

CLASSIC DRIVER

[Ferrari FF: Shooting in style](#)

Lead

The Ferrari FF could be perceived as the Englishman among the Italian sports cars – practical and bold, yet also stylish. But does its shooting brake format make it a suitable steed for a hunt? We hand the keys to probably the most quintessentially British non-pat, huntsman Conrad Hasselbach.

We've already put Maranello's first four-wheel-drive four-seater to the test in the [Dolomite mountains in summer](#), and (alongside its namesake and spiritual progenitor, the Jensen FF) the [snow-covered heights of the Engadine](#). Driving dynamics from the 660HP beast were a revelation (as you would expect from anything wearing the Prancing Horse badge), but never before had a Ferrari's performance been so accessible. A 3.7-second sprint to 62mph and a 20mph+ v-max is impressive in itself – but it can also cope with rain, snow and ice. What about the real-world character of the Italian GT, however, a car which seems closer in principle to the British shooting brake conversions of yesteryear, than any of the FF's contemporaries? And, more to the point, can we justify arriving at a boar hunt in a brazen, bright red Ferrari?





“Well, the colour isn’t ideal,” says Conrad Hasselbach, a haberdasher from Hamburg who is also a passionate hunter, and probably the most respected British style guru south of the Channel. “Personally, to go hunting I’d rather choose a more muted, organic tone that occurs innately in nature. An orange maple, for instance, would conceal itself in a deciduous autumn forest. Even a dull, olive-green khaki would feel appropriate in this setting; it’d be nicely complemented by these cognac-coloured leather seats that already have patina. Driving through the Highlands, it almost feels awkward to travel in such a brightly coloured Ferrari – not to mention the fact that every sow within ten miles has no trouble spotting you.”





But electing to take the sleek supercar in place of a comparatively clumsy off-roader is an easy decision for Hasselbach. He believes that a traditionally built two-door estate is still relevant today: "If you drive a shooting brake, you demonstrate that you have taste, yet are not afraid to put your car to work and get it dirty. The FF is comfortable in a London mews setting, but there are many supercars that can fulfil that role – this is the only one of them that you could load up with equipment and go off in search of game," he says. Convenience, rather than cabaret. In the past, this approach was only achieved through costly bespoke modifications; it's now available direct from the showroom. With the rear seats folded, the FF's cargo volume expands to an astonishing 800 litres. That's more than enough to swallow Hasselbach's hunt gear: firepower, cases of ammunition, rifle or shotgun holster, game bag for clothing and equipment, boot bag, and a dark green or plaid tweed hunting suit – oh, and since there's still room, a picnic.



The car is laden; our huntsman must now pilot his shooting brake to the start. For high-performance sports

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cars, ground clearance is a problem – whether they’re of Italian or English origin. “The question is,” laughs Hasselbach, “will it fall to its knees at the foot of the first molehill we encounter?” His question is soon answered by the FF’s four-wheel-drive system, a pre-requisite in this terrain. And if it seems useful now, imagine its worth in the darker months; any owner would be congratulating himself even before he swapped tarmac for trail. Then for the next conundrum: what to do with the forest-dwellers once they’ve fallen before the gun? “With fallow, roe and wild boar, as a rule the hunter keeps only the head as a trophy, stored in a plastic tub. In this case, a matching carbonfibre tub would be quite fitting! The antlers could be fastened to a ski rack – it’s so versatile.”



Instead of female company, Hasselbach recommends a loyal Hanover Hound – who should happily install himself in the spacious unoccupied footwell, and remain oblivious to the ancillary passenger speedometer which usually strikes fear into humans. On a serious note, though, hunting is much more about skulking and observing. Experienced hunters will know there’s a time and a place for ‘dynamic’ driving opportunities – and this isn’t it. To provoke the V12 into a wailing scream that reverberates across the estate would be uncivilised.

So, is the Ferrari FF the perfect sports car for a hunting adventure? “I have to admit that the Ferrari embodies some very English qualities; it’s very capable, yet also understated. The car can actually be *used* – and not merely to transport a case of Scotch. Perhaps one or two additions would make it the ideal hunting stallion: reclining seats, and a heater to enable one to spend the night in it. And what about hunter and dog on a morning ambush in a matte green Ferrari? That paints a wonderful picture”. We hope the personalisation department in Maranello has made diligent notes.

Photos: Jan Baedeker
Production: J. Philip Rathgen

Gallery

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