

CLASSIC DRIVER

Top Five: Our favourite supercars of the 70s



The 1970s weren't all about flares and sideburns; this was also the era when supercars went from flowing curves to straight lines, and the world was treated to a proliferation of wedge-shaped wonders. We've picked five examples of 1970s metal that might not immediately jump to mind, but which scored a particular hit in the *Classic Driver* office.

Aston Martin DBSV8





Maybe you think that it's slightly undignified to label a four-seat Aston Martin a 'supercar'? We beg to differ. There's no denying that with a 0-60mph time of 5.9 seconds and a maximum speed just nudging over the 160mph mark, the first series of fuel-injected eight-cylinder DBSs were mightily impressive machines.

More widely accepted 'supercardom' came with the introduction of the 170mph, 400+bhp V8 Vantage in 1977. But what we like about a well set up, injected DBSV8 is that it's not only very fast, it also has the purity of the original chrome grille and four headlamps.

This car was originally supplied in August 1972 to an Italian customer living in London. A RHD example, it's finished in a very period colour scheme of Tudor Green with Mustard hide.

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Ferrari 512 BB



Ferrari had been making flat-12, mid-engined racing cars since the early 1960s. In the early 1970s – post Porsche-917 – it dominated sportscar racing with the 312PB, and in F1 had the powerful 312B which was to develop into a World Championship-winning car – as a 312T – in 1975, 1977 and 1979.

So it made sense from a marketing, as well as an engineering perspective, to install a big flat-12 in the Maranello company's first-ever mid-engined supercar, the 365 GT4 Berlinetta Boxer introduced at the 1971 Turin Show. The famous '365' engine capacity was superseded in 1976 by the '512', a bigger engine with more torque and a dry sump system. The 512 BB also had a front spoiler, wider rear wheels and tyres, and suspension revisions designed to make it handle better at the high (176mph) speeds for which it was designed.

The all-red example you see here, chassis 19677, is from 1977 and is understood to be the first-ever production 512 BB.

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Lamborghini Jarama GTS



While Miura production was nearing its final stages, a replacement for the Islero was urgently needed as a result of impending stringent American safety and emissions regulations. The quirky Espada formed the basis of the rapidly launched new model, designed by Bertone's Marcello Gandini and named 'Jarama'.

Performance-wise, the Jarama was in similar territory to the outgoing, lighter Islero: 162mph, so Lamborghini said, from the 350bhp, 3,929cc DOHC V12.

This 1974 GTS, an uprated version of the regular GT with a V12 now producing over 360bhp, is for sale in Switzerland.

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Maserati Khamsin





We don't think this wildly bizarre creation that emerged during Citroën's short-lived ownership of Maserati gets anything like the attention it deserves. Never mind its radically different styling (just look at that transparent tail!) and hot-blooded performance, what makes the Khamsin a shoo-in when it comes to our personal pick of the 70s is the other-worldly driving experience.

We describe what it's like to get behind the wheel of a car that has French hydraulics operating the brakes, clutch and steering, plus a 320bhp Italian V8 to eat up the Tarmac. It's like nothing else on Earth.

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Porsche 911 Turbo 3.3





There are some combinations that are simply timeless. Take, for example, the dark green paintwork and tobacco-coloured leather interior worn by this archetypal sports car of the late 70s, a Porsche 911 Turbo.

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