'Alfa Romeo Argentina' - the definitive book

On a crowded international bookshelf, every now and again a volume comes along that becomes the standard by which others are judged. One such is the masterpiece from two Argentine authors that catalogues the complete history of Alfa Romeo in the South American country that brought us González, and the great man from Balcarce, Juan Manuel Fangio.

Right from the start it's made clear this is a work that's intention is not to validate or certify the chassis numbers of cars, the value of which would today total tens of millions of dollars. It's simply the story of Alfa Romeo and its interwoven history with Argentina. From the G1, Rl and P2 through a jaw-dropping number of 8C 2300s, Tipo Bs, 308s, Giulias and GTAs to the fabulous 3-litre V8 T33s of 1970/71 every significant car is analysed and recorded and for pre-war cars in particular, there are whole chapters dedicated to individual chassis.

And just to set the scene, the first chapter is devoted to a brief synopsis of Argentine history from 1900 to 1972. Thus the changing political arena and economic fortunes of the country can be considered as a backdrop to the races mainly centred in Buenos Aires. The text is produced in Spanish and English by the two authors, who have spent the last ten years exhaustively researching the subject. Very high quality black and white photographs, many unpublished and from private collections, are a feature of the book.

The first Alfa arrived in the country in the 1920s and needless to say examples of the marque soon found their way onto the rough street racing courses of the time. The entry of a Grand Prix P2 in 1927 driven by the experienced Italian Vittorio de Rosa was the start of many appearances in South America by the very finest racing machines from Milan. Followers of today's collecting scene will be fascinated by the condition of what nowadays are the 'premier crus' of the market. And dealers will be ruing missed chances of 40 or 50 years ago when the 2900Bs and 8Cs were almost scrap.

There's a couple of chapters on Fangio and the era of the early post-war period when Alfa Romeo had the immortal 158/159 'Alfettas' in Grand Prix racing and the Disco Volante and its pure racing cousin the 6C 3000CM at Le Mans, the Mille Miglia and Targa Florio. Here the scene moves somewhat from South America to Europe, but Fangio is the point of interest and other famous Argentine drivers like the generously

proportioned Froilan González, as well as Roberto Mieres and Carlos Menditeguy, feature too. And there's also a chapter on the home-produced IKA Bergantin, a car based on tooling from the recently ceased-production four-door Alfa Romeo 1900.

The story finishes in 1972, the year of the YPF (state-owned oil company) sponsored World Championship sports car races at Buenos Aires that Alfa Romeo entered Autodelta-run TT 33/3s for the likes of Vic Elford, Nino Vaccarella, Helmut Marko and Andrea de Adamich.

But it's the '20s, '30s and '40s that this book is all about - and it's a highly recommended read.

Alfa Romeo Argentina, by Cristian Bertschi and Estanislao Iacona is priced at $US175.00, airmail shipping included worldwide. Hard Cover, 30 x 25 cm size. English / Spanish. 368 pages. 313 pictures in B&W. From 1923 to 1972. Alfas RL, P2, P3, 8C 2300, 8C 2900, 8C 35, 308C, tipo 316/12C 4500, Alfas specials, Fangio and Alfa Romeo, the 1960s, and the T33 sports cars at Buenos Aires. Club Alfa Romeo Argentina...and much more.

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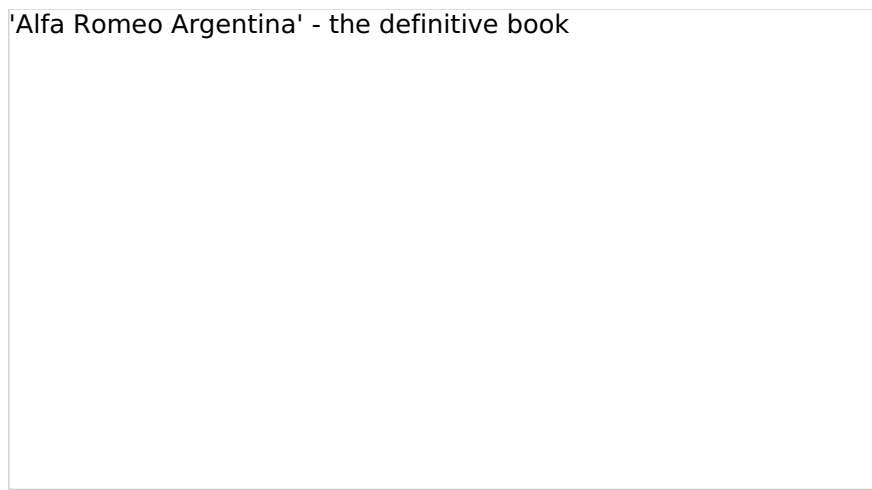

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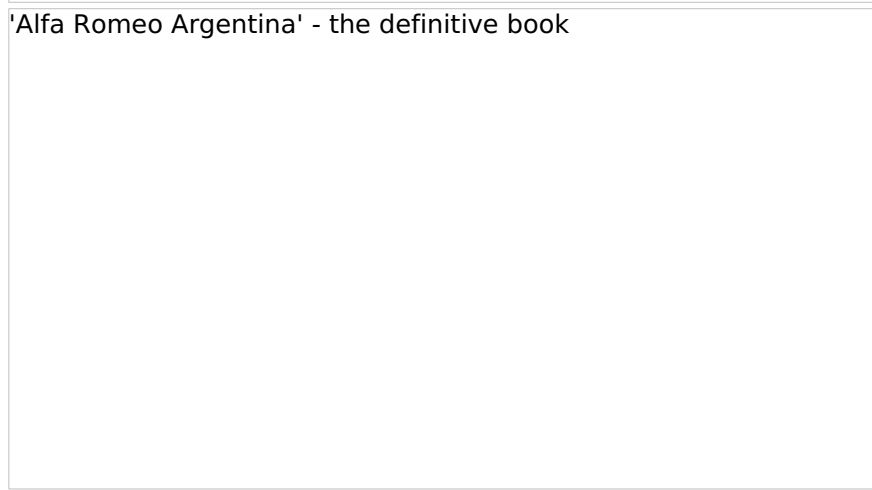*[Free Subscription!](#)*
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