

CLASSIC DRIVER

[Ferrari 612 Scaglietti](#)

Champion's year



With another year's F1 World Championship for Drivers and Constructors in the bag, Ferrari must take great pleasure in announcing final details of what may well be the benchmark car in the 2 + 2 performance GT class of 2004. Move over Bentley Continental GT and Aston Martin DB9, Ferrari's very successful 456M model has been succeeded by the 612 Scaglietti.

Named in honour of one of Ferrari's seminal coachbuilders of the 50s and 60s, the car is actually built entirely by Ferrari at the ultra-modern Scaglietti light-alloy technologies facility. Its all-aluminium space frame chassis and bodywork construction is used for the very first time on a Ferrari 12-cylinder model, and is designed to give the very highest strength and stiffness for the lowest possible weight.

A 60kg weight reduction compared to the outgoing model and a massive 60% increase in overall structural rigidity is the result of the increased use of aluminium in the car. Of course the 612 Scaglietti's advanced aluminium construction also translates into improved comfort and handling - in addition to offering maximum occupant protection in the case of a collision.

Ferrari state 'Sergio Scaglietti bodied some of the most beautiful cars ever to emerge from Maranello. Scaglietti wasn't a man who relied on pencil and paper to create his magnificent designs: he worked like a sculptor, fashioning their forms from aluminium.' Looking at the design of the car one can see the great cars of the past coming through in living aluminium. The sides are scalloped, a nod of respect Ferrari say to the special 375MM bodied by Scaglietti for Ingrid Bergman in the Fifties.



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Understated elegance

The car is understated in the great tradition of Ferrari long-distance GT cars; it's as far removed from the hyper-performance 'Enzo' and 360 as it could be. Take note that the press shots seen here are in blue, the 612 is clearly going to be a Blue Pozzi/Tan car. Or Grigio Titanio/Bordeaux. Take your pick from the extensive colour range available - and Ferrari are eager to point out that personalised combinations are available 'on request'.

Underpinning the car is the aluminium chassis and of course Ferrari's usual magnificent V12 motor. Almost centrally mounted, the engine, in conjunction with the rear-located transaxle, gives the car excellent weight distribution (46% front, 54% rear). The handling is enhanced by a performance-oriented set-up with active damping and the special CST stability and traction control system, seen on the 612 for the very first time on a Ferrari.

The engine is a 65° V12 engine displacing 5748 cc. Rounded off to give the figure 6 (litres) in the 612 model designation, the V12 represents the very pinnacle of Ferrari engine design, thanks in particular to improved fluid dynamic characteristics of the intake and exhaust manifolds, generating a blistering 540 bhp at 7250

rpm. The six-speed mechanical gearbox is available in both manual and new-generation electro-hydraulic set ups - the semi-auto known as the F1A, designed to marry fast manual gear shifting with comfortable automatic use.

The car is a 2 + 2 that should certainly be able to seat four as well as Aston's DB9, if not Crewe's new GT. Ferrari have gone to great trouble to improve ease of entry for all four occupants as well as greatly improving legroom (an increase in length of 139mm over the 456M), as well as giving extra headroom. Not forgetting the long journeys the car is expected to make at least two-up, luggage capacity has been increased to 240 litres - a full 25% larger than the 456M's. The boot can either hold a five-piece Ferrari luggage set or two golf bags.



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Performance on demand

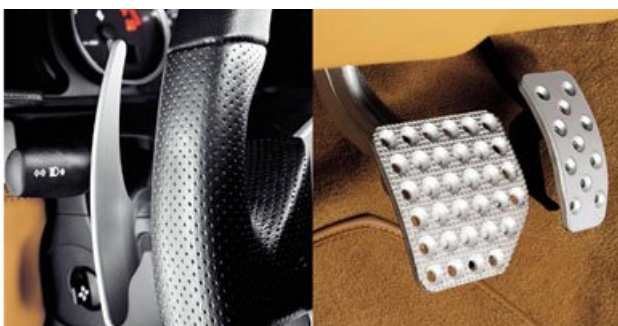
Inside the luxurious cabin the level of on-board comfort is completed by a new instrument binnacle and has steering wheel-mounted controls designed for maximum driver convenience. Needless to say dual-zone climate control, and a top of the range Bose sound system that has been specifically developed for the 612 Scaglietti, makes the sophisticated aluminium and leather interior as stylish and comfortable as possible.

So who will buy the 612? Sources close to the UK importers report unprecedented demand for the car already, based on the preliminary sketches shown a few months back. It fits nicely into the 'acceptable supercar' bracket, where understated styling and awesome performance meet head on. Perhaps a part of the market once buying Aston Martin's bespoke V8, a part of the market which delights in the pure driving pleasure of the 360 Modena but recognises this delightful car is not suitable for every single journey and that the option of an AMG Mercedes, for example, is simply not on.

The 612 puts Ferrari firmly back on pole position in the most sophisticated car market in the world - that of the long-distance GT car. A market it created for itself fifty-odd years ago with cars clothed by that maestro of aluminium - Sergio Scaglietti, from whom it gets its name.

The omens are good, Alberto Ascari in 1953 - and Schumacher in 2003.

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The facts;

Engine: Cylinders 65° V12
 Bore/stroke 89 x 77 mm
 Unit displacement 479 cc
 Total displacement 5748 cc
 Compression ratio 11.2:1

Power:	540 CV @ 7250 rpm
Torque:	60 Kgm @ 5250 rpm
Transmission:	Six speed F1A semi-auto transaxle or Six speed manual transaxle.
Body:	Two door coupe 2+2. Extensive use of aluminium for body and chassis.
Tyres:	Front 245/45 - 18" Rear 285/40 - 19"
Dimensions:	Wheelbase: 2950 mm Length: 4902 mm Width: 1957 mm Height: 1344 mm Kerb weight: 1840 kg Front track 1688 mm Rear track 1641 mm
Performance:	Top speed over 315 kmh/195 mph Acceleration 0-100 kmh/62 mph 4.2 s
Price & availability:	For production in 2004. Price to be confirmed.

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