

CLASSIC DRIVER



Darracq 12 HP

Lot sold	USD 208 369 - 250 043 GBP 150 000 - 180 000 (listed)	Lenkung	Links
Chassisnummer	3663	Zustand	Gebraucht
Zahl der Sitze	2	Standort	
Antrieb	Zweirad	Kraftstoff	Benzin
Losnummer	220	Außenfarbe	Sonstige
		Motornummer	3663

Beschreibung

c.1903 Darracq Twin-Cylinder 12hp Rear-Entrance Tonneau

Coachwork by A Védrine et Cie

Chassis no. 3663

Engine no. 3663

Born in Bordeaux in 1885, Alexandre Darracq made a fortune in the bicycle industry's boom years of the late 19th Century and like many of his contemporaries subsequently turned his attention to powered transport. Darracq's new venture was financed by the sale of his Gladiator bicycle business to Dunlop, though he continued to make bicycle components in his new factory at Suresnes, Seine.

After two false starts that saw him abandon electric carriage manufacture and then attempt unsuccessfully to sell the built-under-licence Léon Bollée voiturette, Darracq launched his first successful internal combustion-engined automobile in 1900. Darracq was a businessman rather than an engineer and had recruited designer Paul Ribeyrolles to be responsible for its production.

That first 6½hp single-cylinder voiturette was followed by a range of twins and fours, and to publicise his products Darracq set about establishing a reputation for sporting prowess, commencing in 1901. In December 1905 a 22-litre V8-engined monster designed by Ribeyrolles and driven by Victor Hemery set a new World Land Speed Record of 109.65mph, and that same year Darracq won the both the Circuit des Ardennes and Vanderbilt Cup races, repeating the latter victory in 1906.

Early in 1903 a consortium of British investors had bought the company, though Darracq remained as

managing director. In 1905 its UK operations were incorporated as A Darracq & Co, with offices in London's Oxford Street, and in 1906 the firm opened an assembly plant at Kennington, South London. Before then the UK's sole importer had traded under the 'Automobilia' name. Advertising the new 1903 12hp twin-cylinder Darracq, Automobilia described the car as 'perfectly silent and smooth running' before inviting prospective customers to 'call and inspect before purchasing elsewhere.' Noteworthy features listed included an engine cast in one piece and driving direct to the back axle on top speed; ignition apparatus under front of bonnet; governor on the induction; and a wood frame.

Introduced in 1904, an advanced feature of early Darracqs was a chassis frame pressed out of a single piece of steel, while that same year also saw the arrival of the famous 'Flying Fifteen'. The latter was powered by a 3.0-litre sidevalve four rated at 15hp and would go on to become Darracq's most successful model to date. Of exceptional quality, the Flying Fifteen remained essentially unchanged for the next three years, its success helping the company capture a 10% share of the French market. In 1904 the United States importer accomplished the remarkable feat of covering 2,350 miles in 14 days at the wheel of a 15hp Darracq without stopping its engine!

This 12hp Darracq was first registered in Portugal as 'AA.2040', the original owner being a Mr Matos of Cunha. In 1914 ownership passed to a Mr Gabriel of Beira Baixa. The Darracq's next owners, the Martins family from Lisbon, kept the car until earlier this year. Restored by Fernando Martins between 1998 and 2000, it is described as all original with the exception of the red paintwork and matching leather upholstery. The four-seater rear-entrance tonneau body is by the little known Parisian coachbuilder Auguste Védrine, whose firm commenced its operations in 1899 but was out of business by 1914. Noteworthy features include Ducellier headlamps and a 'snail' horn. Described as in generally excellent condition, running and driving with a good turn of speed, this beautiful early Darracq is offered with Portuguese registration papers.

Bonhams 1793

Bonhams

Titel Herr

Vorname Jamie

Nachname Knight

101 New Bond Street

London

W1S 1SR

Vereinigtes Königreich

Telefonnummer +44-2074685801

Fax +44-2074477401

<http://www.bonhams.com/>

<https://www.classicdriver.com/de/car/darracq/12-hp/262115>

© Classic Driver. All rights reserved.