

ASTON MARTIN

A PRODUCT OVERVIEW

Part II



Newport Pagnell

DB4 – DB6

Bibliography

With thanks to

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Aston Heritage	Journal of the Aston Martin Heritage Trust	Aston Martin Trust
Power, Beauty and Soul	David Dowsey	Peleus Press

www.astonmartin.com

I have been working in the world of Aston Martin for the past 25 years. I came upon the marque in my general course of business in the motor trade and have become as enthusiastic as my customers about Aston Martin and their products.



My son Matthew and I with my first Aston Martin

There is an aura about Aston Martin, a heritage far beyond simple statistics. Winning at Le Mans, victory in the World Sportscar Championship, the Zagatos and Royal patronage would be enough for any car manufacturer. Aston Martin goes beyond that – every car has its character and every owner, real pride in his or her car.

Any market place has pitfalls for the unwary and opportunities for the unscrupulous. What I have tried to produce is an overview of Aston Martin cars that can act as an introduction to the marque. It is my view, coloured by my experiences and the use of my library of Aston Martin books as a reference. Most of the Aston Martin photos are from my own archive and I have been fortunate enough to enjoy handling each of these glorious cars.

This may represent your first foray into the world of Aston Martin; it may supplement your own knowledge. Whatever your point of reference, I hope this overview adds to your enjoyment.

Philip Jones
Byron International

THE ASTON MARTIN DB4

Production dates:	October 1958 – June 1963
Top Speed:	140 mph
Acceleration:	0 – 60 in 9.0 seconds, 0 – 100 in 20 seconds
Chassis numbers:	DB4/101/R-DB4/995/R, DB4/1001/L-DB4/1215/L
Team car chassis no:	
Length	14 feet 8.375 inches (448 cm)
Width	5' 6" (1.68 m)
Height	4 feet 3.5 inches (131 cm)
Ground clearance	7 inches (177 mm)
Track	Front 54 inches (1372 mm) Rear 53.5 inches (1360 mm)
Wheelbase	98 inches (2490 mm)
Turning circle	34 feet
Dry weight	2878 pounds (1311 Kg)
Engine	3.7 litre
Capacity	3,670 cc
Cylinder bore	92 mm (stroke 92 mm)
Compression ratio	8.25:1
Power output	240 bhp @ 5500 rpm
Carburettors	2 x SU HD8
Chassis	Square section tube frame, aluminium body.
Transmission	David Brown 4 speed
Front suspension	Unequal transverse wishbones with Armstrong shock absorbers with co-axial coil springs and anti roll bar
Rear suspension	Coil springs parallel trailing links and Watts linkage Locating live axle with Armstrong double acting Lever shock absorbers
Steering	Rack and pinion
Brakes	Dunlop disc with Lockheed vacuum servo assistance 11.5 inch disc front 11.125 inch disc rear



**1960 Aston Martin DB4 Series I
Chassis DB4/209/R**

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When the single pale primrose DB4 was launched at the Paris Salon in October 1958, Marcel Blondeau, the French distributor for Aston Martin approached John Wyr on the stand with tears in his eyes “This is not a car, it is a folly, but I can sell as many as you can supply.” With a top speed of 140 mph, it was one of the fastest four seaters in the world and was on a par with the best of Italian Grand Turismos. Not wholly surprising, given the decision to have this distillation of years of Feltham ideas designed by Touring of Milan using their “Superleggera” system. The body consisted entirely of aluminium mounted on a trellis of small diameter steel tubes welded together. Body panels were attached to the trellis and clinched around angle plates which were welded to the members with graphite pads.



**1965 DB5 showing “Superleggera” Framework
Chassis No: DB5/1993/R**

© BYRON INTERNATIONAL

Items like windscreen, rear window frames an angle sections for the door hinges were attached directly to the frame. The design delivered slim proportions and outstanding all-round visibility. With the body mounted on a platform chassis, the seats could be set low without resorting to deep sills. The doors, which undercut the windscreen, were wide with frameless windows – no quarter lights – and the rear windows opened hingeing on their forward edges. Easier access to the rear with its new full width rear seat, past hinged and adjustable front seats from Reutter. The wide parcel shelf concealed the presence of a 19 gallon petrol tank while at the back of the car, the boot lid opened to floor level. The battery, with its own master switch was behind a panel in the right hand wing and the spare wheel was in a separate contained under the boot floor. Power came from the all new Tadek Marek twin overhead cam aluminium engine that weighed in 22Kg less than its predecessor. The twin cam shafts operated the valves directly through inverted steel tappets while those valves were splayed at an 80 degree angle – the seats all had inserts and the exhaust guides were all in direct contact with cooling water. The block followed the contour of the liners which combined to save weight and strengthen the structure. The crankshaft was a nitrided steel forging which ran in seven bronze bearings – the connecting rods were polished and weight graded while the pistons each had two compression rings, the top one being chrome faced. Driving through a four speed, all synchromesh gearbox and a 10 inch single, dry plate Borg and Beck clutch – the engine was quoted as developing 240 bhp, although this was, in truth, probably nearer 208 bhp. Marek had, at John Wyr’s suggestion, researched horsepower claims on American engines and had found a mean discrepancy of 32 per cent – John Wyr’s reaction was “We can’t lie that much, we can only lie 15 per cent”. Ride and handling came courtesy of Harold Beach designed coil and wishbone front suspension and a rear set up of trailing arm and coil spring incorporating a Watts linkage. The brakes were all wound discs from Dunlop with a Lockheed servo fitted. Wire wheels with Dunlop centre locks and 16 inch Avon Turbospeed tyres as standard fitment. At launch, Aston Martin only had two pre-production models and with one used to promote the new car, they were reluctant to entrust the other, untried and untested model to the motoring press so definitive road tests were not available, just the enthusiastic hyperbole of John Wyr. His claim, made before launch, that the car could go from a standing start to 100 mph and back to standstill in 30 seconds was faithfully reproduced in advertising material. It was on October 2nd, the day of the car’s launch in Paris that tests at MIRA proved him correct with mean times set of the feat at 27.2 seconds. Sadly industrial disputes meant that full production did not get under way until 1959.

Driving along the highway on the way back to San Francisco on a trip to buy a DB4GT Zagato (DB4GT/0188/L) , I took a call from someone offering me DB4 with a Chevrolet engine. The only positive was its alleged first owner, Robert Mitchum but, whether it was the sunshine or the Pacific breeze, without having seen the car, I agreed to buy it. Glad to say that the provenance was good and, even better, the car is now back in pristine condition.



1962 Aston Martin DB4 MkII Vantage
Chassis No: DB4/489/L
 © BYRON INTERNATIONAL

PURCHASER'S NAME:— ROBERT MITCHUM, 8947 GARDEN BLVD., LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA.		CAR No. DB4/489/L REG. No. 44
GUARANTEE ISSUED:— 22.5.61		GUARANTEE EXPIRES:— 22.5.62
DELIVERED:—		SHIPPED:—
AGENT:— BYRON		YEAR OF MANUFACTURE:— 1960
PARTICULARS		PARTICULARS OF NON-STANDARD EQUIPMENT
TYPE	ASTON MARTIN DB4 LTD	FULLY CHROMED ROAD WHEELS. 17" STEERING WHEEL.
ENGINE No.	270/552	
CHASSIS No.	DB4/489/L	
CARBURETTOR	TA13 20.HU.8	
L. JAWO	LDC.1	
STARTER	LDC.2	
GEARBOX	SA12/3/216	
SPEEDO GEARS		
REAR AXLE RATIO	3.77:1	
SHOCK ABSORBERS	AMH272000	
FOG LAMPS		
CIGAR LIGHTER		
SPEEDOMETER	GENEVE NPH	
PLUGS	ELG	
TYRES	GOULD 400.5125WALL	
HEADLAMPS		
BODY TYPE	SLIDE	
BODY MANUFACTURERS	REDFORD JAGRELL	
BODY No.		
BODY COLOUR	NIGHT BLUE MANIKS ICI 8045-0059	
TRIMMING	BLUE GRAY GORDONALLY 702744	
HOOD and COVER		
SLIDING ROOF		
WIRELESS	REDFORD. RADIO 606, No. TR0.12395	
HEATER		
REAR AXLE No.	5.60/53	
BATTERY No.	P 9-1 12	
KEY No.	IGN. PP-672 Doors PP-644	
		<p>With the Compliment of</p> <p>ASTON MARTIN MOTOR CO. LTD. 15 HAYWARD ROAD, LONDON W14 9JF TEL: 0181 741 2222</p> <p><i>[Signature]</i></p>
		ADDITIONAL OWNERS



1960 Aston Martin DB4
Chassis No: DB4/235/R
© BYRON INTERNATIONAL



THE ASTON MARTIN DB4 – A Development Story

The Detail

Series I:

Launch – February 1960: Instrument panel inherited from the DB2/4 Mark III. No chrome surrounds were fitted to the windows on the initial production (50 cars) and after that initial run, over riders and heavy duty bumpers were fitted.

Series II

January 1960 – April 1961: Heavy duty front callipers were fitted together with a 17 pint sump and a radiator blind and the bonnet hinged from the front. The height of the car was increased by half an inch to 4 feet 4 inches while the car was lowered with the ground clearance moving from 18 cm to 16 cm. Various options were introduced including an oil cooler, selected by 34 buyers, electric windows and an overdrive unit. The overdrive was normally used with a 3.77 rear axle – discounting these options, the kerb weight of the car increased by 45Kg to 1,353Kg.

Series III

April 1961 – September 1961: Optional oil cooler continued from Series II, selected by 53 Series III buyers. An additional bonnet sty fitted together with a modified handbrake, clutch cover and brake pedal linkages. Separate rear lights fitted on a chrome plate, a single stalk switch, courtesy switches and an electric tachometer. The heating system was improved with the fitment of 5 rather than 3 demister outlets and an optional 4.09 ratio rear axle was offered. Three cars in this series were sold with the special fitment of a DB4GT engine.

Series IV

September 1961 – October 1962: Lower bonnet scoop introduced as well as a new grille with 7 vertical bars and internally, the ashtray was moved from the top of the dash to the gearbox cover. Also introduced as an option was a Vantage or Special Series (ISS) engine. With 3 SU HD8 carburettors, larger valves and a 9:1 compression ratio, this engine delivered 266bhp at 5,750 rpm. Most cars fitted with this engine were also given a restyled front sloping headlamps and called the DB 4 Vantage. Internally, the GT instrument panel with separate gauges was fitted to most cars

Series V

September 1962 – June 1963: The body was extended by 9cm to provide more leg room and boot space. A higher roof gives the best indicator of change in the line where the roof meets the boot lid, but the overall height of the car remained the same 132cm because of the change to 15 inch wheels. Under the bonnet, an airbox on the carburettors, an electric fan in front of the radiator and a vacuum advance. Smaller brake pads complete the external differences.

DB4 Convertibles

Introduced at the London Motor Show in 1961: Of 1,110 Aston Martin DB 4's manufactured, only 70 were convertibles. The first 30 were Series IV cars (11 with Vantage engines) and the balancing 40 cars were Series V of which 21 were built with Vantage engines. The standard petrol tank was replaced by twin tanks positioned in the rear wings with a combined capacity of 16 gallons – 3 gallons less than the coupe.



1959 Aston Martin DB4 Mark I
Chassis DB4/109/R
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1960 Aston Martin DB4 Series II
Chassis DB4/372/R
© BYRON INTERNATIONAL



1961 Aston Martin DB4 Series III
Chassis DB4/649/R
© BYRON INTERNATIONAL



1962 Aston Martin DB4 Series IV
Chassis DB4/834/R
© BYRON INTERNATIONAL



1962 Aston Martin DB4 Series IV Vantage
Chassis DB4/982/R
© BYRON INTERNATIONAL



1963 DB4 Aston Martin Series V Vantage
Chassis DB4/1147/R
© BYRON INTERNATIONAL

When the Aston Martin DB4 was conceived, there were no motorways in the United Kingdom and, as a result, no long term high speed testing had been conducted during development. Production of the car ramped up and exports, especially to France with the energetic Marcel Blondeau promoting the car he had fallen in love with at the Paris Show, put the car into new territory. Arrow straight *Routes Nationales* – especially the 193 kilometers from Paris to Le Mans where enthusiasts tried to set outright, if unofficial, records for the trip – proved too much, in high temperatures, for the all aluminium engine. The Italian market delivered the same verdict with the new *Autostrada del Sole* between Milan and Bologna proving as tough a test for the DB4.

The problem was simple – as the engine temperature rose, bearing clearances grew to a point where the oil pump could no longer cope. Flat out, it circulated oil at a rate of 20 gallons per minute and this was equivalent of the sump being changed once every eight seconds – at the point where the bearing clearances grew to great, the pump would be waiting for oil to get back and would suck air as well as oil with disastrous consequences. Tadek Marek delivered a twofold solution – the introduction of an oil cooler and adjustments to reduce the bearing clearances. At the same time, Aston Martin instituted a test programme utilising the newly opened M1 motorway. Paradoxically, while the engines overheated, other customer complaints related to poor heating and ventilation on the passenger compartment which was cured in the Series III in 1961 with five vents replacing the original 3.

Changes in the car saw the kerb weight of the car rise and to help negate this, lighter bodywork was introduced – with half hard aluminium replaced by two sets of lighter panels in 1.26 and 2 per cent aluminium magnesium. At the same time passenger experience was improved with new sound deadening materials and a replacement silencer. With Aston Martin almost reluctantly marching towards the World Sports Car Championship, the development of engine performance continued alongside the bodywork. Introducing 3 SU HD8 carburettors, putting in larger valves and increasing the compression ratio from 8.2:1 to 9:1 delivered a stated 266 bhp at 5,750 rpm. An oil cooler was fitted as standard, a new throttle linkage fitted and the Vantage name, last used in the Aston Martin DB2, was revived. The car was instantly recognisable with the headlamps recessed and protected with perspex covers to improve aerodynamics. Astonishingly, at £4,230, the Vantage version of the DB4 was only £145 more expensive than the standard coupe.

The ultimate DB4, the Series V, was introduced in September 1962 – a longer and taller body gave more leg, head and luggage room. Putting the car on 15 inch rather than the original 16 inch wheels, meant that, even with the higher profile, the overall height of the car was unchanged. A thermostatically controlled fan kept the noise down and, after the first 50 cars were produced with the standard engine, the majority of the remaining production were fitted with the Vantage engine and the distinctive headlamps. It is interesting that the “Aston Martin DB5” that James Bond drove in *Goldfinger*, was in fact a DB4 Mark V Vantage!

When production ended in June 1963, Aston Martin had built 1,100 DB4's making it the most numerically successful Aston Martin ever built even exceeding the DB2 whose production ran for 9 years. It set a benchmark for Grand Tourers but also set a foundation for performance and specialist models that had a legacy that continued for decades.



1961 Aston Martin DB4 Series III
Chassis No: DB4/723/R
© BYRON INTERNATIONAL



1962 Aston Martin DB4 Mark IV Convertible
Chassis No: DB4C/1061/R
© BYRON INTERNATIONAL



1962 Aston Martin DB4 Series IV
Chassis DB4/834/R
© BYRON INTERNATIONAL

THE ASTON MARTIN DB4GT

Production dates:	October 1959 – June 1963
Top Speed:	152.5 mph
Acceleration:	0 – 60 in 6.4 seconds, 0 – 100 in 14.2 seconds
Chassis numbers:	DB4GT/0101/L–DB4GT/0201/L (except 0192 & 0194-8)
Team car chassis no:	DP199/1
Length	14 feet 3.375 inches (435.3 cm)
Width	5' 6" (1.68 m)
Height	4 feet 3.5 inches (131 cm)
Ground clearance	
Track	Front 54inches(1372mm) Rear 53.5inches(1360mm)
Wheelbase	93 inches (2362mm)
Turning circle	34 feet
Dry weight	2798 pounds (1269 Kg)
Engine	3.7 litre
Capacity	3,670 cc
Cylinder bore	92mm (stroke 92mm)
Compression ratio	9:1
Power output	302 bhp @ 6000 rpm
Carburettors	3 twin choke 45 DC0E4
Chassis	Square section tube frame, aluminium body.
Transmission	David Brown 4 speed
Front suspension	Unequal transverse wishbones with Armstrong shock Absorbers with co-axial coil springs and anti roll bar
Rear suspension	Coil springs parallel trailing links and Watts linkage Locating live axle with Armstrong double acting Lever shock absorbers
Steering	Rack and pinion
Brakes	Girling disc with Lockheed vacuum servo assistance Swept area of 527 square inches



1961 Aston Martin DB4GT
Chassis No: DB4GT/0147/R

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A year after the arrival of the DB4, Aston Martin announced the DB4GT at the London Motor Show in 1959. Outwardly very similar in looks, the differences were substantial – the wheelbase and body were shorter with the rear seat being replaced with a simple parcel shelf and using 18 gauge magnesium aluminium for the body panels mean the car weighed in 85 kilograms lighter than its big brother. The sporting pedigree was reinforced with lightweight centre-lock Borrani wire wheels made more distinctive with three rather than two knock-off spinners. The engine shared the same bore and stroke as the standard 3.7 but the head and block were lighter being made of RR50 alloy – twin spark plugs per cylinder were ignited by two distributors driven at right angles from the rear of the camshafts. Out went the standard twin SU carburettors to be replaced by three Weber DCO E4 twin choke units. The twin camshafts were special high lift units and the compression ratio for the engine was up to 9.0:1. The extra power demanded a 9 inch twin rather than 10 inch single plate clutch, while the David Brown 4 speed gearbox was close ratio all synchromesh unit and a Salisbury Powr-Lock limited slip differential was standard.

For stopping power, in place of the Dunlop discs on the standard DB4, large diameter Girling units derived from competition were used with no servo unit fitted. The 30 gallon light alloy fuel tank took most of the space in the boot but the interior of the car was trimmed and finished to Aston Martin's normal exacting standards. In similarly cavalier fashion to the headline grabbing headlines at the DB4 launch, the DB4GT was claimed to achieve 0-100 mph and back to standstill in 20 seconds. This was achieved, just, at MIRA with a driver and observer on board. Over the winter of 1958/9, Aston Martin had worked to make the DBR1 race car as reliable as possible for a tilt at Le Mans – they had determined that all their efforts would be focussed on that one race.

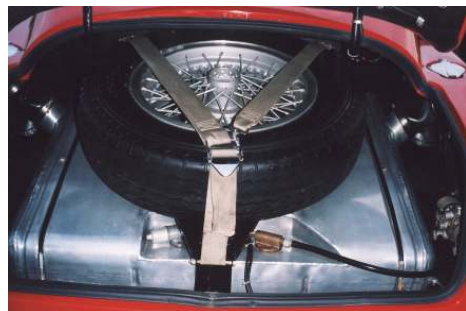
However, Stirling Moss asked to use the spare car for the Nurburgring 1000 and the factory agreed, paying for transport, team manager Reg Parnell and a couple of mechanics. Paying his own expenses, Moss went on to win the race. At Le Mans the Aston Martins scored a memorable first and second it left the team that had intended to only enter one race in a position to win the World Championship which it went on to do with a win at the Tourist Trophy at Goodwood. At the victory dinner in London, David Brown announced the company's withdrawal from sports car racing to focus on production cars.

With this withdrawal, the factory gave works support to John Ogiers newly established Essex Racing Stable who took the first three of five lightweight DB4GT's built and campaigned them with Roy Salvadori and Innes Ireland, who I later had the privilege to meet. They were entered into the 1960 Tourist Trophy and finished second and third behind Stirling Moss in a Ferrari. Moss himself competed three times in the DB4GT winning twice, once in Nassau in the Bahamas and once at the Easter meeting at Goodwood.

Also racing at this time was Jackie Stewart and I handled one of his cars – DB4GT/0147/R – shown opposite when I rescued it from many years of storage in a barn in Cornwall. In October, Essex Racing entered two cars into the Montlhery 1000 kilometre race against a huge number of Ferrari GTO's. In spite of the urging of the enthusiastic Marcel Blondeau, Aston Martin's French distributor, the best they could muster was sixth behind five Ferraris. After a season of mixed fortunes, the DB4GT continued to be raced but more often in second string races as it had been overshadowed by the new, more potent, lighter and, arguably, prettier Zagato version that was launched at the 1960 London Motor Show.



1960 Aston Martin DB4GT
Chassis No: DB4GT/0136/R
© BYRON INTERNATIONAL



Aston Martin constantly developed special models and various owners have done likewise. One of the biggest influences on those owners has been Aston Martin's association with Zagato. Here are a couple of examples:



1961 Aston Martin DB4/685/R
in the style of a Zagato Race Car
Chassis No: DB4/685/R



1960 Aston Martin DB4
in the style of a
DB4GT Zagato
Chassis No: DB4/353/R



THE ASTON MARTIN DB4GT Zagato

Production dates:	October 1960 Sanction II – 22 nd July 1991 Sanction III - 1992
Top Speed:	153.5 mph
Acceleration:	0 – 60 in 6.1 secs, 0 – 100 in 14.1 secs Sanction II: 0–60 in 5.5 secs, 0 – 100 in 12.2 secs
Chassis numbers:	DB4GT/0176/R – 0191/R,0193/R,0199/R,0200/R Sanction II: 0192, 0196-0198 Sanction III: DB4/344/R, DB4/424/R
Team car chassis no:	0182R/ 0183R
Length	13 feet 10.5 inches
Width	5' 6" (1.68 m)
Height	4 feet 2 inches
Track	Front 54inches(1372mm) Rear 53.5inches(1360mm)
Wheelbase	93 inches (2362mm)
Turning circle	34 feet
Dry weight	24.75 cwt
Engine	3.7 litre
Capacity	3,670 cc Sanction II: 4,212 cc
Cylinder bore	92mm (stroke 92mm)
Compression ratio	9.7:1 Sanction II: 9.82:1
Power output	314 bhp @ 6000 rpm Sanction II: 352 bhp @ 6000 rpm
Carburettors	3 twin choke 45 DC0E4 Sanction II: 3 Weber 50 DCO1/SP
Chassis	Square section tube frame, aluminium body.
Transmission	David Brown 4 speed
Front suspension	Unequal transverse wishbones with Armstrong shock Absorbers with co-axial coil springs and anti roll bar
Rear suspension	Coil springs parallel trailing links and Watts linkage Locating live axle with Armstrong double acting Lever shock absorbers
Steering	Rack and pinion
Brakes	Girling disc with Lockheed vacuum servo assistance Swept area of 527 square inches



1960 Aston Martin DB4GT Zagato

Chassis DB4GT/0188/R

© BYRON INTERNATIONAL

In the late fifties before regulation and bureaucracy, commissioning the construction of imaginative and sensuous cars was often concluded on a handshake. One of those handshakes occurred at Earls Court in 1959 when Aston Martin was dominating sports car racing and a new Grand Tourer - the short wheelbase DB4GT was on the Aston Martin stand.

Driven by the desire of David Brown to produce an alternative to the Ferrari Berlinetta, it was then that John Wyer of Aston Martin met Gianni Zagato, the youngest son of Ugo Zagato who founded his business in 1919. His friendship with Fiat engineer Vittorio Jano led to the design of special bodies. When Jano moved to Alfa Romeo, Zagato created a look that was to make him famous - the Alfa Romeo sports and racing cars, but the arrival of World War 2 heralded the end of that period for Zagato. Fortunately, for Aston Martin lovers there was a second period of Zagato from the mid forties to the late fifties designed by the eldest son Elio, who utilised aerodynamics resulting from his experience as a racing driver. Unfortunately, Elio was involved in a road accident so Gianni, the younger son, joined the company, modernised the operation, and asked a brilliant new star to join them - Ercole Spada - leading to a series of outstanding designs, which kept Zagato in the spotlight.

Early in 1960, the first DB4GT chassis was delivered to the Zagato facilities on the outskirts of Milan. Ercole Spada, only 23 years old, was assigned to Aston Martin, and he created the DB4GT Zagato, 350 pounds lighter than the standard DB4GT it also had striking lines accentuated by tightly drawn elliptical surfaces, all highly reminiscent of the equally rare and handsome Ferrari 250 GT Berlinetta by Pinin Farina.

At the London Motor Show that year, the wickedly purposeful Silver Grey car that appeared was numbered 0220/R and although 19 cars were built and recorded, the final ones nearly the decades later, there is no record of where 0220/R went – nothing has been seen or heard since that show.

This came about when Victor Gauntlett and Peter Livanos, then Joint Chairmen of Aston Martin Lagonda, with the agreement of Zagato, decided to build four works approved DB4GT Zagato Coupes using chassis 0192, 0196, 0197 and 0198 prepared by Richard Williams. All four cars were launched at Protech House, Cobham on 22nd July 1991. Outwardly identical to the originals, the four cars have unobtrusive changes that positively impact their performance and handling. The largest of these differences is the fitment of a 4.2 litre engine producing 352 bhp – slightly extended inlet manifolds help the 3 Weber carburettors work more effectively and alternators replaced the original dynamos. Improved front suspension geometry has removed the old bump steer of the original. The back axles are braced by tubes welded to the nose of the differential and Goodyear Eagle tyres replaced the original Avons these fitting on smaller and wider 15 x 6 Borrani wire wheels.

In 1992, with Zagato having two spare bodyshells, Richard Williams approached Walter Hayes, then Chairman of Aston Martin with a proposal for two further “Sanction” cars. Approval was given on the understanding that these cars should be identified as being built after the original build series finished. This was done and two “Sanction III” cars were built – DB4/344/R and DB4 424/R. John Ogiers stable was once more the leading exponent with the Zagato on the track – two examples were acquired, 0182R and 0183R respectively registered 1 VEV and 2 VEV. They competed at Le Mans alongside a privately entered French Zagato – sadly all failed to finish as did the DBR1 driven by Roy Salvadori. 2VEV did win a GT race at Aintree while Salvadori in 1 VEV came third in the Tourist Trophy at Goodwood with Essex Racing winning the team prize.



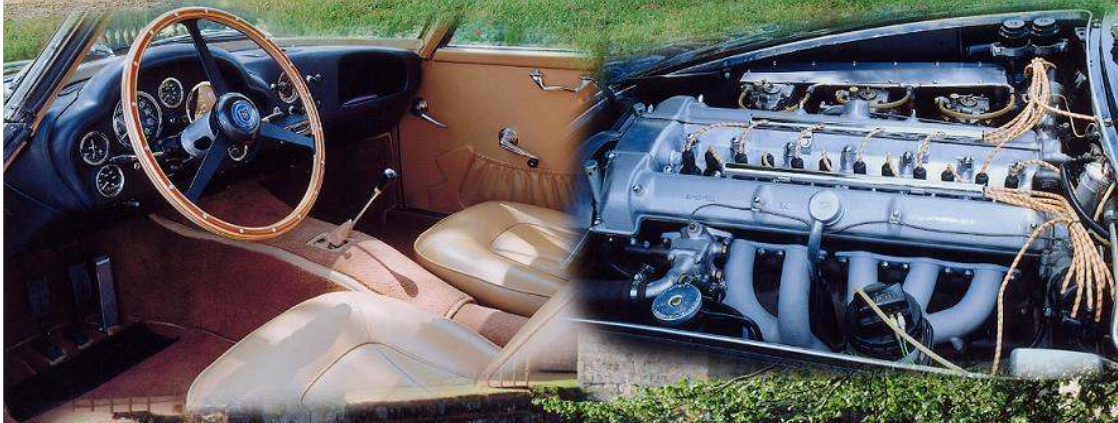
**Aston Martin DB4GT
Zagato
Chassis No: DB4GT/0177/R
© BYRON INTERNATIONAL
Photographed 1989**



Aston Martin DB4GT Zagato



Chassis No. DB4/GT/0188/L



Another rare classic sold by
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THE ASTON MARTIN DB5

Production dates:	October 1958 – June 1963
Top Speed:	140 mph
Acceleration:	0 – 60 in 7.1 seconds, 0 – 100 in 16.9 seconds
Chassis numbers:	DB5C/1251/R – DB5/2275/L (except 2021,2094)
Team car chassis no:	
Length	15 feet (4572 mm)
Width	5' 6" (1.68 m)
Height	4 feet inches (1346 mm)
Ground clearance	6.3 inches (160 mm)
Track	Front 54inches(1372mm) Rear 53.5inches(1360mm)
Wheelbase	98 inches (2490mm)
Turning circle	34 feet
Dry weight	3233 pounds (1466 Kg)
Engine	4 litre
Capacity	3,995 cc
Cylinder bore	96mm (stroke 92mm)
Compression ratio	8.8:1
Power output	282 bhp @ 5500 rpm
Carburettors	3 x SU HD8
Chassis	Square section tube frame, aluminium body.
Transmission	David Brown 4 speed with overdrive 5 speed ZF after chassis /1340
Front suspension	Unequal transverse wishbones with Armstrong shock Absorbers with co-axial coil springs and anti roll bar
Rear suspension	Coil springs parallel trailing links and Watts linkage Locating live axle with Armstrong double acting Lever shock absorbers
Steering	Rack and pinion
Brakes	Girling disc with separate servo assistance 11.5 inch disc front 10.8 inch disc rear



1965 Aston Martin DB5
Chassis DB5/1821/R
© BYRON INTERNATIONAL

The launch of the Aston Martin DB5 in 1963 was memorable for many reasons. Its arrival coincided with the departure of John Wyer. It bore the mark of the masters who continued to work on the car – Tadek Marek in the choice of the 4 litre engine giving usable power right through the engine range and Harold Beach moving the company on from the David Brown four speed box with overdrive to the competent, if slightly noisy, ZF five speed. The 4 litre engine had three SU carburettors that helped deliver the smooth torque curve – the valve covers and the exhaust manifolds were stove enamelled and a small hydraulic damper at the front of the engine eliminated vertical shake. There was a larger air filter and later a Lucas alternator to cope with the increase in electrical gadgets.

More power meant that the old single plate clutch was replaced with a 9 inch Borg & Beck diaphragm unit, significantly reducing the pedal pressure needed. 3 transmission alternatives can be found on DB5's – first fitment was a David Brown 4 speed box with a Laycock de Normanville overdrive. However, from chassis number 1340, a ZF 5 speed box was fitted. The unit had seen life in commercial vehicles and with Maserati but importantly for Aston Martin, it could cope with the torque of the new engine. A little noisy at idle, it also gave its share of clutch problems and the Borg & Beck clutch gave way to a Laycock single diaphragm unit. Perhaps reflecting Aston Martin's luxury image, the third transmission is the Borg-Warner automatic, which, although it had been fitted to the Lagonda, made its debut with Aston Martin on the DB5. Aston Martin also introduced the option of air conditioning.

There was already production experience from its fitment to the Lagonda Rapide, and for £320 extra, the Normalair system was offered on the DB5. Lack of space under the bonnet meant that the only place for the receiver and the evaporator was behind the rear seat. To accommodate this, the petrol tank was replaced with two wing mounted tanks in the manner of the DB4 convertible – this had the effect of reducing the capacity from 19 to 16 gallons of fuel. In spite of the fact that the DB5 was a direct derivative of the DB4, it cost £4,175 – a £670 premium over its predecessor. The price differential to the convertible was maintained with it being offered at £4,490. A total of 1,021 Aston Martin were built – 89 less than the number of DB4's but over a much reduced production run. Of those 1,021 cars, convertibles accounted for just 123 cars so it was a very low volume car. Even lower volume was one that derived from a personal request from David Brown when he had asked the factory to convert a DB5 Coupe into an estate car – the requirements were a capacity to accommodate his polo kit and a grilled rear compartment for his dogs.

Conceived as a one off, the conversion was completed by a few master craftsmen at Newport Pagnell by modifying the rear seating, adding a roof section and a rear door. That would have been the end of it if regular public appearances in the car by David Brown had not produced a number of enquiries from potential customers. Too complex and costly to tool up for at Aston Martin, the conversions were undertaken by coachbuilders, Harold Radford of London, who built a total of 12 examples.

With John Wyer's departure. David Brown relinquished some of his duties and introduced two new faces at the top – Jack Thompson as joint managing director and Steve Heggie as his deputy. Steve had a keen sense of the value of promotion and publicity, and was instrumental in Aston Martin becoming the car of choice for James Bond.



1966 DB5 Shooting Brake
by Radford Coachworks
Chassis No: DB5/2014/R
© BYRON INTERNATIONAL





**1965 Aston Martin DB5 Vantage
Convertible
Chassis No: DB5/2109/R
© BYRON INTERNATIONAL**



THE ASTON MARTIN DB5

*For delivery to Universal Exports
attention of James Bond*



The front of Mr Bond's DB5 with the extended bumper overriders for ramming. Also clearly shown are the revolving number plates and the "Browning type" machine guns concealed behind the side lights. These have to appear to fire and are, in fact, each a distributor rotated by its own electric motor which ignited a trickle of acetylene gas. Note the Silver Birch paint finish of the 1963 London Motor Show car

As lethal at the rear as the front, the "bullet proof" screen protects 007, while the chariot style scythes puncture the tyres of opponent and oil or nails from the rear light clusters. The revolving number plates and the ramming overriders were shared with the front end and clearly visible is the removable roof panel for the unwary (and ejected)



A gear lever switch activated a Martin Baker ejector seat from a fighter aircraft while under the drivers seat there was a tray of weapons to supplement the car's armoury. Built in radar with a scanner in the contemporary racing mirror feeding into the dashboard mounted display. While a special compartment in the door trim conceals the original mobile phone. Could anyone apart from science fiction writers have predicted

Harry Saltzman's idea was that the car would, as far as possible, resemble a production car, but would have a host of extras that suited the lifestyle of Britain's newest, and ultimately most famous, secret agent.

The car chosen for conversion was the prototype DB5 – actually the DB4 Series V Vantage that had been the London Motor Show car in 1963. Hydraulic overrides front and rear formed ramming devices while two “Browning” type machine guns fired from concealment behind the front side lights. The rear lamp clusters each had their own surprises – one spewed oil while the other fired out special triple headed nails. Triple headed also were the chariot type scythes that came from the rear wheels to catch the unwary pursuer. Other rear end gadgets included a “bullet proof” screen and smoke screens produced by canisters in the exhaust pipe.

To fool the enemy, the number plates rotated to show three different numbers from three different countries – BMT 216 A from the UK, LU 6789 from Switzerland and 4711-EA-62 from France. The very sporty racing mirrors on the front wings concealed radar scanners. The scanners fed a dash mounted screen – very much science fiction at the time and convincing dummies. Definitely not trickery was the Martin Baker ejector seat fitted from a fighter aircraft. In the film, the ejector seat operated from a concealed switch in the gear lever and the seat looked entirely normal. This required a little bit of cinematic trickery – the Martin Baker unit was huge, and required a rather offset removable roof panel to function for the film and was replaced in normal or promotional use.

The whole lot added 136 kilograms to the weight of the car and the overall cost of the project was £15,000. The premier of the film that the car was built for, Goldfinger, happened in Leicester Square, London on 17th September 1964 and the popularity of the film and the Aston Martin DB 5 was such that the film company ordered two duplicate cars – DB5/2008/R with the registration YRE 186H and DB5/2017/R registered as BMT 216A. The impact on Aston Martin was electrifying – the name was on everybody's lips and the company could have sold fifty cars a week, what a pity for the balance sheet that they could only produce eleven every seven days! There were models produced for the toy market, but the factory had just one more James Bond car to build and that was a miniature version of the DB5 convertible, full of 007 goodies, for the six year old Prince Andrew – a second miniature was reserved for Reza, son of the then Shah of Iran.

After its introduction in Goldfinger, Aston Martin became synonymous with James Bond, returning with Thunderball then in later films when Pierce Brosnan had replaced Sean Connery. As for the original car – after promotional tours, it returned to Newport Pagnell where all the gadgetry was stripped off the car, the DP216/1 dealer development chassis plate removed and the car was then returned to the production line where it was re-worked into a brand new DB5.

Roger Stowers of Aston Martin recalled delivering the car to its first owner in Chislehurst in Kent. Subsequently rediscovered, the car was returned to its 007 specification and went on to be sold in the United States by Sothebys for \$275,000 plus commission and taxes but was then stolen from its Florida base. Like that other missing thoroughbred, Shergar, it has been the basis for rumour and conjecture ever since – one unconfirmed report alleging that insurers for the car had paid out a massive \$4 million on its loss. Whatever happens, it is unlikely that any product will achieve greater brand prominence from association with a film than Aston Martin enjoyed with James Bond.

THE ASTON MARTIN DB6

Production dates:	October 1965 – July 1969
Top Speed:	148 mph
Acceleration:	0 – 60 in 6.1 seconds, 0 – 100 in 15.0 seconds
Chassis numbers:	DB6/2351/R – DB6/3599/R and DB6/4001/R – DB6/4081/R (except 4039 & 40610)
Team car chassis no:	
Length	15 feet 2 inches (4620 mm)
Width	5' 6" (1.68 m)
Height	4 feet 5.5 inches (1360 mm)
Ground clearance	6.3 inches (160 mm)
Track	Front
	Rear
Wheelbase	101.75 inches (2585mm)
Turning circle	
Dry weight	3250 pounds (1474 Kg)
Engine	4 litre
Capacity	3,995 cc
Cylinder bore	96mm (stroke 92mm)
Compression ratio	8.9:1
Power output	282 bhp @ 5500 rpm
Carburettors	3 x SU HD8
Chassis	Square section tube frame, aluminium body.
Transmission	5 speed synchromesh
Clutch	Borg & Beck 9 ½ inch plate
Front suspension	Independent wishbones and coil springs
Rear suspension	Coil springs, live axle, trailing links and Watts linkage
Steering	Rack and pinion
Brakes	Girling disc with separate servo assistance 11.5 inch disc front 10.8 inch disc rear



1966 Aston Martin DB6 Vantage
Chassis DB6/2848/RN

© BYRON INTERNATIONAL

The roots of the DB6 can be found back in 1960 when Tadek Marek cut the platform chassis of a DB4 ahead of the heelboard and inserted a new 3.75 inch (92mm) section of metalwork with the intention of creating a car that would carry four rather than two adults. This car entitled DP/200/1 and registered 4 YMC became a development workhorse for the DB5 replacement. However, the mid 1960's were a period of considerable upheaval for Aston Martin. The first changes were self imposed as the decision was made to finally close the Feltham factory and move everything under one roof at Newport Pagnell.

Sadly, although in initial consultations a large proportion of the staff had indicated a willingness to move, in the end, many decided not to. For example, when the service department moved, of the 100 staff, 78 had agreed to make the move but, in the end, only 18 made it. After rejecting proposals from Touring of Milan, the decision was made to focus on 4 YMC, testing it in a wind tunnel for the first time in February 1965. That showed the need for work to counteract the test car's rear end lift. So the final development phases saw a DB5 chassis, suitably lengthened and titled MP219, with a rear spoiler and abbreviated Kamm tail that Aston Martin had previously incorporated in sports racers. The decision was made to progress MP 219 as the Aston Martin DB6 although its de Dion rear axle was replaced with a live axle on cost grounds.

So the new car had a wheelbase extended by 3.75 inches with the extra inserted just ahead of the rear wheel arches and this allowed the roofline to be raised by an inch, while a further two inches of headroom was gained by reworking the seat squabs. Reducing the length of the trailing arms on the rear suspension, gave more elbow room at the back. The seat shapes were changed to give greater shoulder and lumbar support while the dashboard changed only with the size and layout of individual dials. Externally, however, horizontally slatted grille beneath the number plate allowed better air flow to the oil cooler and visual symmetry of the new arrangement was maintained with a split bumper at the front that was mirrored at the rear of the car. Mechanically, the car was very similar to the Aston Martin DB5 with 3 SU carburettors fitted as standard. There were a number of items that a customer could specify at no extra cost – a Powr-Lok limited slip differential and chrome wire wheels. An electric aerial was fitted as standard, although the radio, which would be a customer choice, was considered an extra and was charged accordingly. The Aston Martin DB6 was priced at £4,998, a substantial increase on the DB5, although the convertible, now named the Volante was priced the same as the coupe. By the end of production, 140 Volantes had been built – more than any other post war open top Aston Martin, however, the first 37 DB6 Volantes were actually built on the shorter DB5 wheelbase and were later identified as “the short wheelbase Volante”.

Aston Martin had got the DB6 into production early and looked to increase production rates from the eleven cars a week that had been built in the DB5 era and by June 1966, production stood at an all time high of eighteen cars per week. But by mid 1967, Government economic measures had crippled the car industry and with the factory on a three day week, production fell to an uneconomic ten cars per week. So the wave of optimism on which the new longer wheelbase DB6 was launched at the 1965 Paris and London Motor Shows was soon dashed.

A Faithful Family Friend



**1967 Aston Martin DB6 Mk1
Vantage
Chassis No: DB6/2637/R
© BYRON INTERNATIONAL**





**1970 Aston Martin DB6 Mk II
Vantage**
Chassis No: DB6MkII/4184/R
© BYRON INTERNATIONAL



THE ASTON MARTIN DB6 Mark 2

Production dates:	July 1969 – November 1970
Top Speed:	148 mph
Acceleration:	0 – 60 in 6.1 seconds, 0 – 100 in 15.0 seconds
Chassis numbers:	DB6Mk2/4101/R – DB6Mk2/4345/R
Team car chassis no:	
Length	15 feet 2 inches (4620 mm)
Width	5' 6" (1.68 m)
Height	4 feet 5 ½ inches (1360 mm)
Ground clearance	6 ¼ inches (160 mm)
Track	Front 4 feet 6 ½ inches (1380 mm) Rear 4 feet 6 ½ inches (1380 mm)
Wheelbase	101.75 inches (2585mm)
Turning circle	
Dry weight	3300 pounds (1500 Kg)
Engine	4 litre
Capacity	3,995 cc
Cylinder bore	96mm (stroke 92mm)
Compression ratio	8.9:1
Power output	325 bhp @ 5,500 rpm
Carburettors	3 x SU HD8
Chassis	Square section tube frame, aluminium body.
Transmission	5 speed synchromesh
Clutch:	Borg & Beck 10 ½ inch plate
Front suspension	Independent wishbones and coil springs
Rear suspension	Coil springs, live axle, trailing links and Watts linkage
Steering	Rack and pinion
Brakes	Girling disc with separate servo assistance 11.5 inch disc front 10.8 inch disc rear



1971 Aston Martin DB6 Mark 2 Vantage
Chassis DB6Mk2/4325/R

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Aston Martin were working on three separate but interconnected projects. William Towns was developing the designs for the new model, the Aston Martin DBS, and there has always been conjecture about the influence of the Ford Mustang on the project. The Mustang had co-starred with the DB5 in Goldfinger, it had the beneficial association with Carol Shelby as well as association with Shelby's and Ford's successes at Le Mans. And, of course, it had a V8 engine and the DBS was specified to carry the V8 engine that constituted the second of the three Aston Martin projects. The third project was continuing focus on sales and the development of the DB6 Mark 2.

By July of 1969, 1,327 DB6's had been produced making it by far the highest volume model of the Touring designed body with Aston Martin. This number included six Harold Radford bodied shooting brakes – very similar to the DB5 original but with the incorporation of a distinctive DB6 style rear spoiler. In addition to Radford's conversions, FLM Panelcraft of London converted a further three. Mechanically, the Aston Martin DB6 Mark 2 was little changed from its predecessor although power steering was now standardised and the 9 ½ inch Borg & Beck clutch plate was replaced with a 10 ½ inch version. The ZF 5 speed gearbox and automatic transmission were retained and a new option of Brico fuel injection was introduced. The DB6 was the first car to be fitted with this new system that its makers, Associated Engineering, claimed had been seven years in development. It was an electronic rather than mechanical system with engine demands conveyed to an on-board computer by five transducers. In the event, 46 of the cars were built with this system all with the chassis prefix DB6Mk2FI/. The most obvious visual indicator for this model came from reactions to comparisons between the DB6 and Aston Martin's new kid on the block, the William Towns designed DBS. The DBS had been originally conceived to accept Aston Martin's new V8 engine and the width to accommodate it. Some said the DBS was too wide and others that the DB6 was too narrow. For purely cosmetic reasons, on the DB6 Mark 2, Aston Martin replaced the 6.70-15 tyres with the DBS's fatter 8.15-15 Avons. To accept these new tyres there were distinctive flared wheel arches although this increase in body width is studiously ignored by all documentation on the car. William Towns left Aston Martin in 1968 to pursue a successful freelance design career, but not before he had a hand in the interior design of the DB6 Mark 2. Retrimmed to closely resemble the new DBS, its remodelled seats were from the DBS and it had new bucket seats in the rear.

Looking at the evolution of the Touring design for Aston Martin from the DB4 Series I to the DB6 Mark 2, the kerb weight of the car had increased a massive 415 pounds – 190 kilograms. However, in the same time period, the engine output had increased from 240 bhp to a huge 325 bhp on the Vantage version of the later model. Although the DB6 was still a lightweight compared with the DBS that carried a further 179 kilograms. Actual production of the Aston Martin DB6 Mark 2 was phased out after just 240 cars, including the Mark 2 Volante, had been produced in just over a year of production.

All of that leaves one small element of the Superleggera story untold – the Short Chassis Volante. At the launch of the DB6 some thirty seven DB5 chassis's remained, these were all built as convertibles. Named after the Italian for 'flyer' and with the wheel base some 4" shorter than the new DB6 coupe they were called DB6 Short Chassis Volante. Built between October 1965 and October 1966 and designated DBVC (Volante Convertible), they differed from the DB5 convertible in that quarter bumpers in the style of the DB6 were used. The rear light unit, front side and indicators were also taken from the DB6 as was the interior trim style. Door windows also incorporated quarter lights. The DBVC was also built on the Superleggera, principle. It was October 1966 before the first of one hundred and forty eight DB6 mark I Volante's were built.

Of the thirty seven DB5 Short Chassis Volante convertibles only three were built with Vantage engines, these being chassis numbers DBVC2307/R, DBVC2320/R and DBVC2322/R. Fifteen of the original thirty seven were listed in the 1966 AMOC register.



**1966 Aston Martin DB Short Chassis Volante
Chassis DBVC/2309/R**
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**1966 Aston Martin DB6 Short Chassis Volante
Chassis DBVC/2321/R**
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1968 Aston Martin DB6 Volante
Chassis DBVC/3697/R
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1969 Aston Martin DB6 Volante
Chassis DBVC/3758/R
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