

# CLASSIC DRIVER

## 1963 Aston Martin DB4GT

- Lot sold  
USD 486 505 - 608 132  
GBP 400 000 - 500 000 (listed)  
**Year of manufacture** 1963
- **Chassis number** DB4/1208/R
- **Number of seats** 2
- **Drivetrain** 2wd
- **Lot number** 17
- **Drive** LHD
- **Condition** Used
- **Location** 
- **Fuel type** Petrol
- **Exterior colour** Other
- **Engine number** 370/1213/SS
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### Description

1963 Aston Martin 4.7-Litre DB4 Vantage Series V to DB4 GT Specification

Registration no. VGR 420

Chassis no. DB4/1208/R

Engine no. 370/1213/SS

The competition potential of Aston Martin's new DB4 had been recognised from the outset, and the factory lost no time in developing a lightweight version suitable for racing, the resulting DB4 GT debuting at the 1959 London Motor Show. The model had already been proven in competition earlier that year when the prototype ('DP/199') driven by Stirling Moss won its first race at Silverstone. Extensive modifications to the standard car took 5" (127mm) out of the wheelbase, and replaced the rear seats with a luggage platform on all but a small number of cars. Together with lighter, 18-gauge bodywork, these changes reduced the car's weight by around 200lb (91kg).

The GT used a tuned engine which, equipped with a twin-plug cylinder head and triple Weber 45DCOE carburettors, produced a claimed 302bhp at 6,000rpm, a useful increase over the standard car's claimed 240bhp. Maximum speed, of course, depended on overall gearing, but 153mph was achieved during testing with a 0-60mph time of 6.1 seconds recorded. The DB4 was also one of the first cars to go from standstill to 100mph and then brake to a dead stop on under 20 seconds, a tribute, in part, to its up-rated Girling brakes as used on Aston Martin's competition sports racers of the era.

Viewed from the front, the GT was readily distinguishable by its faired-in headlamps with Perspex covers, a feature later made standard on the DB5 and DB6. The rear screen and quarter windows were made of

Perspex on many examples; bumper over-riders were deleted and the wind-down windows were frame-less within the doors. Twin, quick-release, Monza competition fuel fillers were added atop the rear wings, leading to a large-capacity fuel tank mounted flat in the boot. GTs were fitted as standard with lightweight Borrani 42-spoke wire wheels with alloy rims and 3-ear 'knock-offs'. The interior was trimmed to full Aston Martin road car specification, with fine Connolly leather upholstery and deep-pile Wilton carpeting. The evocative instrument binnacle on the GT benefited from the addition of an oil temperature gauge to the standard array.

DB4 GTs offered a strong challenge to the prevailing Ferrari dominance in GT racing, examples entered by the works and John Ogier's Essex Racing Stable enjoying numerous victories. Driven by the likes of Roy Salvadori, Stirling Moss, Jim Clark and Innes Ireland, the DB4 GT earned its stripes every day on the racing circuit. In December 1959, at the Bahamas Speed Week, Stirling Moss won driving a standard customer DB4GT 'borrowed' back by the works following the demise of Moss's intended DBR2! The DB4 GT was indeed a true dual-purpose car, equally at ease on both the circuit and Grand Tour. Only 195 'Sanction 1' DB4 GTs were produced between 1959 and 1963 (including DB4 GT Zagato).

This stunning re-creation of one of Aston Martin's most iconic models started life as a standard DB4 Series V Vantage. The current vendor purchased 'VGR 420' from R S Williams Ltd on 27th March 2003 with the intention of creating a really fast DB4, but soon decided to recreate a DB4 GT. The aim, which the vendor feels was achieved, was to completely rebuild and restore the DB4 to full GT specification, the end result being indistinguishable from any of the 75 cars originally produced.

The base DB4, which is a matching numbers Series V Vantage, was complete at the start of this process. It was completely stripped down and the body removed by Spray Tec Restorations. After the chassis had been stripped back to bare metal, it was sent to renowned marque specialists Bodylines Specialist Panel Beaters, who then shortened its wheelbase and constructed - by hand - a new body made out of thinner gauge aluminium, with the distinguishing features of the GT being incorporated during the build. These included the deletion of the rear seating and relocating the fuel tank to the luggage compartment.

Rebuilt by R S Williams Ltd to 4.7-litre twin-plug GT specification, the engine produces in excess of 410bhp in road-useable form. This engine rebuild was carried out at great expense and would, we are advised, cost in excess of £80,000 if undertaken today. The Aston was also equipped with a comprehensive 'ride and handling' package, an up-rated braking system, and new Borrani alloy wheels of the correct style for the GT, which were refurbished recently by the Borrani factory. Every detail of this motor car is said to be correct, apart from the more comfortable seating.

This painstaking project was completed in July 2007 and then sold to Mr Adrian Gosden, being delivered to him on 31st October of that year. During the last seven years with Mr Gosden the DB4 has performed faultlessly. It has been driven to the Le Mans Classic on two occasions and on its first outing won 'Best of Show' at an informal concours, the prize being awarded by Aston Martin CEO David Richards.

'VGR 420' has recently visited marque specialists Spray Tec for a full inspection and is now offered for sale in faultless condition, presented in Aston Martin Black Pearl with Soft Tan hide seating and beige carpeting. The accompanying history file contains the invoices from Bodylines, Spray Tec Restorations and R S Williams Ltd relating to its comprehensive restoration and rebuild; a dynamometer printout for the engine; and a CD-ROM of images, including a selection taken at this year's 'Salon Privé' event. The car also comes with a current MoT certificate, V5C registration document and a copy of its factory build sheet. With all the surviving genuine DB4GTs either in museums or private collections, this stunning re-creation represents a wonderful opportunity to acquire a car built in the spirit of the original but at a fraction of the cost.

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