

CLASSIC DRIVER

Ferrari 166 Inter Coupé by Vignale

Lead

Having won the first post-War Le Mans 24 Hours the previous year, in 1950 Ferrari was just finding its feet as a manufacturer...

It had only built around 100 cars, some pure racing cars and others, such as this elegant coupe by Vignale, real 'dual-purpose' machines, as at home in the centre of Paris or Rome as on the Mille Miglia.

The classic *barchetta* styling of the type 166 that had won at Le Mans and the Mille Miglia was by Carrozzeria Touring. Touring also produced a *berlinetta*, another competition car intended for privateers such as the Marzotto brothers, rich sportsmen looking for an off-the-shelf winning car.

These three-Weber-carburettor cars, built for racing, carried the Mille Miglia ('MM') suffix.

For no less discerning clients wanting a fast sporting car mainly for the road, in 1948 Ferrari introduced a model known as the 'Inter'.





Most often equipped with a single 32DCF Weber, the Inter's 1,995cc V12 produced 110bhp and was mated to a 5-speed gearbox and live rear axle, the powertrain set in a slightly lengthened chassis (wheelbase was now 2,420mm vs. 2,250mm for the 166 MM) designed for better interior comfort with a little usable luggage space.

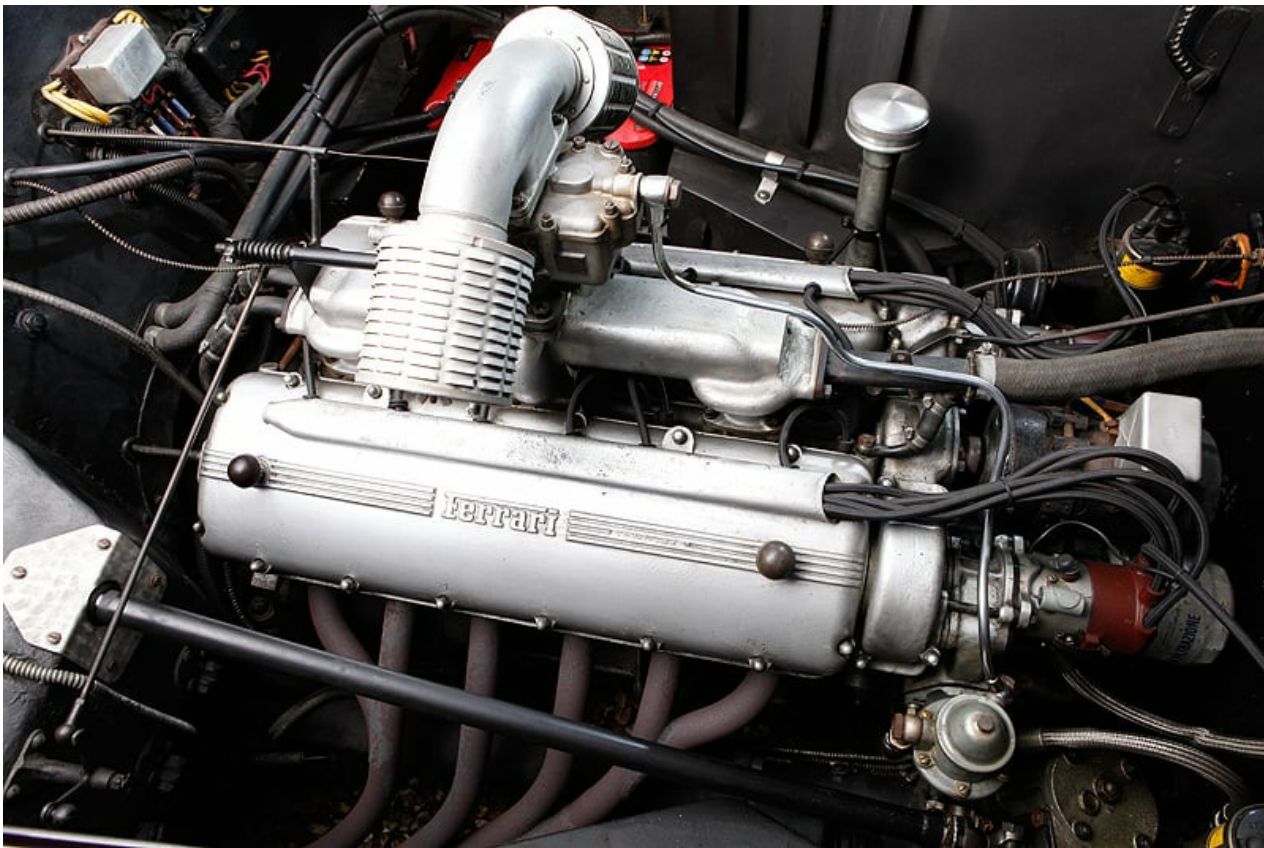
Coachwork from a variety of Italian *carrozzerie* was available, and after initial efforts by Touring, Stabilimenti Farina and Zagato, Alfredo Vignale's young designer Giovanni Michelotti was entrusted with styling a 166 Inter.





It was to be a successful relationship for Vignale and Ferrari, as not only did Michelotti develop and build upon the marque's famous 'egg-crate' grille by widening it and recessing it into the bodywork, through his designs he helped the coachbuilder become a prolific supplier of bodies to Ferrari from 1950 until the late-50s. Although not all were stylistically successful, the simple lines of early cars such as this coupé were to look 'modern' for decades to come.





This particular 166 Inter, available from Classic Driver dealer Talacrest 2000 AD Ltd, is believed to be the 37th production Ferrari built. Like all Ferraris of the period it can be raced (it has period competition history) or shown on many a concours lawn worldwide. It can also be driven two-up on touring events, with the thought of a 5-star hotel overnight stop an extra bonus after driving hour after hour to the magical sound of Ing. Colombo's classic Ferrari V12.

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Photos: Talacrest 2000 AD Ltd

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