

Auto Italia

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Alfa Romeo Giulietta TI

Fiat's by Pininfarina The 1200 & 1500 Cabriolets



Also:
Fiat 500X UK Launch
Maserati Quattroporte 1 by Frua
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Our feature on Bertone in this issue records the demise of the last remaining great Italian designer and coachbuilder. Bertone and Pininfarina were the two companies that became most prominent among Turin's prolific coachbuilding fraternity. Both companies enjoyed great success by designing and building cars for Fiat and Alfa Romeo, and in Pininfarina's case, Ferrari. The writing was on the wall when the Fiat Group decided to first, take its manufacturing in-house, and then subsequently its design.

Despite rescue attempts the Bertone empire has finally collapsed and its ultimate indignity is that the fabulous collection of prototypes at Caprie is to be sold off. At least Pininfarina managed to hold on to most of its own cars at the Moncalieri design centre.

According to *Ruoteclasse* magazine the cars will be auctioned on the basis that they will stay in Italy. While this seems admirable, I can see some cars being resold to second owners elsewhere. Indeed a few of them were auctioned by RM in 2011 and I am not convinced that they are all still in Italy.

The Bertone Design Centre at Caprie is in a beautiful location in the foothills of the Alps north of Turin and this is where the collection should be kept. Being opened up to the public would help support the costs providing somebody volunteers to fund the project. Readers will recall what happened to the Maserati factory collection that Fiat turned its back on when it took control of the company. The cars ended up in Wimbledon to be auctioned off before Umberto Panini stepped in and saved them for the nation.

There are some deserving Italian collectors who will cherish individual Bertone cars but I can see others making big gains here while Italy watches its heritage evaporate. Sad, really.

Phil Ward
Editor

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NEWS & VIEWS

Brooklands 2015

30th Italian Car Day



Record numbers turned out for the 30th edition of Auto Italia's Italian Car Day. This significant anniversary also coincided with 20 years of publishing this magazine, so there was plenty to celebrate.

Brooklands managed to accommodate over 3000 Italian cars in the display areas throughout the historic site before overflowing over to the adjacent Mercedes-Benz World.

The variety and quality of the cars both on and off the track was spectacular with some very special star machinery in action. Top billing must go to the two Isotta Fraschini-engined monsters run by Glenn Billqvist with Il Drago Ruggente and Michael Vardy with his '1905' Fiat. Billqvist made a return visit after

wowing the crowds last year. He brought his fire breathing machine over from Sweden single handed, which was quite ambitious for such a long journey. Vardy did not have so far to travel but his machine was equally impressive. Based on plans he discovered for an official Fiat world record challenger, the vehicle is superbly engineered and was regularly driven sideways on the throttle with apparent ease, much to everyone's delight.

Other notable cars being demonstrated included Peter Jerram's delightful 1950 Ferrari 212F1, which was in full flight, and a Group 4 Lancia Stratos. Dressed in Alitalia livery, this Stratos has a significant rally history and was ably – and loudly – demonstrated by Brooklands regular John Reaks, he of Ex-Piquet F1





Benetton fame. Just as impressive in the sound department was Max Wakefield with his Lola T332 F5000. Although not an Italian car it was run as a tribute to Italian racing star Lella Lombardi who competed in a similar car in period.

An extra group was included in the track demo to celebrate 20 years of the Fiat Coupe and 10 multi-coloured examples ran in production date order. The Ferrari and Lamborghini groups were at capacity which included Jon Oakley's bellowing satin green Huracán several F40s and 458 Speciales. Two of the latter later made ultra rapid ascents up the notorious test hill. Equally impressive were two Iso Rivoltas, one of which laid down tyre marks right to the top.

As usual the paddock was packed with many

stunning beauties, which included two rare right-hand drive Dino 246 GTS 'chairs and flares' versions, no less than six classic Fiat Pininfarina Cabriolets, a Bugatti EB110 and the remarkable Abarth 750 Zagato Sperimentale. This car, one of only four made, has just completed an extensive restoration.

Visitors will have noticed changes happening in the Brooklands infrastructure as the museum prepares for the relocation of the aircraft hangar. This is an ambitious undertaking but once completed it will free up valuable display space on what was originally the circuit's start and finish straight.

Our thanks to everyone who supported the event, the marshals, the admin staff, the chaps at Talk Media and our sponsors Hoyle-Fox.



RM Sotheby's Fort Worth Sale



RM Sotheby's set a new record for a private automobile collection auction on May 2, generating a remarkable \$53,887,585 with 100 percent of all lots sold at its sale of the Paul and Chris Andrews Collection in Fort Worth, Texas.

The result of more than 15 years of dedicated and meticulous acquisition by the father and son team, the Andrews Collection is widely known and respected by the global collector community for its exceptional quality, diversity, presentation and historical significance. The weekend's sale, staged as part of an effort to pare down the collection to a more manageable size, lifted the gavel on a total of 78 vehicles and select memorabilia before a packed house.

Top sale honors at the auction went to the sale's cover car – the desirable covered headlight 1962 Ferrari 400 Superamerica SWB Cabriolet, chassis Ch. 3309 SA, which led a string of 16 individual million-dollar-plus sales. The last of only seven examples bodied by Pininfarina, the Superamerica sparked a lively bidding contest in the room and on the phones, before eventually selling for a strong \$7,645,000 to applause

from the audience; the impressive result represents a new record for the model at auction.

Another Ferrari, sold without reserve, was 400 Superamerica LWB Coupe Aerodinamica Ch. 5029 SA (below), which went for \$2,860,000. An interesting 'Ferrari lookalike' Cunningham C3 Coupe by Vignale made \$869,000.



FERRARI RED DOT AWARDS

Three Ferraris have won the prestigious Red Dot Award, the world's leading product design competition which celebrates its 60th anniversary this year. The recent FXX-K has been named Best of the Best for the top design quality and groundbreaking design, while both the California T and LaFerrari were also singled out by the international jury for Red Dot Awards for the high quality of their design.

Approximately 5000 innovative entries from 56 nations were in the competition. The work of the Ferrari Style Centre headed by Flavio Manzoni was selected by an international jury made up of respected designers, design professors and specialist journalists from 25 countries.

Photo: Neil Fraser for H&H



Richard Colton

Richard Colton, a long term member and Vice President of the Ferrari Owner's Club, died in March aged 83. Richard owned a 250 SWB and 275 GTB/4 that he drove extensively. In a remarkably generous gesture he has gifted his cars to the Royal National Lifeboat Institute (RNLI). The cars will be auctioned by H&H Classics at the Duxford sale on October 14th.



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NEW ATS 2500 GT

The original 1960s GT, developed by Chiti and Bizzarrini, is considered a masterpiece amongst the world's car collectors, from both an engineering and design viewpoint. The new GT sees that masterpiece reborn – a car that builds upon the original ATS ethos.

The GT is light, rigid, and efficient. It is intended to bring back the spirit, purity and simplicity of the 1960s, but relived in a truly modern way. It incorporates the very best that modern engineering and technology has to offer a driver, but stripped of unnecessary systems that add weight.

Built around a chassis that was designed using sophisticated 3D Cad-Cam programmes, the GT wears an extremely strong carbonfibre body weighing in at a mere 70kg. This allows the final weight of the GT to sit well below 1000kg – something almost unheard of today for a car in this sector.

The 90-degree naturally-aspirated V8 engine is rear/mid mounted and develops over 640hp at 10,000rpm, its origin has yet to be announced.



ABARTH 695 BIPOSTO RACING DEBUT

Abarth's potent 695 Biposto – 'the most Abarth of all Abarths' – made its UK racing debut on May 9-10, celebrating with a class win and runner-up place.

Driven by motoring journalists Alisdair Suttie and David Finlay, and entered in the Class A1 Road-going production cars up to 2000cc class, the stunning grey Biposto, complete with 'dog-ring' gearbox, attracted the attention of spectators and racers alike at the BARC Harewood Speed Hillclimb in Yorkshire.

The two drivers plan to enter as many rounds as possible of this year's British Leaders Hillclimb Championship, always in the Road-going category but always in a different car, while raising awareness and money for the charity Blood Bikes.



MASERATI ON TARGET

Maserati confirms the results that set a new record in the first quarter of 2015. With 148 new cars registered in April, the UK market reaches a cumulative figure of 523 vehicles for the year so far, an increase of 65% compared to the same period of the previous year.

All the main European markets (United Kingdom, Italy, Germany, France, Spain, Switzerland and Benelux) recorded positive results during April, with an average increase of about 20% over the same month in 2014.

The Ghibli Diesel also received a major mark of approval with regard to the corporate market, being named 'best company car in Germany', both in direct competition with the highly acclaimed German cars and in the imported car category. This rating was awarded by a sample of 270 German fleet managers.



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Lamborghini Huracán GT3 Race Car

Lamborghini is expanding its motorsports programme with the new Huracán GT3, which competes in the 2015 Blancpain Endurance Series in Europe. The Huracán is the first GT3 car fully engineered, developed and assembled internally by Lamborghini, with assistance from its

valued partners.

The Huracán GT3 is equipped with an all-carbon chassis and a fully integrated, FIA-compliant roll cage. The subframe has been modified both at the front and rear to accommodate a high performance water radiator (front), and for a better positioning of the gearbox (rear), improving aerodynamics. The car

features a 42/58 front/rear weight distribution.

Bodywork is constructed using composite materials and was developed, along with aerodynamics, in collaboration with Dallara Engineering. Efficiency has been improved with the rear adjustable wing, adjustable front diffuser and louvres. The new aerodynamics also allow

improved cooling of the braking system.

The new rear-wheel drive Huracán GT3 adopts the V10 direct injection engine mounted on the road car, managed by a Bosch Motorsport control unit that also manages traction control, gearbox and the TFT display on the dashboard. The engine is fixed on the chassis by rigid mountings and is coupled

with a sequential six-speed gearbox, according to FIA regulations, and a three-disc racing clutch.

Lamborghini and its dealers entertain VIP guests at every Lamborghini Blancpain Super Trofeo North America in the Lamborghini and Blancpain Village, which features lavish hospitality and amenities.



Lamborghini Luggage

Automobili Lamborghini has added its mark to the latest generation of high-end luggage from TecknoMonster. Bynomio rolling luggage is an exclusively Italian, co-branding project between Automobili Lamborghini and TecknoMonster, and is on display to passers-by inside the specially constructed pop-up showcase in Via Monte Napoleone, Milan.

Entirely fabricated in Italy, the collection of high-end rolling bags is created using the same carbonfibre materials employed in Lamborghini's super sports cars.

The exclusive Bynomio rolling bag collection will be distributed world-wide through the Automobili Lamborghini mono-brand shops, the network of Lamborghini dealers, and selected multi-brand shops. www.lamborghini.com

Lamborghini Polo Storico

Automobili Lamborghini is relaunching its restoration centre under the name of Lamborghini Polo Storico. The new department includes the brand's historical archives, the vehicle restoration centre, vehicle certification, and guarantees the availability of numerous genuine spare parts for all historical Lamborghini models.

With its new facility Lamborghini emphasises the importance of preserving its broad heritage and unique knowledge. A big part of this new formula is the Archivio Storico Lamborghini, which includes the documentation for historical Lamborghini car models, as well as technical schemes, body colours, leathers, images and publications made by the company. These are all accessible in a digital format for owners, enthusiasts and journalists researching Lamborghini classics.

A supply of original spare parts and the unique techniques applied is now available, allowing classic car owners to put their car back on the road in the best possible condition and integrity.

Furthermore Polo Storico provides various certification for Lamborghini classic cars. Customers can have the originality of the components of their historic car checked by a technical committee which, if compliant, will then issue the certificate.



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DESIGN

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

Castagna Milano 500C Ischia

Castagna Milano's 500C Ischia is the Italian Carrozzeria's latest coachbuilt special. Following the 500 Tender2, the Ischia is another Fiat 500-based retro-reinterpretation on the iconic 1950s Fiat 500 Jolly theme; the essential accessory for the mega-yacht owning jet-set. In a time when the horsepower race of large OEMs has led to the 'democratisation of performance' and with the economic devaluation of last generation supercars, demand is strong for new, unique, automotive toys to reinstate the hierarchy in the harbours of Portofino, Monte Carlo, Saint-Tropez, et al.

The story of Castagna began in 1849 with Carlo Castagna, a former apprentice at Carrozzeria Ferrari, who took over Mr Ferrari's businesses after his retirement. The company had already established a reputation for manufacturing



sumptuous carriages, mainly for European royal families and the Italian aristocracy, such as the Visconties. Following the collapse of the American market in the 1950s, Castagna did not adapt quickly enough to the changing times and it would take 40 years for Castagna's new era of coachbuilding to begin, with the introduction of the 1995 'Auge' and frequent provocations – such as the Imperial Landaulet Concept – ever since.

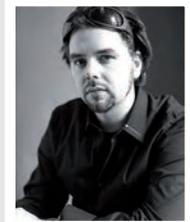
Castagna Milano's 500C Ischia is essentially a Fiat 500C sans doors and roof, offering room for a captain and his four (probably, female)

guest sailors, each sitting in individual seats and surrounded by sumptuous leather and solid teak wood. Conceptually it might be similar to a four-seater Smart Crossblade, yet in terms of refinement, material choice haptics and craftsmanship it leaps miles ahead of its plastic ancestor and so does its drivetrain. The 500C Ischia is powered by the 0.9-litre TwinAir Turbo engine, featuring 105hp at 5500 rpm and 145Nm of



CHRIS HRABALEK

Age: 38
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



torque; not shabby for a port tender.

Designwise the 500C Ischia looks plain yet well resolved in detail. A high-sill entry is reminiscent of a BMW Z1 with doors 'down'. Yet, as no such novelty feature

of the latter found its way into the 500C Ischia – and neither did a retractable roof – it makes the usability of this car very limited; thus underlining its decadent ultra-niche positioning. To the defence of its existence, it must be said, that currently the Fiat 500 line-up does not feature a full convertible, but rather a central retractable cloth roof Coupe with fixed C-pillars,

thus the wind-in-hair experience that the 500C Ischia provides, is probably a well appreciated feature on a hot summer's day in the Mediterranean.

The founder Carlo Castagna's motto was 'luxury must be built slowly and with passion, in detail', and that is probably a good thing, as it would be a positive surprise, if more than a dozen or so well heeled playboys could be motivated into placing an order for a 500C Ischia with Castagna Milano. The larger share of mega yacht owners probably opting for a weather-proof Aston Martin Cygnet or Smart Brabus instead . . . even if that means (temporarily) removing their doors.



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Photo by Martin Holmes



BETTEGA REMEMBERED

The Italian rally driver Attilio Bettega, who died on 2nd May 1985 at the age of 32, was fondly remembered by friends and colleagues at a ceremony last week based around his home town of Molveno.

Motoring activities in Molveno and nearby Trento were performed at local venues, using vehicles which featured in Bettega's truncated career. During his seven years in the WRC, he achieved six podium finishes progressing from the Autobianchi one-make championship through to drive Lancia Stratos, Fiat Ritmo, Fiat Abarth 131 and Lancia 037 cars.

Attilio was the first professional driver in the world rally championship to die during an event, having already suffered serious leg injuries in an accident, also in Corsica in a Lancia 037 three years earlier.

Attilio's son Alessandro also took up rallying, and arranged the exhibits for the ceremonial parade.

Martin Holmes

PANDA PRAISE

I entirely concur with Chris Rees' findings re: the Panda 100HP – ours

has covered nigh on 59000 miles at 40/42 mpg and still goes like a bomb coupled with near-zero oil consumption.

I believe in using the torque curve rather than



the power curve and generally do not exceed 4000rpm, which may, in some hands, seem to avoid exploiting the character of this excellent power-plant. By the same token I find the six speed 'box a delight to use.

The thought has occurred to me that Fiat ought to drop the Panda unit into a 500 – if only to improve the fuel consumption vs the 500S, which despite the claims



of remarkable performance from the Twin-Air unit, the economy aspect is way short of the brochure claims.

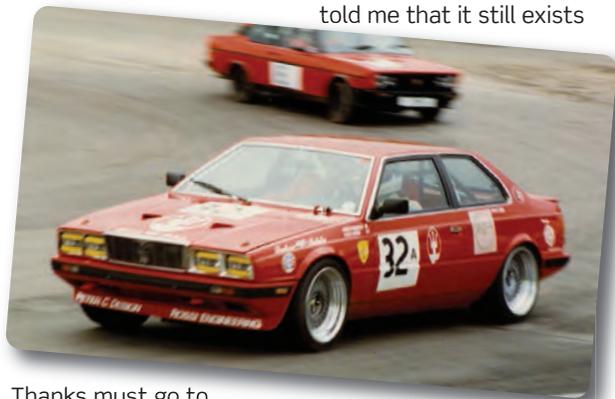
Your publication only seems to improve with age which is more than can be said for most of us! With best wishes

Ian Bateman

BRISTOL ITALIAN AUTO MOTO FESTIVAL

Bristol's 'Old City' once again resonated to the harmony of Italian exhaust notes as the Auto Moto Festival sprung into life on 25th April. For the thirteenth year in succession, the streets; lined with Italianate architecture, thronged with enthusiasts and thrilled spectators with one common purpose: To soak up the heady atmosphere and marvel at the wide array of style and design flare. This year our featured marques were Lamborghini and Moto Morini. Spectator interest was intense throughout the 'Old City' as crowds thronged in from the city centre, through the Bike Zone; tempted by the hundreds of examples of classic machinery, both ancient and modern from all the prominent marques and a few more obscure ones too. On into

Corn Street they passed the scooter displays, adorned with classic Lambrettas and Vespas, the Abarths, Fiats and then the exciting array of Alfa Romeos and Maseratis and then at the centre-piece, the Lamborghinis. Further on were magnificent displays of Ferraris and Lancias. Ernie Marshal's Aventador was chosen for the 'favourite Lamborghini' award although competition was stiff.



Thanks must go to Wessex Garages for their excellent display of Abarths and Alfa Romeos.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA ITALIAN FESTIVAL

I am arranging the Southend On Sea, Essex Italian Festival on Saturday 5 September 2015. The event will include Italian Food, entertainment, Italian FREE crafts for the children, Pavarotti Singer

(as seen on TV), etc. I am looking for some Italian cars to attend this event and wondered whether you would be able to help?

A dedicated area would be given to Italian Cars to promote their clubs etc
Malcolm Tilsed

MISSING MASERATI

I'm looking for Roberto Giordanelli's Maserati Biturbo race car. About five years ago at a Maserati Club event he told me that it still exists

but has been standing in the open for years according to the information he had received.

Roberto suggested I write to you and ask you to publish my search in your magazine. If you could do this or can offer any other help it would be most appreciated.

Stefan Wray

Roberto raced this car in the Italian Intermarque Championship of which I was the series coordinator. I recall he was on pole once at Brands Hatch, when the flag dropped the diff immediately seized and the car had to be lifted off the grid. Emails will be forwarded. Ed





1967 Ferrari 330 Shooting Brake

The only 330 GT Vignale Shooting Brake. This spectacular example was the result of a collaboration between the legendary US importer Luigi Chinetti and the world Famous Vignale Coachbuilder. A very famous motor car, this is the last car to have been bodied by Vignale. Regularly invited to some of the World's most prestigious events including amongst others Salon Prive, Villa d'Este and the Cartier Style et Luxe at the Goodwood Festival of Speed.

Additional Motorcars Available for Acquisition



Ferrari 365 GTB/4 Daytona

This remarkable two owner "Daytona" was first registered in Italy on July 10th 1971, therefore making this example one of the very first "Pop-Up" light examples produced. The car, now UK registered, features factory-fitted air conditioning, electric windows and has recently received a full service. This sensational motorcar has covered just 24,000 kms and is in the process of being Classiche Certified.



Ferrari 275 GTB/4

Completely Restored and finished in its original colour combination of Celeste Chiaro with Nero Leather, this stunning Matching Numbers LHD 275 GTB/4 is an exceptional example. UK Registered and with just five documented owners from new.



Ferrari Dino 246 GT

An excellent "M series" example which was completed in August 1971. It is presented in its original colour combination of Argento Auteuil Metallizzato with Nero. The car has spent its recent life in Japan, but prior to being shipped it was totally restored to a high standard. This Dino has also received a major check over and service.

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Stanford Hall ‘Summertime Classics’

SUNDAY JUNE 28TH

The third edition of Summertime Classics will take place in the manicured parkland of Stanford Hall. This superb stately home will play host to extensive displays of classic cars of all marques and nationalities. And it doesn't cost an arm and a leg to take the whole family along to enjoy it.

The event incorporates the 'Club Italia' concours and a general classic car concours competition which forms the centrepiece of the event. Email applications to the Editor for consideration.

Centrally located, Stanford Hall is clearly signed from M1 Junction 18 from the South and 20 from the North. Access from the East is via Junction 1 on the A14. For access via the M6 and roadworks information please check with www.highways.gov.uk before travelling.

Ticket Information

Pay on the day. £10 Adults – children under 16 free



BROOKLANDS MUSEUM 'SUPERCAR SUNDAY' SUNDAY JULY 19TH

Developed over the last three years, this exciting event will be repeated at Brooklands for 2015.

This is a rare opportunity for the public to get close to exclusive motor cars and also see them in action. At most venues, exotic cars are fenced off in secure enclosures but at Brooklands, with its friendly atmosphere, the visitor can inspect the cars at close quarters.

Historic Brooklands has easy access via London's arterial motorways and is conveniently located just within the orbital M25. It has excellent aviation and motoring exhibitions including the Concorde Experience and London Bus Museum.

The event has proved to be popular with car clubs that put on complementary displays for members and also take part in the Test Hill runs. Owners of supercars are invited to contact the organisers for information on free entry.

Pre-booking is advisable to benefit from fast track entry and to save on gate prices.

Advance ticket sales are now available for both Brooklands events at www.brooklandsmuseum.com



BROOKLANDS TICKET PRICES

Advance sales

Adults £11
Seniors & Students £10
Children (5-16) £6
Family £30

On the day prices

Adults £13
Seniors & Students £12
Children (5-16) £6.50

BROOKLANDS MUSEUM 'AUTUMN MOTORSPORT FESTIVAL' SUNDAY OCTOBER 11TH

Competition cars from all ages will again be put through their paces on the Mercedes-Benz World test track. Selected cars will also run up the demanding Brooklands Test Hill. Visitors can expect to see – and hear – a wide variety of competition cars including Formula 1, F5000, CanAm, GTs, Touring cars, Group B rally cars and historic cars like the record breaking 1933 Napier Railton – holder of the outright lap record at Brooklands. This is the only venue in the UK where visitors can get really close to competition cars in action.



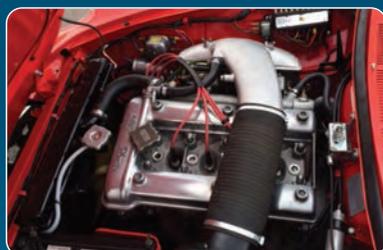
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X hits the spot

Is the new 500X sexy enough to be X-rated? Or do we mark it with a big 'X'? We take a test-drive on UK roads to find out

Test by Chris Rees
Photography by Michael Ward





Judging by Fiat's new TV ad, the new 500X doesn't so much have the X-factor as the XXX-factor. With the tag line "well dressed, badly behaved" the 500X is being shown on TV ads as a Fiat 500 fed with what looks like a Viagra pill, and turning into a 500XXX.

The 500X crossover is further proof of the huge market appeal of the 500 brand. Badges like Multipla and Idea have been ditched in favour of iterations of the 500. The growth of the 500 brand is happening not just in terms of the number of derivatives but in their size, too. Make no mistake, the 500X is a relative giant, if not quite as big as a 500L MPW. It's comfortably larger than its B-segment SUV rivals like the Juke, Captur and Mokka, although it stops short of Qashqai size.

You could perhaps view the 500X as the belated successor to the long-dead Sedici, but that would be to do it a disservice. While the Sedici may have been something of a trailblazer (arguably the world's first ever supermini crossover), it was never quite resolved, and never achieved anything like the sales success of the Nissan Juke, for instance.

But I think UK buyers will be queuing up to get behind the wheel of the 500X. Fiat expects the 500X to break into the top five in this market segment in the UK, which will mean it overtaking the Mini Countryman in terms of sales. So who will buy the 'X'? Lots of current 500 owners looking to move up to something bigger, for starters. Don't they already have the 500L? Yes, but that car tends to attract older 'cool nesters'. The 500X is aimed at what Fiat calls "stylish adventurers" – younger buyers than 500L ones, but older and more male-orientated than regular Fiat 500 buyers.

The 500X is trying to cover two distinct market niches: urban sybarite and country welly-wearer. So it's offered in two distinct styles: urban (Pop, Pop Star and Lounge) and off-road (Cross and Cross Plus). The former set boasts a coloured dashboard, rounded lower grille and front-wheel drive. The Cross ones get a grey dash, off-road type lower grille, and in 2.0 diesel guise 4x4 as well.

Frankly, though, very few people will opt for 4x4. Front-drive Cross models have Traction Plus, which works brilliantly in most low-grip scenarios, even muddy fields. I did have a brief drive in the 2.0-litre diesel 4x4 on a mild off-road course, and it coped admirably, but in truth the 500X isn't an off-roader – there are other choices if you want a 'proper' SUV.

The 500X works much better as a funky-looking everyday car. It's really rather good to drive, for starters. The engines in Fiat's line-up are exceptionally lively. The 120bhp 1.6 diesel (the engine most people will choose) has plenty of torque from revs as low as 1500rpm, and engaging Sport mode gives it a genuine kick of extra performance.

But don't discount petrol as an option. Yes, 1.4 MultiAir engine is thirstier (a claimed 47.1mpg versus 68.9mpg for the 1.6 diesel) but the 140bhp powerplant is an absolute cracker. It's wonderfully revvy and benefits from the sort of keen throttle response in Sport mode that could well raise eyebrows among your passengers. It's far more eager than its 9.8sec 0-62mph time would suggest, and also far more refined than the diesel. As well as being cheaper . . .



ABOVE: UK Fiat 500xs are now hitting the streets and with attractive finance deals it deserves success



The MultiAir also benefits from a new six-speed manual gearbox, which boasts very smooth shifts. An alternative (for the 2.0 diesel only) is an automatic gearbox with – wait for it – nine speeds. This is the first car in this market segment with so many ratios, and despite seeming like overkill on paper, it works impressively smoothly in practice, even if it seems like it's changing gear almost every second. Fiat's six-speed twin-clutch DDCT transmission is also available on some models.

One 500X trait you can't fail to notice is how firmly the suspension is set up. That definitely benefits the handling: there's very little body roll around corners, and it grips the road with less understeer than many of its rivals. While the steering is fairly responsive to your input, the feel is on the woolly side, however. The flipside of the firm suspension is a ride quality that can be juddery at both low and high speeds, although it absorbs big bumps very well.

The 500X is a very practical choice. You sit quite high up, giving you a clear view of the road, and there's loads of passenger space up front. Even in the back it's fairly spacious, with decent head and leg room, even if the seats themselves aren't terribly comfortable. And the well shaped boot swallows 350 litres of luggage with the seats up. Fold them down (a very easy task) and you have a near-flat load platform that can house 1000 litres of luggage.

The cabin looks pretty stylish, too, I reckon, with its 500-inspired retro elements. The five-inch touchscreen on high-spec models may be smaller than the screens offered in some rivals, but it's stuffed with 'Uconnect' tech to give you streaming radio, for instance.

So, we have something to celebrate in the 500X: it's a very cool new addition to the Fiat fleet, and one that seems set for success. Rather than being triple-X rated, I give it a triple F rating: fun, functional and funky. 



TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

	FIAT 500X 1.4 PETROL	1.6 MULTIJET	2.0 MULTIJET AWD
ENGINE:	1368cc 4-cylinder petrol	1598cc 4-cylinder diesel	1956cc 4-cylinder diesel
BORE X STROKE:	72mm x 84mm	79.5mm x 80.5mm	83mm x 90.4mm
COMPRESSION RATIO:	10.0:1	16.5:1	16.5:1
POWER:	140bhp @ 5000rpm	120bhp @ 3750rpm	140bhp @ 4000rpm
TORQUE:	170lb ft @ 1750rpm	236lb ft @ 1750rpm	258lb ft @ 1750rpm
TRANSMISSION:	6-speed manual, front-wheel drive	6-speed manual, front-wheel drive	9-speed auto, four-wheel drive
BRAKES:	281mm vented discs (front) 278mm discs (rear)	281mm (front) 278mm discs (rear)	305mm vented discs (fr) 278mm discs (rear)
TYRES:	215/60 R16, 215/55 R17 or 225/45 R18	-	-
DIMENSIONS:	Standard: 4248mm (L), 1976mm (W), 1600mm (H)	-	Cross: 4273mm (L), 1976mm (W), 1620mm (H)
FUEL CONSUMPTION:	47.1mpg (combined)	68.9mpg (combined)	51.4mpg (combined)
KERB WEIGHT:	1320kg	1320kg	1495kg
TOP SPEED:	118mph	116mph	118mph
0-62MPH:	9.8 seconds	10.5 seconds	9.8 seconds
PRICE:	£17,595-£20,345	£19,095-£21,835	£24,095-£25,845

UK PRICING @ DEALS

The 500X is on sale now in the UK, priced from £14,595 to £25,845. For now there are only 1.4 petrol and 1.6 diesels. 1.6 E-torQ 110bhp petrol models follow in July, with 2.0 Multijet diesels following in September and a new 1.3 Multijet diesel in October.

I never realised how popular finance has become for new car purchasers – some 80% of private buyers now get their new car through finance. And Fiat is stepping up to the mark with a PCP deal that will cost you £199 per month at 4.6% APR, based on a £4099 deposit (which includes a £500 dealer contribution) over a period of 36 months. While most buyers prefer PCPs, if you want to go the hire purchase route, Fiat is offering 0% finance on a 33% deposit.

Meanwhile, if you do buy outright, you can be reassured by the fact that CAP has given the 500X best-in-class value retention figures. A 1.6 MultiJet Cross should be worth £9375 after three years/36,000 miles, or 48% of its original cost.



The Missing Link

This Group B version of the Ferrari 288 GTO formed the basis for the iconic F40 – and we drove it on the Nordschleife

Story by Tony Dron

Photography by Phil Ward and Keith Bluemel



This is not a road car. To look at it, Ferrari's 288 GTO Evoluzione could be mistaken for one of the more outrageous roadgoing supercars but don't be misled. This car is nothing like that.

As far as we know, this is the first track test of one of these unbelievable cars ever to be published. We have not found one in the English language, anyway.

I can imagine what it's like to buy a Ferrari road car. The posh showroom, the well-dressed salesman, the handing-over ceremony – I have driven enough of them to have some idea of the process. There would be the appreciation of the beautifully-crafted interior, a delight in the luxury of it all and the getting to know a car that has been painstakingly set up for owners to enjoy the performance of a thoroughbred engine in safety. If the slightest thing went wrong you'd expect red carpet treatment.

Buying and running a machine like this is different. It's a race car. There's no posh showroom and no red carpet. It is not set up to be easy to drive: the simple objective nearly 20 years ago was to produce the fastest possible Ferrari Group B racer, a car to beat the technical wizardry of Porsche's 959 in international circuit racing.

The sad story of the FISA Group B experiment, and the part played in it by the 288 GTO Evoluzione, has been described before (see *Auto Italia*, May 1995) so a brief recap is all we need. The basic idea of Group B was to create some powerful competition cars that looked very much like recognisable road cars. The rallying fraternity took up the idea enthusiastically but, when it came to racing, the only serious players were Porsche and Ferrari, although Jaguar did try.

Group B produced shocking results in rallying: within a few years there were terrifyingly fast Fords, Lancias, MG Metros, Peugeots, Audis, Renaults, Opels and Citroëns blasting around the forests. Typically they had 600bhp turbo engines, 4WD and flimsy bodywork. They were lethal and, in May 1986, the death of the great Henri Toivonen and his co-driver, Sergio Cresto, on the Tour de Corse tarmac rally in a works Lancia brought everyone to their senses.

Group B rallying came to an end by mutual

agreement all round and it petered out in racing too. Ferrari had devoted a serious programme to it, launching the 288 GTO at the 1984 Geneva Show. Based on the 308/328 series of road cars, the new GTO had a 400bhp twin-turbo V8 mounted longitudinally in a lengthened chassis. Like the classic 250 GTO of old, the "O" was Italian for "Homologation". To get it homologated for motor sport they needed to make 200 road cars. With that done, Ferrari was entitled to create a full-blooded, radically modified, 650bhp Group B racer version of the 288GTO. This 'Evoluzione' was the result.

Just five exist and this example, chassis 79887, was the first definitive example. It was completed in May 1986, days after that fateful rally in Corsica. With the demise of Group B it was sold and soon found its way to England. As is well known, Ferrari did not waste this development work. The design was adapted to produce the F40 in 1987, using at least one of the five 'Evos' as a prototype.

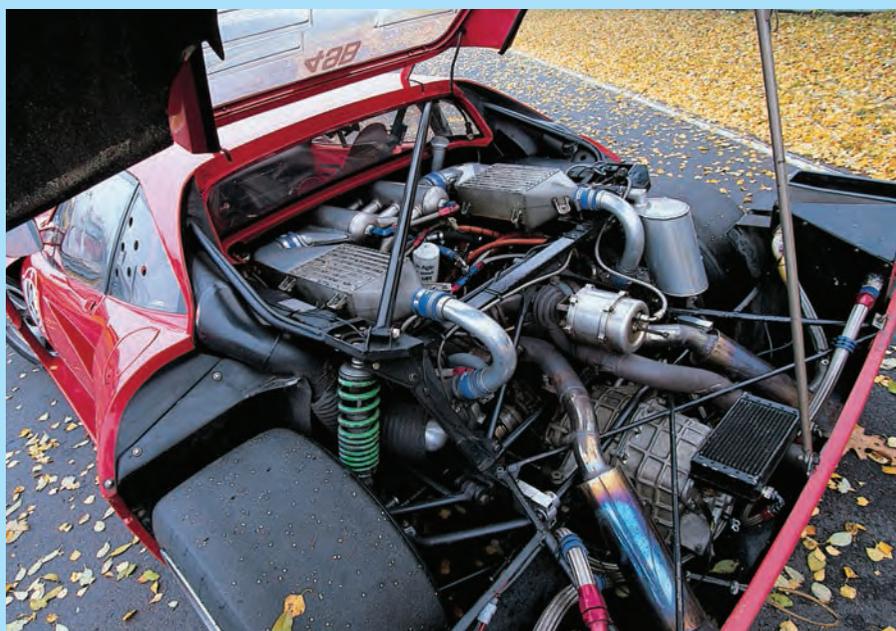
Several times over the past couple of years I have been invited to drive this rare survivor of a forgotten race programme. Back in 2002, I was strapped in at the Nürburgring and ready to go on the classic 13-mile Nordschleife circuit. I was putting it into gear when the gate came down. Somebody had crashed heavily at the Foxhole and the circuit was closed.

In 2004 I was fortunate to get in half a dozen laps – nearly 80 miles – of very fast motoring on a dry but occasionally misty circuit. A series of passengers joined me on this RMA track day and they all seemed properly astonished by the 288 GTO Evo.

I shall not pretend to have got near the car's full potential. On some circuits it could be done but not in a track-day fun session on the world's most demanding circuit. Without the extra focus of a race, which would make it a different matter, this Evo is just too powerful to get on it properly in that time.

I know the circuit intimately and I came to the Evo after some pretty hot laps in a Porsche GT1 and a Ferrari F50 on slicks – all three expertly maintained by Tim Samways Sporting and Historic Cars. And, believe me, with the hard track use these cars endure, they need expert tending. Yet by the end of the day I came





to see the magnificent F50 as relatively easy to drive. I saw high rev readings in sixth gear in that F50 and I knew I was using it pretty well. In the Evo I was faster everywhere, some of the speeds reached were quite stunning and I overtook every other car I saw. Easily. Even so, I would have loved at least another dozen laps, just to tease it nearer its limits on the Nordschleife.

This is not an easy car. If I can get across something of the sheer savagery of the thing I shall have done my job. When you get in, the message begins to dawn. There are some pretty red and black colours but this really is a stark cockpit. The seats are superb but strictly basic, lightweight racing jobs. There is no soundproofing. The doors, made of carbonfibre composite like the rest of the body, feel flexible and shut with a little click. The door opener is a cord rather than a fancy handle. There's a sliding flap in the fixed Perspex door window to increase ventilation.

The instrument panel is pure 1980s racer, not

something you would expect to find in a West End car showroom. The dials are small, easy to read and well placed; they cover revs, boost, fuel pressure, oil temperature, oil pressure and water temperature. There is, naturally, no speedometer.

The driving position is excellent, headroom is pretty good and the pedals are big and ideally positioned. The gear lever gate hangs out in space, some way above the floor. Just right.

This is a racer that never raced. It was built and ready to go, almost fully sorted. The gearbox is extremely strong but the selector linkage is a weak point. There is some evidence of an effort being made to beef this up when it was new but it remains a problem. Before I even got in I was told that first and reverse were out of commission. I would have to start in second, not that easy as the engine does not like to run below about 3000rpm. Care has to be taken to get it moving without stalling and without harming the clutch.

ABOVE LEFT: The 288 GTO Evoluzione weighs less than 1000kg and produces 650bhp. It has sledge hammer performance





ABOVE: Ch. 70205 was retained by Ferrari
BELOW: Ch. 79887 upon arrival at Talacrest in 1998





288 GTO EVOLUZIONE CAR BY CAR

Ch. 50253 A 288 GTO prototype converted to Evoluzione specification. Location unknown.
 Ch. 70167 Evoluzione prototype. Location USA.
 Ch. 70205 Evoluzione Prototype. Location Maranello
 Ch. 79887 Customer version. Location USA
 Ch. 79888 Customer version. Location USA
 Ch. 79889 Customer version. Location Brunei

Once on the move, we have second, third, fourth and fifth and that's fine. We accelerate away, not giving it everything at first but it is already extremely quick as we get some warmth into the Dunlop slicks and the Brembo brakes. First impressions of the gearbox suggest that smooth changes are going to be tricky. Everything is direct, with none of the softness we associate with high-performance, expensive road cars.

When I start to let it further off the leash on the straights, the acceleration is quite phenomenal. It's about as progressive as a piece of heavy artillery. You just point it and fire it. And away it goes, I promise you. This car weighs under 1000kg and it really does produce 650bhp at 7800rpm. It feels like it. Top speed is reputedly 230mph. That seems equally believable.

Now the problem is to drive it properly, like the racer it is. The chassis is quite straightforward: a good stiff tubular steel frame, braced by some composite side pieces and an aluminium floor. Wishbone suspension all round comes straight from mid-1980s racing design. The slippery, lightweight body has a snub-nose and a fairly big wing on the back. It seems basically stable and the brakes are fine. You need to press the pedal reasonably hard but the feel is consistently reassuring and the car slows impressively well.

Before long I have realised that nice smooth gearchanges really are impossible. You just have to make sure you floor the clutch each time, and get a proper heel-and-toe action when changing down to avoid locking the back wheels. The gearbox feels crude but you have to act positively and accept the way it is.

The real fun comes first with learning how to start getting the power on a bit earlier coming out of slow to medium corners and then with learning how to keep it moving fast through a series of ultra-quick bends. I never did get into trouble with it but I got the strong feeling that respect is needed when using that throttle. It gets your attention, the way that sudden rush of power hits you in the back.

Put it like this: imagine you're doing 120mph through a fast bend on two thirds throttle, accelerating hard. As the road straightens out, you ease your foot to the floor. There is a huge, instant surge in torque and power and the Evo leaps ahead as if some huge force has whacked its behind. It is quite amazing but the handling makes sense and I do feel that, given time, it would be possible to get the feeling of wringing out the last drop of performance.

As one of my passengers said: "It's a cliché to claim that an engine roars but close your eyes and this has a genuine, organic growl. And then you open the throttle and it bellows like a jungle creature in a fit of fury."

Yup. Learning how to harness a machine like this on the old Nürburgring is a great game but only a reckless fool would attempt shortcuts in that learning process. We got to go pretty fast that day but there's plenty more to come. One day I hope to take it a stage further but, at last, I do know what it's like. Awesome. 🇮🇹

This feature is based on Tony Dron's original article from issue 89 of January 2004. Two of the 288 GTO Evoluzione's have found new owners via Talacrest

TOP: Tony Dron at the notorious Nordschleife
 ABOVE: Roberto Giordanelli at a very wet Snetterton



1985 FERRARI 288 GTO



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Quattroporte by Frua

Only two Mk 1 Maserati Quattroportes were built by Frua and one of them surfaces in the UK

Story by Simon Park
Photography by Michael Ward



Cannozzetta M. Frua TORINO ITALIA



We've had a chance to look at one of the two Quattroporte prototypes built by Pietro Frua in the early 1970s, which recently arrived in the UK. The great Torinese designer got everything right except the timing...

Frua's original Maserati Quattroporte, introduced in 1963, was the inspired embodiment of a seminal concept – the super-saloon. Long before the advent of AMG Mercedes, RS Audis and M-badged BMWs, it was the QP 1 that had rivals with similar aspirations – and there weren't many of them – cowering, whimpering and scurrying for cover. For the remainder of that decade it was the luxury bolide of choice for the high-flyer in a hurry.

Ironically, Frua did some of his most successful work for German manufacturers such as Opel and BMW. But they never engendered in him the passion he felt for Maserati, and by the start of the 1970s his CV already included a clutch of A6Gs, three of the 34 ultra-exotic

5000GTs, a series of rejected 3500 proposals (a Spyder in 1958 and five assorted GTs in 1961-62) and a further pair of one-off coupés (in 1964 and '69) as well as the QP 1 and, of course, the magnificent Mistral.

When Maserati finally pensioned off the first Quattroporte, in 1969, Frua was naturally keen to provide its replacement. His proposal appeared in the metal at the 1971 Paris Salon, a crisply-styled six-light saloon of surpassing elegance based on running gear from the Indy. Known as the Tipo 419 (although identified on the chassis, confusingly, as Tipo 121), its lineage was clear to see and it was as striking to behold as had been its predecessor nearly a decade earlier. It caught many an eye, not least that of the Aga Khan, a serial Maseratista and devout fan of the designer, who had already commissioned one of those three 5000GTs. Now, he was after something a little roomier than the QP 1, specifying a 250km/h (156mph) top speed and 0-60mph in less than 7sec.

Frua was happy to oblige. However, the Trident was



now under the control of Citroën and the world was heading for a calamitous and unprecedented upward spiral in petrol prices, courtesy of OPEK. A gallon of four-star, just 35p in 1972 (less than 8p a litre), had more than doubled in price to 73p by 1975, and the market for large thirsty motorcars rapidly contracted in inverse proportion. To what extent this influenced the decision by la nouvelle régime to replace the original QP with a dreary, unimaginative Bertone design powered by the puny but relatively abstemious SM V6, rather than with Frua's ravishing, full-fat offering, is conjectural. But, whether pragmatic or merely political, the decision was academic since the Bertone QP II never made it into full production either.

Frua did, however, build a second example of his losing contender, the two of them bearing chassis numbers 002 and 004 (a Maserati quirk shared by the two original 'prototype' 5000GTs). Despite being first in the queue, the Aga Khan in fact had 004, while 002

was sold to King Juan Carlos of Spain in 1973. It's said that Frua actually dissuaded the AK from buying 002, offering to build him another, better one benefitting from a number of modifications incorporated into the latest version of the Indy – principally the 4.9-litre engine – and the full bag of Citroën hydraulic tricks.

Whatever the actual circumstances, the car was duly delivered in 1974. But some time in the late 1970s the AK, as passionate about the turf as about the Trident, gave it to his favourite jockey – which, as extravagant gestures go, is up there amongst the very best. The lucky recipient, however – one Yves Saint-Martin – was clearly more at home on horseback, and it was a third owner who, in 1989, consigned the car to an auction in Paris, where it was acquired by the Geneva International Automobile Museum.

Eight years later, it was once again offered for auction, and this time the buyer was American collector Alfredo Brener. It remained in Brener's

ABOVE: Chassis 004 was first owned by the Aga Khan who later gave it to his favourite horse racing jockey. Lucky man.







ownership in Houston until 2005 when he, too, moved it on, this time to Los Angeles-based enthusiast Bruce Millner – who just happened to own sister car 002 as well. But now, this much-travelled orphan is in the UK – or was at the time of writing. Somewhat surprisingly, it has actually covered some 80,000km, but certainly looks none the worse for it.

Wherever you stand, whatever the angle, the car claims a place right at the top of Frua's roll of honour. From the partly hooded headlights via the swooping bonnet, the glass-house cabin to the neatly truncated tail, there's not a line or curve out of place. Indoors, all is as you would expect of a top-drawer gentlemen's express from the 1970s. Incredibly light and spacious, it's home to acres of still-immaculate cream leather, polished woodwork, a full set of traditional dials encircled by matt-black bezels and, to underline its identity, that reassuringly familiar Bora wheel – shared also, like the road wheels, with

the Khamsin. Even the Fiat 124 Coupé handbrake looks good amongst that lot...

Underneath, it's pretty much pure Indy – with Citroën on hand to do the heavy lifting – and it reputedly drives like one, too. Frustratingly, circumstances contrived to thwart our plans to put that to the test; but some other lucky soul will soon have all the opportunities they need to stand out in any crowd. By the time you read this, it may well already have settled in to yet another home. Let's hope it's still in the UK, and that we all get to see it from time to time. Failing that, let's hope at least that it gets used again.

It's very easy to think of this oh-so-nearly Quattroporte II as one of Maserati's great lost opportunities; and yet in the context of that volatile, unsettled period it's probably fair to view it as the right car at the wrong time. But really, automotive architecture such as this is timeless. 🇮🇹

ABOVE: Previously part of the Alfredo Brener collection, at the time of writing the car was offered for sale at JD Classics




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A.ITAL JUL15

Nessun Dorma

A retired Stratos hillclimber blows away the cobwebs and wakes up the neighbourhood

Story by Richard Heseltine
Photography by Lyndon McNeil





Our arrival is trumpeted from a mile away. A purebred V6 on megaphone exhausts ensures this. Choral doesn't come close to describing it, each incremental rise in revs ushering in more commotion. Heads swivel in unison as we thread our way through traffic, bystanders for the most part adopting looks of admiring disbelief before reaching for their camera phones. The carnival is in town and we appear to be it.

A Lancia Stratos in full war paint – in full song – has this effect. As we carve our way through Milan's suburbs, it's hard to reconcile the fact that this was once a rally titan. From inside, the cabin feels tourniquet tight, phobic even, but then the beauty of this car is that you have to accept the mad with the maddening. The funny thing is, it was rooted in a car that was even more leftfield. Stile Bertone's Fulvia-based Stratos Zero concept car prompted jaws to slacken in unison when unveiled at the 1970 Turin Motor Show. Stylist Marcello Gandini created a wedge-shaped device which had only the one door which also doubled as a windscreen.

For the most part, however, the Stratos Zero wasn't taken seriously, its artful artifice being too much to stomach. There were some onlookers, though, for whom the Stratos Zero wasn't just a grounded flight of fantasy, Lancia's competition department boss Cesare Fiorio being among them their number. Bertone's show stopper provided the kernel of an idea for a new rally weapon, but several hurdles had to be vaulted before it could become a reality.

For Fiorio, merely pitching the idea of a small-series homologation special wasn't without its headaches, but fortunately he found an ally in Lancia principal Pierugo Gobbato who managed to sway the board of parent company Fiat. The difficult bit, they reasoned, would be prizing an engine from the desired supplier. Ever since he had first assessed a Dino with a view to rallying one, Fiorio had been enamoured of its 65° V6 engine – and he reckoned it was just the ticket for the Stratos. But first there was the small matter of

persuading Enzo Ferrari to release some. While his eponymous marque had by now joined Lancia as a Fiat-owned brand, the self-directed autocrat still ruled the roost. Much to Fiorio's surprise, Il Commendatore was receptive.

Scroll forward to the 1971 Turin Motor Show and the Stratos as we know it was revealed on the Bertone stand although the prototype was little more than a mock up. Resplendent in an eye-watering matte orange, it bore little resemblance to the Stratos Zero. With its tiny footprint and stubby proportions, not to mention its wraparound windscreen, it wasn't everyone's idea of a rally car, but that perception was about to change.

In February 1972, a test mule was put through its paces, with Gian Paolo Dallara contributing to its subsequent development. With so much at stake, not least for Fiorio and Gobbato who had petitioned for the car to be created, a good result first time out was vital. In November of that year, the Stratos was bloodied, showing well in Sandro Munari's expert hands on the Tour de Corse. Lancia's brave new world was quick, but it was also fragile and broken rear suspension ended play. In April of the following year, the Stratos claimed its first victory on the Spanish Firestone Rally.

There was, however, the small matter of building the car in sufficient volume so that it could be homologated. And, as is so often the case with these things, a certain amount of smoke and mirrors was involved. Stratos production began in October '73 with frames and glassfibre bodies being produced at Bertone's factory in Grugliasco, Turin. They were then transported to Lancia's Chivasso facility for final assembly. In July '74, Fiorio informed the Italian sporting body, the CSAI, that 500 cars had been completed which was the magic number to appease the rule makers. In reality, only 150 or so had been finished. Nevertheless, four months later the Stratos was given full Group 4 status by the FIA. By this time, former Ferrari man Mike Parkes had tweaked and honed the car further.





ABOVE: This Stratos was built as a road car in 1976 and retains the production dash. It was converted to race spec in 1978



Before the car was strictly legal for competition, the Stratos had already claimed six scalps including the Targa Florio which, in '74, was no longer a round of the World Championship for Makes. The following season saw factory driver Munari seal the first of three consecutive Monte Carlo Rally wins. However, despite racking up umpteen wins over the next few years, the Stratos' time on the frontline as a works challenger ebbed in the second half of the 1977 season. The marketing people at Fiat had been busy pushing for something production car-related to be the weapon of choice: The Lancia and Fiat competition departments were then brought together under one roof at Abarth's Turin facility and emphasis was now placed on the Fiat 131 Abarth. Production of the Stratos had officially ended in May '75, by which time 457 cars had been made (502 chassis were reputedly laid out).

Not that the Stratos was done in rallying just yet. Works entries were sporadic, due as much to homologation requirements that insisted on the use of 12-valve engines rather than 24-valve unit to as corporate interference. Markku Alén took the final works Stratos WRC victory on the San Remo in October '78, Darniche's upset win on the following January's Monte Carlo classic aboard a privateer example proving it still had legs although by then the model's Group 4 homologation had lapsed. In October '79, 'Tony' Fassina drove his Jolly Club car to victory on the San Remo Rally to claim the model's final WRC victory. The Stratos' legendary status was already assured.

A magazine cover star in period, the example pictured here racked up its fair share of wins, but in hillclimbing rather than rallying. Built in 1976, and first registered a year later, it began life as a road car. The conversion for competition use occurred in '78 with the

Bartolini tuning concern adding Weber 48 carbs, racing cams and a works-spec 'box. Owner Idealgo Branducci campaigned the car – in Jolly Club colours on occasion – but was unhappy with the way it performed. The Lancia subsequently gained a reworked cylinder head with uprated valves, while smaller Weber 44 carbs were substituted, parts being sourced from Piedmontese driver/tuner Claudio Maglioli. At this juncture, the car produced around 240bhp if documents from the time are to be believed.

The car found greater success, however, when ownership passed to Giovanni Gandolfi. The Parma man had previously starred in Alpine A110s and in 1980-81 he was the man to beat in the up to 2.5-litre class of the Italian Hillclimb Championship. In 1982, the Lancia was sold to Berardo Taraschi whose family had hitherto constructed single-seaters. Not that it was driven much: the Stratos covered all of 200km during his ownership to 2011 when the car was acquired by former motocross ace, Daniele Turrisi.

"It was found in an underground garage," he recalls. "It was one of 15 cars that were just sitting there collecting dust. After Taraschi died, I don't think his family knew what to do with them. It took three of us five hours just to manoeuvre the car into a position so that it could see daylight. Everything about the car was exactly the same as it was when it had been put away almost 20 years earlier. It wasn't perfect; the petrol tank was leaking, and there were a few other little things that needed attention, but what I loved about it most was that it was so original. You don't see many like this that haven't had a new chassis – or a new body for that matter – at some point."

Turrisi and his team subsequently restored the car mechanically, but were at pains not to gild the lily.

That said, a subsequent keeper decided to repaint the bottom half of the car, much to Turrisi's annoyance. Otherwise, the glassfibre 'shell displays every chip, graze and starburst with pride and is all the better for it. Turrisi reacquired the car in 2014 and enjoys exercising when the mood strikes him.

Inside, it's an intriguing mix of road car and competition tool. The dashboard, for example, is a 'Stradale' item but there are also myriad extra gauges, kill switches and idiot lights. What's more, the driving position is nowhere near as uncomfortable as you might imagine, but somehow you suspect ergonomics were low down on the list of priorities when the Stratos was in the throes of creation. Adopting the bum first, legs next approach to entry, you then have no choice but to assume an arms outstretched, splayed legs stance.

With the fuel pump primed, and following a couple of stabs at the throttle, the transverse V6 fires with the sort of fanfare that causes your pulse to quicken on turning the key. But then four chain-driven camshafts are spinning in their alloy 'heads only a few inches behind you. The dog-leg 'box snatches if you treat it gingerly, and the clutch on the heavy side, but once up and running the action is smooth and defined so long as you remember to blip on both up and down changes. The sense of immediacy is spectacular.

The steering is light, but then there is little weight up front. It's ultra-precise, if perhaps a little edgy at even

moderately enthusiastic speeds. Go-kart analogies are unavoidable. Then there are the disc brakes which don't have servo assistance. Get your gear changes and braking done approaching a corner, pick your line and the rest is done with the throttle. You can then call upon the fantastic traction to slingshot you out of a bend before savouring the strung-out backbeat on the straight bits. The sound of a Stratos as it revs off its axis defies description as much as belief.

As indeed is the sense of accomplishment felt when you get it right. Sitting so low, everything feels quicker than it actually is, the fact that you cannot see further than the base of the windscreen heightening this sense of lunacy all the more. The suspension is firm, and every zit in the asphalt is relayed through your contact points to the point that your kidneys rattle, but it isn't anywhere near as intimidating as legend would have you believe. But all too soon playtime is over and we're back to reality. That, and more traffic.

Stories of the Stratos being a white knuckle ride due to an excess of power and paucity of wheelbase do it a disservice. It's relatively easy to drive so long as you focus. That said, while it isn't necessary for mere mortals to tiptoe, driving one at ten-tenths would require serious talent. That, and a lack of imagination. There was nothing else like a Stratos in period and there has been nothing quite like it since. It's perfectly imperfect which is why we love it still. 🇮🇹

ABOVE: Apart from a bottom half repaint the car is pretty much as it was when it was retired in 1982



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Three of a kind

A unique gathering of Giuliettas sharing the same colour but from all three series

Story by Ruoteclassiche/Alessandro Barteletti
Photography by Ruoteclassiche/Wolfango



Fascination, a touch of mystery and the habit to run fashionably late on the first date. It was the Italians' fiancée during the years of post war recovery until the economic boom; it was in the dreams of every Italian adult, teenager and child. Paolo Morocutti was a school boy in those years. He says: "I fell in love with her when I was in third grade at primary school. Dressed in my black apron and carrying a satchel in my hand, I would stop to admire her every morning on my way

to school. 'She' is the Alfa Romeo Giulietta, or better la Giulietta (the Giulietta), the glamorous sixty-year old beauty featured in these pages. On this occasion, it is the TI version inspired by the saloon, and launched in 1957. It was another fascinating car belonging to the Alfa Romeo's exclusive portfolio.

Giuseppe Luraghi (President of the Public Institution for Industrial Reconstruction and later Alfa Romeo), was determined to make the Giulietta miracle happen. He wrote: "Research on the car was always kept top



secret. The serial numbers and the initials printed on the drawings would mislead people to think that Alfa Romeo was studying an 850cc car. The secret was well kept until the last moment and in my experience, this makes an extraordinary exception in the car business, where industrial espionage plays a significant role and press information leaks are quite frequent”.

It was a fact that the arrival of the new car ran late, with up to 18 months elapsing between the placement of an order to delivery (the Coupe arrived

ahead of the saloon, which was held over because Alfa Romeo had to rectify noise issues. Ed). This created a touting situation. After placing an order, a few customers would re-sell it a few days before delivery making a profit on the deposit.

The design of the Giulietta saloon was innovative, without looking revolutionary, and came from Centro Stile Alfa Romeo headed at the time by Giuseppe Scarnati. In addition to Luraghi and Scarnati, others involved in the Tipo 750 (secret code for the project)



were Giuseppe Busso (engine) Orazio Satta Puliga (mechanics), Rudolfo Hruska (production line) and the poet Leonardo Sinigalli (creator of the name).

TURISMO INTERNAZIONALE

Hruska's decision was to debut the first Giulietta in 1954 as the coupe version called Sprint. The saloon and the spider versions came one year later – exactly 60 years ago. The TI which is the subject of this feature was launched at the Monza circuit in 1957. The TI acronym stands for Turismo Internazionale and was created by Alfa Romeo to characterise the performance versions of its saloons.

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

ALFA ROMEO GIULIETTA TI

ENGINE:	4-cylinder, DOHC
CAPACITY:	1290cc
BORE X STROKE:	74mm x 75mm
COMPRESSION RATIO:	8.5: 1
FUEL SYSTEM:	Twin choke Solex 35 APAIG (Solex 32 APAIG from 1961)
POWER:	65hp @ 6150rpm. (74hp @ 6300rpm from 1961)
TORQUE:	9.5kgm @ 3400rpm
TRANSMISSION:	4-speed, rwd
BRAKES:	Front and rear drums
WHEELS & TYRES:	155 x 15
SUSPENSION:	Independent front suspension, transverse arms coil springs, shock absorbers
KERB WEIGHT:	908kg (950kg from 1959, 980kg from 1961)
TOP SPEED:	155km/h (150km/h from 1959, 155km/h from 1961)

All three Giuliettas (coupe, saloon and spider) share the same engine displacement of 1300cc. The traditional twin-cam layout was common to all, but the TI was equipped with a sportier engine capable of being enjoyed on road, track, rally and hillclimbs. The power increased from the 53hp of the saloon to 65hp, thanks mainly to the twin choke carburettor. Curiously, the four-speed gear change remained on the steering wheel.

The example shown in this article was registered in Teramo and dates from 1958. The first owner kept the car for 15 years before handing it on to a collector. Silvio Riccardi, born in 1956, is the current owner.

"When I was a three-year old toddler, my father bought a Giulietta in 'acqua di fonte' paint. I was so fond of that car that when my father decided to sell it, I felt really sad".

Years passed by, Silvio grew up and made friends with Paolo Morocutti (the child we spoke about earlier) who owns a splendid Second Series TI. Silvio missed the car of his childhood and started leafing through car sale ads. He eventually came across an ad placed by the above mentioned collector. The Giulietta for sale was a copy of the car owned by his father: the deal was made in 30 minutes.

Of the first series TI there are only a few differences compared to the standard version. The most evident change lay in the diameter of the headlights, increased from 15cm to 17cm, while the tail lights were now built-in. The fuel cap remained in view on the rear panel below the boot.

*ABOVE: This 1958 first series car has the filler mounted in the rear panel
RIGHT: First and second series had column change*

ALFA ROMEO GIULIETTA TI



By their grilles you shall know them. Top left is the first series Giulietta TI. Left is the second series with additional chrome stripes. Above is the final version with extensive chrome mesh.

In the March 1958 issue of *Quattroruote* the writer stated that: "The lines are pleasant, materials and finishing can be improved, while the car is perfectly watertight. The engine, road holding, uphill drive, consumption and brakes (already defined the best ever tested in the road test of the standard Giulietta in May 1956) are all awarded four stars (the maximum)." According to *Quattroruote*: "The single front seat does not sit three passengers. Split seats would be more supportive and therefore preferred for this sports car."

FRANKFURT RESTYLING

The second series Giulietta debuted at the Frankfurt Motor Show in 1959. The example shown in this feature was manufactured on November 3rd 1960 and registered in the province of Lucca on 15th February 1961. It has been part of Paolo Morocutti's collection for 20 years. The original owner lived in Livorno, as recorded by the original metal license plates.

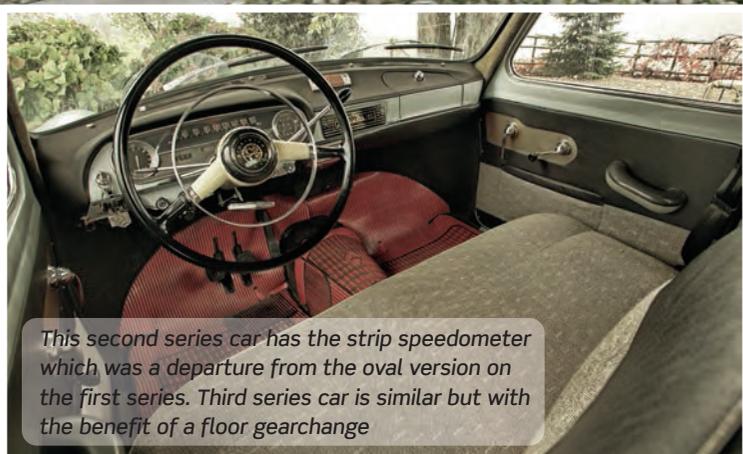
Paolo fell in love with the Second Series Giulietta TI when he was in second grade at primary school. He eventually met his much dreamt of car at the Padua classic car show.

"I took the train", explained Morocutti, "and arrived before the gates opened. I was among the first to get into the hall . . . and there she was! The seller was away and while I was waiting for him to come back, I noticed that a German guy was interested in 'my' Giulietta. I walked up to him and told him that it was useless for him to wait because the deal had already been made. So the German guy left and I ultimately got my Giulietta TI. I can't tell you whether I did a clever thing or I simply cheated on that person. Certainly, I have no regrets . . ."

The Second Series version differs from the first in some minor details. The front lights are built-in and the air intake grill became horizontal. The bumper overriders were covered with rubber. The side indicator repeaters were new, and also the taillights and the license plate rear light. The fuel filler was moved to the wing next to the rear right bumper, and protected by a flap. As for the interior, the dashboard, instruments and upholstery were all new. The sun visors were padded and there was a small courtesy mirror for the passenger sitting to the right. The interior lights turn on when the front doors are opened. Shifting of the

*RIGHT: Unmolested classic Giulietta 1200cc twin-cam
BELOW: Spot the difference! Third series car has the wider boot lid*





This second series car has the strip speedometer which was a departure from the oval version on the first series. Third series car is similar but with the benefit of a floor gearchange



fuel pump to the right, below the distributor, was the only mechanical change.

THIRD AND FINAL

The third and final series debuted in September 1961. The example featured here has a Rome license plate and was manufactured in 1964. It belongs to Stefano Centanni and was bought on the recommendation of Silvio Riccardi, the owner of the first series TI. In this version the power increased to 74hp. It was equipped with a new exhaust system and a new front end, featuring large air intakes with a squared grille and built-in indicators. The boot had a wider lid and was fully carpeted and illuminated, as was the engine compartment.

In the February 1962 issue of *Quattroruote* the car's lines were described as: "Clean but a little outdated". The front seats were separated but not adequately supportive for a performance car. The maximum speed when tested was slightly below 150km/h, oddly enough, lower than the performance of the first series version. The verdict was excellent road holding, uphill drive, engine and Porsche synchronized floor mounted gear lever transmission and was awarded a 'g'.

Production of the Giulietta TI ended in March 1964 although it remained in the Alfa Romeo catalogue throughout 1965. The final price was 1.2m lire, which was lower than the Lancia Fulvia and Fiat 1300. A total of 92,658 were built, 800 in right-hand drive and 2500 were assembled outside of Italy. 🇮🇹



A second series Giulietta that is part of the Police classic collection in action at Silver Flag





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CLOSING DOWN SALE

Bertone's fabulous collection of design prototypes is to be dispersed

Story Ruoteclassiche/Gilberto Milano

Photography Ruoteclassiche/Alessandro Bianchi/Michael Ward



Difficult times for Lilli Bertone



It has been stated that the cars must go to Italian buyers - but will they be sold on later?



le di Torino - 1951



Just before passing away, Nuccio Bertone asked his wife Lilli: "Promise you will bring my enterprise to celebrate its 100th anniversary". Early in 1997 Giuseppe Bertone, better known as 'Nuccio', was very ill and realised he would never make it to 2012, 100 years after his father Giovanni started a small coach repair business, which eventually grew to become a major car building and design powerhouse. Nuccio died on 26 February 1997 at the age of 83.

A few weeks after Nuccio's death, an off-road compact car designed on Alfa Romeo 145 mechanics called Sportut, was presented at the Geneva Motor Show. The presentation marked the beginning of the decline of Bertone's empire even though Nuccio's group of design and manufacturing companies had grown to become a successful construction industry thanks to his extraordinary entrepreneurial skills and determination.

It had been a surprising and rare mix that enabled Nuccio to foretell changes in the car industry and

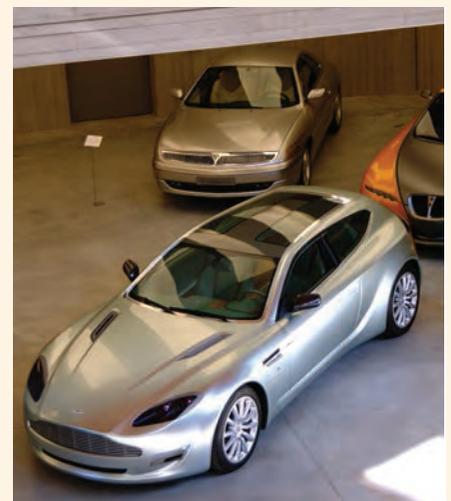
consequently address new trends and market segments with innovative designs and products. Sadly though, Nuccio was unable to foresee the risks his family would be exposed to when taking on his heritage. Lilli kept the promise she made to her husband and steered the company to celebrate its first centenary, but the group was in such a bad shape that two years later the empire broke down.

On top of the legal proceedings commenced against Lilli Bertone, she and her daughters searched - alas in vain - for new business partners. They also lost the support from Bertone's traditional partners (Opel resigned from co-operation after 20 years), the C1 scooter project developed for BMW failed, and there were no new contracts on the horizon. Last but not least, there was a crisis among independent Italian design companies, which were gradually being replaced by in-house design centres that were manufacturing one-offs directly at their own plants, ultimately putting at risk the future of Bertone and others.

Before his death, Nuccio failed to find a suitable



Marzal has already been sold for €1.512M





Corvette-based Bertone Nivola



Pickster with BMW 528 base



More prototypes in the basement

candidate to effectively continue the business he had built up during his lifetime. He could never have guessed that his wife Lilli (21 years younger than him) and his two daughters Marie-Jeanne and Barbara, in complicity with the respective husbands, would take their disputes to court.

Nuccio left everything in the hands of Lilli who received the majority of Carrozzerie Bertone's shares, the car manufacturing plant (the minority went to Nuccio's family), some shares in Stile Bertone (the project and design company) and also control over two smaller companies. The two daughters inherited the majority of Stile Bertone (purchased by Lilli later on). With the wisdom of hindsight, Nuccio would have done better by selling a minority of his shares to General Motors in the early 1990s, following GM's request to enter into partnership with him.

In the mid-'80s, 2000 people worked at the Grugliasco plant and 25,000 cars were manufactured. The figure dropped down to 7000 in 2002, when the company was on the verge of decline. Opel withdrew in 2005. At its peak 150 Opel Astra Cabrio were built daily over two shifts during 2002, with an overall capacity of around 35,000 units per year. Poor management and family disputes did the rest.

In 2007 Carrozzerie Bertone employed 1300 workers and elected to go into receivership to hold the creditors at bay. The mother and her daughters had originally planned entering into partnership with Gian Mario Rossignolo, a former CEO at Lancia, but Lilli reconsidered this idea and started talking instead to the Turinese financier Domenico Reviglio, excluding her daughters from the negotiations. Jeanne-Marie and Barbara took their mother to court, rejected the plan and resigned from the management.

The Fiat Group purchased Carrozzerie Bertone in 2009. The Grugliasco plant was the core of Bertone's operations and car manufacturing and Fiat acquired it for Maserati production.

"Fiat is still in debt to us, they promised to cancel it in five years," Lilli Bertone explained when we met her in Caprie, just outside Turin. Serious cash flow problems made things worse and the Stile Bertone branch, still operating two years ago, went into liquidation in



Kayak based on the Lancia Kappa

November 2013 and bankruptcy was announced on July 4, 2014. The final blow was delivered on October 7, 2014 with the bankruptcy of Bertone 100, the company established by Lilli in partnership with the young CEO Marco Filippa in order to merge the brand and the Bertone museum cars.

The collection in Caprie, made up of around 80 cars, many of which are one-offs, also filed for bankruptcy, although the cars cannot be dispersed or sold outside Italy, as declared part of Italy's cultural heritage. Selling will be no easy task for the receiver. The same applies to Bertone Stile, Nuccio's jewel that was created in 1972 to separate design and engineering from the manufacturing operations at Grugliasco. What's more, there is a mortgage on part of Bertone 100, which owns the brand and the museum. Bertone Stile's operations shut down over a year ago and the museum gates are closed.

Ultimately it is a tangle of problems. So, what is there to buy? What are the conditions of sale for the Bertone Stile headquarters and the museum? We managed to get access to the premises to photograph the works of art, some of which are shown in this feature. Everything is in good order, neat and clean, as if the photos were taken over the weekend when the employees were resting at home. The lawn outside the building is regularly mown, the offices are immaculate, the working tables are clean and the equipment is in good order, ready to operate. A spooky and ominous silence reigns over the place. The whole structure could be brought back to full operation in one week. "Everything is in good order here, because I am waiting to be allowed to start over again", maintains the indomitable Lilli.

A stern member of security takes care of the place and looks after the museum. He starts the engines twice a year and dusts around every two weeks. At first sight, though, not one of the cars on display could go a long way. Many of them are operating (others are simply design prototypes), although with difficulty. It is a fact that the prototypes were actually realised by dressing up very old production cars that were in poor condition and with huge mileages. The engines were simply required just to run



Bertone Shake was a Fiat X1/9 development project



A112-powered Runabout previewed the Fiat X1/9



One that got away - Stratos Zero already sold for €761k



Alfa GT Cabriolet looked stunning but Alfa didn't bite



Empty Bertone facility at Caprie is well maintained

long enough to move the car to the show platform, or to Caprie's garden for photography.

The prototypes include the Porsche Karisma (1994) based on a 911 chassis; the Lamborghini Genesis (1988) equipped with a V12 engine; the Ferrari 308 GT Rainbow (1976); the Citroën Camargue (1972), a Stratos-like sports car on GS chassis and many others, such as the Nuccio, created for Bertone's 100-year anniversary, based on Stratos Zero, and other historical concept cars designed by the 'Mister B of Style'.

The most valuable specimens were already auctioned at Villa d'Este in 2011 (Stratos Zero, the Lamborghini Marzal, Athon and Bravo; the Testudo and Lancia Sibilo). A few interesting cars are still at Caprie though, such as a Lamborghini Miura and a Countach, a Lancia Stratos Stradale and a 1956 Alfa Romeo Giulietta SS, a Montreal, a Giulietta Sprint and a series of prototypes which would make any collector happy. Their values may well be affected if they all appear on the market at the same time. Concept cars, in fact, do not always appeal to everyone. 



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Dolce Vita Classics

Three rare survivors of the elegant Pininfarina-penned Fiat 1200 and 1500 Cabriolets

Story by Chris Rees
Photography by Michael Ward





Just look at this trio. Bellissime, aren't they? Few cars indeed have aged as gracefully as Pininfarina's 1959-1966 Fiat Cabriolet. That's certainly not something that you could say about its predecessor, the fussy, over-ornate 1950s Trasformabile, a car that Pininfarina always denied styling, despite Fiat giving them the credit. However, Pininfarina certainly was responsible for the seductively clean shape of the new-in-1959 drop-top – and even built the bodies, too.

The Cabriolet looks every inch the classic coachbuilt Italian sports car, and despite the mainstream Fiat badging, that description really isn't too far from the truth. The engines and floorpan were shared with the 1200 saloon, and even the car's character – rather more 'tourer' than 'performance tool' – is very much in keeping with the 1950s coachbuilt ethos.

So in its launch form, the 1200 Cabriolet had a mere 55bhp from its 1221cc engine. Recognising that this really wasn't enough, especially for American customers, Fiat turned to the Maserati brothers' OSCA operation. From November 1959, the car was offered (as the 1500S) with an OSCA-built twin-cam engine of 1491cc, developing 75bhp, identifiable by a wider bonnet scoop to clear it. In 1962 this evolved into the 1600S, with OSCA's 1568cc unit developing 90bhp – a very healthy output for a 1.6-litre engine back in the early 1960s.

Meanwhile, the 1200 was replaced by the 1500 Cabriolet in 1963, fitted with Fiat's own 72bhp 1481cc pushrod engine. In contrast to the 1200, the 1500 boasted assisted disc front brakes, while it also graduated to a five-speed gearbox in 1965.

This is a rare car: only around 35,000 Cabriolets were made of all types. Pininfarina's official figures are 11,851 units of the 1200 (1959-1963), 20,420 of the 1500 (1960-1966) and 2,275 of the 1600S (1962-1966). The Fiat was even rarer in the UK, where it was only available to special order in left-hand drive. You had to really want one, too: while the Fiat was always so much more interesting than an MGB, it cost more than a Jaguar E-Type to buy new, and was far less of a sports car than either. But it was always considerably cheaper than Alfa Romeo's contemporary two-seater convertibles, and arguably has every bit as much appeal, especially in terms of road presence. So how does this trio of contrasting-spec Cabriolets feel today?

1959 FIAT 1500S

When is an OSCA not an OSCA? When its OSCA engine has been dumped. What! To most of us, the idea of jettisoning a rare early OSCA engine from a Fiat Cabriolet may seem heresy, but owner John Smith has his reasons.

"I'd always wanted a Fiat Cabriolet as a boy," he explains, "and then 15 years ago I came across this early 1959 example, a 1500 fitted with OSCA's 1432cc twin-cam engine. It wasn't exactly in great condition – it had a false MOT, the springs were so seized that it took four months of soaking in diesel to get them free, and the engine itself had a cracked block."

But wasn't it worth reviving the engine, even in its damaged state? "I didn't want the OSCA engine," declares John frankly. "It's unreliable and Fiat's own later twin-cam is far superior. In fact, I never even



saw the OSCA unit, I just decided to go for a 1592 Fiat twin-cam engine instead.”

Remarkably, John managed to locate a brand new twin-cam engine on eBay. He then sent it to the renowned Fiat twin-cam expert, Guy Croft, who had apparently never seen a brand new TC engine before. Guy stripped, balanced and fine-toleranced it and then

performed a Stage 1 conversion on it.

The spec includes a single 28/36 carb, as twin carbs are difficult to fit, and the single carb works very well in practice. The engine is the clear standout element of this car: it's so sweet, so smooth and so revvy (quite happy to go up to 7000rpm, in fact). Its torque curve is also surprisingly flexible for such a modestly sized engine, with an easy, smooth delivery of pulling power.

ABOVE: The Fiat twin-cam conversion is a practical option although purists would probably disagree





ABOVE: This 1200 Cabriolet has the most original specification of the group having a 'relaxed' 55bhp

And it sounds great, too, helped by a stainless steel replica of the original OSCA exhaust system. The five-speed gearbox (five ratios – very fancy for the time) works well, too, the lever slotting positively into each position in its gate.

The one thing that takes some getting used to is the steering. Hold the spindly steering wheel in your hands and the first thing you feel is the heaviness of the helm at low speeds, but as soon as you're underway, a decently solid feel quickly develops. There's understeer in evidence early on in corners, requiring armfuls of lock, but it's very easy to deal with by simply lifting off the throttle. The spring travel is generous and soft, and it has a surprisingly relaxed ride.

1962 FIAT 1200

Trevor Salthouse's 1962 Cabriolet is the most original example of the three cars in our group. In fact, it's pretty much as it left the factory, with no additions at all.

That does mean it has a mere 1221cc and 55bhp, making it easily the least powerful of the trio, too, while its four-speed gearbox underlines its lowly status. It certainly isn't quick, very much a car that's

happier touring than tearing up the tarmac, but it's got charm by the chest-full.

On 145/14 Firestone F-500s, the handling is hardly the last word in grip, either, but it has an assured feel to it – and actually the tyres squeal less in anguish around corners than the other two.

It's little surprise that such an underpowered car really didn't sell well in the USA, which is where Trevor's car was originally exported. In fact, it's the very car that the aristocrat, Lord Cavendish, would use for transporting his painting materials while he was in California. The car ended up in Paris, where it was left to suffer badly. Eventually it turned up at an auction in Banbury, and was bought by someone who only wanted the registration plate and was planning to scrap the car.

Trevor came to the rescue. He's a long-term Fiat Cabriolet fanatic, having owned a right-hand drive OSCA-engined 1500S since the age of 18, and he also owns a later Cabriolet like Bob's (see below). He succeeded in buying this example for £2000 and proceeded to restore it, rebuilding the engine and gearbox, and having a new passenger door made by hand.







ABOVE: A rare right-hand drive conversion carried out by Huxfords when the car was new in 1966

"It's not immaculate but it's rare and lovely," says Trevor. "In fact, when I took it to Spa, it was recognised by winning a trophy as first in class."

There's one mystery with this car, surrounding the 'Vettura Speciale' badging you can see on it. One explanation is that it might be a US special edition, with the suggestion that perhaps 400 were made, but there isn't a definitive answer on this. Of course, it could simply be that it's a 'special car'...

1966 FIAT 1500

What a fantastic period piece this '66 Cabriolet is. Actually it's one of the very last 1500s made before the Tom Tjaarda-designed 124 Spider replaced it. Check out the glorious period 'Karobes Kontinental' headrest, the late-shape wide grille, the aftermarket rev counter and – hang on! – right-hand drive?

Yes indeed. That's a real surprise, as not only were right-hand drive cars never built at the factory, but the Cabriolet itself was a rare period import by prestige car dealer, Jack Barclay. What we have here is a very rare, original right-hand drive conversion carried out in 1966 by a company called Huxfords.

Bob Hirschhorn has owned this Spider since 2002, when he bought it from an Alfa dealer who'd taken it in part-ex on an Alfa 156. It was in reasonable condition but the electrics were poor. It's since completed a further 18,000 miles (the odometer now reads 67k), and while it's not in concours condition, it's a superb original example, and has the distinction that it's used a good deal.

It's still on its original engine. That's Fiat's 1481cc pushrod unit – to be contrasted with the OSCA 1432cc twin-cam unit fitted to the early 1500S. But





despite having a mere 83bhp at the crank, it feels a lively, tough and torquey engine. No, it's hardly the last word in sportscar performance off the line, but it'll happily pull along at motorway speeds. It shares its five-speed gearbox with the Fiat 124, but does suffer from a 'whippy' canted gear lever that can be a little awkward to engage.

The bottom half of the engine has needed work (Bob actually drove it with a blown big end for a bit!) but nothing's been done to the top end. The sills, valances and arches have all needed attention, however, and it's been repainted in very nearly the original white and has had some rechroming done, new carpets and a new hood. Finding parts is becoming tricky now, with items like the rear lights (shared with the Ferrari 250, no less) especially difficult.

Bob is clearly a great fanatic of the car. "I like it because it's different, but still usable, with comfortable seats and suspension, and a big boot. It's got no

scuttle shake and the doors still close perfectly. It'll do 30mpg cruising at 70mph, with the rev counter reading 3300rpm. And it's reliable."

Underlining that this really isn't a sportscar, its 14in four-stud wheels and 145/14 Bridgestone B381 tyres (same as a Morris Minor, apparently) offer not a lot of grip. And while the double-jointed RHD steering column means that the steering wheel sits lower down than LHD cars, the feel through the wheel isn't quite as direct as the left-hookers. However, it does settle well into its stride, and is a perfect companion for our sunny photo shoot up and down Bruntingthorpe's runway.

Despite the obvious conclusion – that these cars are better suited to leisurely touring than a testing trip over the Stelvio pass – I came away charmed by all three Cabriolets. Which one would I pick? I'd be a happy chap if I could fit John's Guy Croft engine into Trevor's original shell with Bob's right-hand drive conversion. But I'm guessing the owners might not be too willing to oblige... 

ABOVE: The owners of the three Cabriolets meet up regularly and travel to events at Brooklands and across to Europe



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True Greats

History will show that the ultimate combination of looks and power in an Alfa Romeo of the modern era is the V6-engined GT

Test by Chris Rees
Photography by Michael Ward



The money might finally have run out at Stile Bertone (tragically, the carrozzeria went bankrupt last year), but Bertone's legacy remains as rich as any Italian design house.

And I don't think there's a finer coupe design of the last 15 years than Bertone's effort with the Alfa Romeo GT. Elegant, understated and undiminished by the passage of time, it succeeds in the tricky task of looking beautiful while retaining the practicality of a usable road car with five seats and a hatchback.

If the GT's shape is a true classic, the Giuseppe Busso-designed V6 engine under the bonnet is the stuff of legend. In 3.2-litre form, it was at its very pinnacle, and by 2007 the GT was the very last Alfa model to retain this engine under the bonnet. We're lucky enough to have two GTs to play with: a near-standard 3.2 V6 and an Autodelta-tuned 3.7 V6. The latter happens to be a historic machine: the very last Busso-engined Alfa ever to be imported to the UK. Can the GT really live up to the status of 'legend'?

MARTIN HUDSON'S GT 3.2 Q2

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

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

It's hard to disagree. That Busso 3.2-litre V6 engine, even in completely unmodified form with a bog standard exhaust, is one of the all-time greats. Every time I drive an Alfa Romeo with this V6, I'm reminded just how glorious it is – in my view the pinnacle of V6 engineering in a road car, full stop. While the GT's 240bhp may not be quite as potent as the 156 GTA's 250bhp, it's willing, silken and gruff all at once. Accelerating from 30mph in sixth gear poses no problems, so even is the torque curve. But





when you want full acceleration, dropping it into third and flooring the accelerator provides a rush of power all the way to its redline. The transmission isn't quite a match for the engine, though: it can be a bit notchy in cold weather, Martin admits, and the clutch on his car is possibly reaching the point when it needs replacement.

What really makes this car so good, though, concerns a little badge on the boot that says Q2. While Alfa fitted its Q2 diff to diesel-powered GTs, it never saw fit to offer it in the model that needed it the most – the V6 – so it's been left to owners to do the sensible thing. The Q2 Torsen unit adjusts the amount of power directed to each of the front wheels, and in the dry conditions of our test it really worked well to rein in torque steer. Martin reports that it makes the biggest difference in the wet, though.

So how's the ownership experience? Martin bought his 2005 example when it was two years old, and it

remains low mileage (50k). It's had cambelts at 25,000 and 50,000 miles, plus a new radiator and a new set of tyres at £750, but other than that it's been a dream.

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

CHRIS EATON'S AUTODELTA GT 3.7

There are several ways to extract a lot of extra power from an engine: turbocharging, supercharging, or expanding the capacity of the powerplant.

Jano Djelalian at Autodelta knows a lot about all of these different routes to big power. His work with the GT started in 2004 with the GT 3.2 Super (Rotrex C30-94 supercharger and 320bhp), then the GT 3.2 Super Evo (larger intercooler, remap, new exhaust and 341bhp).

ABOVE: The magnificent Busso V6 in its ultimate 3.2-litre specification. The GT is a definite keeper





TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

	ALFA ROMEO GT 3.2	AUTODELTA GT 3.7
ENGINE:	V6 dohc per bank	V6 dohc per bank
CAPACITY:	3179cc	3750cc
BORE X STROKE:	93mm x 78mm	101mm x 78mm
COMPRESSION RATIO:	10.0:1	10.5:1
FUEL SYSTEM:	Bosch Motronic MED7.1.1 fuel injection	Remapped Bosch Motronic fuel injection and Ferrari-inspired throttle
POWER:	240bhp @ 6200rpm	328bhp @ 7300rpm
TORQUE:	213lb ft @ 4800rpm	260lb ft @ 4700rpm
TRANSMISSION:	Six-speed manual, front-wheel drive	Six-speed manual, front-wheel drive
BRAKES:	330mm vented discs (front); 276mm discs (rear)	Brembo 330mm 4pot grooved and ventilated discs (front); 276mm discs (rear)
SUSPENSION:	Independent with double wishbones, coil springs, anti-roll bar (front); independent MacPherson struts, coil springs, anti-roll bar	
TYRES:	225/45 ZR17225/40 ZR18	
DIMENSIONS:	4489mm (L), 1763mm (W), 1355mm (H) Kerb	
KERB WEIGHT:	1410kg	1410kg
TOP SPEED:	151mph (claimed)	175mph (claimed)
0-62MPH:	6.7 sec (claimed)	5.0sec (claimed)
PRICE:	£26,695 (in 2004)	£49,000 (in 2007)



The car in front of you sits somewhere between these two in terms of power, with 328bhp. It achieves this not by forced induction, but by increasing the capacity to 3750cc.

I've always said that the best way to extract more power is the 'no replacement for displacement' route. Do it right, and the results are almost always better than forced induction: instant throttle response, sweeter and more consistent power delivery, purer sound. Trouble is, doing it right costs a lot of money compared to the turbo or supercharger route. But if you can afford it, it's definitely the way to go.

Chris's car has a 'Stage 2' Autodelta conversion, which gets "everything but the supercharger" – in other words, bored out and tuned. The result is more power and torque: for the record, the figures are a 101mm bore (versus 93mm standard), 328bhp at 7300rpm (versus 240bhp at 6200rpm standard) and 260lb ft at 4700rpm (versus 213lb ft at 4800rpm standard).

This car is historic in one very important way: it

started life as the very last Busso V6 Alfa ever to be supplied to the UK, delivered new in 2007. It was immediately taken to Autodelta and completely re-engineered from new. Autodelta's engine spec includes gas-flowed cylinder heads, steel billet camshafts, enlarged Ferrari-inspired throttle, bespoke Autodelta manifold and downpipes, remapping and a stainless steel exhaust system developed in conjunction with Ragazzon.

To haul it up, there are cross-drilled Brembo front discs with four-pot calipers. The suspension is uprated to Sportline Corse coilovers, while OZ 18in wheels and Pirelli P Zero Rosso 225/40 ZR18 tyres provide the grip, aided by a Quaife limited-slip differential.

Making it stand out visually is an Autodelta body kit (unique front bumper, rear spoiler and rear diffuser), plus twin exhaust tailpipes. It all looks very svelte in Nero Jarama (paint code 846) with a natural tan leather interior.

In the last eight years, Chris's GT has covered just

ABOVE: Intended as a run out model based on 147/156 parts, Alfa Romeo sold over 80,000 GTs





ABOVE: Improving on excellence! This overbored Autodelta version churns out 328bhp at 7300rpm

10,000 miles from new, as it's kept pretty much as a weekend toy (Chris has a V6-powered Alfa 916 Spider as his daily driver), and it's never been tracked.

So how does it drive? With 328bhp going through the front wheels, you might well expect it to be very tricky. In fact, torque steer is kept well under control by the Quaife differential, at least when the steering wheel is turned. If you accelerate with the wheel in the centre position, you can certainly feel it tugging; but turn it at all and that tugging abates. It gives you all the confidence you need to accelerate hard as you clip each apex, so that your corner exit speed is much higher – especially in wet conditions. It's hard to know which of the two systems – Quaife or Q2 – is better, as the difference in power between the two cars we're testing is so great, but they both work superbly in their respective settings. One thing that is very noticeable, though, is the reined-in body roll in the Autodelta.

With its louder exhaust and throttle, the 3.7 V6 sounds amazing. And it's a very quick car in a

straight line, capable of 0-60mph in around the 5.0 second mark, and topping out at close to 180mph. But the really big advantage of the extra capacity is the sheer muscle it brings. This is one hell of a flexible powerplant. You can accelerate away at 20mph in top and it'll just tank away all the way to the increased 7300rpm redline – and near-on 180mph – without missing a beat. There's little point revving the nuts off this bored-out engine, though, since most of its flexibility lies lower down the rev range. And it's relaxed, too: at 100mph the engine is spinning at only 3000rpm.

Autodelta did go even further than this with its 3.7 Super engine, featuring a Rotrex C38-81 supercharger for 405bhp and 375lb ft of torque. Frankly, though, I think 328bhp is plenty in the GT's front-drive chassis; not that it couldn't handle more power (it can) but because this is just so usable as it stands. Which is just one of the many beauties of this rather wonderful machine. Legend? Yes. 



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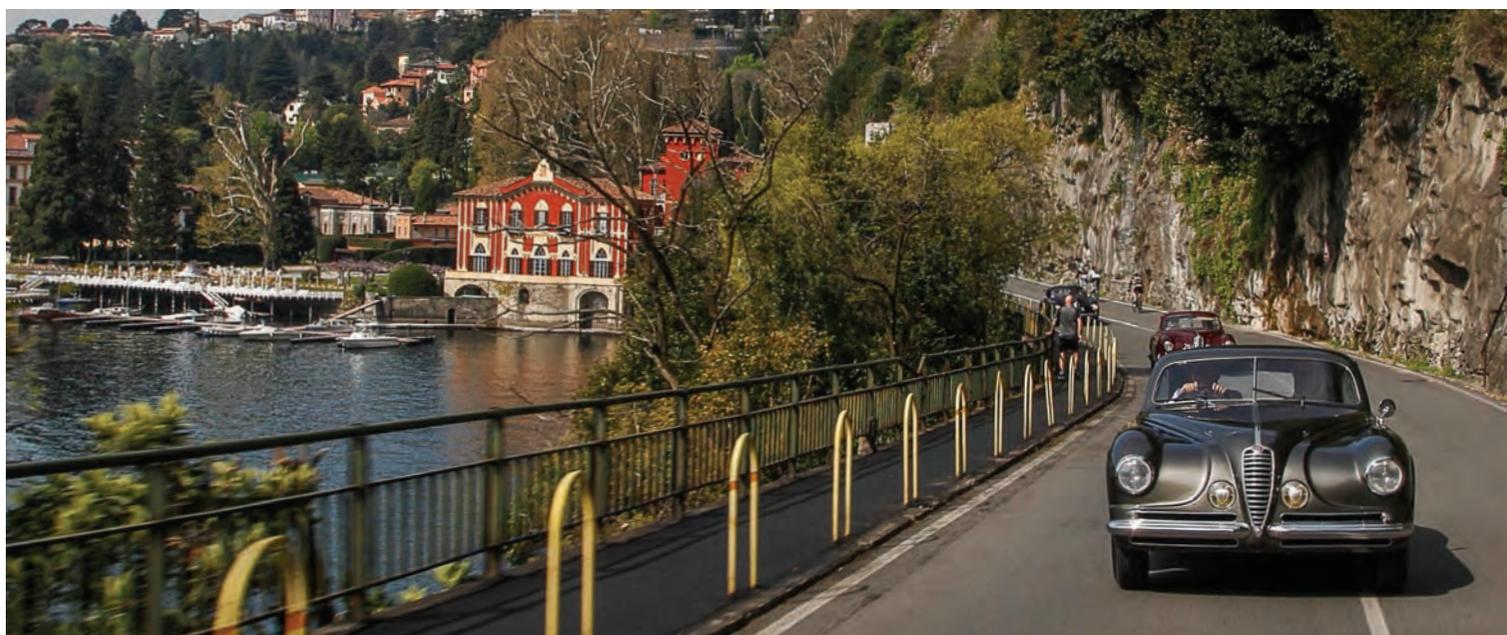
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Villa d'Este Style 2015

A fine collection of Alfa Romeo 6C 2500s gather beside Lake Como

Story by Francesco Gandolfi





Perfect weather conditions blessed the two days of the Villa d'Este Style 2015, the fourth edition of an event dedicated to the Alfa Romeo 6C 2500, an absolute masterpiece created by Carrozzeria Touring.

Chief organiser Marco Makaus of Mille Miglia fame, supported by his perfectly coordinated team, changed the formula from the original one day event where the cars sat in the dream park of the Cernobbio hotel, to a full weekend. Villa d'Este has regularly been on the top of the list of the world's very best resorts where owners of exclusive cars can enjoy the beauty and the hospitality of the Grand Hotel.

Saturday's programme retained the single day format of previous events but was enriched by the interesting lecture given by Elena Lingeri, architect and granddaughter of Pietro Lingeri. Lingeri was one of the highest valued architects of the rationalism movement. A native of Bolvedro on Lake Como, in the early forties Lingeri built what is considered his crowning achievement, Villa Leoni.

On the shore of the lake, just a few kilometres

north of Villa d'Este, Villa Leoni was the destination for the Alfa Romeos on Sunday's drive. The Villa is especially remarkable for reasons that go beyond being one of the finest examples of rationalist architecture in Italy, because Lingeri was constrained by the most severe limitations imposed by the Como 'Genio Civile', the authority granting building permits. They forbade "l'uso del cemento, del ferro e di altri materiali non autarchici" (using cement, steel and all other building material not sourced locally).

Some might have considered these limitations to be insurmountable but Lingeri's ingenuity turned them into pluses. He made the walls with local stone from Moltrasio, mostly left without plaster. Stone from the quarry at Musso was used for the pillars and windowsills, the wood for the roof, windows and doors came from Valmalenco.

On Saturday there were four Alfa Romeo Villa d'Este's on display (the version sharing the hotel's title), accompanied by a Touring coupe built on a 6C 2500SS 2nd Series chassis (the Villa d'Este's are on 3rd Series chassis) and a 1900 Super Sprint, also with coachwork



by Touring and still bearing some styling elements derived from the Villa d'Este. As in previous years the cars were parked around the centenarian sycamore tree. Concerns for the 'health' of this magnificent tree had forced the hotel management to request that the cars be parked in different areas, but the innovative measures taken in the last year to revive the ancient tree have had excellent results making it possible to return to what is most likely the best location in this magnificent estate.

The 2nd Series coupe was loaned from the Alfa Romeo Museum in Arese, which is presently under restoration and hoped to be ready for the 24th of June, Alfa Romeo's birthday. A.L.F.A. – Anonima Lombarda Fabbrica Automobili – was founded on June 24, 1910. It is curious that the Museum sent the 2nd Series Coupe instead of its Villa d'Este, although it could be under restoration.

Saturday's dinner, like several other elements of the weekend, was generously provided courtesy of the Grand Hotel Villa d'Este and took place in the Veranda restaurant. The very clear night made the view incredible, with the lights of the towns on the shores reflecting in the water.

After a leisurely start on Sunday morning, the cars followed a fascinating route along the western shores of Lake Como, on the old (and very narrow) road avoiding the modern sections, which are mostly inside tunnels. Although they make reaching the northern part of the lake much quicker they are much less attractive.

The 20km route passed through the towns of Moltrasio, Carate Urio and Laglio where George Clooney has a residence. He was not seen and the Alfisti avoided the risk of being fined in accordance with the regulation recently introduced by Laglio's mayor to protect the privacy of its most famous resident. After Laglio the cars passed through Briennio, Argegno and Sala Comacina and all the way to Ossuccio, for the visit to Villa Leoni so brilliantly described by Elena Lingeri the day before. The Villa was found to be even better than what the enthusiastic description had led us to believe. It is kept in perfect and highly original condition by the present owners.

After a lunch that took place at Villa Leoni, where



two ample halls with great views of the lake and Comacina island were ideally suited for the purpose, some of the cars went back to Villa d'Este, others took the way home directly, with the commitment to be back for Villa d'Este Style 2016.

The establishment of the Alfa Romeo 6C 2500 Villa d'Este Registro Storico (www.villadestestyle.com/it/31/registro.aspx) has already provided some very good results. Owners of cars that until now have been totally unknown have reported their existence and felt motivated to bring them back to the road. As a result it is hoped that there will be a few new entries next year. Another benefit of the Register is the prevention of fakes, one has already been identified and listed as such, which certainly is a deterrent to building recreations, and attempting to credit them as genuine works of Carrozzeria Touring.

ABOVE: Fabulous cars displayed in fabulous surroundings. The gardens at Villa d'Este are an ideal location for fine motorcars





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Alfa Romeo Owners' Club

www.aroc-uk.com

Alfaowner.com Club

Web based Alfa Romeo club

www.alfaowner.com

Alfa Romeo Association of California

www.alfaromeoassociation.org

Alfa Romeo Club Quadrifoglio Belgium

www.clubquadrifoglio.be

Alfa Romeo Owners' Club of Canada

www.alfabb.com

Alfa Romeo Owners' Club Australia

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www.alfaclubvic.org.au

Abarth Owners Club

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www.abarthownersclub.com



De Tomaso UK Drivers' Club

www.detomasodc.co.uk

Ferrari Owners' Club

Gary Dearn, Silverstone Innovation Centre, Silverstone Circuit, NN12 8TN
gary.dearn@ferrariownersclub.co.uk

www.ferrariownersclub.co.uk

Fiat Motor Club

The original UK club for owners of all Fiat models. gavin@fiatmotorclubgb.org
www.fiatmotorclubgb.com

Fiat Club Africa

www.fiatclub.co.za

Fiat Club of New South Wales

www.fiatclub.com.au

Fiat Club of Victoria

www.fiatclub.org.au

Fiat 500 Club

www.fiat500club.org.uk

Fiat 500 Enthusiasts Club GB

www.fiat500enthusiasts.co.uk

Sporting Fiats Club

www.sportingfiatsclub.com

Fiat Barchetta UK Owners' Club

www.fiatbarchetta.com

Fiat Forum

www.fiatforum.com

Fiat Bravo and Brava Owners' Association

www.fiatboo.co.uk

Fiat Multipla Owners' Club

www.multiploowners.co.uk

Fiat Cinquecento & Seicento

www.clubcento.co.uk

Fiat X1/9 Owners' Club

www.x1-9ownersclub.org.uk

Fiat 127 Forum

www.fiat127.com

Fiat 131 Mirafiori Forum

www.131mirafiori.com

The Fiat Coupe Club UK

www.fccuk.org

Fiat Punto Forum

www.puntosports.co.uk

The Other Dino (Fiat)

Brian.Boxall@maxxium.com

Fiat Scotland

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www.fiat-scotland.com

Fiat & Lancia Club of Western Australia

www.fiatlancia.org.au

Lamborghini Club UK

Contact: Lynne Bull, Membership Secretary,

Barnside, Wrotham Road, Meopham, Kent,

DA13 0AU Lynne@Lamborghiniclub.co.uk

www.lamborghiniclub.co.uk

Lancia Motor Club

Contact: Sarah Heath-Brook

31 Creffield Road, Colchester, CO3 3HY

membership@lanciamc.co.uk

Lancia Montecarlo Consortium

www.montecarlo.org.uk

International Association of Lancia Clubs

www.viva-lancia.com

Club LanciaSport

www.lanciasport.com

Stratos Enthusiasts Club

www.stratosec.com

Maserati Club

Contact: Dave Smith, 2 Sunny Bank, Widmer

End, Bucks HP15 6PA Tel/Fax: 01494 717701

admin@maseraticlub.co.uk

www.maseraticlub.co.uk



Northern Ireland Italian Motor Club

www.niimc.net

Italian AutoMoto Club

www.italianAutoMotoClub.co.uk

Yorkshire Italia

www.facebook.com/YorkshireItalia

Scuderia Italian Car Club

South Australia

www.scuderiaitaliancarclub.asn.au

DIARY DATES

June 2-7

15th Modena Cento Ore

Rome to Modena rally
francesca.azzali@canossa.it

June 11-14

Parco Valentino

Salone & Gran Premio

City of Turin

www.parcovaleentino.com

June 12-14

Cholmondeley Pageant

of Power

www.cpop.co.uk

June 14

Italian Masters Car Fayre

(Alfa Book)

Seighford Driving Centre

Stafford

italianmasters.events

page.org

June 18-21

Le Mitiche Sport a Bassano

Bassano del Grappa

www.garedepoeca.com

June 19-21

20th Vernasca Silver Flag

Historic hillclimb

www.vernascasilverflag.it

June 21

National Alfa Day (AROC)

Gawsworth Park

Cheshire

www.aroc-uk.com

June 21

Classics at Sharnbrook

Sharnbrook Hotel

Bedfordshire

June 25-28

Goodwood Festival of Speed

Goodwood House

www.goodwood.com

June 28

Summertime Classics

Stanford Hall

www.auto-italia.net

July 5

British Grand Prix

Silverstone

www.silverstone.co.uk

July 10-12

LMC National Weekend

Lancia Motor Club

Stratford Manor Hotel

www.lanciamotorclub.co.uk



July 19

Supercar Sunday

Brooklands Museum

www.auto-italia.net

July 24-26

Silverstone Classic

www.silverstoneclassic.com

August 15

Midlands Italian Car Day

Deene Park, Northants

www.aroc-k.com/eastmids/mitcar15.html

September 5

Italian Festival

Southend-on-Sea

Contact: Malcolm Tilsed

malcolm@greenboxmanagement.com

September 6

Kent Italian Car & Bike Day

Honnington Country Fair

www.honnington

events.com

September 26-27

Spa Italia

www.spaitalia.be

September 19-20

Classic Car Show

Manchester

www.manchesterclassiccar

show.com

October 11

Motorsport Day

Brooklands Museum

www.auto-italia.net

October 10-11

Mercante in Auto

Fiera Di Parma

www.mercanteinfiera.it

November 13-15

NEC Classic Motor Show

www.necclassicmotorshow.com



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ALFA-ROMEO GT 3.2 V6 24V 36,000 miles Alfa Romeo GT 3.2V6. Grey. Black leather interior, ARFSH. Q2 diff by Monza Sports
Price £8,995



ALFA 159 JTDM 16V TI QTRONIC 73,307 miles. Exceptionally rare 159 Ti automatic. All the Ti refinements inc sat nav and full leather interior.
Price £8,995.



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*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.



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CHESHIRE CLASSIC CARS

Report by Phil Ward
Photography by Michael Ward

Cheshire Classic Cars was founded by Iain Tyrrell in 2004. With extensive technical knowledge and over 30 years of experience across a range of top end marques, Tyrrell certainly knows his cars.

Given the current interest by investors in collectable cars, there are

an increasing number of companies that specialise in sourcing suitable vehicles. While there are several specialists in the south east of the UK there are fewer further north. Cheshire Classic Cars is located in an area where there are an increasing number of potential clients but their location is also accessible to London and indeed

international customers, by being located on an airfield near Chester. The on-site General Aviation facilities can accommodate aircraft up to Airbus 318/Boeing 737, almost to the door.

Rather than specialising in a single marque, Cheshire Classic Cars deals with a wide range of classics. The cars are carefully selected and

many have fascinating provenance, which is essential for collectors looking for a car that is a cut above the rest. Two such cars on stock are the pair of Lamborghini Miuras shown here.

Any Miura is special but there are two that are perhaps the most iconic. The first is the one that featured in the *The Italian Job* and the second is the

For more information on these special cars and current stock lists at Cheshire Classic Cars visit:
www.cheshireclassiccars.co.uk







legendary Jota prepared by Lamborghini's development test driver Bob Wallace.

Although the original Jota was destroyed in a well recorded and needless crash, there are some excellent replicas, in particular the one created in the UK by Piet Pulford. The example at Cheshire Classic Cars is based on a Miura S that was supplied new to Japan and has been there until recently. The last owner set out to produce a car whose closeness to the original Jota specification was much more than skin deep, and there is a comprehensive photo record and bills on file for over £365,000. This work included producing hand formed aluminium bodywork with exposed rivets and fitting a specially modified SV

engine, as well as a simply stunning ground up restoration. The build quality far exceeds anything produced by the factory in period.

The other famous Miura at Cheshire Classic Cars is widely acknowledged to be the actual example used in the opening sequence of the 1969 cult film *The Italian Job*. It was a new car supplied by the factory and carried the 'prova' plate BO 296. A second car was used for the bulldozer crash sequence, which was another Miura provided by Lamborghini and the engine-less chassis had already been severely damaged. After its roll down the cliff it was swept away by the river and never seen again!

Research has uncovered that the filmmakers, Paramount,

hired BO 296 from Lamborghini and after filming it was sold to a dealer. The dealer then sold it to an unidentified buyer. In 2005, after it had changed hands a few times, Norbetto Ferretti, a luxury yacht manufacturer, bought it. Incredibly, it seems that the previous owners had been completely unaware of its role in the movie.





CHESHIRE CLASSIC CARS



1977 Lamborghini Countach LP400

The LP400 Periscopio is the most desirable Countach, with only 150 cars produced.

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Complete with its original tool roll and an extensive history file, including owner's manual, original warranty card, and delivery documents.

Price On Application



BUYERS GUIDE

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT OWNING A TOP END CLASSIC

Ferrari 400/412

After years of languishing as one of the least appreciated Ferraris of all, the four-seater 400/412 is now finally attracting the attention it deserves.

Report by Chris Rees

Photography Michael Ward

Feature sponsored by Superformance

At Auto Italia, we're old enough to remember the 1970s like it was yesterday. And back then, we all thought Pininfarina's design for the Ferrari 400 was the cleanest, prettiest shape ever seen in a four-seater.

This was in fact the very pinnacle of GT motoring back in the day. The 400 was the most expensive model in Ferrari's range; in fact, it was very nearly the most expensive car on the planet. So why is it that you can buy one today for family hatchback money – especially when the classic car market for other Ferraris of this era has gone mad?

Well, on that point, things are changing rapidly. People are starting to 'get' these elegantly poised cars, the last of a long line of superb Colombo V12-engined Ferraris. Despite recent rises in asking prices, the fact remains that no V12-engined Ferrari offers as good value as 400s and 412s right now. Like that other 1970s Ferrari wedge, the 308 GT4, the 400 and 412 are rapidly regaining favour with enthusiasts and collectors.

Ed Callow of Ferrari specialist Foskers

comments: "These are not Ferraris for people who like to get where they are going fast. They are proper GT cars – at their best when lolloping up the M40 to a race meet at Silverstone, or on a brisk A-road run to Goodwood. They're comfortable and practical enough to use regularly."

In this guide, we're covering the 1976-1985 400 and 1985-1989 412 (we'll leave the 1972-1976 365 GT4 to have its own guide). This is a classic front-engined Ferrari in every sense: tubular chassis, all-independent suspension and a front-mounted V12 engine. Gioacchino Colombo's legendary V12 had reached 4823cc by 1976, its fabulous spec including all-aluminium construction, wet liners, four camshafts and six

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barrel carburettors, good for 340bhp. In 1979 Bosch fuel injection was introduced in the new 400i, with power now rated at 311bhp. In its final incarnation – the 412 from 1985 – it grew to 4943cc and developed a solid 340bhp.

A real revolution for Ferrari was the availability of automatic transmission (supplied by GM) in 1976 – the first-ever self-shifter fitted to a Ferrari. A five-speed manual was always available, in which case a lower 4.3:1 final drive was fitted to aid acceleration. The ZF recirculating ball steering had power assistance and there were all-round disc brakes.

Production of the 412 came to a close in 1989 after the 365/400/412 had lasted 17 years, making it comfortably the longest-running Ferrari of all time. Some 2904 examples of the 365/400/412 were built, almost exactly half of which had automatic transmission.

ON THE ROAD

At the risk of being controversial here, the 400 family is perhaps the least Ferrari-like driving experience you can have in a Ferrari. It's soft, wafty and refined; a grand tourer, not a driver's car.

There's no issue with the powerplant, at least in carb guise. That luscious V12 offers plenty of torque and if you want to explore the upper reaches, it has the flexibility to match. Trouble is, it has almost two tons of bulk to haul around. Even with manual transmission installed, it's no supercar, and the 0-62mph time of 8.3 seconds for the automatic model says it all.

Expect feelsome (if very light) steering, a well-damped ride and handling that is on the understeer side of ponderous. It's still possible, though, to hoof it mid-corner and induce some power oversteer.

ENGINE & TRANSMISSION

The V12 is fairly robust, but check for head gasket problems and oil/coolant leaks. It's chain-driven, not belt-driven, so doesn't have an age- or mileage-related replacement schedule. But listen carefully for rattles from the timing chain: if that goes, you'll be faced by a very large bill for rebuilding the engine.

Check the chain regularly and adjust it as needed; if it does need replacing, budget around £1000. Auxiliary belts need replacing every three years or 30,000 miles at around £500 a time.

If it's a carb car, keeping on top of tuning six carbs is a major job. While it's not as desirable, Bosch injection is at least reliable.

Beware of blowing exhausts. Replacing the system costs around £2500 but the manifolds have a tendency to crack, doubling your expense. Should your engine need a rebuild, you're looking at a minimum of £15k.

The gearboxes – manual and auto – are reliable, if maintained properly. On the former, second-gear synchromesh problems are pretty common, while a clutch costs around £1500 to replace. As for the auto, if it doesn't change smoothly that suggests a failed servo pump. An overhaul of the auto 'box will cost up to £3000.

CHASSIS & BODY

The Koni self-levelling rear suspension is hydraulically operated, and sadly its pipework does rust. If the back end looks saggy, the cause is likely to be failed self-levelling struts. Check for tired dampers, springs and bushes all round.

The brakes are expensive to repair: rebuilt calipers cost around £450 each up front, and £300 each at the rear, and replacing a whole set of discs and pads will cost the best part of £2500. Check that the 412's Bosch ABS system is functioning, too.

The correct 245/55 VR415 Michelin TRX tyres on 'metric 16in' rims cost over £300 a pop, leading many owners to fit non-metric wheels and tyres from other Ferrari models of similar age, but going non-original seems a shame.

As for the bodywork, unfortunately it's very prone to rust. You can find it almost anywhere, from sills to chassis outriggers, floorpan to front wings, roof pillars to doors, bootlid to boot floor. New panels are no



■ Many thanks to Ed Callow at Ferrari specialist Foskers for their help in the preparation of this buyers guide. www.foskers.com



TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

FERRARI 412

ENGINE:	V12
CAPACITY:	4942cc
POWER:	340bhp at 6000rpm
TORQUE:	333lb ft at 4200rpm
TRANSMISSION:	Five-speed manual or three-speed auto
TOP SPEED:	155mph (auto 152mph)
0-62MPH:	6.7sec (auto 8.3)
WEIGHT:	1810kg



longer available, so you'll either need to find a secondhand part (rare and pricey) or make it specially. You may also find that the windscreen has delaminated and needs renewing (at around £1000).

INTERIOR

The 400/412 still feels very special inside – a pantheon to 1970s-style luxury, with air-conditioning, electric windows, full leather upholstery and rich carpeting. Make the usual checks on the leather trim, and electrics are a known weak spot, especially if the car hasn't been used regularly. Early 400s had some niggles with the heater and air con controls, so just check these work, too.

RUNNING COSTS

There are some cars where there's really no escape from massive bills, and the 400/412 is one of those: it's hellishly expensive to keep going. Even small jobs can cost a fortune, and a full restoration will be eye-watering.

Oil changes are recommended every 6000 miles (or annually), with a gearbox oil change every two years. A major service is needed every 12,000 miles at a cost of around £2500. It goes without saying that a chunky history file is definitely worth having.

Don't shy away from the harsh reality of fuel costs, either. Single-figure averages are not uncommon, and filling the 26.5-gallon tank will set you back £150 a time.

VALUES

For years, these big V12s have languished in the doldrums as far as prices are concerned. But they're

finally starting to appreciate, helped by the increasing desirability of the 365 GT4, one of which recently sold at auction for £67,500.

As these cars have a reputation for being black holes to chuck money down, you can still find restoration projects changing hands for under £10k – surprising as the V12 engine (basically the same as the Daytona's) is easily worth that on its own.

Finding cars isn't easy, especially in RHD (a mere 164 Ferrari 400s made it to the UK officially, plus 85 of the 412). A usable 400 auto can still be bought for £25,000. Only 671 manual carb cars (badged '400 GT') were built, very few of which exist in the UK, and a £30k premium over automatic cars is not unusual. The GT is the last carb-fed V12 manual-gearbox Ferrari ever built, so it has inherent interest for marque collectors. Budget £50,000 and up – and the very best examples could now fetch £75,000 or more. Some argue that the 412 is less desirable, but it's better than the 400 in almost every respect: quicker, more refined and with more boot space. Budget around £30k for a 412 auto and £50k-70k for a rare 412 manual. We wouldn't be surprised to see the £100k barrier broken in the foreseeable future.

Because of the model's rarity, paint colour really isn't important to value. 🇮🇹

PRICE GUIDE

Ferrari 400i 1984	37k miles, blue, £27,995
Ferrari 412 auto 1987	98k miles, silver, £42,000
Ferrari 412 manual 1987	30k miles, blue, £69,990



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ALFA ROMEO



1972 Alfa Giulia 2000 Berlina. Pale green metallic. Fitted with reliable 1750 engine, manual 5-speed gearbox. Had lots of new metalwork, sills were done by the previous owner/MGS Coachworks. Red leather interior, Webasto sunroof, modern CD/radio installation. Campanatura alloys. Large history file. Car known to the 105 Register. Large supply of spares available at extra cost if buyer is interested. Email for further details, £7500. Email: stuart.alfa@virgin.net. A233/023



1991 Alfa 33 Sportwagon 1.7 Boxer 16v. 44,500 miles. Extremely rare 33 Pininfarina-design Sportwagon with the fabulous Boxer 1.7 16v engine. Champagne silver metallic, unmarked contrasting cloth interior. Very low mileage, AR dealer and specialist history, £2500. Email: stuart.alfa@virgin.net. A233/025

Classifieds are free! Just email your text and photograph to liz.solo@ntlworld.com



Alfa GT Junior Bertone 1300. LHD, a rare and very well cared for example, nicely maintained, navy blue (Blu Olandese) with black interior, original Italian log book and some service history, it has also had a full recent service and new MOT. The Alfa Romeo 105 series is an iconic Italian coupe and a continually appreciating classic, this car is original and without modifications, it drives beautifully with a very positive 5 speed gearbox. The mileage shows 25,160km but I assume it to be 125,160km as there are only 5 digits on the clock. More photos on request, £13,000. Tel: 0035 318 484376. Email: garybelcher@eircom.net. A233/024



1980 Alfa Romeo Spider 2000 Series 2. Beautiful cond. Last of the series 2, imported into the UK in 1993 (originally sold in France). Has an extensive file of French/UK history and MOTs. Mileage 97K km (approx 60,000 miles). Looks and sounds fantastic. LHD. Was owned and lovingly restored in 2012 by Alfa specialist restorer Nino De Luca of Park Royal, North London. Including: new rear wings, new sills to both sides, floor pans, rear valance and front quarter panels. It was finished off with a fresh coat of paint in Bianco Pininfarina. The interior was recarpeted and replacement seat covers and a new hood fitted. The wheels were refurbished and have good tyres. Mechanically it has had a replacement gearbox and clutch and it has undergone a recent oil/filter service. No leaks from the engine and it runs and drives very well. It has MOT until May this year but it will be sold with a brand new MOT, £12,995 ovno. Email for more info. Email: cirogtv@hotmail.com. Tel: 07956 182455. A233/022



1991 Alfa Spider S4. Black, tan interior, LHD, Californian car for restoration. Last used Feb 2013 been standing since MOT failure sills (£300 welding quoted), body and mechanics in good condition when taken off road. Could be a good project? Car in Brighton, £2000 ono. Please contact Nathan on 07974 017375 or Simon on 07973 868478. A233/026



Alfa Romeo Spider 2.0 S4. RHD, '91 reg, Rosso Red with crema leather, full service history, 58,000 miles, MOT till Oct, taxed till Feb '16, has been fully restored to a high standard, lots of receipts, £6995 ono. Tel: 01256 840915 or 07775 942601. A233/027

2000 Alfa Romeo 145 TS 1750. Rosso Red, previously owned by Fiat UK as company car. Log book says 2000 first registered. My ownership since April 2002, complete list of services, MOT, reluctant sale, £750. Tel: 01477 500607. A233/031



1991 Alfa 75 2.0 Twin Spark. Rebuilt 2006, 68,000 miles, white. Engine rebuilt and modified by Bianco Auto Developments. New gearbox synchromesh, new clutch, balanced propshaft, CSC manifold and exhaust. Full RSR rose jointed adjustable suspension, fully polybushed. Spherical centre bearing in DeDion, 330mm front discs, 4 pot Brembos. Grooved rears, new calipers, Aeroquip hoses. Compomotives with custom offsets, Toyos. Excellent bodywork, Dinitrol treated. Full spec available, inspection ramp with prior arrangement, £4000 ono. Tel: Tony, 01342 717764 or 07952 525053 or Paul, 07739 988966 (Gatwick area). A233/030



1982 Alfa Romeo GTV. 42,000 miles, red. Owned by one family for most of its life. Waxoyled from new, garaged throughout its life. Serviced with additional work carried out: gearbox overhaul with synchromesh replacements. Clutch bearing replaced, clutch slave cylinder replaced, rear brake calipers replaced. New front tyres. Bodywork and interior are in beautiful condition. Full service history with MOTs to confirm mileage. Low genuine mileage. AROC member, £5700. Email: its_syd@hotmail.com (Dublin). A233/019



2008 Alfa Romeo 147 GTA. 56,700 miles, red. 275bhp remap Monza sports, Selespeed, Q2 differential, induction kit, SS exhaust, Wiechers strut brace, Xenon headlamps, Brembo callipers, professional underseal 5-year guarantee, two tyres 53,000, timing belt/water pump/tensioner/pulleys 54,000, suspension overhaul, new alternator and battery, 2 keys, 4 owners, history file, MOT October, tailored, breathable cover, manufactured 2005 for Malaysia, imported into UK and first registered May 2008, only 4 cars known with Selespeed, £8000 ovno. Email: clive@hardacrehouse.co.uk. A233/029



2005 Alfa Romeo GT 3.2 V6. 44,000 miles, metallic grey. Low mileage, new MOT and service including new discs, very good tan leather interior. FSH. Excellent bodywork and general condition. Well cared for car, maintained by Rusper Alfa. Last of the true V6s. Reduced for a realistic price, £5950 ono. Tel: 01444 483116 or 07845 117898 (Sussex). A233/009



2000 Alfa Romeo 156 2.0 TS Lusso. 155,000 miles, silver. Reliable daily transport owned by me for 12 years. A much cherished car with full service history. Silver paintwork and dark blue Momo leather upholstery. New front tyres and very good rears. Stainless steel exhaust. MOT till end of September 2015. Runs beautifully and is a pleasure to drive, £550. A future classic? AROC member. Tel: Mike, 01285 652407. A233/007



1998 Alfa Romeo 156 2.0 TS Lusso. 63,073 miles, red. Cambelts just done and a new thermostat fitted. Lusso spec includes air con which was serviced about three years ago. New tyres all round, Avon ZT5 205/60. Uprated brakes and brake hoses, MOT on May 2015, £1350 ono. Tel: 01527 524634. Email: jkquatrebras@outlook.com. A233/028



Alfa Romeo GT 1.9. Diesel, 2005 (05). 51,000 miles, £3495. Tel: 07818 220414 (located 4 miles J.23 M1). A233/017



2006 Alfa Romeo 156 1.9 JTD MultiJet. 145,000 miles, red, 6-speed gearbox. Comprehensive history. Cambelt changed at 102K. Leather interior, radio/CD, air conditioning, alloy wheels. MOT Sept 2015, straight car, good condition for year, £1395. View in SE Essex, email me for owner's contact details. Email: stuart.alfa@virgin.net. A233/021



2002 Alfa Romeo 156 2.5 V6 24V Veloce. 109,791 miles, red, two owners (friend/myself). History, receipts, MOTs, manuals, codes, two keys. MOT Jan 2016, £2750. Tel: 01883 627387 or 07885 066473. A233/020



2011 Alfa Romeo 159 Ti Sportwagon 2.0 16v JTDm. Probably the best 159 SW Ti for sale in the country! Very late 2011 model. Genuine Ti model with optional chrome roof bars and parking sensors. One owner from new. Low mileage only 28.5K with FSH. Just been serviced and MOT'd with new front tyres and rear brakes. Professional valeted every few months with gleaming white paintwork. It's in near mint condition and extremely well looked after by an Alfa enthusiast. Auto Lusso have fitted uprated adjustable suspension bushes and done the steering alignment. This 159 drives beautifully without any running issues at all. I've never had a problem with it and it's been a superb car for me. Very reluctant sale. Remapped by Alfa Tune, now has 200bhp+ and 300lbs+ torque. Massive improvement to the performance and fuel economy, absolutely transformed the driving experience. Now does 37mpg around town and 50mpg on long runs, £13,995. Email: mark@whybee.co.uk to arrange a viewing and for full description and lots more photos (Burnley, Lancs). A233/018

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2005 Alfa Romeo 916 GTV 2.0 JTS Lusso. 48,600 miles, silver. Black leather interior, <49,000 miles. Full service + second cam belt change last year, ECU replaced, Pirelli tyres, all 4 original keys + code card, £4200 ono. For more info tel: 01460 220211 (East Devon). A233/011



Very rare Alfa Romeo 159 Ti. It is one of the last ever made, purchased in March 2012, powered by a 200bhp 1750cc TBI engine, one owner, 33,000 miles, just had a full service and its first MOT, usual high Ti specification, in addition it has a number of options fitted: Bi-Xenon headlights with wash system, front parking sensors, Bose audio upgrade, sumptuous tan leather interior and finished in 8C red is very rare with the tan leather combination. I have taken very good care of this car, serviced when it should be and have always spent time and money on maintenance, cleaning and products etc, this is reflected in the condition and was recently featured on the cover of the AROC magazine *Quadrafoglio*, genuine car, comfortable, nimble, fast enough for most, looks gorgeous and feels great to drive, £14,000 ono, open to serious offers. Email: dandydy@btinternet.com. A233/045



2007 Alfa Romeo 159 Ti 2.4JTM. 40,600 miles, Stromboli Grey. Immaculate black leather interior. Maintained at Voloces of London, major service at Voloces at 40,000 miles. Timing belt and water pump changed at 32,000 miles. Brand new Bosch battery with 5 year guarantee. MOT due November. Continental Sport 3 tyres all round, front brand new, rear nearly new. Totally unmarked immaculate alloy wheels. Apart from the usual Ti refinements, this car has power heated seats, cruise control, electric, heated, power folding mirrors, auto wipers and lights. First registered 24 December 2007, lots of history, I am the second owner of this extremely well cared for car as a Alfa Romeo enthusiast, £8500 ono. Tel: 07940 715445. Email: markcrawley1209@live.co.uk. A233/012



2002 Alfa Romeo 156 2.0 T.Spark Veloce. 155,000 miles, metallic green, tan Momo leather interior in excellent condition. In very good condition overall. Full 12 months' MOT (March 2016). Full main dealer and Alfa specialist service history from new with all receipts and old MOTs. Cambelt changed every 36K miles. Owned by me since 2005 (with 12K miles), one previous owner. Cherished car, meticulously maintained. AROC member, £850. Please call Nick on: 01789 262539 or 07050 234693 (Warwickshire). A233/043



2008 (October) Alfa Romeo 916 GTV 2.0 TS. 98,300 miles, Sargassi Green. A great early Phase 2 example in a rare and very beautiful colour. All original apart from full stainless steel exhaust from cat back. CD multi-changer. Full Alfa dealer and specialist service history with cam belt changed at 78K. Bodywork, paintwork and interior in very good condition and tyres have plenty of wear left. MOT'd until March 2016 and just serviced. Only one previous owner and I bought it in Feb 2002 with 6500 miles and have loved driving it ever since, £1700 ono. Tel: 02380 760043 or 07979 050947 (Southampton). A233/046

Alfa Romeo 156 GTA Sportwagon.

98,500 miles. A case of too many cars is forcing me to offer my blue 156 GTA Sportwagon on 53 plate for sale. I have owned it since August '07. During my time it has been looked after exclusively by Alfa Aid in Maidenhead. Has had gearbox rebuild with new clutch and Q2 fitted, has Koni FSDs and Supersprint exhaust. Usual stuff has been replaced: oil cooler, water pump, suspension bits. Last cam belt service 2 years ago. I have all receipts to show dates. Open to sensible offers. Email: Graham, g.couchman@steel-sci.com. A233/032

2004 Alfa Romeo 156 1.8TS Berlina.

96,000 miles, Grigio Lipari. Purchased new by us in Holland and imported to UK 2012. LHD, full red leather interior, full service history, dual zone climate control, cruise control, great condition for age. Original and sound. Lovely looking car which still turns heads. AROC member. All work by Alfa specialists. Will need MOT but no foreseen issues, would prefer it went to an Alfa enthusiast, must sell as need more space, £600 ono. Tel: Warren, 07880 253416 (Norwich). A233/033

2000 Alfa Romeo 156 Selespeed

1970cc. 59,800 miles, silver. Owned since new, FSH, serviced and loved last 8 years by Gonnella Bros Catford. Red leather seats, new battery, MOT due 25 Feb 2016, photos upon interest. Tel: James, 07901 528605 (Bromley Kent). A233/034



2005 Alfa Romeo 166 2.0 TS Lusso Ti.

Job loss forces the sale of this car, which has covered 80,000 miles and is MOT'd until December 2015. Together with the usual refinements to be found on a 166, the Ti pack specifications add lowered sports suspension, Ti badges at side and rear, Ti engraved sill kicker plates, exclusive 18" alloy wheels, embossed black leather upholstery with Alfa Romeo logo and red dashboard instrument and switch lighting. The car is generally in very good condition, although the air con may need re-gassing, £2650 ovno. For viewing or further information. Tel: 07510 444024. Email: alfalfa@virgin.net. A233/044

2003 Alfa Romeo 156 Sportwagon

2.5 V6 24V Veloce. 74,000 miles, metallic silver. One lady owner from new. Momo full black sports leather interior, cruise control, CD changer. Good service history, maintained locally by Alfanatic. Fair condition, needs tidying with a few supermarket car park dings. Outstanding value at £1500. Tel 01252 726950. Email: jenny@bellamanda.co.uk (located in Farnham, Surrey). A233/010



2008 Alfa Spider 2.2 JLS LE. 7658 miles, Alfa Red. Excellent condition inside and out, always garaged and only had dry weather use. Recent annual low mileage service and new wiper blades. Lifeshine finish in Alfa Red. MOT until August 2015, tan leather seats, Spider mats, 18" 5 hole titanium wheels and bluetooth handsfree and USB port. Genuine reason for sale - have downsized and need the garage space, £13,000. Tel: Jeremy, 07961 339607. A233/008

FERRARI



1982 Ferrari Mondial QV. 78,600 miles, recent major service and MOT, Rosso/Crema, £19,995 ono. Contact Anthony for photos and more info. Tel: 01621 813015 or 07779 726845. Email: prsche@msn.com. A233/042

FIAT

Fiat Panda 100HP. 2007, 89,000, 6-speed, 1.4, red, good all round condition, reliable and fun, £2650. Tel: 07771 821548 (Herefordshire). A233/015

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Lancia Delta 2.0 HF Turbo HPE 16 Valve. 1999, 70,000 miles (112,700km). Excellent condition, recently serviced, timing belt, tensioner, water pump, suspension arms and drop links. All parts OE and car drives perfect. MOT'd Dec '15 with full history file from new. Lancia Owner's Club concours winner in 2008. Will be sold with registration 'A2 OHF', £7750. Tel: 07799 473341 for more details. A233/013

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1978 Alfa Romeo Alfetta 1.6GT gearbox and differential, £100 collect in person. Tel: Joe, 01228 522226 (Carlisle). A233/036



Sold my Lancia Fulvia.

No longer need these spares. Study the pic, or email me for list. Will sell the lot for £250 or will sell separate. Email: porsche-don@hotmail.co.uk. A233/005

4x16-inch Elegance alloys for 147/156, fair condition with part-worn tyres, £100 ono. Email: simon.johnson753@ntlworld.com. A233/037

Passenger door for Alfetta GTV.

Bought for my 1981 2ltr coupe, may fit others but I don't know. In good condition, no evidence of rust, but in the end I didn't need it. No glass or trim. Prefer this is collected from Watford or London E14, £45, please call for any details. Tel: 07843 074700. A233/038

MISCELLANEOUS



Alfa GTV four five-hole alloy wheels, fitted good treaded tyres, 205/50/16, oiro £200. Alfa GTV speedo/rev counter module, black, vgc, oiro £50. Tel: 01564 772714 (Solihull). A233/049

Fiat Panda '81-'95 Haynes manual, offers. Tel: Eric, 07539 967937 (West Sussex). A233/039

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Alfa Romeo Historical Document for sale. Signed letter from Vittorio Jano dated Nov 1929 to a Mr Crepaldi discussing establishing a motor racing stabilimento (stable). Provenance available. Offers invited, please contact Dominic: 07954 192579. Email: dom.coupe@ntlworld.com. A233/014

Back copies of Auto Italia dating from 1995 to present day, total of 215 copies. Also 8 copies of *Italian Cars & Bikes* 1991 - 1993. 2 copies of *Alfa Romeo World* 1991. POA. For further information please contact: 01691 682588. A233/016

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Cars wanted: S3 Espada LHD, also S1/2-Miura wheels etc, swap 4 pro photography equipment and collectables + wildlife cammo equip and literature. Email: dcian@fastemail.us (Essex). A233/004

Searching for Maserati Indy 1971 AM 116948 chrome windshield trim. Tel: 00 33 06 80 04 85 78. Email: yvon.coquelin@hotmail.fr (France). A233/041



Enzo Ferrari book by Richard Williams. 2001 print, 337 page, dust cover, excellent condition, £40 post free. Tel: 020 8399 7541 (Surrey). A233/050



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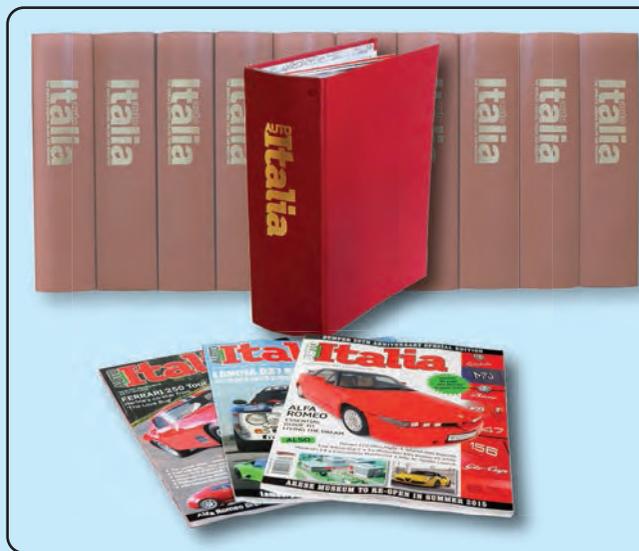
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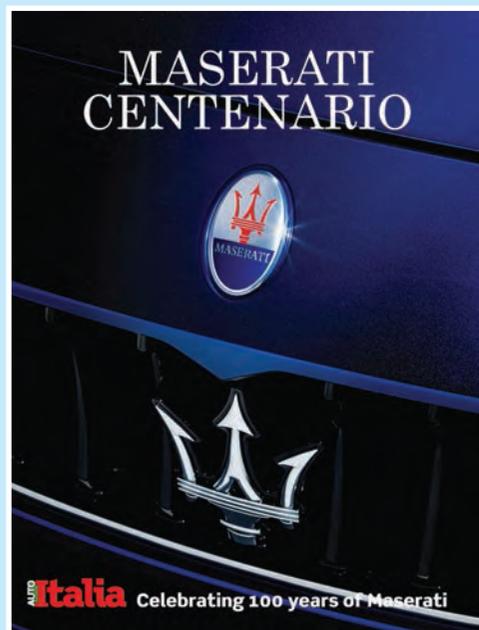
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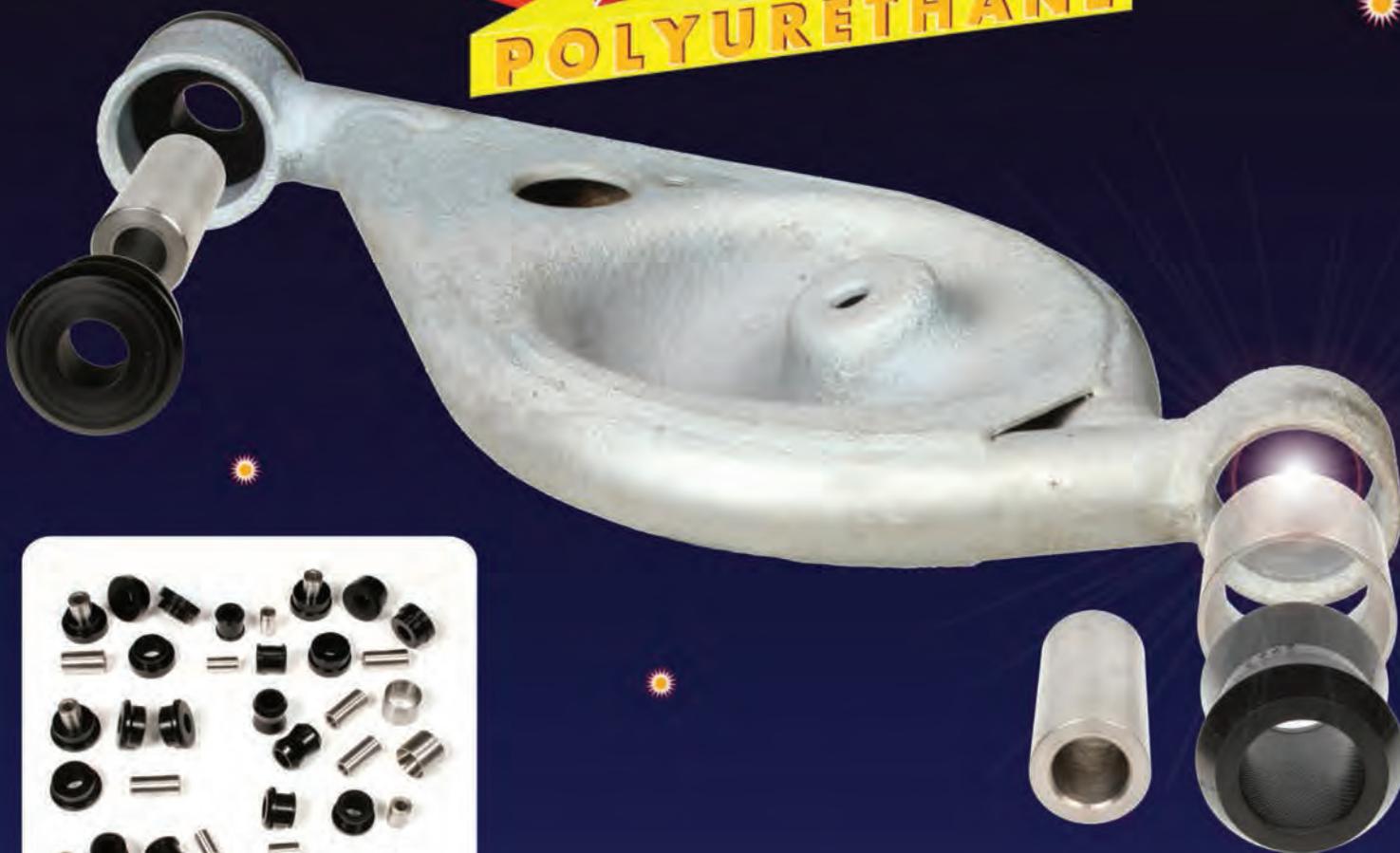
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Fiat-Siata 1500 Coupé Speciale by Gilco

Story by Richard Heseltine



When is a Fiat not a Fiat? When it's a Siata. Or a Gilco. The car pictured here could be labelled all three, but its history is mired in mystery. What is known is that it was originally commissioned by gentleman driver Ovidio Capelli. The Milanese Fiat distributor had taken over the running of the influential Scuderia Ambrosiana from Count 'Johnny' Lurani in 1949 and campaigned several cars under this banner. These included the first-ever Zagato-bodied Fiat 8V (Elio Zagato was another team member). This car, however, was something else entirely. It began life as a 1951 Fiat 1400 berlina, but emerged as more than a mere 'chop'.

First of all, the running gear was mounted in a bespoke tubular steel frame constructed by Gilco's Gilberto Colombo, a name more commonly remembered for making chassis

for Ferrari (and less so for assorted Ghia projects). Which carrozzerie bodied the car remains unrecorded, as does the identity of the company which tuned the three-bearing four-banger. The original engine, number 024073, was warmed over by Abarth or Siata depending on whose opinions you credit, but it reputedly wore Siata badging from new.

The car was first registered in Milan in March 1954, but Capelli never raced it. The 'Speciale' was acquired by Mille Miglia veteran Roberto Montali who fielded the car in that year's running. He and co-driver Bontempi Morici failed to finish. A year later, he teamed-up with Esildo Morici only to record another DNF. Tellingly, the car is referred to in period reports as a Siata.

The story moves on apace after the car was acquired by Al Maggiacomo, an American G.I. stationed in Germany. He bought the 'Mediterranean Turquoise'

coupe while visiting Milan in 1956. He paid \$2500 and proceeded to drive the car around Europe for several years before returning Stateside. The New Yorker continued to use it until 1963 when his teenage brother, future TransAm champion and NASCAR occasional Chauncey 'Jocko' Maggiacomo, removed the tuned Fiat engine and installed a Triumph TR3 unit and

corresponding four-speed 'box.

The car, by now registered as a 1957 Siata, subsequently passed through several owners before being acquired by Vermont's Dave DuBrul. The respected collector managed to locate two genuine Siata 1400 engines (they had their own engine numbers), one mildly modified, the other a full-house racing unit. In 1984, he moved the project on to Peter Voorhees who restored the car over a period of several years. Much of the chassis remained original, although new engine mounts were required before a period-correct unit could be reinstated. The aluminium body was also largely complete and, as such, required relatively little fresh panel-work.

The car – complete with tweaked 1669cc 'four' – was subsequently shown at numerous events including the 2010 Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance. It went on the block last year at RM Auctions' Monterey sale where it recorded the extraordinary hammer price of \$616,000. Not bad for a Fiat special, albeit a very special one.





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