


CLASSIC DRIVER

1959 Ferrari 250 GT

- Lot sold
USD 0
Year of manufacture 1959
- **Lot number** 036
- **Drive** LHD
- **Condition** Used
- **Location** 
- **Exterior colour** Other
- **Car type** Other
-

Description

PROVENANCE

Eric Don Pam, Monaco, Monte Carlo (acquired new in September 1959)
Sidney J. Simpson, Houston, Texas (acquired by 1974)
Hilary A. Raab Jr., Crown Point, Indiana (acquired from the above in 1976)
Current Owner (acquired from the above)

EXHIBITED

FCA National Meeting, St. Louis, Missouri, May 1976
FCA National Meeting, Watkins Glen, New York, June 1977
Meadow Brook Concours d'Elegance, August 1990 (Blue Ribbon)
The Inaugural Colorado Grand, 1989
Copperstate 1000, Phoenix, Arizona, April 1990
FCA National Meeting, Grand Rapids, Michigan, June 1992
Colorado Grand, September 1997
The Quail, A Motorsports Gathering, Carmel Valley, California, August 2007
FCA National Meeting, Elkhart Lake, Wisconsin, July-August 2009
Milwaukee Masterpiece Concours, August 2009 (Best Exterior)

LITERATURE

Hilary A. Raab Jr., Ferrari Serial Numbers Part I, chassis no. is listed
Ferrari Market Letter, vol. 6, no. 20, October 3, 1981, subject of feature article
Official Ferrari Calendar, 1996

THIS CAR

That the 40 Pinin Farina Cabriolets produced between 1956 and 1959 are referred to and grouped as a distinct "series" is somewhat misleading, as each of these spectacular cars is utterly unique in its combination of mechanical specifications, interior appointments, exterior details, and overall character.

Despite their differences, all 40 examples share the same basic 250 GT chassis and timeless style that have garnered the model a revered reputation with collectors.

All of the Series I Cabriolets were assembled by Pinin Farina in its custom shop, not just in the effort of maintaining a superior build quality, but also in the interest of accommodating the wide variety of requests specified by each car's original owner – generally top clients of Ferrari. In fact, the people who bought Series I Cabriolets new were often as glamorous as the cars they drove; the roster of original owners includes Peter Collins, Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, Porfirio Rubirosa, Count Giovanni Volpi, and Prince Mohammed Al Faisal.

When compared directly to the Scaglietti-bodied 250 GT LWB California Spider, an open Ferrari of the period that shares a similar design and chassis, it becomes clear that Pinin Farina's Cabriolet is the more refined and mature product. This extraordinary quality, style, and exclusivity came at a price; when new, the Cabriolet was not only the most expensive 250 model by a wide margin, it was also one of the world's most expensive automobiles. Factory literature indicates a list price of \$14,950 for a new Cabriolet, \$3,000 more than the California Spider and \$2,500 more than the "Tour de France" Berlinetta.

The Series I Cabriolet presented here, chassis 1475 GT, is the very last example built. As such, this is a virtually unique example in terms of its coachwork and mechanical specifications.

Given its late build, this body, numbered 19473, displays clear evidence of the transition from the ornate designs of the late 1950s to the clean, modern styling that characterized Pinin Farina coachwork in the early 1960s.

As with nearly all late-production Cabriolets, 1475 GT features full-width bumpers and its flanks are unadorned with vents, emphasizing the long, elegant lines of the front wings. Additionally, this Series I Cabriolet is one of only four examples built with the open headlamp treatment and one of only two that feature the tall vertical taillights that were later incorporated into Pinin Farina's 250 GT Coupe and Series II Cabriolet. As completed, 1475 GT was finished in a striking color scheme of Giallo Solare (Sun Yellow) with brown Connolly leather upholstery.

In addition to its refined coachwork, this Series I Cabriolet possesses mechanical specifications that differentiate it from other examples; it is one of a limited number of Pinin Farina Cabriolets (three known and possibly as many as 10) that were factory-equipped with a Lucas starter, generator, voltage regulator, coils, plug wires, and twin, rear-mounted distributors – the same as those used in contemporary Aston Martin sports racing cars. Additionally, 1475 GT is the only Series I Cabriolet that was constructed with a Lucas parallel wiper system, in lieu of the standard "clap hands" system.

This example also features an improved six-blade cooling fan and its radiator was equipped with a roll-up blind instead of the standard actuating louver system. While later 250 GTs had a more resolved system to raise and lower the radiator blind, in this car the actuator for the louvers was modified by drilling a hole in the pivot pin, thus allowing the cable to pass through and pull up the blind.

Completed on August 27, 1959, 1475 GT was first sold to Eric Don Pam, an American citizen living in Monaco, who took delivery at the Ferrari factory and had the car registered on Italian tourist license plates, "EE 30001."

In January 1963, presumably while in Mr. Pam's ownership, the Series I Cabriolet was serviced at the Ferrari Factory Assistenza Clienti in Modena. Records indicate that, by this time, 1475 GT had covered 36,000 km and was registered on American license plates.

In the mid-1960s, the Ferrari was exported to the US and spent approximately 10 years in Florida. By 1974, 1475 GT was owned by Sidney J. Simpson, proprietor of Simpson Automobili, a Ferrari specialist in Houston, Texas.

Two years later, Mr. Simpson offered the Series I Cabriolet for sale in Ferrari Market Letter, and his ad caught the attention of Hilary A. Raab Jr., a pioneering enthusiast whose early efforts to document Ferrari production have proved instrumental to the collector car community. Shortly after seeing the ad, Mr. Raab flew to Houston, bought 1475 GT, and drove it nonstop from Texas to his home in Indiana.

Over the next 38 years, 1475 GT served as Mr. Raab's preferred driver and, in 1989, it was the car he chose to take on the inaugural Colorado Grand. Following this event, Scott Taylor rebuilt the engine, and 1475 GT then covered approximately 8,000 miles in two other Colorado Grands and two Copperstate 1000 rallies. Beyond these long-distance tours, the Series I Cabriolet was regularly used to drive to events throughout the Midwest, from Ferrari Club of America National Meetings to regional concours d'elegance. Throughout Mr. Raab's ownership, the Cabriolet was always regularly exercised and meticulously maintained in good working order.

Acquired by the current owner in 2014, the Ferrari has recently benefited from a high-quality cosmetic restoration, carried out in a sympathetic fashion so as not to disturb the car's extraordinary originality. Presented in a striking color scheme of dark metallic blue with tan leather upholstery, 1475 GT is a

particularly elegant open 250 GT – one that is sure to be well received at any top-tier concours d’elegance.

Not only is this an attractive, limited-production coachbuilt Ferrari, it is an authentic example with just over 70,000 km (43,000 miles) covered from new. All of the major mechanical components (engine, gearbox, and rear end) are original to 1475 GT, with their respective internal numbers corresponding to the factory assembly sheets, copies of which are included in the sale.

Additionally, this outstanding Series I Cabriolet is accompanied by important accessories and documents including the original registration book, Italian “EE” tourist plates, leather key fob, handbook pouch, owner’s manual, service directory, tool roll, various spares, and a set of rarely seen maintenance tools, secured in the proper wooden box as supplied by Ferrari.

As Ferrari 250 GTs have become increasingly sought-after, the most desirable open models are especially prized and difficult to come by. These magnificent Series I Cabriolets are the result of a brilliant collaboration between Ferrari and Pinin Farina, each firm operating at the height of its powers. They are mechanical objects of exceptional beauty and sophistication that have long captured the interest of connoisseurs. Today, Series I Cabriolets are found only in the finest collections and continue to reward those who seek out only the very best.

As the last of just 40 Series I Cabriolets built, 1475 GT possesses a robust 250 GT chassis, unique mechanical specifications, and special coachwork details that place it among the most distinctive and recognizable examples. Furthermore, its outstanding presentation, originality, and provenance set this car apart from less distinguished brethren.

While all Series I Pinin Farina Cabriolets are among the top tier of collectible Ferraris, 1475 GT is surely a star among the best of them.

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