

# CLASSIC DRIVER

## Cadillac Seville designed by Gucci: Molto Americano!

### Lead

Seventies American glamour meets Italian lifestyle grandeur: in 1979, Cadillac collaborated with Gucci to create the ultimate edition of the Seville. Even 33 years later, the car seems to have inspired some of the 'fashion' cars of the present.

In the [opening scene](#) of Martin Scorsese's Las Vegas epic 'Casino', Sam 'Ace' Rothstein (played by Robert DeNiro) swaggers over to a '79 Cadillac Eldorado and turns on the ignition – only for both car and salmon-jacketed occupant to be engulfed in an explosion. Film buffs hold the opening shots in historic regard, but one detail seems unlikely: only one car would be suitable for a swanky casino boss-come-playboy – the Cadillac Seville designed by Gucci.

The Italo-American special edition reached the market in 1979, characterised by an elegant leather trim and a beige vinyl cover with the famous Gucci pattern which extended over the C-pillar. The biggest eye-catcher, though, was the Gucci logo with two interlocking Gs that formed a hood ornament on the bonnet. The Gucci logo was also used on the wheels, while the lower edge of the boot was decorated with a red-green stripe – the traditional colours of the Italian fashion label. Cadillac offered the elite Seville in three shades of paint: black, white and a medium brown. Inside, the double-G honeycomb pattern was repeated, and a logo on the glove compartment gave the front passenger further indication of the car's exclusive nature.



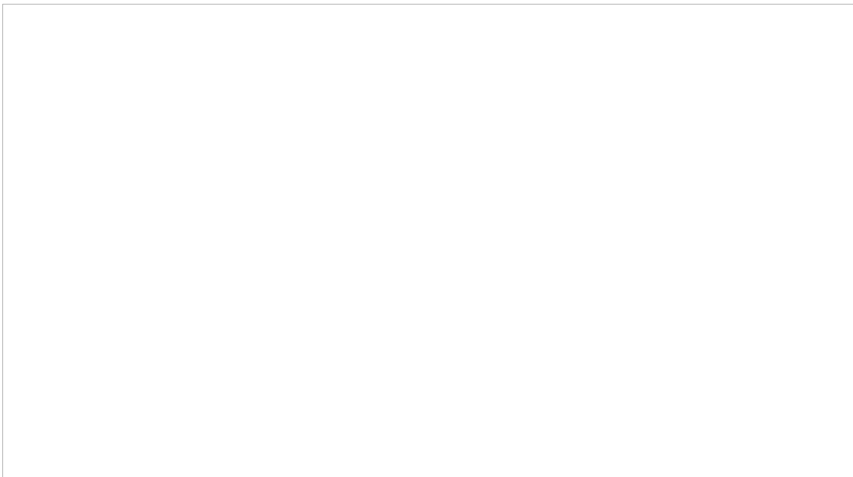
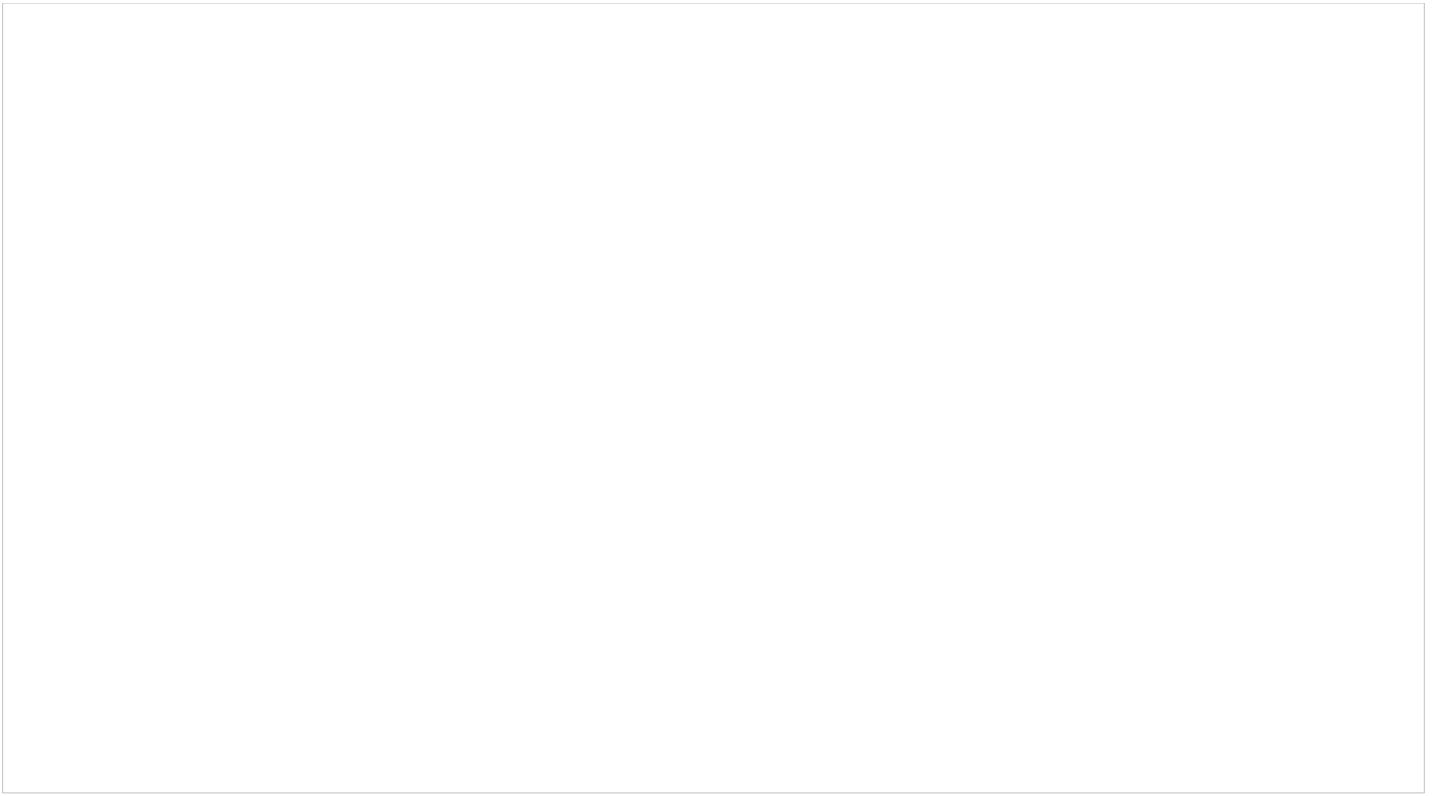
The Italo-Cadillac was designed by none other than Dr. Aldo Gucci, one of three sons of founder Guccio Gucci. When interviewed by the Palm Beach Post in September 1978 – just days before the official presentation at the Fontainebleau Hotel in Miami – he remarked how proud he was to be working with Cadillac. "I have strong feelings for this car, because it is fundamentally different from anything I've designed in my life," the designer said over a glass of champagne in the driveway of his estate in Palm Beach. "This Cadillac is another stone in the necklace of our international success." Because an American car was chosen in place of an Italian for the project, Gucci cemented his ties with the U.S., which he regarded as his second home.

The individualisation of the Gucci model was carried out not directly by Cadillac, but by a Miami-based company – with worldwide sales taking place exclusively through a distributor in Florida. A base price of \$19,900 meant the Gucci Seville cost over \$7,000 more than the standard model; a significant difference, though Cadillac's more brand-conscious customers seemed unperturbed. The sweetener came in the form of a complete, colour-coordinated Gucci luggage set – which would have been perfect for Sam Rothstein and on-screen wife Ginger to transport their abundant cash resources. But given the explosive fate Scorsese gave Rothstein and his chosen chariot, maybe his choice of Eldorado might have been for the best?

Three decades on, collaborations between carmakers and design houses have become more common. Gucci now teams up with Fiat to create an exclusive edition of the quirky 500, while Fendi cooperates with fellow Italian brand Maserati to produce the Fendi edition GranCabrio. In both examples, design parallels can be seen with the original 'Big Daddy' of designer cars.

Photos: GM

### Gallery



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