

CLASSIC DRIVER

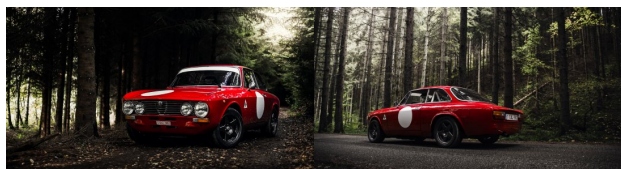
Little Red Riding Hood: Alfa Romeo Junior in the woods

Lead

Flush with passion rather than cash, 21-year-old Belgian student Wouter Martinot proves that you don't need seven (or even five) figures in the bank to be a 'classic driver'. He recently took his beloved Alfa Romeo GT 1300 Junior to the forests of La Roche-en-Ardenne, not far from Spa-Francorchamps...

With no need for a reliable daily driver, and a passion for classic cars instilled in him by his father early on, a 19-year-old Wouter chose to defy the usual tendencies of his generation. Rather than buy a cheap used hatchback for insurance and other reasons of economy, he instead opted to spend his limited budget on a car almost twice his own age – a 1975 Alfa Romeo GT 1300 Junior – and embarked on a project with the sole intention of creating "a classic racing car for the road".

All the better to see you with



As any Alfa enthusiast will have spotted, the Junior has the appearance of its more powerful sibling, the 2000 GTV. "It's actually original; during this era, Alfa sometimes took the leftover stock parts from other models such as the GTV, and fitted them to the later Juniors," says Wouter. "Any modifications I've made beyond that are completely reversible." That should satisfy the purists, then. Wouter admits that he's the first to have reservations about the somewhat out-of-place aftermarket wheels, but explains: "I'd love to fit GTA-style wheels, but at the moment my budget doesn't stretch that far. For the time being, I use these as they are the right fitment and very lightweight, which fits the road-racer theme of the car."

While the additions to the to-do list might pour in at a faster rate than they're crossed off, Wouter still makes time to enjoy the car between his studies. He recently took the Junior deep into the forests of La Roche-en-Ardenne – approximately 50km from the Spa-Francorchamps circuit – for a combined shakedown and photoshoot. "For me, the winding forest roads provide not only a beautiful backdrop for photos, but also the opportunity to enjoy the car in its natural environment. With around 90bhp, it's not going to win any traffic-light duels, but it's wonderful on the twisties. Your focus is concentrated on maintaining momentum, with the four-cylinder roar filling the sparse cabin and the Jaeger instruments feeling like they're dancing to your heartbeat."

A noisy new addition to the family



Though Wouter says his father's influence was a major factor in his purchase, he admits that it hasn't brought them any closer together: "The Alfas of this era are the quintessential definition of a driver's car, and my father and I are both 'drivers'. Because neither of us want to be only a passenger in the Junior, it means we can't go on road trips together!"

Pictures: [Ben Kwanten Photography](#)

Gallery

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