


# CLASSIC DRIVER



## 1970 Land Rover Range Rover

Lot sold	<b>USD 0</b> GBP 0 (listed)	Drive	LHD
Year of manufacture	1970	Condition	Used
Lot number	134	Location	
		Exterior colour	Other
		Car type	Other

### Description

There may be newer-looking Range Rovers around these days but that isn't to say that the original first generation version, with its familiar boxy shape, doesn't still have its supporters. In fact, it's positively flying on the used market. The original Spen King designed Range Rover was one of the British Motor Industry's proudest success stories. When it went out of production at the end of 1996, it still looked as fresh and forward thinking as it did back in 1970 when one was chosen for an exhibit in the Louvre as an example of modern sculpture.

The car was renamed the Range Rover Classic when the Mk.II model was introduced in the autumn of 1994, but demand continued even then. This was a car that had real international appeal selling in markets as diverse as Japan and the USA, Canada and Australia with demand often exceeding supply. Well over 300,000 Range Rovers had rolled off the production line by the time this legendary model was laid to rest; the final one being proudly displayed as part of the British Motor Industry Heritage Trust collection at Gaydon in Warwickshire.

We understand there to be 28 pre-production chassis' for the launch of the Range Rover with the order for the first 6 vehicles made on 26th September 1969. This batch of six were to be issued with Croydon registration numbers (YVB \*\*\*H) as these were intended to disguise development vehicles when they went out onto the road. It was deemed that a Solihull registration would have made it been obvious they were Land Rover products so even a "VELAR" name badge was added to further

disguise their identity. The car offered here today is Range Rover Chassis Number #001, the first Range Rover to go onto the production line. Built from 24th November 1969 to 17th December 1969 it was first registered on 2nd January 1970 - some 5½ months before the June 17th launch date.

It is agreed that Michael Forlong - The producer of the two Range Rover promotion films "A car for all reasons" and "Sahara South" was to become the first private owner of "No 1" on 8th April 1971. Before taking possession, the car was re-sprayed into the production colour of Bahama Gold, and the textured dash was fitted. A private registration number WGA 71 was allocated to #001 in November 1975 when the vehicle passed to Mr. W.G Ansell of Belvedere, SE London. Before disposing of the Range Rover in 1979 to the next owner (a farmer in Kent) the WGA 71 number was replaced with an age related number EGU 16H, and so the identity of this important icon was inadvertently disguised for a further 6 years.

During this time a similar Range Rover was mocked up with the registration 'YVB 151H' by enthusiasts in a bid to try and trace #001, unaware of course that at the time the original registration number had of course been 'lost' and that it was also no longer in its original Olive Green. Not until a chance phone call to our vendor in the early 1990's, himself a known enthusiast of the marque, did the road to the rediscovery of Range Rover #001 begin. What followed was a professional six year ground up, every last nut and bolt restoration both bodily and mechanically which has been executed to an exceptional and unwavering standard. There is a photographic record of this restoration, which includes photos of some parts date stamped as early as April 1969.

Unusually, the vehicle retains all its "matching numbers" components; chassis, engine, gearbox, and axles, as well as the original aluminium bonnet, and the original body shell. In 1997 the DVLA after some considerable cajoling by our vendor reissued #001 with its original registration number 'YVB 151H' due to the significant historic interest of the vehicle and the importance and relevance of the 'YVB' registration number. Sold with a warranted mileage of 86,950miles and fresh MOT we are informed by our vendor that his car has ventured out on a limited number of occasions over the years for various photographic assignments and promotional shoots and is well-known in many publications and historical reference books for the marque.

Having owned this iconic motor car for nearly a quarter of a century the vendor has decided it is time to pass the responsibility of owning YVB 151H to a new custodian. The sympathetic and meticulous restoration has proudly stood the test of time making #001 - with what we strongly believe is an attractive guide price - a hugely significant motor car worthy of serious consideration.

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