

# CLASSIC DRIVER

## Ferrari 612 Scaglietti HGTC



**Travelling in the same high speed convoy through France, Switzerland and Italy as two Ferrari 599GTBs was a discreet grey 612 Scaglietti. Bug-spattered, like the other Berlinettas, from 100s of kilometres of hard driving, the bigger car seemingly offered a more staid alternative to the sporty two-seaters, and for the last fuel stop and driver changeover before Maranello I exchanged the keys to the [Rosso Monza 599GTB](#) for the 612's.**

This was however, a car that had been specified with Ferrari's HGTC package, just one of the many personalisations prospective owners can order, and it meant that not only did the car drive on 19" ball-polished modular wheel rims with sport tyres, but also stopped via colossal carbon-ceramic brake discs and CCM System monoblock brake calipers. The car sounded sportier (sometimes louder than the 599s...) via a sports exhaust, and to complete the performance package, a specific suspension control ECU and revised F1 gearbox software gives the car shorter gear shift times and enables the active suspension to react even quicker than usual.

In short, relinquishing the wheel of one of Ferrari's flagship models is tough, but the development engineers at Maranello have developed the 612 (already a fabulous car that I've been fortunate to drive many times before) into a high-performance rocket ship for the man wanting to share the experience with friends (it's a genuine four-seater, although tight on trunk space for a weekend away), or letting the family come along too. And quite rightly so.





The 5,748 cc V12 gives its peak 540 HP at 7,250 rpm, but all the way up to this the power and torque delivery is so smooth and effortless it's only the stronger rasping howl from the revised exhaust that tells you the car is really working at it. The sublime four-cam motor has not been touched in the HGTC version, but the new exhaust note coupled with a perceptible change in the dynamics of the big GT means it takes on a harder, even more purposeful stance that you could easily visualise on a race track.

Coming from the 620 HP, 150 kgs-lighter outright sports machine to the Grand Tourer that is the 612, you do feel the difference in overall size (although it's a foot longer, it's actually slightly narrower than the 599GTB) but given the wide sweeping roads these transcontinental expresses are designed for it's perfectly manageable.





It's a car that's built for no-nonsense big-distance driving, a task it will do with ease. Just adjust the seats in the best-finished cabin out there, brim the 108 litre fuel tank and **go!** Dropping down a couple of gears via the excellent F1A sequential gearbox and flooring the throttle brings tremendous acceleration that if I hadn't been driving a 599GTB just 30 minutes previously would have been truly outstanding. The ceramic brakes were not tested in my tenure, but will no doubt prove to be unburstable, and the 19" wheels looked a lot better than their 'ball-finished' cataloguing promised, contrasting nicely with the matt grey discs lurking behind.



These touches, together with the 'Daytona' seats, beautifully-finished alloy air vents and dials give the car a classy, grown-up look devoid of affectation or tawdriness. In the fast-moving world of production at Maranello, the 612 was the first car produced of the ultra-stiff, lightweight aluminium and high-tech generation. Already an excellent machine, the HGTC package keeps its elegant nose right up there with its more sporting brothers.

*The **Ferrari 612 Scaglietti F1** costs from £180,245.00 On-The-Road in the UK. The **HGTC Package**, comprising Carbon-Ceramic Brake Discs, CCM System Monoblock Brake Calipers, Sports Exhaust, Ball-polished Modular Wheel Rims 19" with Sport Tyres, Colour Brake Calipers, Specific Suspension Control ECU and Revised F1 Gearbox Software with Shorter Gear Shift times is priced at £15,675.00.*

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