

CLASSIC DRIVER

Ferrari Testarossa Koenig Competition: King of the neighbourhood

Lead

Those who really wanted to stand out in the Eighties (no mean feat, we'll admit), took their Ferrari straight to Willy Koenig's tuning studio, for a steroidal injection of unashamed muscle. Love them or loathe them, the market is beginning to covet these rare machines once more...

Willy Koenig was the undisputed emperor of the [wild Eighties tuning scene](#).

Every generation gets the supercar it deserves and, in that regard, the [Eighties spoke for itself](#). Even the Germans, today so concerned with keeping well within the boundaries of taste, wanted something a little more exciting. Anything went: if it had more wings than an aircraft (and more horsepower, too), it was worthy. Enter Willy Koenig, the undisputed emperor of the [wild Eighties tuning scene](#). As early as 1961, Koenig was forging an impressive career in motorsport. In the subsequent years, he would drive [Ferrari 275 GTBs](#), the legendary [Ford GT40](#), [BMW M1s](#) and the [Porsche 962](#). But his joy didn't end on the track – his real dream was to develop the ultimate road-going sports car.

Poster-car looks and up to 1,000HP



Design, aerodynamics, equipment, engine and suspension – nothing was safe from Koenig's discerning eyes. It all began in 1974 with the [Ferrari 365 GT4 BB](#), followed by a raft of countless other [Ferraris](#), as well as [Mercedes-Benzes](#), [Porsches](#), [Lamborghinis](#) and [Jaguars](#). The recipe was simple: install a ridiculously powerful turbocharged engine, widen considerably and add huge spoilers and deep ventilation tunnels. The most successful and best-known Koenig Special was the Koenig Competition, based on the iconic [Ferrari Testarossa](#). Its testosterone-fuelled, [F40](#)-esque design was real poster-car stuff and, if requested by the customer, its twin-turbo V12 could produce up to 1,000HP. Its list price was appropriately outlandish: one million Deutsche Marks.

Gone were the Testarossa's of-the-era gills (though they were later used as distinguishing features in Koenig's Mercedes-Benz SEC and Porsche 928), but in came stance and muscle. Those cruising the red-light districts of Frankfurt and Hamburg in a Koenig Competition would rightfully feel like the kings of the neighbourhood. In the Nineties, however, the tuning craze slowly faded and in-house manufacturers at BMW M and Mercedes-AMG came to dominate the market. The Koenig Specials disappeared, often without trace.

A certified classic?



As the Eighties generation grows older and wealthier, it was perhaps inevitable that the brutal, tuned monsters would be rediscovered by serious collectors. A genuine and well-preserved Ruf Porsche, Alpina BMW or Koenig Ferrari isn't easy to find and hence prices are rising, rapidly. At Artcurial's [Le Mans Classic sale on 5 July 2014](#), a 1987 Ferrari Testarossa Koenig Competition Evolution II will go under the gavel. One of just 12 built and with a mere 46,000km on the clock, the car is estimated to fetch between 80,000 and 120,000 euros (not that different from a bog-standard Testarossa). Barmy? Regardless, we can't wait to see what it brings.

Gallery

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