

## Ferrari 250 GT Zagato Sanction II: The real deal?

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Simon de Burton

"While 'originals' will always be deemed best, it's difficult to see what's not to like about a 'Sanction II' car," says Simon de Burton, as he ponders the pros and cons of such models as this stunning 1957 Ferrari 250 GT long wheelbase TDF, later fitted with a stunning, Zagato-sanctioned body...

The old car market is steeped in jargon, and I don't mean of the technical kind. I mean the sort of pompous mumbo jumbo that is so often used to make a car sound a bit more upmarket, or to make a generally undesirable model seem rare. Rust-ravaged death traps can become 'potentially rewarding restoration projects'; non-runners often require no more than 'gentle recommissioning'; sports cars dulled by auto boxes are described as 'benefiting from the rare option of automatic transmission,' while traders who are really just trying to turn over another bit of stock like to say they are 'privileged to be able to offer... etc. etc'.

But nowhere have the cunning linguists of the classic motor trade worked harder on their vocabulary than in the field of copies. Copy? That really is a four-letter word, so why use it when there are so many alternatives which are far longer, better sounding and more sophisticated? 'Evocation' and 'recreation' are especially popular, and I do like a 'convincing homage' (especially when spoken with an English accent).

The best term of all, however, has to be 'Sanction II', which most of us associate with the four left-over Aston Martin DB4 chassis that, in 1991, were allowed to become Zagato-bodied beauties following a decision by Aston's joint chairmen of the time, Victor Gauntlett and Peter Livanos, to respond to demands to revive the iconic Zagato of the early 1960s.

Just 19 originals were built and today they are each worth north of £5 million – whereas one of the 'Sanction IIs' was sold at Bonhams last year for 'just' £1.2m.

Apart from the fact that 'originals' will always be deemed to be best, it's difficult to see what's not to like about a Sanction II car of any description. As demonstrated, they're less expensive, they look virtually identical to their forebears and (because they're 'sanctioned') they are produced with the blessing and co-operation of the original manufacturer. But best of all, perhaps, modern know-how means – dare we say it? – that they might even be rather better built.

Paradoxically, true 'sanction' cars are invariably rarer than the ones they replicate – not least because it takes a considerable amount of effort and commitment to knock up 'just one more' like the ones they did earlier.

One such rarity is being offered by DK Engineering in the form of a truly stunning, 1957 Ferrari 250 GT long wheelbase TDF which began life with a Boano steel body before, during the 1990s, being fitted with one of two

Zagato-sanctioned 'double-bubble' bodies that mirrored the three others made in period.

Underneath, the sanction car is mechanically and structurally identical – but it is, of course, somewhat less valuable than the USD 10 million originals would be, if ever they came up for sale.

We're not saying it's cheap, mind – just 'more affordable', 'accessible' and with 'investment potential'.

*Photos: DK Engineering*

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