
1951 Lancia Aurelia

Lot sold	USD 284 175 - 341 010 EUR 250 000 - 300 000 (listed)	Zustand	Gebraucht
Baujahr	1951	Standort	
Chassisnummer	B20 - 1301	Außenfarbe	Sonstige
Losnummer	27	Motornummer	1295

Beschreibung

Formerly the property of William 'Bill' Spear, Richie Ginther and Jesse Alexander

1951 First Series Lancia Aurelia B20 Coupe " Gina "

Registration no. DSK 657

Chassis no. B20 - 1301

Engine no. 1295

When the Aurelia first appeared in 1949 as a 1700cc four door saloon, its novel mechanical specification with lightweight all aluminium V6 and rear mounted transaxle with inboard brakes and all independent suspension created a stir but the real coup de theatre was the arrival in 1950 of the beautiful and elegantly understated two door Aurelia B20 Coupe. The First Series cars weighed a mere 1000kgs and the 2 litre V6 revved with enthusiasm to 6000 rpm and beyond.

An astonishing second place overall by Bracco in the 1951 Mille Miglia in a near standard 2 litre B20 laid the foundations of the Aurelia legend. More successes followed rapidly with top ten overall placings in the Mille Miglia (third, fifth, sixth and eighth overall in 1952), an outright win and second and third in the 1952 Targa Florio and many wins in Italian and international hill climbs and rallies. The 2 litre B20 became the car to beat in demanding, twisty and mountainous events ; its excellent handling more than made up for the relatively small engine and modest power output. The Aurelia quickly became the car for connoisseurs, racing drivers, film stars and the rich and famous to own and be seen in. Fogged in at Paris airport, Fangio borrowed a B20 and drove over the mountains through the night in time to make the start of the Italian Grand Prix at Monza. Prince Rainier owned a B20 and Brigitte Bardot posed next to her Aurelia Spider.

The B20 was made in six series of 500 cars each with gradual developments and increased power. The first two series were 2 litre cars, then came the 2.5 litre car from 1953 onwards. But with more power came more weight and the power to weight ratio was better on the earlier than on the later cars, which were quieter and more comfortable but less sporting than the first and second series.

Chassis number 1301 has a special history. In 1951 American sportsmen, Briggs Cunningham (frequent Le Mans entrant, eventually in cars of his own name and manufacture) and his great friend, William " Bill " Spear competed at Le Mans. Having witnessed Count Giovanni Lurani's remarkable class win and 12th place overall in a B20, Briggs and Bill went straight to Turin to meet Gianni Lancia (Vincenzo's son and now running Lancia) and ordered a 2 litre B20 each. Chassis number 1301 is the car which Bill Spear bought that day.

The car had and still has many special features - a Nardi floor change, a Nardi rivetted wood rimmed steering wheel, two large Jaeger combination instruments with white on black lettering in " widow's peak " housings and an English language hand book written for this particular car showing its chassis number. Gianni must have been hoping that these two wealthy and well connected American amateur drivers would open the door to the American market.

The car retains its delicate original First Series fittings - the lightweight aluminium bumpers, the italicised Lancia script on the hub caps and glove box, the aluminium interior door trims including the driver's fold flat window winder and the fuel level measuring rod fixed to the fuel filler cap.

#1301 also had the spectacular Nardi 6 Dell' Orto carburettor set up (illustrated, and included in the sale of the car). The car at present has fitted the slightly tamer Nardi twin Solex modification which in combination with its period Lancia factory competition exhaust manifolds and hotter camshaft gives around 100 bhp - the same as on the 1952 lightweight Mille Miglia and Targa Florio cars.

#1301, nicknamed " Gina " because she is said to have starred in a film with Gina Lollobrigida, remained in the USA for many years, passing through the distinguished ownership of Ferrari team driver Richie Ginther and Jesse Alexander, celebrated motor racing photographer, before being bought by Anthony MacLean from Jesse in the early nineties. Anthony sold her some ten years later but always regretted the sale and bought her back again fifteen years ago. She has been meticulously maintained by the leading experts in Turin and in England and has always been completely reliable.

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