

CLASSIC DRIVER

Volvo P1800 shooting brake: Swedish Britpop

Lead

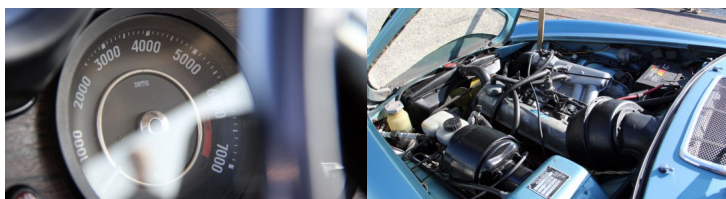
The fact that Swedish bands with a British sound have enjoyed worldwide success isn't news to anyone. But long before the pop phenomenon, a clever Swede was inspired by the excellence of British automotive styling – and redesigned the Volvo P1800 coupé as a shooting brake...

Off-the-cuff design hit



Volvos have always been a little different, but 'Snow White's Coffin' (as the P1800 ES was cruelly nicknamed, due to its all-glass rear hatch) had an entirely unique character. As it happens, the design process for the P1800 ES was rather off the cuff. The P1800 coupé designed by Pelle Petterson in 1957 had been on the market (with occasional updates) since 1961, hence in the mid-1960s, Volvo Director Gunnar Engellau decided the model needed refreshing. Expensive modernisation was not an option, but Jan Wilsgaard, former chief designer at Volvo, was inspired by the Radford-designed Aston Martin Shooting Brakes to create a flat rear combined with a continuous side window to give the 2+2-seater a more dynamic stance. A positive outcome was not only the increased luggage room, but the fact that the rear passengers also had more space. Just over 8,000 examples of the estate were built in its production years, 1971-73.

The Saint's company car



European demand remained manageable, so today's collector vehicles come mostly from the U.S. The extraordinary Swede is not one of the "generally sought classics", explains Marcel Schonewille, salesman at RD Classics in Emmerich, but the sporty estate with its durable four-cylinder (124HP) engine, its ride quality and solid stability (available for 16,000-30,000 euros, depending on condition), has many qualities other than simply good design. "The coupé is currently in more demand than the shooting brake," says Rob Broekmans of E & R Classics in the Netherlands. Perhaps this is due to the coupé's TV career, as the P1800 was Roger Moore's official car when playing Simon Templar in 118 episodes of 'The Saint', on air from 1962 to 1969.



The car shown here is a [1972 Volvo P1800 ES](#) from California that is being put under the hammer on 22 March by Avus Auctions in Hamburg. Estimate: 24,000 to 27,000 euros.

Photos: Jan Richter

Gallery

Related auctions:

Avus Auctions - Cars at the Sea Hamburg 22 March 2014

Source URL: <https://www.classicdriver.com/en/article/cars/volvo-p1800-shooting-brake-swedish-britpop>

© Classic Driver. All rights reserved.