


# CLASSIC DRIVER



## 1965 De Tomaso Vallelunga

Lot sold	<b>USD 146 779 - 195 706</b> GBP 120 000 - 160 000 (listed)	Lenkung	Links
Baujahr	1965	Zustand	Gebraucht
Chassisnummer	VLD 1611	Standort	
Zahl der Sitze	2	Kraftstoff	Benzin
Antrieb	Zweirad	Außenfarbe	Sonstige
Losnummer	356	Motornummer	8465061

### Beschreibung

1965 De Tomaso Vallelunga Competizione Right-hand-drive Mid-Engined Coupé  
Chassis no. VLD 1611  
Engine no. 8465061

Alejandro de Tomaso began racing in his native Argentina in 1951, before moving to Italy to drive for Maserati and Osca the latter firm having been founded by the Maserati brothers after they had sold their original company. This experience prompted De Tomaso to found his own company in Modena, Italy, in 1959.

Initially, racing was the company's sole aim, the fledgling firm producing cars for Formula Junior, Formula 3, Formula 2 and ultimately Formula 1. The first De Tomaso road car named the Vallelunga after the Roman motor racing circuit did not appear until 1965. It was a pretty small-engined Coupe built in small numbers and it would contribute its ultimately well-proven short-wheelbase backbone chassis (extensively re-engineered) to the subsequent Mangusta model. This latter design's introduction finally established De Tomaso Automobili as a serious manufacturer.

The Vallelunga prototypes, meanwhile, had been styled and constructed by Carrozzeria Fissore, an alloy-bodied Spider and a pair of closed Coupes having been completed in 1963-64. The Vallelunga was assembled around a Chapman-esque backbone chassis frame and was powered by a 1.5-litre Ford Kent 4-cylinder engine which, unusually, performed double-duty as a stressed chassis member a practice becoming accepted in competition car construction of the time but rare within road cars.

De Tomaso's long racing experience was also reflected in the design of the Vallelungas running gear, which comprised all-independent suspension by wishbones and coil springs, rack-and-pinion steering and four-wheel disc brakes.

Alejandro de Tomaso had hoped that a major motor manufacturer would buy into the programme and adopt the project as its own, but when no such approach was forthcoming he decided to go it alone.

The production Vallelunga featured striking glass-fibre Coupe bodywork styled by the young Giorgetto Giugiaro with more than a hint of Ferrari 250LM and Dino 206 combined. Compared with the Fissore-styled cars, there were numerous detail differences, the most obvious concerning access to the engine bay, which was via a glass hatch rather than the hinged clamshell-type rear body section of the prototypes.

Although just a humble pushrod power unit, the Ford Kent engine was both robust and immensely tunable, and when installed in the Vallelunga it was fitted with Weber carburettors. Power was transmitted via a Hewland transaxle. Approximately 50 production Vallelungas were made during 1965-66 before De Tomaso moved on to manufacture the Mangusta. Of the Vallelunga series, only two cars are believed to have been completed in right-hand drive configuration for delivery to the UK market. Colonel Ronnie Hoare, head of the Maranello Concessionaires company which imported Ferraris, had expressed an interest in the De Tomaso programme. Of the two known right-hand drive variants, chassis number '1601' was we are advised a road car, while the other chassis '1611' offered here is one of only three built by the factory to competition specification and fitted with the 1558cc Lotus-Ford twin-cam engine, Brevetti disc brakes and Colotti 5-speed gearbox. What is believed to be this car was the subject of an article by Patrick McNally in the November 26th 1965 issue of Autosport in which he visited Hoare's garage to view the car (copy of article on file).

Col. Hoare opted against taking on the De Tomaso distributorship and it is believed that '1611' was sold on to the well-known racing driver and collector, Robs Lamplough. The Vallelunga later went into Australian ownership where it was owned by Fred Vogel and later Andrew Osmond who raced it occasionally. A communication dated January 27, 2014, is included in the De Tomaso's documentation file, coming from former works driver Franco Bernabei, explaining that the model was "...named after one of my good performance in the GP circuit Vallelunga in Rome. It was exhibited at the Modern Art Museum in New York" and that "All the official races the De Tomaso Vallelunga entered were made with Ford engine 1600cc 4-cylinders" .

Described by the vendor as in generally good condition with excellent engine, brakes and bodywork and with the fitting of electronic ignition being the only known deviation from original specification. The car's presentation here represents an exciting opportunity to acquire a unique Italian mid-'60s competition Coupe which is eligible for entry into a wide range of the most prestigious motoring events.

Bonhams 1793

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