

CLASSIC DRIVER

Tour Auto Optic 2000 2010: Preview



The Tour Auto is one of Classic Driver's favourite events of the year – a sort of Goodwood Revival on tour. This year, however, it promises something even more special. Thanks to this being the 50th anniversary of the Ferrari 250 GT SWB, the 220 cars taking part will include no fewer than 17 SWBs...

...along with over 200 other models that participated in the original **Tour de France Automobile** between 1951 and 1973. Although a large proportion of the cars can boast enormous value – **DB4 GT Zagatos**, **250 GTOs**, **Ford GT40s** and their ilk – part of the joy of the event is the diversity of entries. Any model which took part in the **Tour Auto** in period will be considered: and that might be a relatively humble **Citroën DS19** or **Saab 96**.

But it will be hard to tear your eyes away from the **Ferraris**. As well as the 17 (yes, seventeen: we keep writing the number because it's hard to imagine this many in one place) **250 GT SWBs**, including the actual car that took **Willy Mairesse** to victory in 1960, there's – appropriately – a **1958 TDF**, as well as a selection of **275 GTB** and **GTB/Cs** – plus the beautiful **GTOs**.

Nor are the cars the only attraction for spectators. As at **Goodwood**, famous drivers are tempted back behind the wheel for this exceptional outing – and, given the Gallic nature of the whole event, it will be no surprise if French ex-works rally drivers such as **Ragnotti** and **Serpaggi**, in their **Alpine Renaults**, draw the greatest adulation from the crowds.



For those not familiar with the format, entries fall into two distinct categories: **Regularity** and **Competition**. The **Competition** category (itself divided into classes according to age of vehicle) sees the crews compete against the stopwatch on special stages, held on tracks or closed roads. The fastest wins. In the **Regularity** cars, meanwhile, each crew aims to stick precisely to a pre-defined average speed over the stages.

Running from **19-24 April**, the **2010 Tour Auto** will leave the **Jardins des Tuileries** in the heart of **Paris** on **20 April** to head for **Beaulieu-sur-Mer**, via **Vichy**, **Lyon**, **Megève** and **Aix-en-Provence**. If you can be in **Paris** on **Monday 19 April**, it really is worth attending the public display of cars as they assemble for

scrutineering and final checks.



As in 2009, the stages on the various legs of the **Tour** will be open to public viewing, while, new for 2010, the 'parc fermés' will also – rather misnomerically – be 'open' to holders of the official programme. Do, however, check the times on the **Tour Auto** website, www.tourauto.com.

You can see the full **Regularity Entry** list [HERE](#)

You can see the full **Competition Entry** list [HERE](#)

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