

CLASSIC DRIVER

Ferrari 308 GTB: The black swan of Paris

Lead

Ever since Claude Lelouch's classic short film 'C'était un rendez-vous', it has been the dream of every enthusiast to drive a Ferrari through the streets of Paris. Classic Driver had the opportunity to do just that, with a beautiful black 308 GTB...

It was capable of 158mph, a higher top speed than that of the Porsche 911 Turbo

Paris in the autumn of 1975: at the motor show, Ferrari had just shown off its new eight-cylinder model for the first time. Designed as a supplement to its 2+2-seated (and much maligned) sister, the boxy [308 GT4](#) Dino, the Gran Turismo Berlinetta's aim was to attract new buyers. Pininfarina designer Leonardo Fioravanti was responsible for the [GTB](#), the same man who penned the original Dino and the stunning Daytona. Little did he know that the wedged shark shape, the flip-up headlights and the quad, round taillights were to shape the look of most Ferrari sports cars for the next two decades. The new GTB boasted a three-litre V8, generating 227HP (at 6,400rpm) and capable of 158mph, a higher top speed than that of the 1975 Porsche 911 Turbo.

Procession along the Seine



And the new model was a resounding success – more than 12,000 cars were built in ten years of production. With a little help from 'Magnum PI', the 308's appeal stretched around the world. But while the open GTS is the ideal choice for cruising in Hawaii, on this gloomy day in Paris we're quite happy to hear the rain pitter-pattering on the roof above us. This wonderful 1979 GTB is currently for sale at [De Widehem Automobiles](#). It's presented in a timeless colour combination: black paintwork with beige leather and French yellow headlights; we just can't resist taking the car for a short parade along the Seine.

Fast, easy, unpretentious



In the Seventies, the GTB left the Italian competition from Lamborghini, Maserati and De Tomaso behind. Its sturdy body (either glassfibre or steel), predictable handling and comfortable seats made it one of the first truly all-round Ferraris. Even today, the 308 is surprisingly agile, battling the taxis, vans and scooters with ease.

Commuting capability



This horse isn't just for weekends, either – the GTB would take the daily commute to the office in its stride. And if you get up extra early, you could have your very own 'Rendezvous' moment on the empty city streets.

Gallery

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