

CLASSIC DRIVER

World's largest Ferrari and Maserati showroom opens in UK



The world's largest Ferrari and Maserati showroom was officially opened in Egham, Surrey, last week when a £500,000 enlargement and refurbishment of the famous Tower Garage was completed. The historic home of Maranello Sales Ltd, the 70 year-old building beside the A30, retains its distinctive all-white, art deco exterior and landmark tower. Inside, the showroom now has space to display 50 new and pre-owned cars, and houses 'The Maranello Store' which offers customers the very best of Ferrari and Maserati accessories, clothing, models and books. This store is the first of its kind in the UK.



Speaking at the grand opening attended by almost 500 customers and guests, Paul Burrows, General Manager of Maranello Sales, commented, "This charismatic site has been home to Ferrari cars since 1967 and to Maserati cars since 1998. Demand for both brands has grown steadily over the years – with over 600 Ferrari and Maserati cars sold last year – and the need to improve Tower Garage became urgent. As part of our continuous striving to deliver the best possible service to customers, our Aftersales Operation was relocated to a £1 million purpose-built facility at Thorpe in 2002. That move enabled the re-creation of the entire Tower Garage site as a dedicated sales showroom.

"The building is rightly listed as a Grade II structure and consequently its exterior has changed little since its conception in 1933. However, inside, we have more freedom to adapt it to modern requirements and I'm confident that Maranello Sales Ltd now has another world class facility for both brands, to mirror the highest standards set by our Aftersales Operation," concluded Burrows.

History of Maranello Sales



The story of Maranello Concessionaires and Maranello Sales can be traced directly back to Britain's first world motor racing champion, Mike Hawthorn. The brilliant Hawthorn won the 1958 Formula One world title at the wheel of a Ferrari and at the end of that season concluded a deal with Enzo Ferrari to sell Ferrari road cars in the UK. Selling the glorious but undeniably expensive 250GT was not easy in the cash-starved 1950s. Hawthorn showed two examples at the London Motorshow in 1958. While one of them sold comparatively quickly, the second was not so easy to move.

Eventually it was acquired by car dealer Colonel Ronnie Hoare, then a leading light in the UK racing scene. Ronnie Hoare quickly realised the potential of the Italian marque and, following Hawthorn's tragic death, he approached Enzo Ferrari with a view to becoming Ferrari's official UK concessionaire. A deal was struck and Maranello Concessionaires Ltd., named in honour of Ferrari's Italian hometown, was formed in July 1960 and initially operated from a small corner of Hoare's successful Bournemouth Ford dealership, F English Ltd.

In its first year, Maranello Concessionaires sold just four cars in the UK. Today, Ferrari sells more than 450 new cars in the UK every year, making this country one of Ferrari's most important markets in the world. In 1987, the company founded by the Colonel was sold to TKM which, in 1991, was taken over by Inchcape.

- 1935 -- Tower Garage was designed by Rix and Rix of Burnham in art deco style and was originally built as a Vauxhall / Bedford Sales & Service operation, for The Egham Motor Co.
- 1955 -- The building was extended and remained a Vauxhall / Bedford Sales & Service operation.
- Early 1960's it was purchased by Shell and became a petrol station and service centre.
- 1967 -- Colonel Ronnie Hoare leased the site from Shell and moved his Ferrari Importership, Maranello Concessionaires, to Tower Garage along with the Retail Sales & Service operation.
- 1975 -- Maranello Concessionaires Ltd (now Ferrari UK) moved to its present location in Thorpe. Maranello Sales Ltd was created as the retail arm at Tower Garage and the BMW franchise was introduced to be sold & serviced alongside Ferrari.
- Early 1980's -- there was increasing demand for Ferrari products and therefore the BMW franchise was evicted and Maranello Sales Ltd became a solus Ferrari Sales & Service operation.
- 1987 -- TKM purchased the company from Colonel Ronnie Hoare and Shaun Bealy.
- 1991 -- Inchcape purchased TKM.
- 1998 -- the Maserati importership was taken over by Maranello Concessionaires Ltd (Maserati UK) and the Maserati franchise was introduced alongside Ferrari at Tower Garage.
- Over the next 3 - 4 years the volumes for both Sales & Service grew dramatically, with over 600 Ferrari and Maserati cars being sold from the site in 2002.
- On-going success of Ferrari, both on and off the race track, and the re-launch of Maserati in the UK in 1998 meant that demand for both products continued to grow and the need to improve the Tower Garage facility became evermore urgent.
- 2002 -- the Maranello Aftersales operation was relocated to a brand new, purpose built facility in Thorpe. This new facility represented a £1 million initial investment and is the largest and most advanced Retail Ferrari & Maserati Aftersales operation in the world.
- 2002 -- the Ferrari & Maserati official UK Bodyshop remained in its location in Thorpe. It combines the latest technology and equipment with traditional skills enabling some of the oldest and rarest Ferraris and Maseratis to be repaired alongside the modern cars.
- 2003 -- investment in the dedicated Sales showroom at Tower Garage will, upon final completion, represent a total investment of more than £500,000 and provides a world class Ferrari and Maserati facility.

For the story of the recent launch of Maranello Concessionaires' 2003 racing programme please [CLICK HERE](#)

For more information on Ferrari and Maserati in the UK please visit www.ferrari.co.uk or www.maserati.co.uk

Gallery

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