

CLASSIC DRIVER

[Bonhams just sold a Ferrari 250 GTO for \\$38.115m – a new World Record](#)

Lead

As was widely predicted, a Ferrari 250 GTO – offered by Bonhams at its Quail Lodge Sale in Monterey – has become the most expensive car ever to be sold at auction, fetching a princely \$38.115m (including premium)...

While much higher values had been mooted in anticipation of the headline-grabbing sale, ultimately the car's less-than-perfect history saw the gavel drop at USD 34.650m, following a tense and lengthy bidding war overseen by Bonhams' head auctioneer Robert Brooks.

One owner for 49 years

Offered as part of the [Maranello Rosso Collection](#), 3851GT was sold new to Jo Schlesser who, together with Henri Oreiller, finished second overall in the 1962 Tour de France Automobile. But Oreiller, a former Olympic gold-medal-winning skier, was tragically killed next time out at Monthéry and the heavily damaged car was sent back to the factory for a complete rebuild.

After short and successful spells with Italian racers Paulo Colombo and Ernesto Prinoth, the car was sold to Fabrizio Violati in 1965, who would remain the sole custodian until his death in 2010 (making 3851GT the longest single-family-ownership 250 GTO in existence). Violati was said to care more about the car's performance than its value. For that we commend him – we wonder if the same could be said of its new owner?

Despite eclipsing the previous world record held by the [ex-Fangio Mercedes-Benz W196](#), which was sold (also by Bonhams) for circa \$30m in 2013, the sale did not surpass the rumoured \$52m private exchange of 250 GTO chassis 5111GT (a Tour de France winner) last year.

Could this be the pin to finally burst the ever-growing [Ferrari](#) bubble, or merely another new benchmark for auction houses to pursue, further driving demand and prices for most classic Ferraris? Regardless, whoever sealed the winning bid has joined an [elite club](#) of people lucky enough to say they own one of, if not *the* most special automobile ever built.

Photos: © Drew Phillips for Classic Driver / Bonhams

Gallery

