

CLASSIC DRIVER

Don't miss your chance to see this game-changing Ferrari 500 F2 at Lake Como

Lead
Envisioned by Enzo Ferrari and driven to victory by Alberto Ascari, this modest Ferrari 500 F2 paved the way for Maranello's racing glory. Once gifted by 'Il Commendatore' to the MAUTO museum in Turin, the iconic race car will star at this year's FuoriConcorso Open Museum exhibition at Lake Como.



Formula One racing is considered to be the pinnacle of modern motorsports, but in its early years after the first world championship racing season of 1950, the open-wheeled series struggled to attract enough entrants with high-performance cars. So in 1952 and 1953, all World Championship Grand Prix races were run in the slightly less demanding Formula 2. For Enzo Ferrari, who had already committed himself to the less expensive and easier to manage F2, the change allowed his Scuderia Ferrari to secure many victories in a short time. After all, Ferrari's brilliant engineer Aurelio Lampredi had already constructed the perfect car for the occasion – the Ferrari 500 F2.



The chassis was similar to that of the Ferrari 375 and featured two tubular longitudinal side members and crossbars, independent front wheels and a rear De Dion axle. The 4-speed gearbox with differential was mated to a dual ignition engine fed by two double-body carburettors. The *monoposto* allowed Ferrari to participate in the World Championship races with a new, but already tested, innovative, but already reliable car. In fact, no other Ferrari achieved the same level of success – and no other car ever had such simple mechanics.



Upon its debut at the 1951 Modena Grand Prix, it immediately demonstrated its potential. Furthermore, under the leadership of Alberto Ascari, it finished in first place with an average speed of over 116 km/h. However, Ferrari's lucky streak had just begun. With this very car, Ascari won two Formula 1 World Championships in 1952 and 1953, winning 31 races out of 35, turning the Scuderia Ferrari into a legend. "It is a very special car – it was the first truly successful racing Ferrari", says Benedetto Camerana, renowned architect and president of the Museo Nazionale dell' Automobile. "In a letter written in 1957 to his long-time acquaintance Carlo Biscaretti, the founder and *ordinatore* of the Museo Nazionale dell' Automobile in Turin, Enzo Ferrari wrote that a 'mechanical gift' would reach the museum within a few days. Since then, the game-changing Ferrari 500 can be adored at MAUTO."



Founded in Turin in 1933 and opened to a wider public in 1960 in its ultimate venue, the Museo Nazionale dell' Automobile is considered to be one of the world's oldest and most interesting museums of its kind. The world-class collection of historic automobiles includes more than 200 cars from 80 brands, among them many championship-winning racecars from the golden era of Formula 1 that were donated to the museum in period. For Classic Driver, the mythical Ferrari 500 was allowed to leave the holy halls of the museum for an exclusive photo production at Parco del Valentino in Turin, which was not only the first public garden in Italy, but also the setting of a demanding street race. The 'Gran Premio del Valentino' took place six times between 1935 and 1955, starring world-class drivers like Tazio Nuvolari and Alberto Ascari. Today Castello del Valentino, the magnificent historical palace at the center of the park, houses the architecture faculty of the Polytechnic University of Turin.



Bringing this mythical racing Ferrari to this historical setting already felt like a dream come true. But this is just the beginning: On 21st and 22nd of May 2022, the Ferrari 500 F2 and a selection of 25 to 30 iconic Italian cars from the Museo Nazionale dell'Automobile will be on display in the park of the equally impressive, neoclassical Villa Olmo on the shores of Lake Como. The 'Open Museum' special exhibition is part of [FuoriConcorso, the innovative event format created by Guglielmo Miani](#) to celebrate the highlights of car culture and supported by Classic Driver as the exclusive media partner. Taking place during the same weekend as the Concorso d'Eleganza Villa d'Este, this year's FuoriConcorso expands the format to three historical villas - Villa del Grumello, Villa Sucota, and Villa Olmo, paving the way towards a future Como Car Week.



"Villa Olmo is the perfect setting for a very special exhibition - and every year we will host a world-class car museum, a foundation, or a collection at this outstanding location, taking their cars out of these holy halls and giving them visibility way beyond their usual audience", Guglielmo Miani [recently announced in an interview with Classic Driver](#). With MAUTO as a first guest, the FuoriConcorso puts the spotlight on one of the world's oldest and most important car museums in the world, allowing the public to marvel at their automotive masterpieces all weekend - and free of charge.



“Anticipating the soon-to-come 90th anniversary of the National Automobile Museum, we will bring a selection of extraordinary Italian cars to FuoriConcorso – both from our museum as well as other important collections”, explains Benedetto Camerana. “Which cars we will show is still a surprise, but they will range from the prototypes of the pioneers, to legendary racing cars that have triumphed in historic circuits and in Formula 1, up to the icons of Italian design from the post-war period to today.” We cannot wait!

Photos: Andrea Luzardi © 2022

Gallery

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