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[Sleeping Beauty №20: Maserati Ghibli](#)



Anyone who admires the flamboyant styling and world-leading (at the time) performance of the Ferrari Daytona, but baulks at the price tag attached to this legend, would do well to consider the Maserati Ghibli.

Until the birth of the **Ghibli**, **Maserati's** road cars were predominantly grand tourers of elegant design. For the **1966 Turin motor show**, however, the Modenese marque wanted something different and hence **Giorgetto Giugiaro**, then working for **Ghia**, was asked to design a pure two-seater coupé. His creation was blessed with a long swoop of a bonnet and an avant-garde chopped-off tail. While the bodystyle was rakishly modern, the all-new chassis was built from the oval tubes long favoured by the **Trident** and the rear suspension was of very traditional design: a live axle with semi-elliptic leaf springs. Hardly cutting edge.

The power plant, meanwhile, was a fresh version of **Maserati's** existing **quad-cam V8**, with 4.7-litre capacity, a dry sump and a claimed power output of 330bhp.

The performance was, without doubt, quite exceptional – but, as with so many supercars of that era, the actual claims should be taken with a rather large pinch of salt. A top speed of 174mph? That's very unlikely, and even the 166mph claimed elsewhere is open to a large dose of cynicism. But it probably came somewhere close to 160mph. The 0-60mph sprint was said to be dispatched in around 6.5 seconds but, again, these figures were not subject to anything like the strict scrutiny of today.

From the start, the **Ghibli** was an obvious competitor to the **Ferrari Daytona** and while both were strikingly beautiful (especially the open-topped version of both cars, launched a little later), each had its own strengths. The **Daytona** was known above all for its phenomenal speed, as well as handling which bettered that of the **Ghibli**, with its rather outdated leaf springs. But the **Maserati** offered power steering, which the **Ferrari** did not; and this made the **Ghibli** a far more driveable option for everyday motoring.

No doubt aiming to match the **Daytona's** performance, **Maserati** increased the size of the **Ghibli's** V8 engine to 4.9 litres. In this form, the **Ghibli SS** stayed in production until 1973, with a total of some 1280 cars built: an overwhelming success for the **Trident**.

If your preferences lie more with Modena than Maranello, have a look in the [Classic Driver car database to see what's available](#).

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