

# CLASSIC DRIVER



## Sleeping Beauty N°6: Renault Alpine A110

01 December 2010 | Classic Driver



**Classic French cars are a specialised field; yet even those with little interest in the history of the French automobile can't fail to be impressed with the achievements of the Renault Alpine. Here at last was a model that restored the necessary aura of sporting success, both in racing and rallying, to the Renault brand.**

The **A110**, first introduced in 1961 as an evolution of the **Renault A108** (using the same format of a steel backbone chassis with glassfibre body), used many parts from the **Renault 8**. During its production lifetime, it was powered by a wide range of **Renault** engines - of differing capacities and in various states of tune.

Fitted with the cast-iron engine from the **R8 Gordini**, the **A110** won several French rallies of the late 1960s. But it was when the car was fitted with an aluminium **R16 TS** block that power was upped to 125bhp - and this meant that the production **1600S** could reach a top speed of around 130mph. Pretty quick for a (relatively low-priced) mass production car of the 1970s. And this was by no means the most powerful **A110** in the model's colourful history: 180bhp is claimed for those fitted with highly developed 1800cc engines.

Predominantly known as an ultra-successful rally car, the **A110** first achieved international acclaim in 1970-72, winning several European events in the **International Rally Championship**. In 1971, the

car took the first three places in the Monte Carlo Rally. By the time the new **World Rally Championship** kicked off in 1973, Alpine had become a wholly owned subsidiary of Renault. With regular drivers **Bernard Darniche**, **Jean-Pierre Nicolas** and **Jean-Luc Th  rier**, along with the occasional guest driver such as **Jean-Claude Andruet**, Renault's **A110** dominated the world rallying scene, winning almost every event the factory team entered – culminating in victory in the first **World Rally Championship**.

Today, a top-condition **Renault Alpine A110** will cost you upward of 40,000 euros and our **Classic Driver** dealers suggest this could well increase in the not-so-distant future. What it buys you is a slice of French motoring history, backed by outstanding rallying credentials – and a large dash of charismatic Gallic styling.

**Keen on a Renault Alpine A110? Have a look in the [Classic Driver car database](#).**

*Text: [Classic Driver](#)*

*Photo: Renault*

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