

CLASSIC DRIVER

Reflecting on an epic English Tour on the east coast of America

Lead

Driving 2,500 miles across an entirely foreign continent in two cars with a combined age of almost 90 years old — to some, it might sound like an arduous task, but for Bremont's co-founders, Nick and Giles English, it was a challenge to relish...

Earlier this year, the co-founders of Bremont, Nick and Giles English, embarked on a road trip across the east coast of America in their personal classic cars: a Porsche 911T and a Jaguar E-type, the latter of which was restored for the brothers' late father and is something of a family heirloom. Beginning in the hustle and bustle of New York City, the 12-day 'English Tour' took the duo through Philadelphia, Charlotte, Charleston, Atlanta, and Memphis, before concluding in Frisco, Texas. We caught up with Nick and Giles in London to reflect on what was an epic journey.



Firstly, whose idea was it to take two old cars a very long way from home?

Giles English: We had originally thought about flying to America in two vintage biplanes, but then I went and crashed one and broke my back, so my wife wasn't quite so keen on that idea. We've done various road trips in Europe with these two cars, so we thought, 'Why not take them to the States'? It was an amazing experience.

Why the East Coast and not the west?

Nick English: We wanted to start in New York, and just crossing America didn't seem so interesting. Also, Giles and I have driven quite a large chunk of the West Coast before, which is stunning, but we'd never done the east. The cars are still stateside, and we're actually planning to replicate the journey on the West Coast in the spring of next year — perhaps invite some of our friends to join us along the way.



Could you tell us a little about the cars in which you completed the tour?

Nick: The E-type is a car our father restored for our mother around 30 years ago, so it's a bit of a family heirloom that's been passed down. It's got a lot of sentimental value, and other than a few small issues, it performed magnificently on the tour.

Giles: I bought the Porsche as my first proper car when I got my first job and drove it daily for around 15 years. The whole idea was that if we'd hired cars out there, it wouldn't have felt the same. It was about taking cars we loved to another part of the world — to drive a car you know so well in England in New York was a bit like picking up your house and moving it to the States.

So, how was it?

Giles: It was truly amazing. The Americans couldn't quite get over the manual gearboxes and the fact the steering wheels were on the right-hand side, but once we'd gotten out of town and onto the open roads, there was just so much to see. The scale of the country is just enormous — you just cannot appreciate it. The roads and environment were simply spectacular, and we got a really warm welcome wherever we stopped.



What were your standout memories?

Giles: Driving up to Graceland, the home of Elvis, on my birthday, in my own car was really special. I also really loved driving around New York — although, finding a valet who'd take our cars was tricky. Seeing towns you'd otherwise never see, such as Hot Springs in Arkansas or the Blue Ridge Mountains, was just incredible.

Nick: It was also great to see the common empathy classic car owners share across the world. We were in Memphis and just had a clutch master cylinder issue, so I put a call out on social media, and it was touching to see the responses from guys willing to rip the parts off their own cars in order to help us.

Did you find the connection between classic cars and mechanical watches was as obvious in America?

Nick: What is lovely is that if there's something mechanical, such as a classic car or a watch, there's this universal language. People who are interested in these old cars are naturally interested in old watches — they're both moving machines and you've immediately got something to talk about with these people.

Photos courtesy of Bremont

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