

# CLASSIC DRIVER

## For this collector, one green Aston Martin V8 Coupe simply wasn't enough

### Lead

If you're head-over-heels in love with a certain car, there's only one treatment to cure the admiration – more of the same! That's exactly what this collector did, who firmly believes the V8 Coupe is an under-appreciated gem in Aston Martin's lineage.



As the sun set on the 20th century, Aston Martin quietly bid farewell to one of its most enduring legacies: the hand-built, V8-powered gentleman's express known as the [Aston Martin V8 Coupe](#). Sure, it may have looked somewhat similar to the Virage it replaced, and it may not have been the mightiest compared to its V550 and V600 siblings, but the V8 Coupe is perhaps one of the last great British bruisers. With just 101 examples produced between 1996 and 2000 and boasting a 5.3-litre V8 good for a 0-60mph time of under six seconds, it's a car that many saw as a dignified swansong to the Newport Pagnell era before the company's rebirth under Ford's stewardship. We're huge fans of these grand tourers, [even meeting with designer John Heffernan back in 2023 to talk all things Aston Martin and Bentley](#), but our admiration pales in comparison to one collector, who owns not one or two, but three near-identical V8 Coupes, each with their own unique story to tell the world.



Our collector, who we will keep anonymous, first fell in love with the brutish charm of a 1990s Aston Martin after a brief ride in a V550 Vantage, and from there the infatuation started. While many consider this era of Aston Martin to be somewhat problematic, their unique silhouette and character was undeniable, and once experienced, very difficult to forget. The V8 Coupe was brought in from 1996 [as a facelift to the Virage, a car that rode the turbulence of the British brand rather well](#) with 363 of the first series Virages being produced. Picking up where one bruiser left off, the V8 Coupe was altogether more restrained, a car designed not to dominate the autobahn, but to cross continents in silence and comfort.

Our collector firmly put the V8 Coupe's cross-continental abilities to the test with their first example, purchased in 2008 and since amassing over 40,000 kilometres, often travelling through Germany, Italy and beyond. "The car is the ultimate UFO, people know what a Ferrari or Porsche is, even the classics, but if I pull up in the V8 Coupe, people always ask me about it, often followed by questions of what it even is!"





After enjoying many adventures in the V8 Coupe, in 2016 our collector spotted a true gem thousands of miles from where his first example resided. Located in Japan, another green V8 Coupe was listed for sale with just 8,000 kilometres from new. While the plan was to purchase the Japanese car and sell the first, the lack of public awareness surrounding these cars made the sales process a tricky one. In the end, they decided it would be more beneficial to keep them both.

When delving a little deeper into the car's history, you'll notice its true charm lies in the oddities only apparent with the cars side-by-side, "While mine are perfectly maintained, you need to remember the car is the last of the true coach-built machines, where all are slightly different, which you learn to love along the way. Take the rear-view mirror for example, each car has a slightly different one. It's the same story with the door handles and seat controls, and even some elements under the bonnet. Despite only 30 left hand drive cars being produced, the variation in the cars shows the craftsmanship involved and the team behind them were constantly trying to improve the cars, despite facing financial constraints every step of the way."



While the V550 and V600 were the powerhouses of Newport Pagnell, the V8 Coupe was also no slouch. It was a car that wafted to blistering speeds without much of the dramatics its Italian rivals had. It could muster a 0-60mph time of under 6 seconds, an impressive figure for a machine weighing nearly two tonnes. Ferrari's 550 Maranello or the Porsche 928 could perhaps provide more fun along the way, but the unflustered confidence of the V8 Coupe makes it the perfect companion for a weekend in the Highlands or a run to the Riviera.

As 2022 rolled by, our collector incredibly invested in a third V8 Coupe, also finished in a metallic shade of emerald. Now with three near-identical examples in their possession, along with a friend's green car only differentiated by its ruby interior, the craziness begins to set in. With three of the same cars to choose from every morning, they were able



to better understand their unique differences, not to mention the privilege of owning a healthy percentage of the 30 left hand drive examples out of the 101 V8 Coupes produced.



With the DB7 series, Aston Martin had definitely appealed to the tastes of a larger target audiences, returning better sales and enabling the brand to aim their focus more on this model and ramped up production, leaving the V8 Coupe as the last true old-school, hand-built Aston Martins. Today, the model sits at a fascinating crossroads. It is a car that symbolises the end of one era and the quiet prelude to another — capturing the charm of old-world Aston just before the tide turned. For the discerning enthusiast, it remains a superbly judged, delightfully anachronistic slice of automotive history. And as the years roll on, loyal collectors such as collectors like these only add to the car’s cult fanbase. While owning just one isn’t enough, three is most certainly not a crowd!

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