

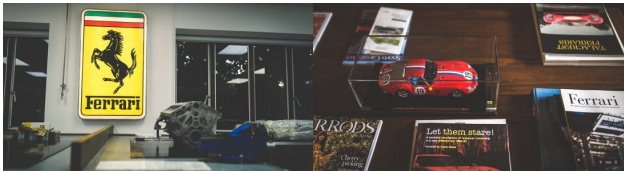
CLASSIC DRIVER

Step inside GTO Engineering’s sanctuary for fabled Ferraris

Lead
Renowned for its restoration, race preparation and preservation of the finest Ferraris, GTO Engineering has added another notch to its belt with the formation of a dedicated sales division. We paid a visit to the UK headquarters to see just what goes into keeping these Prancing Horses alive...

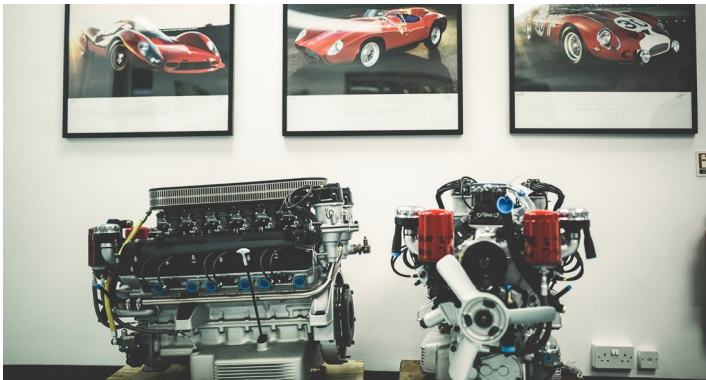
Though there are branches on both the East and West Coasts of America, the beating heart of GTO Engineering is the eponymous GTO House, a sprawling mansion set in the picturesque English countryside west of London. Indeed, this grand building is something of a British home from home for sporting Italian machines, and within seconds of stepping foot inside, the bloodline of this super-stable is clear to see.

Family affair



Also evident is the sheer scale of operations, the interlinked departments each overflowing with their own pieces of the Ferrari puzzle. The engine shop is a prime example of this, with an average of fifteen thunderous V12s in build at any one time. Headed by founder Mark Lyon’s son Jerry, a passion for engineering hit him at a very young age. “After school, I’d try and skip my homework and sneak into dad’s garage to get stuck in, cleaning engine components or helping with anything else I could find,” he comments. “And every summer holiday, I’d be there among the engines.”

One-stop shop



Mark’s decision to go it alone in the early 1980s has not only seen GTO become a figurehead of the Ferrari community, but has also resulted in a company full of second-generation engineers sustaining the family’s reputation. From full rebuilds for original cars, brand new units for racing heavyweights, and everything in between, the work of the GTO Engineering engine department is, similarly to its other departments, united by a focus on preservation and, where necessary, innovation.

Looking backwards, thinking forwards



Having laid its hands on countless significant examples of the marque over the years, including more than a third of the 250 GT SWBs produced and a similarly impressive number of the Testa Rossa derivatives, requests from customers worldwide and a desire for longevity prompted the firm to begin reverse engineering scarce or flawed components. Now, this department offers over 10,000 part types for sale catering to all models, from the 125 right through to the present-day machines, with the US branches in place to furnish customers Stateside and beyond. Rear axle components and gearbox casings, all the way down to window winders, can be manufactured to the highest modern standards in-house. But still, a conscious effort is retained to seek out rare original parts across the world.

Build it, and they will come



Just like the grand GTO House, which is currently being subject to an expansion to further increase productivity, 2017 has seen GTO make the long requested and much-deliberated move into sales, sourcing and consigning not only Ferraris, but also other exotic cars. "There has always been a desire to help customers buy, sell and source cars through GTO, but it's taken time to find the right fit to carry the high standards of the workshops through to the sales division," remarks Sales Director Neil Cruickshank. As the year of Ferrari's much celebrated 70th anniversary draws to a close, the future for GTO Engineering looks very bright indeed...

Photos: Robert Cooper for Classic Driver © 2017

Gallery

