

# CLASSIC DRIVER

## What not to miss at the 2016 Concorso d'Eleganza Villa d'Este

### Lead

For us, the Concorso d'Eleganza held on the grounds of the Grand Hotel Villa d'Este is the absolute highlight of the automotive year. Here's what you can expect to see on the shores of Lake Como this weekend...



The champagne's been chilled, the gravel swept and the waiters' brilliant white uniforms pressed – the Grand Hotel Villa d'Este is ready for the arrival of the most beautiful classic cars from around the world, together with their owners who will all vie for the venerable Coppa d'Oro trophy in the concours competition. The capricious weather gods always seem to favour the event, too, making the stroll along the shore between million-dollar classics and sparkling Riva yachts all the more special. Add in the dulcet tones of jazz from a nearby band and a glass of Aperol in hand, and the experience is arguably among the finest on the planet.

### Coveted trophies





The Concorso d'Eleganza is not only the ultimate incarnation of the modern-day Italian *Dolce Vita*, and a fantastic journey through time. The trophies up for grabs at the beauty contest – which also covets a car's originality and unusual history – are among the most prestigious in the classic car world. It will be a particularly tough choice for the jury, which this year includes Classic Driver veteran J. Philip Rathgen once again.

## Back to the future



The theme for this year's Concorso d'Eleganza is 'Back to the future – the journey continues', an unashamed reference to BMW, which this year celebrates its centenary. The Bavarian company has played a big part in the revival of the traditional beauty contest, and its presence at the event is always strongly felt. The selection committee – which is currently still sworn to secrecy – has this year divided entries into eight classes, rather than the six of previous years. New classes for this year include 'GT Man is back – The golden era of sportscar design, 1950-1975' and 'Driven by excess – Cars of the Studio 54 era, 1975-1986'. With a broader and more modern spread, we're intrigued to see whether the quality of the cars exhibited will remain as high. We'll even see the first rally car on the sacred gravel of Villa d'Este, in the 'Rally cars – Heroes of the special stages, 1955-1985'. A step too far, or a sign of the Concorso keeping up with the times? Let's wait and see... Elsewhere, the 'Daring to be different' category will show the most controversial and influential designs from the 1920s to the 1950s.

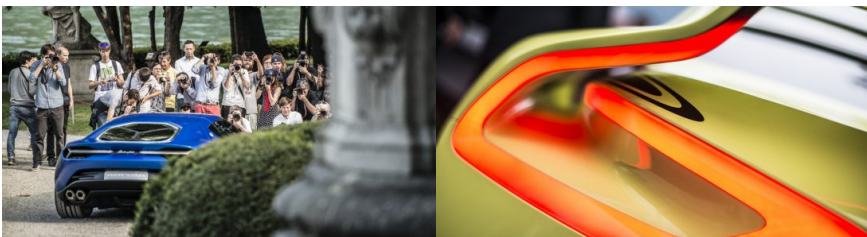
## The golden age of coachbuilding





Pre-War classics will, of course, also star on Lake Como this weekend. Between the dedicated classes, which include ‘Sur mesure et haute couture’, ‘pre-War decadence’ and ‘pre-War supercars’, you’ll be able to admire some of the most impressive cars built before the War by the major manufacturers and coachbuilders. Doing justice to the grandeur of the Grand Hotel Villa d’Este will be the ‘Cars of the Stars’ category, featuring vehicles that played important roles in films or that belonged the famous actors.

### Looking ahead



As ever, modern concept cars will star alongside great classics at Villa d’Este. On the occasion of its 100th birthday, BMW is poised to reveal at least one design study. Also confirmed to be in attendance is the Disco Volante Spyder by Carrozzeria Touring Superleggera – a car that seems as though it could have been made specifically for the twisting roads surrounding Lake Como. Finally, Aston Martin will reveal [its latest collaboration with Zagato](#) in all of its double-bubbled glory.

### Elegance on two wheels



Often overlooked, motorcycles have come to play an important role in the Concorso d'Eleganza since their introduction a few years ago. On Saturday, the mouth-watering selection of historic bikes will parade through the park of Villa d'Este, before embarking to the nearby Villa Erba for their own dedicated beauty contest. The spectrum ranges from pre-War machines to privateer racers and off-road motorcycles. There will also be a special exhibition dedicated to the BMW R 5, which celebrates its 80th anniversary this year.

*Photos: Rémi Dargegen for Classic Driver @ 2015*

**Gallery**











































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