

CLASSIC DRIVER

In Vogue: Callum Mullin talks all things cars, clothes, and content

Lead
Callum Mullin is a fashion influencer-turned-petrol head who has garnered a huge following on Instagram and TikTok. After meeting Callum at Goodwood last year, we went for a drive with the social media star in his Porsche 968 Sport to find out what's trending in 2024.



Callum, it's great to finally sit down and talk cars with you. Our generation seems to be falling out of love with cars, so what are your earliest automotive memories and what sparked your inner petrol head?

For me, it was growing up in the golden era of tuner car culture and car culture in general; everywhere you went there was something to do with cars. Need for Speed: Underground was huge, Fast and Furious was in its heyday, MTV was doing Pimp My Ride, and Schumacher the goat was racing for Ferrari.

My earliest memories were sitting on my dad's lap while he was playing Need for Speed: Porsche Unleashed on the PC. Then, it was trips to Scotland going full-throttle in his G-body 911 with me in a baby seat. He decommissioned the 911 after I began talking, so it's just a garage queen now, but it's still in the family.



You're not just a car fanatic and the jokingly-self-proclaimed world's best car journalist, but you're also deeply involved in fashion. How did you get into modelling, and what's the secret to social media success?

I was still in school, and I was posting edgy outfits on Instagram. When I was 17, I was asked to model for the Alexander Wang x Adidas campaign. I was going to go to university, but decided against it to try out the modelling thing. With the money I got from the Adidas campaign, I bought more clothes started buying and selling them online while uploading outfit pics to Instagram, and that's how I grew my platform. Back then, in around 2017, it was easier and fewer people were doing it — there weren't many small tier influencers, and you were either just a normal person or the Kardashians.



The two worlds of cars and fashion are closely linked. How do the two relate for you, and what are some of the most fashionable cars of the past and present in your mind?

I think the Venn diagram of cars and fashion has a huge overlap. Having a good spec is like knowing the colours on your outfit, and they follow the same rules. Blue cars with a tan interior will always work, just like with clothing. I also think the attention to quality is also a huge parallel, which is why I like vintage cars: you get patterns and materials you would never see on a modern car. I would buy an ancient Cadillac Eldorado just for those crazy velour interiors. Present day, very few get this right, but Porsche do a good job — the houndstooth patterns they offer are so cool.



The collector car world can be a bit uptight and serious sometimes, but your approach is refreshingly casual and comedic. How are you putting a new spin on the age-old art of automotive journalism?

I try to make videos that I would want to watch, and make them digestible for people who don't know anything about cars. I learned everything I know from scrolling through online car marketplaces. Petrol heads get painted with a brush stroke of "Maybe they're a little bit boring or weird," but I know there's so many cool car guys out there. The perceptions need to change; car spotters also don't get the best rep.

I consider myself a car journalist. I only do car spotting because I'm always travelling and never really with my own cars. The TikTok algorithm dictates that I have to upload at least once a week, so it just happened naturally that I became a car spotter. I'm in Costa Rica at the moment, so there's a car spotting video coming soon from this trip. There's some great Hondas here — some 1970s Mazda goodness too!



Let's talk about your personal collection, starting with our star car today: your amazing 968 Sport. The 968 is one of the most underrated models in Porsche's back catalogue, what drew you to this example?

As I was scrolling through the classifieds two years ago, I saw it come up and I thought, in that colour and with those wheels, it should be double the price — only 13,000 were made, so it's one of the lowest production mainstream Porsche models, and the Sport is even rarer with only 306 built. I thought the idea of a 3-litre 4 cylinder was also pretty interesting, and that 3/4 profile is just spectacular, especially from the back. Anyway, I saw it had sold, but it was re-listed a couple days later and I knew I had to have it. Mine has the Techart front splitter — they're quite hard to come by, which is super annoying because it scrapes on everything. It has the Porsche Speedline wheels, which are also quite rare. Second hand, the real ones go for like 8 grand, but mine are just knockoffs.



How has your ownership experience been with it so far?

It has been quite a cursed car. One month after buying it, the slave cylinder went, but luckily I was already driving to the garage and it was towed the rest of the way. I had this slightly dodgy Porsche specialist — shout out Mom's House Pete — and he had it for a while. After that, the brakes had to be reconditioned, which took a month. I got it back, and I had it for the summer, but I was a little scared to drive it.

Then, in around August 2023, I took the 968 out of the garage — which is on a big hill — and put the handbrake on. I got in the car, and as the door was half-open, the car just started rolling. Before I knew it, I was in the neighbour's fence. The only reason I was taking it out was to drive it to the specialists at Precision Porsche. They gave the car a full once-over, and luckily it was only light damage, but it needed a full replacement bumper and some paintwork.

That said, the drive home from precision Porsche was the best drive of my life. It's a great grand tourer - it has so much torque, you can leave it in forth or fifth and never change gear. It also has Variocam, so it makes a little more power than the 944 S2. It's kind of like V-TEC: at a certain rev threshold the engine wakes up and it becomes really racy. It loves to be in the high rev range when you're going around B roads. The rev limit is around 6,700rpm, but I don't like to rev bang it — it's already had one engine rebuild in its life, so I want to be careful with it.



The rest of your collection is pretty eclectic too, as anyone who follows your instagram account will know. Could you run us through your garage, are there any favourites?

My Mk 1 MX-5 was the first modern classic I bought, and that has a very special place in my heart. I'm about to hand over the price I paid for it to restore it. My Volvo P1800 ES comes in a close second; I always wanted a proper classic and something I could imitate a 1970s rockstar or geography teacher in.

The buying process was pretty ludicrous - I went 3 hours from London up to Liverpool in a train by myself. I got to the train station, the seller picks me up and takes me to the biggest Charlie and the Chocolate Factory-esque gates I've ever seen, and I'm like, "Am I about to get put into some sort of trade?" The guy had a garage full of at least 50 Bentleys, and he got the Volvo as a part-exchange with one of his clients. After a few hours of waffling, and some pretty non-impactful negotiating from me, I bought it.



At that point it was 8pm, so I told him I'll just drive it home. One of the headlights was already not working, and I had a three hour drive to get back home. I was bricking it; it was the first proper classic car I'd driven at that point. On the way, I realised the fuel was going down pretty quickly, and as I drove away from a fuel station, I saw it dump a load of fuel out the back. Somehow I managed to get it home, which was lucky as I had a flight for Paris fashion week the next day at 7am. It was definitely a character building experience! Afterwards, I took it to a really great place that specialises in the 1800, called Templar Classics. They fixed not just the fuel leak, but a lot of other stuff too. It's going back in a few weeks to get some welding done.



What else do you have your eye on at the moment?

I haven't posted about it, but I have an E46 BMW 325 CI in complete granddad spec, but it's got the underbody of an M3, including an M3 transmission, a short shifter, and BC racing coilovers. I haven't taken it to a track yet, but I'm planning to get my racing license this year.

I have my eye on a 996, maybe a Carrera S, or a 996 turbo. I really do like the original 996 with the yellow lights and cable throttle. There's something so nostalgic about them; they're just so pure. I have a Peugeot 106 to get around ULEZ, but I want a take-it-everywhere daily or a nice grand tourer for the summer. Admittedly, I could use the 968, but it needs to have aircon first and taking the 968 to Barcelona might be a mechanical risk.



Which automotive and fashion brands should our readers keep an eye on in 2024?

Toyota is on their A game right now. They're rumoured to be doing a GR86 with more power, which will be amazing. Mr Toyota is a massive petrol head, and it was really cool to see them going full steam ahead with hybrids instead of just EVs. I think Porsche are going to maintain their dominance as the coolest brand in the world, and I would like to hope BMW maintains its prestige. Let me tell you something: [I'm really excited for the Nardone 928](#). Also shout out to Ford for releasing that ridiculous Mustang, but aside from that, the car landscape is looking pretty depressing at the moment.

As for fashion, I have to mention Dunhill. My friend Ruben and I went to their show just last week, and they've reenergised massively. Every outfit would look good on me in my Volvo. I was a part of their campaign, so I'm biased, but Barbour are making big moves this year, broadening their horizons beyond the classic wax jacket.



Lastly, what can we look forward to from you in 2024? Any big plans?

More videos about my cars. I'm going to start a YouTube channel, as I just feel my content yearns for more minutes, and I would like to start vlogging about what's wrong with my Volvo. Me and my friend Jimmy Howson are also in the slow process of building a replica 924 IMSA racer; a heartfelt love letter to my dad's 924. We're looking to do the 5 cylinder VAG swap and then turbocharge it, so stay tuned!

Photos by Tom Shaxson

Gallery

