the Brera featured fully-independent suspension all round, with double wishbones at the front and a multi-link design at the rear. The chassis is renowned for being very robust and shows no sign of flex, even when pushed hard – unlike that of the GTV it succeeded. Braking is by vented discs at the front, solid discs at the rear.

By its very nature, progress never stands still. While the Brera may have been launched with the three engine options listed above, there have been several other powertrains packed into that swoopy bodysell. The 2007 model year saw the original 2.4-litre JTDM diesel boosted from 200 to 210bhp, while the 2009 model year saw the introduction of a 2.0-litre, 170bhp diesel and a 1.75-litre 200bhp petrol option.

There is one special Brera to consider – the Brera S. To all intents and purposes this is a factory-approved conversion developed by Prodrive in the UK. With revised suspension settings, different wheels and exhaust system, 'limited edition' numbering. Just 500 were made.

### INTERIOR

The Brera really should be considered a two-seater, with a little extra load space behind the seats. Some drivers consider that the front seats are mounted too high and are also a little narrow. The seats were available in leather or 'Poltrona Frau' leather, the latter being an extra cost option. The 'fours' came with cloth





trim as standard.

As for the boot, it's accessible via the rear hatch and is big enough to carry the ubiquitous set of golf clubs, aided by a ski flap in the rear seat. The boot space, at 300 litres, is meagre by some standards but that is still restrictive compared to the 159 saloon at 405 litres.

### ON THE ROAD

It almost goes without saying that the Brera is a joy to drive, as long as one bears in mind the caveats mentioned above. If you're after a lithe, 'throw it through the bends' sportster you may be disappointed. But the reality is more likely that you're looking for an accomplished sporting coupe, and the Brera will probably suit you to a 'T'.

The quick steering tends to make the Brera feel a little top heavy as you turn sharply into a fast bend emphasising, as it does, the body roll. It also lacks that fluid feeling that many larger GTs have when pushed through a series of sweeping bends. The Q4-equipped 3.2 V6 models suffer from understeer, which will probably come as no surprise when you

consider both the front weight bias and the traditional handling characteristics associated with a four-wheel drive system.

The Brera isn't the quickest car on the block, especially the 2.2-litre model with zero to sixty in a leisurely 8.6 seconds, while the V6 is somewhat more brisk in this department, taking 6.8 seconds. Top speed for the six-cylinder model is a claimed 155mph – or 152mph for the Q4 and Qtronic models – while the four can reach 139mph. The JTDM tops out at around 144mph (manual), or 140mph in Qtronic spec.

### FUEL ECONOMY

As far as economy goes, the JTDM diesel is, as one might expect, the most frugal, although a 'combined cycle' figure of 41.5mpg drops to 35.8mpg where the Qtronic version is concerned. The 2.2-litre 'four' delivers a combined figure of just under 31mpg, while the 'six' returns around 25mpg with a manual transmission, or 23mpg with the semi-auto. These figures plummet to well below 20mpg when pushing hard – we have read on some forums of V6s returning little better than 17mpg at times...

ABOVE: GM derived 2.2 JTS engine as fitted to the Brera S. The rare 1750 TBi version is the one to go for





## WHAT TO LOOK FOR

As with all modern cars, ignore the service schedule at your peril. Only the JTDM diesel engine is equipped with a toothed cam belt – the other engines have timing chains – and the belt must be changed every 90,000 miles, according to the Alfa Romeo service guidelines. But the trade would suggest earlier attention than that.

There are a couple of common complaints and one was lateral movement in the driver's seat. It was a problem that dealers could fix so there is every chance that a used example will already have been cured of this affliction. Wind noise at motorway speeds from around the door windows is another criticism.

The door mirrors are known to fail to return to their original position, it seems, when automatically readjusting themselves after reversing, and there are known issues with electric windows not closing all the way, too.


Perhaps one of the more annoying traits with earlier models was the alarm's habit of self-activating for no apparent reason. It appeared to be an intermittent fault but one which should have been cured as part of a dealer recall. The remote locking can suffer the occasional glitch, too.

The remote boot release mechanism can cause a few headaches, with the odd report of flattened batteries caused by an electrical drain somewhere in the system.

By far the biggest criticism, though, concerns the

poor fuel economy that many owners suffer. If you're a diehard Alfa Romeo fan, then maybe that's not such a big issue. If, however, you have a more open mind about your choice of car, then mid- to high-teen mileage figures might make some potential customers think twice.

## VERDICT

Although the Brera's driving experience was affected by the GM based engines, the final versions had the Italian 2.0 JTDM and 1750 petrol units, the latter being a pleasant power unit that was inherited by the current Giulietta. Pro-drive Breras do handle better but some find the ride is too firm. For V6 enthusiasts the front-wheel drive would be a good choice, it being nimbler than the heavier 4x4 version. There is no doubt that the Brera is a very good car. It is stylish, relatively practical and, on the used car market, very good value for money at the moment. 

## PRICE GUIDE

**Brera 1.8 1750 Tbi**

2010, 41,000 miles, FSH. £16,995

**Brera SV 2.2 Prodrive**

2009, 33,000 miles, FASH. £11,995

**Brera SV 3.2 Prodrive**

2007, 39,000 miles, FSH. £7,995

**Brera 3.2 JTS 4wd**

2006, 45,000 miles. SH. £8,990

**Brera 2.4 JTDM**

2007, 70,294 miles, FSH. £7,680

*BELOW: Nicely appointed interior. Lateral movement in the driver's seat was an issue on some cars*





# A Handsome Carriage

Until the new range is announced the 159 is currently the popular big saloon and estate car choice for Alfa buyers

Story by Phil Ward  
Photography by Michael Ward





**L**aunched in 2005, the Alfa Romeo 159 range was designed by Giorgetto Giugiaro in collaboration with Alfa Romeo Centro Stile and shared its latest corporate frontal styling with the Brera and Spider.

The range was built at the Giambattista Vico plant in Pomigliano d'Arco near Naples and was originally available in both front- and four-wheel drive configurations with 3.2-litre petrol and 2.4-litre diesel engines. The gearbox was a six-speed manual, five-speed on the 1.8. Also a six-speed automatic Q-Tronic gearbox was available for the 1.9 diesel, 2.4 diesel and 3.2 petrol models. The Selespeed gearbox was available in some countries with 2.2 petrol engine.

Automatic gearbox option for the 2.4 JTDm diesel model launched in 2006, later extended to other versions. Four-wheel drive diesel model was released in 2007. The 2.4-litre diesel power output increased to 210bhp and reintroduced TI trim level available as an option. In the UK the other trim levels were Turismo and Lusso.

For model year 2008, the mechanics and interiors of the 159 were further developed. The 3.2-litre V6 model was offered in front-wheel drive. All variants were equipped with Alfa's electronic Q2 limited-slip differential. Newly-introduced aluminium components saved 45kg weight.

In 2009, Alfa Romeo introduced the 1750 Tbi, which eventually replaced the GM-derived 2.2 and 1.9 JTS units during 2010. The new 170bhp 2.0 JTDm diesel also became available.

## THE LEGACY

Back in 1997, the launch of the 156 created a great deal of excitement and promised much. It was an attractive car with innovative Selespeed transmission and a full range of engines that included the Twin Spark from the 145/146 and the splendid 2.4-litre V6. Diesels were to follow and then the stylish and practical Sportwagon arrived.

Buyers were lured away from German and Japanese products and Alfa was on to a winner, or so it thought. But, instead of dealing with the engine issues that manifested themselves on the 145/146 Twin Spark, Alfa allowed the 156 to inherit all the engineering defects. Not only that, but the Selespeed system had unreliability issues and then suspension problems began to appear.

Now, it's not that other manufacturers don't have technical issues, because they do – ask any BMW owner. It's just that the German and Japanese manufacturers deal with the issues rather better than Alfa Romeo in order to preserve their reputations. The initial success of the 156 to break into new sales was not sustained – not only that, the loyal Alfisti also began looking elsewhere.

## GM ALLIANCE

Alfa needed a new product to regain buyer confidence, so enter the 159. Back in 2006, the 159 arrived together with an alliance with General Motors. This relationship wasn't to last and the legacy was lacklustre petrol engines fitted to what was basically a





very good chassis. The 159 and its sibling Brera were undeniably stylish motorcars but they were big – bigger than the 156 and therefore heavier. The characterless engines, combined with the weighty bodies, had taken away much of the 'Alfanesse'. The best engines in the range were the Italian diesels that drove and even sounded better than the GM petrol units. Incredibly, we even had a diesel engine in the Spider.

If this sounds like another stab in the back for Italian cars you could be right, to a point. The thing is, instead of Alfa sitting it out and playing with token styling facelifts, like it did with the 156, the engineers at Power Train Technologies got their heads together and came up with a range of interesting new engines instead. First off, we received the excellent 1750 TBi, which provided an attractive petrol alternative to the diesel engines that were ruling the roost. It works really well and, once the driver learns how to drive the car effectively within its power band, offers good performance and economy. With the introduction of the 2.0 JTDM, the diesel engine has now been successfully updated.

### TURISMO INTERNAZIONALE

Alfa Romeo usually gets the TI badges out of the cupboard when it is uprating an end-of-production model. It did it with the 166 and then the 156 and 147, and although the 159 TI has actually been with us since 2007, these final cars are extra special. Alfa has certainly gone to town on the 159's TI-ness. The car shown here has all the right bits, like posh upholstery, 19in wheels and that glitzy 8C Competizione paintwork.

Mind you, it did cost. The 2.0 JTDM TI was listed at £27,895 on the road; if you had the 8C paint then that was another £1950. Ours had the optional sat/nav – it was very good, but it's another £1100 and the aluminium roof bars add £300. So, if you want a car in this specification, it will set you back just over £30k.

There is no doubt that the featured 159 TI looks fantastic and promises to be really special, but is it? If it's looks you are after, then this car ticks all the right boxes – it was noticed and people did stop to admire it. On the road the car felt refined and, well, OK. The handling is great and the ride is well damped considering those giant 19in wheels, but it did tramline noticeably under braking on some surfaces.

The 2.0 engine certainly feels more refined than the 1.9, and once on the move the diesel sound level from the front is almost imperceptible. With the capacity increased from 1910cc to 1956cc, you can feel the benefit in torque, in particular the useful mid-range power from 60mph to 80mph. It's not that quick off the mark, though, and sixth gear is more of an overdrive than a proper gear – remember the engine has 1540kg to lug around. Power delivery is not as good as the old 2.4-litre 20v, where you could accelerate in sixth gear during motorway overtaking without having to change down to fifth.

### 1750 TBi

The comparisons between the 2.0 JTDM and 1750 TBi are interesting. Both TI versions are the same price. Although the petrol engine gives away just over 200cc, it is 30bhp more powerful but has 20lb ft less torque. The TBi has bigger brakes and is lighter than the diesel. It's also much quicker, with 2.1 seconds less to 60mph, and is 11mph faster on top speed. It has considerably higher emissions but only does 34mpg compared to the diesel's frugal 51.4. The conclusion here is that the TBi is quicker but the JTDM is cheaper to run. Which version you buy is down to personal choice, but it is nice to actually have a choice in the first place.

The big criticism for me is the gear lever position. No matter how I adjusted the steering wheel and seat position, the gear lever was always too far back,







requiring my wrist to be angled down instead of straight. It's a small point, but annoying after a while. Not only that but the centre console oddments box interferes with your elbow. A step backwards from the excellent set-up in the 156, I fear.

### 2.0 JTDM

For a top-of-the-range car, the 2.0 JTDM 159 Ti is stunning to look at but falls a bit short on performance. I would have expected a road-burning grand finale with this level of specification, and the 2.4 engine would have supplied it.

Currently the only other 'big' Alfa on sale is the Giulietta hatchback. We have yet to discover if the 159's replacement, said to be called the Giulia, will be a booted saloon. The 159 crossed over into 166 territory, so we can only speculate what specification the '16g' might actually turn out to be. All will be revealed in Spring when the new saloon is announced.

Space doesn't allow us to cover the entire 159 range. For more information on owning a 159, including the V6 version, see *Auto Italia* issue 190.

### VERDICT

The Italian-engined 159s are the ones to go for, especially the 1750 Tbi. The GM-based V6 lacks the charisma of the much missed classic Busso engine and the car's vitality is compromised by its weight. The 2.0 JTDM Ti is a good all rounder but lacks the clout of the older, 5-cylinder 2.4 engine. The 159 is undoubtedly a handsome Alfa Romeo and we have yet to see a better looking model. 🇮🇹

### PRICE GUIDE

**159 1.8 1750 Tbi**  
2011, 26,125 miles, FASH, £12,995  
**150 2.0 JTDM Ti Sportwagon**  
2010, 37,000 miles, FSH, £11,599  
**159 1.9 JTDM 16v Ti**  
2010, 49,030 miles, SH, £11,000  
**159 2.0 JTDM 16v Ti**  
2011, 96,000 miles, SH, £8989  
**159 2.2 JTS Ti**  
2009, 74,800 miles, SH, £7495





# Hot and Hotter Hatches

Something for everyone in the 147 range from a sprightly 1.6 Twin Spark to the outrageous GTA V6

Report by Keith Seume  
Photography by Michael Ward





**T**he Alfa 147 was launched at the Turin Motor Show in 2000, instantly capturing the attention of journalists across Europe who collectively voted it Car of the Year ahead of Audi's chic A2. Replacing the earlier 145 and 146 models, the Alfa Romeo 147, which was available in three- or five-door versions, was based on the underpinnings of the 156 saloon and, at its UK launch in February 2001, it was offered with both 105 and 120bhp 1.6-litre TS (Twin Spark) engines. Backing these up was a five-speed manual transmission.

### EXTENDED RANGE

Four months after its UK launch, the 147 range benefited from the inclusion of the 150bhp 2.0-litre Twin Spark engine (also available with the intriguing Selespeed system, which is basically a paddleshifted, semi-automatic gearbox: semi-automatic in that it is essentially a clutchless manual, as opposed to a fully-automatic design), but it wasn't until 2003 that the first diesel variant was offered in the UK. This was the well-respected common-rail 1.9-litre JTD motor, which initially produced 115bhp (as an 8-valve), or 140bhp (16-valve). The star of the 147 range, though, was the mighty 3.2-litre 250bhp V6 GTA, which was launched on the international market in 2002: a real tyre-shredding 'hot-hatch' by anyone's standards and probably the best-kept secret in this highly-competitive market sector.

The 147 was available in three specification levels: basic TS (badged as 'Twin Spark'), Turismo and Lusso (joined later by the 'Collezione' and TI final editions). As the names might suggest, the Turismo was the 'softer' version, with air-conditioning, 15in alloy wheels, a trip computer and traction control as standard, while the more sporting Lusso added 16in alloy wheels, dual-zone climate control and cruise control.

The TS was fitted with steel wheels and plastic trims.

### REVISED RANGE

In 2004, the range was revamped in line with the rest of the Alfa range, with a front-end treatment reminiscent of its big sisters, the 159 and Brera. The JTD diesel engine was also revised with the addition of what Alfa referred to as M-Jet, boosting the power output to a useful 150bhp, with over 300lb ft of torque.

### ON THE ROAD

While the majority of small hatchbacks on the market demonstrate few sporting pretensions, the 147 was clearly designed by people who enjoy driving. The 2.0-litre Lusso was quick by anyone's standards, and demonstrably as rapid on the road as Ford's more powerful Focus ST170, this is a car for the enthusiast, but also practical for everyday use.

In general, the interior is ergonomically well laid out, with the dashboard and all minor controls directed squarely at the driver. The driving position is adjustable in about every direction. All but the tallest owners will feel right at home. The only complaint your fellow passengers might make is in regard to the ride quality: it's pretty firm. Being charitable, we can put that down to the car's sporting heritage.

If you decide to go for a 147 fitted with the optional 17in alloys and lower-profile tyres, then the ride quality will suffer still further, with a noticeable increase in road noise, too.

### ENGINE SERVICING

The Twin Spark engines fitted to the 1.6- and 2.0-litre petrol models are free-revving and great fun, especially when you use the gear ratios to the full. They are not the most torquey engines in existence but they respond well to spirited driving and, when maintained according to Alfa's strict cambelt service regime, will last a long time.

The Twin Spark engines are not renowned for their exceptional fuel economy, especially when driven hard, but of more concern will be a thirst for oil. It is not uncommon for some examples to consume oil at the rate of just a few hundred miles per litre, while others use no oil at all. A diesel-like rattling when starting from





cold will suggest that the camshaft variator will need replacing. A worn variator won't actually harm the engine but the performance won't be at its best. Similarly, sluggish performance in the mid-range may suggest the mass airflow meter (MAF) is on its way out, sending spurious signals to the car's ECU. Water pumps can fail and should probably be renewed as a matter of course when carrying out other major service work. Replacement of all these parts, including the cambelt and tensioners, should be within the capabilities of a competent home mechanic and the parts are readily available from both main dealers and aftermarket sources. By comparison, the diesel engines are extremely reliable and rarely give major cause for concern. The same can be said for the V6 in the GTA, too.

### TRANSMISSIONS

As far as the transmission is concerned, there are no major problems. Even the complex Selespeed shouldn't give you too much grief. Just make sure everything works as it should (using both the paddleshift and the gearlever while in 'city' mode): some Selespeed shifting problems may prove to be electrical and ought to show up in a diagnostic session. The problem here is that there are four actuators operating the transmission, one acting on the clutch, another selecting the ratios, a third employed to manage the speed selection and the fourth is linked to the electronic throttle. Low battery voltage can upset the way the Selespeed works, so make sure all is in order there. If the transmission gets stuck in gear, it may be that the electric oil pump has ceased to function correctly.

Worn clutches on the diesel 147s, often accompanied by a hard pedal, juddering and difficulty in selecting gears, will mean an expensive clutch replacement that will also include the dual mass flywheel.



### SUSPENSION

It is not uncommon for 147s to suffer from knocks and clonks from both the front and rear suspension. At the front, the upper wishbone bushes can dry out and wear – replacement is relatively straightforward – while creaking can suggest worn anti-roll bar mounts. Knocking from the back suggests the radius arm bushes are past their sell-by date, or that the anti-roll bar links have worn. Uneven tyre wear is a sure indication of worn suspension components. Replacement parts are readily available.

### ELECTRICS

We've already hinted that Italian car electrics are sometimes not all they could be and the 147 does not escape the malaise. Even though you may well see the word 'Bosch' printed on many electrical components, reliability isn't what one might think of as being typically Germanic. Most problems you are likely to encounter are more annoying than anything else, with warning lights giving false signals that suggest imminent engine or brake system failure. In many cases, a trip to an Alfa specialist and a session on a diagnostic system will show up a simple sensor failure – if you're lucky. But intermittent electrical glitches can lead to hours of frustration, trying to track down the source of what may be only a minor problem, yet cost you a small fortune in workshop time. When you start the engine, three warning lights should illuminate: airbag, brake and engine management. If they do not light up, or remain illuminated after a few seconds, then you'll need to







ABOVE: The 147 range was available in a 3- or 5-door configuration, except for the sporting V6 GTA

investigate the cause. A further fault-finding system will check other electrical components around the car (through a system of computers) and cause the odometer to flash if it senses a problem.

### INSIDE AND OUT

You shouldn't need to worry about rust. All 147s came with galvanised body panels, and paint quality is generally high. Some colours do seem to mark easier than others and stone chips along the front edge of the bonnet are a fact of life, especially on high-mileage examples.

The original stereo system wasn't that great and the chances are that many early examples will have been fitted with aftermarket music systems. The factory Bose upgrade was better than the basic system but prone to interference and loss of memory.

Overall, the 147 is an excellent proposition for anyone wishing to own a hatchback with soul. And thanks to the garage trade's continuing and, it has to be said, largely unjustified suspicion of older Italian cars, prices are at an all-time low.

### VERDICT

The facelifted 147s are still good looking cars offering hatchback practicality and spirited performance. The final TI versions were well specced with high quality leather interiors and those stylish wheels. Selespeeds can be a bit of a lottery and even a good one will have fairly slow gear changes by modern standards. The unruly 147 GTA is a keeper but demands full driver attention. Beware of hard driven examples. 🇮🇹

### PRICE GUIDE

- 147 3.2 V6 GTA 3dr**  
2004, 79,000 miles, FSH. £7995
- 147 1.9 JTDm Collezione 3dr**  
2009, 49,000 miles, FSH. £5495
- 147 1.9 JTDm 16v Ti 3dr**  
2006, 65,000 miles, FASH. £4995
- 147 2.0 TS Selespeed 5dr**  
2009, 27,500 miles, FSH. £4950
- 147 1.6 Ti 5dr**  
2006, 53,658 miles, FSH. £3295





# Coupe de Grace

A stylish body on a well-proven chassis makes the Alfa Romeo GT a tempting choice

Report by Keith Seume  
Photography by Michael Ward







**L**aunched at the 2003 Geneva Motor Show 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. 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 by now, but it was a good way to save money and speed up the production process.



## CHASSIS

To match up to the GT's sporting pretensions, the floorpan was beefed-up, adding a claimed 15 per cent to the torsional rigidity. 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. On reflection, this does make the GT sound a little bit of a mix and match design, but it was sufficiently stylish in its own right for customers not to feel short-changed.

## INTERIOR

As we have come to expect from Alfa Romeos, the interior is a very pleasant environment for both the driver and passenger(s). It is well-equipped with the dashboard from the 147 being well laid out and the array of analogue instruments are easy to read, although some drivers may find the steering wheel obscures the upper part of the dash. The steering wheel will be familiar to 147 and 156 owners, and is as comfortable to use as ever.

Ancillary controls for the heating and optional air-con system are mounted in the centre console. The interior's all very Alfa and all the better for it, with supportive (and hopefully leather-clad) seats and more than enough space in the back for two adults. There's a sizable boot, too, beneath that hatchback tailgate, which is only slightly smaller than the 156 saloon. However, by folding the rear seats forward, you can near enough double the available loading space. Yes, the GT may look like a coupe with all the associated drawbacks of such designs, but it's actually a very practical car.



## ENGINE RANGE

At its UK launch, the GT was available with either the 2.0-litre JTS four-cylinder unit – a significant improvement over the older Twin Spark engine from which it was derived – and the 1.9-litre JTD turbo-diesel (otherwise referred to as the 1.9 M-jet diesel). The 2.0-litre JTS is a direct-injection engine with variable inlet camshaft timing and a variable-length inlet manifold. The JTD is a 16-valve common-rail diesel fitted with a variable-vane turbocharger. It would be a few months before the range-topping and altogether sublime 3.2-litre V6 would be available. A 1.8-litre TS unit was also available.

The 1970cc JTS engine produced a useful 165bhp, some 15bhp more than its predecessor, and was reasonably economical, returning an average of around 32mpg. If you're after decent fuel economy, then the turbo-diesels are the ones for you: the 150bhp 1910cc JTD gave close to 46mpg overall, with an 'extra-urban' figure of 58mpg. The JTD engine was revised in 2008, resulting in a boost in power output to 170bhp, and a slight improvement in fuel economy (46mpg overall, 59mpg extra-urban).

In terms of performance, it will come as no surprise that the V6 is the most impressive, but at the price of new front tyres at uncomfortably regular intervals. The factory claimed a top speed of 151mph and a 0-62mph time of 6.7 seconds. That's pretty quick by any standards – not many years ago, there were so-called supercars which would have struggled to achieve those figures.

The 2.0-litre JTS ran out of steam around 135mph, having rushed to 62mph in a claimed 8.7 seconds. Not quick by some standards, but the way in which the power is delivered makes the car feel quicker than it actually is, with maximum power being developed at a heady 6400rpm. In many ways, the most remarkable models are those equipped with the JTD engines. The original 150bhp model could reach 62mph in 9.2 seconds, before hitting 130mph, while the post-2008 cars could hit

62mph in 8.2 seconds and head on to a shade under 135mph. Most impressive, though, is the amount of torque produced: the later JTD engine boasted a staggering 243lb ft at just 2000rpm – substantially better than the V6's 221lb ft at 4800rpm. Who said diesel engines had no place in sporting coupes?

## TRANSMISSIONS

As for the transmission, the V6 and the JTD came with a slick-shifting six-speed manual transmission, while 2.0 JTS models were blessed with a five-speed 'box, with the option of Selespeed: a manually- or paddle-shifted semi-automatic which proved popular but doesn't have a great reputation for long-term reliability, it has to be said. A case of works well when it works, expensive if it doesn't...

## ON THE ROAD

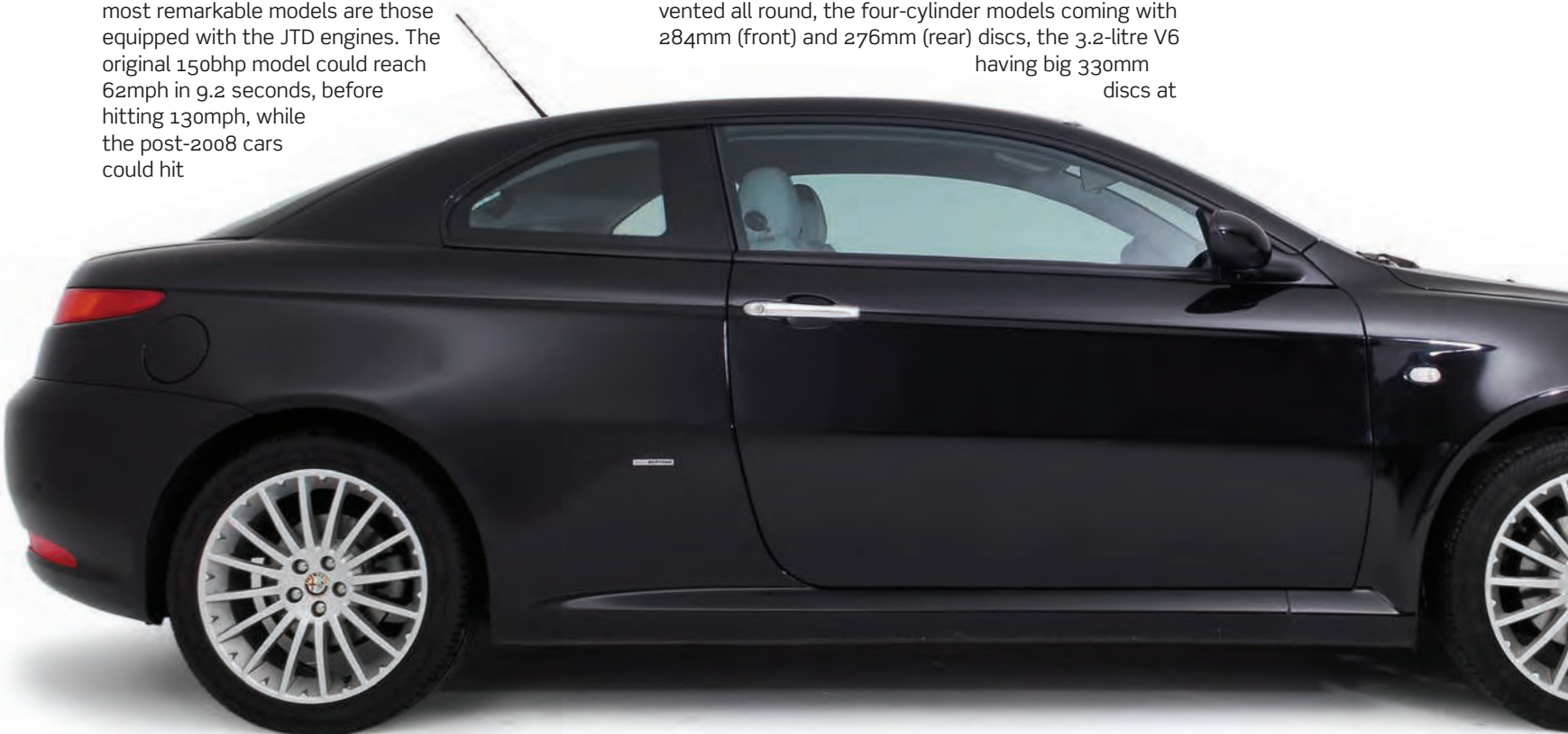
There is no doubt that the GT is a fine-handling car. The beefed-up 156 floorpan allowed the engineers to make a better job of fine-tuning the suspension, resulting in less body roll yet with greater compliance compared to the 156 and 147.

Revised bushes in the front wishbones and rear trailing arms have helped to transform the handling. And despite what you might expect, there isn't such a problem with torque-steer on V6 versions as was commonplace with the top of the range 156s and GTVs with the same engine. Clearly the men at Alfa had done their homework. You can provoke a little tail-end twitchiness if you barrel into a corner and then lift off abruptly, but in everyday driving situations, you'll never need to worry. Oh, and the JTS is marginally the better handling car, thanks to less weight over the front end. The silky smooth V6, the last of the classic Busso-engined cars, is the GT to keep – even if it does have a fairly heavy clutch operation.

The servo-assisted and ABS-equipped brakes are vented all round, the four-cylinder models coming with 284mm (front) and 276mm (rear) discs, the 3.2-litre V6 having big 330mm discs at



*ABOVE: Intended to be an interim model, the GT was more than a parts clean up operation and was actually quite popular*







*ABOVE: The GT had numerous special editions including this attractively priced Blackline and later a the Cloverleaf version*



the front. The brakes are powerful and resistant to fade, if a little 'spongy' in feel.

### WHAT TO LOOK FOR

When viewing a used GT, never lose sight of the fact that it's a sports coupe and would have been originally purchased for that very reason. If the owner wasn't bothered about a car with sporting pretensions, he'd have bought an Alfa saloon, so you ought to expect the car to have been driven a little harder than usual. Check panel gaps for evidence of off-road excursions, mismatched paintwork on panels and signs of overspray behind door seals, or around the edge of the engine bay. If you are at all unsure, get a second opinion.


### SERVICING

Modern Alfa Romeos are, on the whole, reliable. Forget what the trade still thinks – just benefit from the used car salesman's reluctance to regard Italian cars as anything but trouble. As long as you stick to the service intervals (and have proof that the previous owner has, too) then you shouldn't have to worry too much. As with all Twin Spark engines, the factory recommends (no, insists!) you change the cam belt at 36,000 miles – but don't forget, Alfa only changed its mind about this in November 2006. Prior to that date, the recommendation was 72,000 miles. Just make sure 'your' car has had its belt changed at the prescribed interval. V6s and diesels don't, at least according to the factory, need to have their belts changed until 72,000 miles, but many feel this is still too long. Try 60,000 miles to be on the safe side.

Other than routine servicing, you shouldn't have to worry too much about owning a GT, other than the 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 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.

### VERDICT

A stylish, practical four-seater coupe that still looks fresh. The final pre-GM era Alfa Romeo with all-Italian engines including the last of the Twin Sparks and the much missed Busso V6. 

### PRICE GUIDE

#### GT 3.2 V6

2005, 28,000 miles, FSH. £8999

#### GT 1.9 JTDM Cloverleaf

2010, 45,000 miles, FSH. £8895

#### GT 2.0 JTS Lusso

2008, 22,966 miles, FSH. £6000

#### GT 1.8 TS Blackline

2008, 45,000 miles, FASH. £5750





# Secret Agent

With 247bhp, the 156 GTA ranks as one of the world's finest high-performance saloons – but it remains one of the least-known models in Alfa Romeo's line-up

Report by Keith Seume  
Photography by Michael Ward







The 156 GTA was launched in September 2001 at the Frankfurt Motor Show. Those three letters stood for Gran Turismo Alleggerita, or 'lightened grand tourer', suggesting that the new model was a stripped-out version of the 156. In fact, nothing could be further from the truth, for the GTA actually weighed some 91kg more than the existing V6-engined 156.

First offered for sale in February 2002, the 156 GTA was powered by a 3.2-litre 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 – 'Quadrifoglio' (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.

Behind the engine lies either a six-speed fully-manual transmission or, in a few rare instances, a Selespeed semi-automatic. Only a handful of Selespeed-equipped GTAs made it into the UK, and word is that this version should be avoided as GTAs are notoriously hard on transmissions.

Cars built before November 2003 were equipped with 305mm-diameter front discs, while later examples have 330mm discs with matching calipers. The GTA's steering featured a quicker rack, reducing the number of turns from lock to lock from 2.1 to just 1.7, although it's worth bearing in mind that the turning circle suffers as a consequence of the combination of larger wheels and tyres and lowered suspension when compared to other models.

The suspension came in for close scrutiny, with the front end benefiting from a reinforced lower beam, redesigned struts and revised mountings for the wishbones – at the rear, there were also revised mounting points for the MacPherson struts. Larger anti-roll bars were also fitted front and rear, along with uprated springs and dampers. However, the suspension is generally thought to be too soft as standard, allowing the car to 'crash' over bumps. The 156 GTA finally disappeared from the Alfa Romeo line-up in October 2005, making way for the new 159 range.

#### ENGINE

Despite being red-lined at around 7000rpm, the sonorous 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. 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.

### TRANSMISSION

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 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.

You'd expect torque steer to be a way of life in a car like this, but the GTA is better than many in this respect thanks to Alfa's ASR traction-control, a

*BELOW: Radio reception has never been a strong point in 156s. Cabin heating fans have also been known to fail, check the resistor pack*







*ABOVE: Bumpers and sill trims toughen up the 156. It's a pity that Alfa didn't fit the facelift front end*

system that works up to just under 40mph, allowing both front wheels to spin simultaneously, but not independently. It is comparable, therefore, to a conventional limited-slip differential but can be switched on or off by the driver. However, with ASR turned off, you'll need to keep your wits about you accelerating hard out of a wet roundabout. And tyre-scrabbling, foot to the floor acceleration will give your GTA an appetite for rubber that will make you very popular with your local tyre depot.

### BRAKES

As we've mentioned, the early cars were under braked, although later cars (post-November 2003) had the larger 330mm front discs and are a major improvement over earlier 305mm examples, which were prone to warping and must be replaced regardless. Alfa Romeo has been known to offer the upgraded discs and calipers under warranty to owners complaining of brake judder on early cars so, even when looking at an older example, it might have been upgraded.

### WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Listen for 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. Look for obvious signs of accident damage, paying careful attention to the front edge of the roof because 156s can suffer from failure of the bonnet latch, allowing the bonnet to fly open and hit the screen and roof. It was the subject of a recall, but don't assume every car was sorted out earlier in life.

On the whole, though, you'll be pleased to learn that there are relatively few GTA-specific problems – until you get to the transmission. The main problem here is


the differential which, it seems, isn't quite up to the job. Tales of diffs being spat out through the transmission casing are not unknown – it remained an issue that

Alfa Romeo never quite resolved, despite adding ducting to the undertray, designed to channel air directly on to the differential casing. The good news is that Alfa's own Q2 torque-biasing differential solved this problem 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 is costly because it requires dropping the front subframe, along with part of the front suspension, so is not a DIY job to be taken on lightly.

In common with the entire 156 (and 147) range, the GTAs suffer from suspension bush failures. The lower front bushes are particularly prone, with replacement wishbones available. The front anti-roll bar bushes also wear, allowing the bar to move from side to side, resulting in a rather unpleasant knocking.

### VERDICT

The 156 GTA is a 'keeper' and much respected by Alfa enthusiasts and are holding their prices. By their very nature many of these high performance cars have been driven hard so care is needed when buying, in particular the clutch. An example fitted with the more substantial Q2 differential would be an advantage. It is a shame that Alfa Romeo didn't update the front end as they did in 2003 with the rest of the 156 range, making the GTA look dated. Any cars with the more desirable revised front will have been retrofitted. 

### PRICE GUIDE

**156 3.2 GTA**  
2003, 89,000 miles, one owner. £6995  
**156 3.2 GTA**  
2002, 62,000 miles, FSH. £8950  
**156 3.2 GTA**  
2005, 86,000 miles, FASH. £7495



# 156 Turismo Internazionale

The final versions of Alfa's big seller came with an enhanced specification and is a candidate for classic status

Report by Keith Seume  
Photography by Michael Ward







**A**lfa Romeo's 156 is a car that broke the mould, enticing many satisfied customers away from other more mainstream makes, thereby helping to secure Alfa's future. Its distinctive styling won the hearts of many mainstream buyers and, in doing so, turned the parent company's fortunes around.

The Alfa 156 was the replacement for the more angular 155, which had been launched in 1992 and went on to become the darling of the BTCC crowds in the hands of the flamboyant Gabriele Tarquini.

Developed under the internal code 'Project 932', the 156 was conceived back in 1993, just one year after the launch of the 155. It would, however, be another four years before the new model was launched – but it was important that Alfa

planned ahead, as the company was in financial trouble at the time. It

needed a new product – a successful product – and it was hoped the 156 would be the car to turn Alfa Romeo's fortunes around.

The world was given its first sight of the 156 in October 1997, with the full European launch at the Geneva show the following February. It was voted European Car of the Year in 1998, ahead of Volkswagen's Golf.

## ENGINES

A variety of petrol engines were available at launch, ranging from a 1.6-litre (1598cc) 118bhp Twin Spark. This was the smallest of the renowned dual-spark plug engines, which have earned themselves an enviable reputation – just so long as you remember to abide by the service schedule. Next up was a 1.8-litre 142bhp version, followed by the popular 2.0-litre TS with 155bhp. But king of the hill was the 187bhp 2.5-litre V6, a quintessential Italian 'six' which loved to rev, and had an exhaust note to die for.

There were diesels, too, in the form of a 104bhp 1.9-litre (1910cc) JTD and the torquey 2.4-litre five-cylinder JTD, which produced 134bhp and 229lb ft of torque at a lowly 2000rpm.

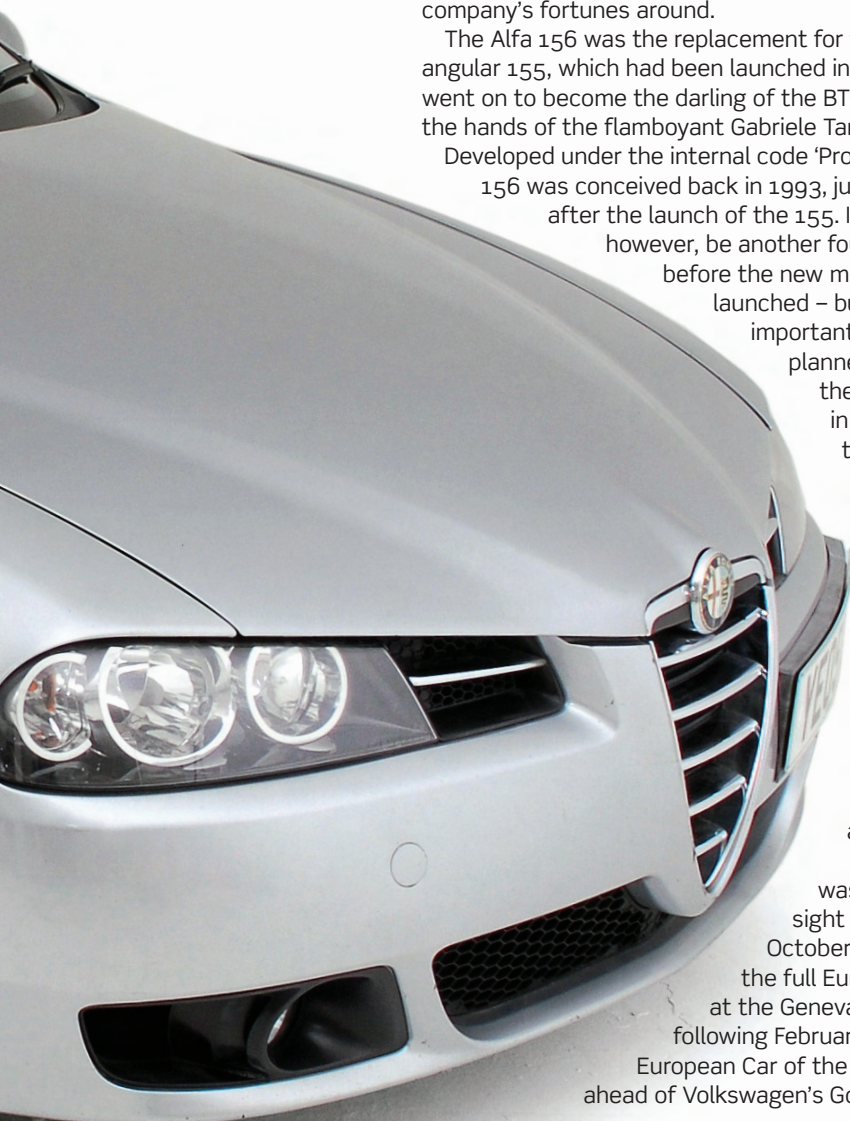
In 2001, there were several changes made to the mechanical specification to bring the engines in line with the new Euro 3 emissions requirements. The general upshot of this was a reduction in power output across the board on most of the petrol engines (not, however, the V6...), but a modest increase in power for the diesels.

These engines were used in conjunction with a smooth-shifting, precise five-speed manual transmission which is a delight to use. Then, in 1999, came the Selespeed. In theory, this is a great design: a computer-controlled manual gearbox with an electronic clutch which can be 'manually' shifted using paddles on the steering wheel, or via a conventional-looking gear lever. There is a city mode, too, which allows fully-automatic shifting. The Selespeed system shifts faster at engine speeds over 5000rpm, or if the throttle is depressed by more than 60 per cent. However, it is not without its faults, and can result in costly repair bills.

## SPORTWAGON

The range was joined in 2000 by the swoopy Sportwagon, an estate version of the 156 which remains one of the best-looking load luggers ever. The Sportwagon is, to be truthful, a victory of style over substance as it offers nothing like the carrying space of its many rivals.

In 2002, the 156 range was given its first facelift





which, modest though it was, helped inject a new lease of life into the model. Externally, the only real differences were colour-coded bumper inserts and mirror covers, while the interior benefited from a new climate control system, multi-function dashboard display and a new steering wheel, the latter 'borrowed' from the 147 range. The original 2.0 TS engine also gave way to the more efficient (but less inspiring) 2.0 JTS unit, which produced 165bhp at 6400rpm. JTS, by the way, stood for 'Jet Thrust Stoichiometric' – all very Dan Dare! The 2.4 JTD engine was also upgraded to 150bhp. There was also the mighty 250bhp 3.2-litre 156 GTA, which was the subject of our Buyers' Guide back in issue 160 in 2009.

By January 2002, the 156 had boosted the marque's market share in the competitive saloon sector from 0.7 per cent in 1996 to 3.2 per cent. Overall sales in Europe rose from 117,500 in 1996 to 202,100 by the end of 2001 – a massive increase of 72 per cent!

### FINAL FACELIFT

A second, and more significant, facelift occurred in 2003 when the Alfa 156 was restyled to bring it into line with contemporary (and future) styling trends. The challenge of revitalising the 156 was handled by Italdesign, headed by Giorgetto Giugiaro.

One of the lesser-known additions to the revised 156 range introduced at this time was the TI model – short for 'Turismo



*ABOVE: Distinctive TI wheels look good but can be easily warped by kerbing. Tailgate strip shown on previous page is not standard*

Internazionale' – introduced in September 2004. In the past, the hallowed TI label had only been applied to the most sporty models in Alfa's history, created by taking a standard production model and improving its performance and styling to produce a true sportscar. So was the use of the TI moniker on a 156 justified? In a word, yes.

Bodily, there is little difference between the regular 156 and the TI save for sideskirts and the discreet TI badging on the rear. However, of note are the lower ride height and the exclusive 17in multi-spoke wheels, each of which carry the 'TI' logo adjacent to one of the spokes (watch out for aftermarket repros – they can usually be spotted by the lack of this logo...). The tyres are

215/45-section low profiles, which help to give the TI outstanding handling but, it has to be said, at the slight expense of ride quality.

On





the inside, the TI's interior was upgraded from that of the mainstream 156 with leather-trimmed Recaro sports seats (with part-electric operation), and a TI-only leather-trimmed steering wheel, which incorporates controls for the audio system. The gear lever is also trimmed in matching leather. Perhaps the most striking feature of the TI's trim is the all-black headlining, a feature which really transforms the character of the interior – aided by black sill plates, matching black fascia and 'TI' mats. All this added up to a £2300 premium, the wheel and tyre package accounting for around £1500 of that alone.

### WHAT TO LOOK FOR

So, are there any drawbacks to owning facelifted 156s in general and TIs in particular? To be perfectly honest, not really. Auto Italia's Editor, former owner of the Sportwagon JTDM shown here, commented thus: "Mine's OK so far. It needed an anti-roll bar and turbo air pipes – they were split and causing smoke. It had a squeaky tensioner on the alternator drive belt, too."

"On the road, the 2.4 diesel feels really fast. The ride and handling are very good considering it should feel nose-heavy, but doesn't. The temperature gauge under-reads (like on my last 156) but at least the radio works on this one. I had two Alfa units (they're the same as the 147) in the last car and the reception was rubbish – you only need to check the on-line forums for confirmation of this. Heater control switches can fail as well, and the air vent control has a mind of its own..."

We have heard of problems with the 2.4 JTDM's dual-mass flywheel, so listen carefully on a test drive for clonks in the drivetrain and a heavy pedal. Check the service history and don't buy a car unless the expensive replacement clutch and flywheel kit has been fitted. Suspension bushes have always been a weak point, but are easy to replace. The last 1.9 JTDS have a GM gearbox which can be costly to repair.

In general, though, by the time the 156 had ventured this far down the development road, most annoying problems had been solved. You still have to pay attention to service schedules – and in the case of the four-cylinder engines, that means essential belt changes every 36,000-mile (or three years, whichever is sooner), or 60,000-mile (or five years...) for diesels and V6s.

### VERDICT

The good looking facelifted 156s instantly made the pre-2002 cars look dated. It's a pity that the 2.5 V6 wasn't carried over. The highly specified TI versions are the most desirable but can have variable under body protection. Good cars are becoming increasingly hard to find. The best ones are often owned by attentive Alfa Romeo Owners Club members so joining a club to find the best examples is a sensible idea. 🇮🇹

### PRICE GUIDE

**156 2.0 TS Selespeed**  
2007, 25,000 miles, FSH. £6495  
**156 Sportwagon 1.9 JTD Veloce**  
2005, 83,000 miles, FSH. £3695  
**156 2.4 JTD Lusso**  
2005, 86,000 miles, FSH. £2495  
**156 2.4 JTD 20v TI**  
2004, 163,000 miles, FSH. £1795





# Decent Proposal

The V6 GTV is already a classic and low mileage, well kept examples are still available – if you are quick!

Words by Keith Seume  
Photography by Michael Ward







**T**he g16-series Alfa Romeo GTV and Spider were launched at the Geneva show in 1995, and attracted a lot of media attention. Designed by Pininfarina the new models were based on the underpinnings of the Fiat Tipo, although in reality very few components ended up being used. 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 suspension design is such that, when cornering, 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 GTV's front suspension is far more traditional, with MacPherson struts and an anti-roll bar.

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.

### THE MODELS

At the UK launch in 1996, we were offered just two options: the 2.0-litre 150bhp Twin Spark, as used in the 145 and 156, among others, and the stunning 3.0-litre 220bhp V6. The Italian market also saw a turbocharged 2.0-litre V6 offering a useful 202bhp at 6000rpm. Elsewhere in Europe, there was a 1.8 TS version, too, along with a 190bhp V6.

In 2001 the 3.0-litre V6 Cup appeared as one of a few limited edition models. With just 419 being built, they are valued considerably higher than a regular version, even though there is no benefit other than appearance and exclusivity.

In 2003, to coincide with a styling facelift, the V6 was bored 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, semi-auto, Selespeed or whatever, available – the GTV was always meant to be an enthusiast's car.

### THE FACELIFTS

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 grill, 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 17in rims as an option, whereas all V6s came with 17in 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 as its engine was the final V6 to be designed entirely by Alfa.

### DRIVING EXPERIENCE

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’.

The driving position is great 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.

### ON THE ROAD

The Twin Spark engine is a fine, free-revving unit that really comes alive over 4000rpm and should not be thought of as a poor relation to its more powerful sibling. Different, yes, but in no way inferior. 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 fares 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. But, 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.

### 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. Some GTVs are young enough to have remained, if not within the care of the official Alfa Romeo dealer network, then almost certainly within the ranks of the many specialists throughout the UK. Although they have no major faults, GTVs still need to be cared for by knowledgeable technicians. Starting with the four-cylinder models, the Twin Spark engines are reliable as long as due attention is paid to service intervals – and that means regular cambelt, tensioner and variator changes. If the engine does feel a bit lethargic under load, then it could be that the MAF sensor is on its way out. Also keep a check on oil consumption as some of these engines can consume oil at a relatively alarming rate.

*ABOVE: It looks good and it is good. The 3.0-litre 24v V6 is an all time classic and is as yet unsurpassed by other power units*







**ABOVE:** GTV Cup values are at a premium although the mechanical spec is the same as a regular GTV6 – but for less money


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, 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'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.

### VERDICT

Good Twin Spark GTVs are becoming quite rare and many have suffered more abuse than the V6s. The V6s seem to have been purchased by the more discerning motorists and as such have been better looked after. While the 3.2 may seem like a good idea, the engine is actually feels less torquey than the 3.0-litre and the facelift is arguably not as successful as its 147 and 156 siblings. The GTV6 is a keeper. 

### PRICE GUIDE

#### GTV 3.2 V6

2004, 19,250 miles, FSH. £9995

#### GTV 3.0 V6 Cup

2001, 39,000 miles, FSH, £7500

#### GTV 3.0 V6 Lusso

2001, 86,000 miles, SH. £3995

#### GTV 3.0 V6 Lusso

2000, 75,000 miles, SH. £5495

#### GTV 2.0 Lusso

2002, 50,000 miles, FSH. £3495





# Late Developer

The arrival of the competent 166 was delayed to allow sales of the all-new 156 to develop, leaving it somewhat overlooked

Report by Tony Soper  
Photography by Michael Ward





There was just one body style for Alfa's flagship 166: a big, booted saloon that's nearly 16ft long and a little under 6ft wide. Two engine types were offered, the 1970cc Twin Spark with 150bhp and Alfa's classic 60° V6. This could be had in three sizes: 2492cc with 190bhp, 2959cc with 220bhp and the rather rare 3186cc variant with 240bhp. A 2387cc five-pot diesel and two-litre turbo were also offered but only to our European brethren; so, if you do find one of these, it will be a left-hooker.

The floorpan is based on that of the 164 but the chassis was given a number of important upgrades to enhance ride quality. These included twin-wishbone front suspension and a more robust rear subframe with multi-links positively locating the wheels, changes that endow the 166 with top-quality ride and handling. For the 2004 model year, a facelift brought changes mirroring those made to the 156 and GTV, the most obvious of which was the front end – incorporating the latest corporate and much larger heart-shaped grille.

### BODYWORK

Modern build quality and techniques mean corrosion in the 166 body is almost unheard of, but do check for evidence of accident repairs or paint overspray indicating a chequered past. Paintwork lasts well and problems of faded and peeling body panels that afflicted the previous generation of Alfa Romeo cars do not seem to plague the 166; however, do check the bumpers because paint adhesion is not so good on the plastic sections.

### INTERIOR

Good-quality materials mean the interior should appear smart and inviting, although the cabin does not focus on the driver like the 156. Lusso models should have leather interiors, and some models will have very nice dark blue or red 'Momo-style' seating, a factory option that's most desirable.

### ELECTRICS

The engine management system is Bosch Motronic, which is very reliable. Unfortunately, there is a weak link in the system. It uses a mass airflow meter to measure the amount of air going into the intake manifold by monitoring the temperature of a heated

wire within the meter. The temperature is proportional to airflow and so the system knows how much fuel to inject. It is this meter that causes problems. On the V6 it usually manifests as a misfire around 5500rpm, but on the Twin Spark it can cause problems anywhere in the rpm range. If left, the problem will get worse and eventually the car will not start. To diagnose whether the MAF sensor is causing a 'non-start' problem, try disconnecting it. The engine should then start and run, albeit in limp-home mode. For reliability replace with a genuine Bosch component.

Don't fiddle with the xenon headlamps, as their alignment is controlled by the body management control unit and the car needs connecting to Alfa diagnostic kit to set this up correctly. Bulbs will cost around £100 and, if you need the complete unit, budget up to £400. Pre-2004 headlamps are now out of production.

Rear door-lock actuators can pack up and cause central locking problems and these cost about £60 to replace. There's a generous level of electrical gadgets such as anti-slip regulation, cruise control, trip computer, vehicle dynamic control, rain sensors, sport throttle response and an immobiliser. These systems are pretty reliable but do take time to read the handbook and check they all work before you buy.

### HEATING AND COOLING

Radiators often have to be replaced every three years and are quite pricey. If the climate control air-conditioning refuses to engage, suspect the switching relays located on the bulkhead behind the engine. The heat from the exhaust means these can fail prematurely and simple replacement will often get the air-con going again.

### SERVICING

More than a few 166s have been scrapped because of a broken timing belt. On both engines, belt failure is catastrophic and will bend more than a few valves. With two heads on the V6, there is obviously double trouble and the £2500 bill to have a garage restore it to full health means it often doesn't make economic sense to repair. Anything over 40k miles is living on borrowed time for the Twin Spark, and Alfa now recommends changing the belt at 36k miles, despite originally claiming a 72k-mile life. The V6 should be







good for nearer 60k, but that 72k recommendation still looks optimistic. In fact, it's often not the belt itself that fails, but the tensioner or idler pulley bearings. This problem was exacerbated by plastic pulleys which were originally fitted and which had very short lives, but the pulleys now supplied are steel-cased and much more durable. If the car you are looking at claims to have had a recent belt job, do try to establish if both tensioners and idler bearings were actually replaced at the same time and, if not, then consider having the job done again.

For the Twin Sparks, a specialist will charge £400 to supply and fit a new timing belt with all pulleys, as well as replace the inlet camshaft phase variator at the same time. Why do that? Well, the variator has a depressingly short life and, once the little cogs inside them have worn a bit, they will rattle like an old diesel every time you start the engine, so it's a wise precaution to just replace it while the timing belt is off. The V6 belt job is more involved with charges of around £550 and, crucially, this includes both tensioner and idler

pulleys. Add £100 if you want the water pump done at the same time, something which many choose to do because it's a belt-off job if it subsequently fails. Timing belts aside, both engines are strong and gutsy, and only need topping up with good quality oil between services, with consumption at anything up to one litre per 1000 miles considered quite normal. Catalytic converters should last the life of the car but mid and rear sections of the exhaust system are less durable and, as with any Alfa replacement, are expensive compared with more mainstream cars.

Manual six-speed gearboxes are strong and rarely give trouble. One problem that does crop up is stiffness across the gate, or even complete loss of self-centring of the gear lever. Usually this can be fixed without having to replace any parts because the shift mechanism can simply be unbolted from the top of the gearbox and lubricated. It should then move freely and restore a smooth action to the gearshift.

Clutches last well but do get heavy with time; budget around £450 to have one replaced. Sportronic versions have a four-speed auto, a fluid drive system that offers a sequential manual change option as well as traditional automatic mode.

The

*ABOVE: Revised interior trim was well appointed. The 166 Auto was probably the last Alfa Romeo to have the Busso 3.0 V6*







system adapts according to driving style and works well but don't expect instant gearchanges in sequential mode and, when fitted to the 2.5 version, the four widely spaced ratios mean progress is frankly a bit dull. However, the additional torque of the 3.0 version makes a big difference.


#### BRAKES AND SUSPENSION

A few problems may crop up come MoT time. Front pads sometimes seize in the four-pot Brembo calipers of the V6 versions, usually put right by cleaning and lubricating. The parking brake often fails the MoT, the lightly stressed rear calipers failing due to corrosion around the mechanical actuator, a problem made worse by a cable that may not operate smoothly due to water ingress. The cable is not expensive but it's a bit of a palaver to replace because the rear seats and carpets need removing to allow it to be attached to the lever mechanism.

Upper wishbone joints for the front suspension wear and need fairly regular replacement and, if the car does not feel as planted to the road as it should, suspect rear bushings. A car that wanders or has uneven rear tyre wear points to trouble with the dog-leg-shaped rear suspension arm or stub axle bushes, and it's worth knowing that Powerflex now supplies polyurethane

replacements which have much improved durability compared with the original equipment. Any abnormal creaking when the steering turns lock to lock points to broken front suspension springs, and quite a few of the heavier V6 cars are showing this problem. A pair of springs will cost about £100 and take about four hours to fit. After any suspension work, four-wheel alignment is strongly recommended to prevent tyre wear and ensure the car drives as Alfa intended.

#### VERDICT

The short lived facelifted TI version is the most desirable 166 and was one of the last Alfa Romeos to benefit from the classic Busso V6. The 4-speed automatic version has the 3.0-litre engine while the 6-speed manual has the 3.2-litre power unit. This model, combined with the exclusive TI wheels is the one to go for – if you can find one. 

#### PRICE GUIDE

**166 3.0 V6 Sportronic**  
2007, 47,000 miles, FASH. £7990  
**166 2.0 Lusso TI**  
2004, 68,000 miles, FASH. £3950  
**166 2.0 TS Lusso**  
2004, 74,000 miles, FSH. £2990

*BELOW: The 166 facelift was attractive but was too late to boost sales, as a result they are quite rare – and desirable*





# Marmite Monster

To some it's a design classic, to others the least attractive Italian car ever made – whichever way you look at it, Alfa Romeo's striking SZ is certainly unique

Report by Keith Seume  
Photography by Michael Ward





The SZ project began life as 'Experimental Sportscar 3.0-litre' (or ES30), a prototype of which was unveiled by Zagato at the 1989 Geneva Motor Show. However, this was somewhat misleading, giving the impression that the ES30 was solely the work of Zagato. It was, in fact, designed by Fiat's Centro Stile but built by Zagato. The Italian press christened it 'Il Mostro' (monster).

Just 1000 examples were planned, each bearing the name 'SZ' – Sprint Zagato – as a tip of the hat to the company's sporting heritage. The first 11 (pre-production) examples left the factory in 1989, with a further 289 units being built in 1990. The following year saw the final 736 SZs leave the line, making a grand total of 1036 cars (38 of which were prototypes and pre-production models). They were only available in red (Zagato retained one black example), with a dark grey roof panel, and all were built to the same mechanical specification. They were also only ever offered in left-hand drive.

### CHASSIS

Mechanically, the car was largely based on the Alfa Romeo 75 saloon, with both the front and rear suspension adapted from the Group A racer – that meant the use of uni-ball suspension joints in place of more conventional rubber bushings. The front suspension featured transverse wishbones and coil springs (another throwback to the Group A racers – regular Alfa 75s had torsion bars), combined with a De Dion-style rear axle with semi-trailing arm location and a Watt linkage. Anti-roll bars were fitted all round, along with specially-developed Koni hydraulic dampers – as ground clearance was somewhat restricted, Alfa Romeo equipped the SZ with cockpit-adjustable ride height, allowing the driver to raise the car by 50mm from a control mounted on the centre console.

The SZ featured ventilated disc brakes at each corner (284mm diameter front, 250mm rear) along with 7Jx16 and 8Jx16 Speedline rims and 205/55 and 225/50 Pirelli P-Zero tyres, front and rear respectively.

### ENGINE

Alfa opted to use the lightweight aluminium 3.0-litre 60 degree V6 unit derived from that seen in the flagship 75. Waved over by the magic wand of Alfa Corse, the front-mounted V6 was an overhead (belt-driven) camshaft, two-valves-per-cylinder design with, compared to the parent 75 unit, revised inlet manifolds, camshaft timing and compression ratio (10.0:1 as opposed to 9.5:1). The 2959cc (93.0mm bore x 72.6mm stroke) V6 relied on a Bosch-sourced Motronic fuel-injection system. The result was a free-revving engine that produced 210bhp at 6200rpm, along with 181lb ft of torque at 4500rpm.

Other features worthy of note included a supplementary cooler for the engine oil and, to meet current emission regulations, all SZs came with three-way catalytic converters.

### TRANSMISSION

In common with the 75 model, the SZ came with a rear-mounted five-speed manually-shifted transaxle which, with the De Dion rear end, helped give the SZ remarkably neutral handling characteristics. A limited-slip differential (set to allow 25% slip) is featured, as is







a single-plate hydraulically-operated clutch – this was beefed up in 1991 after some early failures. The transmission also has its own oil pump and cooler set-up. The SZ remained remarkably free of any feature which might lessen the driving experience. That means there are no modern touches like traction control (the LSD is the nearest you'll get to that) or even ABS braking.

### INTERIOR

Step inside an SZ and it's immediately obvious this is something special. It's not luxurious, in an Aston Martin sort of way, nor is it race-track Spartan, like a GT2 Porsche. The Zagato-designed seats are very supportive, with sumptuous bolsters, and only ever came trimmed in beige leather. Similarly finished was the roof lining, along with the door pillars, door trim panels and storage area behind the front seats. Black leather was used for the tops of the panels, the top of the dashboard, and the centre console. There was a luggage area behind the seats, complete with leather straps to keep stowed baggage in place.

Considering the no-nonsense nature of the SZ, it is perhaps something of a surprise to find that Alfa chose to use 'fake' carbon-fibre panels on the dashboard. It's actually a Fablon-like material stuck on simple aluminium panelling. Also slightly baffling is the lack of height adjustment on the seats. The steering wheel, however, is every bit as good as it looks, being a combined effort from Zagato and Momo, with a thick leather-clad rim and three chunky spokes.

### ON THE ROAD

Although the SZ deserves to be regarded as little short of a 'supercar', it is a remarkably practical machine and, in theory at least, eminently suitable for regular use – as long as you can put up with its uncompromising character.

The meaty V6 should fire up after a couple of turns from cold and settle down to a smooth but purposeful burble. Because the gearbox is at the back, it takes a little longer than normal for the oil to warm up, but once up to temperature, the gear change is probably the best anyone has ever managed to achieve with this transaxle layout.

Acceleration is brisk but not really neck-snapping – a zero-to-sixty time of around seven seconds can be put

down to the SZ's slightly excessive weight. At 1256kg, it is no lightweight – in fact, absurd as it may seem, the all-steel, four-door Alfa 75 on which the SZ is largely based weighs around 50kg less! The blame here lies squarely with the Modar bodywork, with individual panels weighing far more than one might expect from an injection moulding.

Once warm the engine pulls willingly, with maximum torque (4500rpm) corresponding to a distinct change in the engine note, which becomes more purposeful as the engine revs climb towards the start of the red sector (6500rpm) on the tachometer. Although the V6 will happily rev all the way to the limiter, there's no need to push things that far as changing gear at around 6200rpm will drop you squarely into the middle of the remarkably flat torque curve. Push on in fifth gear and, thanks to the aerodynamically efficient shape (yes, really! Despite its blunt looks, the SZ is blessed with a Cd figure of 0.30), a good example will easily top 150mph – 245km/h was the official figure. Handling is reassuringly neutral, thanks to the 56% front and 44% rear weight distribution. That's about as good as it gets for a front-engined car. This, combined with the stupendous grip available, means that there is little evidence of the understeer one might expect when pushing hard, and little chance of throttle-induced oversteer in the dry, too.

If there is a flaw in the SZ's impressive character, it's the brakes. To be frank, they're not really up to the task of taming 'Il Mostro' – and matters are made worse by the location of the brake master cylinder next to the driver-side exhaust manifold. If you're serious about pushing your SZ to the limits on the road, or taking in the occasional trackday, then you may want to consider a brake upgrade.

### WHAT TO LOOK FOR

As far as engines and gearboxes are concerned, there are not too many problems as many components are shared with the Alfa 75. The cambelt tensioner – hydraulic on the SZ – can fail and

*ABOVE: Although made from plastic the bonnet was actually much heavier than steel*






*ABOVE: Revised V6 was sourced from the 3.0-litre Alfa 75. The SZ is a rear-wheel drive classic*

replacements are not available, but it's possible to adapt a later mechanical tensioner to suit.

Certain parts are becoming difficult to source, in particular propshafts. The centre bearing is no longer available and failure can cause vibration. The adjustable Koni dampers are now only available as reconditioned units, while brake calipers are difficult to find and even brake discs are becoming scarce. A certain amount of adaption of parts from other models maybe required.

Although the body is made from a form of fibreglass rust is becoming an issue, especially at the top of the windscreen and the lower part of the C-pillars, as well as the front jacking point. While windscreens are available – at around £1500 – side and door glass is unobtainable.

## VERDICT

SZ values have remained constant for many years and most examples are still very low mileage. A buyer would not lose money on a purchase but with static values the SZ is unlikely to be an investment. The prospect, if running one as a daily driver, is interesting, but like any classic car used regularly it will require specialist maintenance and resourcefulness. 

## PRICE GUIDE

### Alfa Romeo SZ

1992, 2600km, £49,500, Spain

### Alfa Romeo SZ

1990, 40,000miles, £24,500, UK

### Alfa Romeo SZ

1991, 7000miles, £19,995, UK





*Giulietta*

MTJ



147

GT

156

*Giulia Cup*

S.Z.







*Southwood*  
CAR COMPANY



**Alfa Romeo RZ No. 145 of 284, one owner only 12,000kms.**



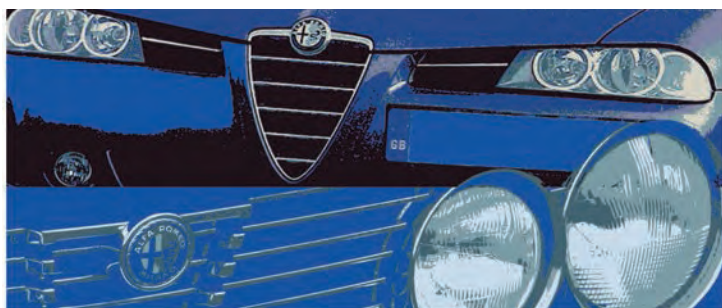
**Specialist supplier of exceptional Alfa Romeos,  
see our website for other interesting examples**



We are always looking to purchase good quality Alfa Romeos  
Please contact us if you have something of interest

**T:** 01883 344226 **M:** 07442 506123 **E:** [info@southwoodcarcompany.co.uk](mailto:info@southwoodcarcompany.co.uk) **W:** [southwoodcarcompany.co.uk](http://southwoodcarcompany.co.uk)  
M25 J6 - 5 mins | Gatwick 20 mins | Heathrow 40 mins | Central London 19 miles





## Nobody cares more for your Alfa

Rusper Alfa Romeo have in-depth experience of classic and modern Alfas. Our large and impressive workshop contains a wide range of specialist tools including diagnostic equipment for the latest engine management systems.

Twin Cam, Boxer, T-Spark and V6 engines. Engine and gearbox rebuilds a speciality. Race and rally preparation.

Just 15 minutes from the M23, 25 from the M25 and close to Gatwick airport and railway station.

Free loan cars.

www.bankdesign.com

Rusper Alfa Romeo, Faygate Garage  
Faygate Lane, Faygate,  
West Sussex, RH12 4SH

T: 01293 871155  
E: info@rusperalfaromeo.com  
W: www.rusperalfaromeo.com

**RusperAlfaRomeo**

## INDEPENDENT ALFA ROMEO & FIAT SPECIALISTS



Carrying out all servicing and repairs,  
from the current range through to  
cherished older models and classics

- Factory trained staff with over 25 years experience
- Servicing carried out to manufacturer's schedule
- Timing/cambelt changes
- Genuine Alfa/Fiat diagnostic equipment
- All types of mechanical repairs
- Four wheel alignment
- Loan cars (subject to availability)

**Italia Speed**

**01635 253047**

Unit 9, Studland Estate, Ball Hill, Newbury RG20 0PW  
e: service@Italia-Speed.co.uk

www.alexjupe motorsport.co.uk alex@alexjupe motorsport.co.uk  
01243 575760



UK Agent for  
Alfa Romeo  
Performance Parts  
by R S Racing



general servicing & restoration  
engine & gearbox rebuilds  
performance upgrades  
cars for sale  
Alfa Romeo specialist:  
- Giulia 105 series  
- Giulietta / Alfetta / GTV6 / 75 / SZ  
- R S Racing handling kits

We have GTV6s  
available for sale  
Please contact  
Alex for further details.



**alex jupe motorsport**  
.co.uk

## Gonnella Brothers

5a Catford Hill, London SE6 4NU  
Servicing and repairing Italian cars since 1979



### MOT, Servicing and Repairs in South East London

We are still, in essence, a family run garage; but the business has matured and developed over the years. Recently, with the help of our sons, we have expanded into larger additional premises and Gonnella Brothers can now offer a fully approved workshop and bodyshop, together with a VOSA endorsed MOT test station, covering classes 4, 5 & 7; and for any make of vehicle.

With best wishes to Phil Ward and the Team at Auto Italia, who have consistently delivered a great journal over the last 20 years. It has been a pleasure to be involved.

Gonnella Brothers sponsor The Warren Junior Football Club, also sponsored by The Metropolitan Police.



0208 690 0060 | 0203 302 2303

www.gonnellabrothers.co.uk



# BEST OF BRITISH 100% UK MADE BRAKES

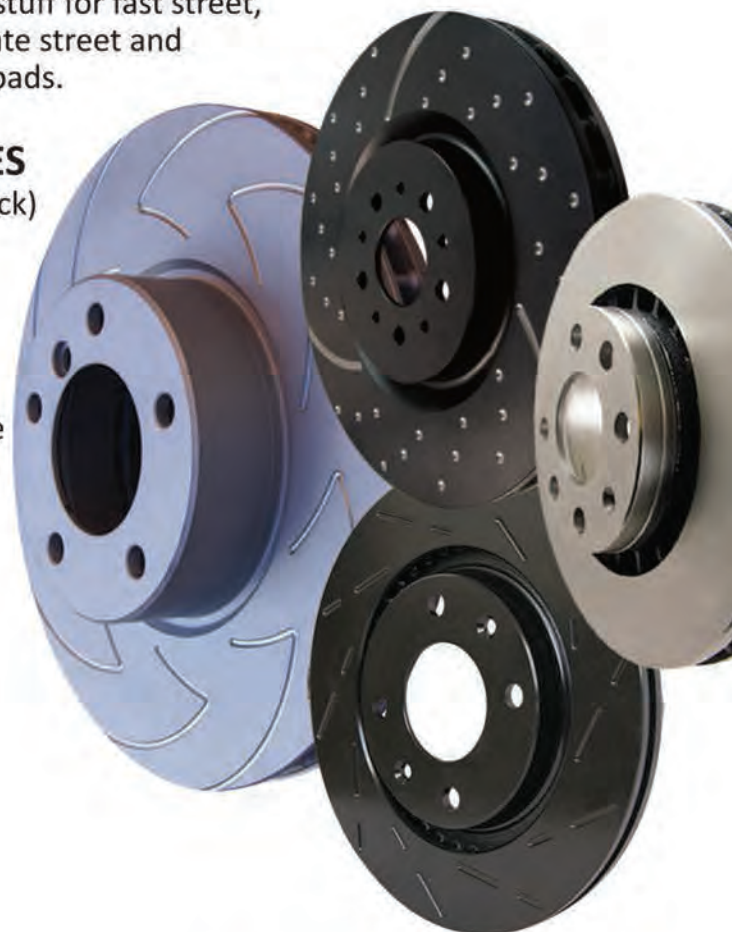
EBC Brakes pads are now  
made using the Nucap Canada  
NRS hook retention backing  
plate system, guaranteed  
NEVER to debond



**BRAKE PADS** Choose from grippy Greenstuff for spirited use, Redstuff for fast street, Yellowstuff for all out grip and track use or Bluestuff for the ultimate street and trackday pad. Latest compound is the Orangestuff full race grade pads.

## THREE SPORT DISC CHOICES

GD series slotted and dimpled (black) for fast street, USR fine slotted (black) or new high carbon BSD series BLADE discs (silver) for fastest street and track day use. For daily driver cars the EBC premium OE replacement discs are a great choice with a superb price point and great value for money.



## WANT A QUALITY DAILY DRIVER PAD?

Try the new Ultimax 2 premium replacement pad.

- ✓ The world's first and only true ECO friendly pad
- ✓ Great brake feel for everyday driving and
- ✓ A new lower price point

**Whatever you drive ... EBC has the  
best selection of brakes for you.**

**EBC<sup>®</sup>**  
**BRAKES**  
[www.ebcbrakes.com](http://www.ebcbrakes.com)





Let the storm begin.



Huracán LP680-4