
1967 Ferrari 330 GTC Speciale

Lot sold	USD 3 300 000 - 3 800 000	Drive	LHD
Year of manufacture	1967	Condition	Used
Lot number	150	Location	
		Exterior colour	Other
		Car type	Other

Description

PROVENANCE

Dr. Michael DeBakey, Houston, Texas (acquired new in 1967)
Dr. Ernest DeBakey, Mobile, Alabama (acquired from the above circa 1969)
Carl De Bickero, Chicago, Illinois (acquired from the above in 1973)
Norman Silver, High Point, North Carolina (acquired from the above in 1974)
John W. Mecom Jr., Houston, Texas (acquired from the above in 1983)
Peter Sidlow, Los Angeles, California (acquired via Paul Forbes in 1991)
Current Owner (acquired from the above in 1993)

EXHIBITED

Geneva Auto Show, Geneva, Switzerland, March 1967
Santa Barbara Concours d'Elegance, Santa Barbara, California, 1992 (First in Class)
Ferrari Club of America Annual Meet and Concours, Grand Rapids, Michigan, June 1992 (Luigi Chinetti Award, First in Class)
Ferrari Club of America Vintage Ferrari Concours, Monterey, California, August 1992 (First in Class)

LITERATURE

Etienne Cornil, , model discussed on pp. 266-267, 272-273
Michael Frostick, , model pictured on p. 177
Antoine Prunet, , pictured on pp. 356-357
Hilary A. Raab Jr., , chassis no. is listed
, Issue no. 40, 1974, pictured on p. 28

THIS CAR

The 330 GTC Speciale presented here, one of only four such examples built by Pininfarina, is among the last of the great custom-bodied Ferraris.

For these special cars, Ferrari provided Carrozzeria Pininfarina an ideal canvas on which to work, in the form of the outstanding 330 GTC. The four Speciales were not merely standard production cars embellished with unique features. Rather, these marvelous Ferraris featured hand-built custom coachwork that integrated many brilliant Pininfarina design cues; some of these features were taken from the coachbuilder's contemporary show cars, while others eventually found their way into production models.

The nose of the Speciale recalls the limited-production 365 California Spider and was described by Pininfarina in its press materials as having a "remarkably sloping-down line allowing favorable aerodynamic conditions." Like the California Spider, the Speciale featured covered headlights, a classic eggcrate grille, and retractable driving lights.

Viewed from profile, the Speciale immediately exhibits the influence of Pininfarina's contemporary mid-engine show cars. The design possesses a distinctive silhouette, produced by a short roof panel and elegant glass greenhouse. The vertical rear glass was styled to curve behind the cockpit toward the tail, resulting in a modern interpretation of the classic flying-buttress treatment. The long rear-quarter panels terminate in an abrupt Kamm tail with the triple taillight arrangement seen on other Pininfarina-bodied Ferraris of the period. Unveiled at the Brussels Motor Show in 1967, the 330 GTC Speciale was hailed as yet another brilliant Ferrari-Pininfarina collaboration. Its striking, avant-garde design captured the essence of late 1960s motoring.

The first of these very special Ferraris, chassis 9439, was sold to a royal customer – Princess Liliane de Réthy of Belgium. The second example and the car presented here, chassis 9653, was built for Dr. Michael DeBakey, a renowned heart surgeon from Houston, and close friend of Princess de Réthy. Dr. DeBakey had accompanied King Leopold and Princess de Réthy on a visit to Maranello, and, while touring the Ferrari factory, placed an order for his very own 330 GTC Speciale.

Construction began in August 1966, when the bare 330 GTC chassis entered the Pininfarina plant in Torino. Internally designated by job no. 99676, the coachwork for this car was built by hand and assigned body no. C0174.

As constructed by Pininfarina, this car was finished in (Aurora Blue) with black leather upholstery, blue cloth seat inserts, and blue carpeting – a tasteful combination ideally suited to the car's modern lines. According to the research of Ferrari historian Marcel Massini, 9653 was originally equipped with air-conditioning, power windows, instrumentation in miles, a chromed front grille guard, and Borrani wire wheels.

Before delivery to Dr. DeBakey, the Speciale was retained for promotional duties. In addition to appearing in several press photos, 9653 was debuted on the Pininfarina stand at the 37th annual Geneva Auto Show held in March 1967. Period photographs from Geneva document Pininfarina's remarkable display, which included a 365 California Spider and one of the three-seat 365 P Berlinetta Speciales.

In April 1967, the Ferrari was delivered to Dr. DeBakey, who enjoyed it for a few years before gifting it to his brother Dr. Ernest DeBakey, a general surgeon living in Mobile, Alabama. Carl De Bickero of Chicago purchased the Speciale in 1973, overhauled the car's engine, and then sold it, in January 1974, to Norman Silver of High Point, North Carolina.

During the late 1960s and early 1970s, Mr. Silver assembled one of the finest Ferrari collections in the US, with a focus on limited-production coachbuilt models. The 330 GTC Speciale remained a fixture in Mr. Silver's exceptional collection until 1983, when it was sold to famed oil tycoon and car collector John Mecom Jr. of Houston.

The Ferrari remained in Mr. Mecom's hands through the 1980s and was sold in 1991 to Peter Sidlow, a collector living in the Studio City area of Los Angeles. Soon after acquiring 9653, Mr. Sidlow

commissioned a complete, concours-quality restoration. The work was carried out by some of the most respected Southern California craftsmen: Michael Regalia restored the bodywork, Bruno Borri rebuilt the mechanical systems, and Tony Nancy trimmed the upholstery. Once the restoration was completed, the 330 GTC Speciale garnered several important honors, including First in Class and the Luigi Chinetti Award at the 1992 FCA Annual Meet and Concours as well as a First in Class at the FCA Vintage Ferrari Concours at Concorso Italiano in August 1992.

Since 1993, this custom-bodied 330 GTC has been a fixture in one of the most significant private collections of coachbuilt and competition Ferraris ever assembled. Though it has been kept out of the public eye for the past 25 years, this important Ferrari is well known to enthusiasts and historians who have carefully documented its history and unique features. Today, it presents in superb condition and retains its matching-numbers engine, correctly stamped 9653 with internal no. 2506. The Ferrari has seen little use over the past two decades and, while currently in running condition, it will require further recommissioning before use.

Significantly, the Speciale has not been exhibited in any major concours d'elegance since 1992, affording its new owner the rare opportunity to campaign a significant coachbuilt Ferrari that has not been exposed on the contemporary show circuit. In addition to its potential as a successful show car, the Speciale would be an ideal choice for high-speed touring, where its ample performance, refined road manners, and modern features would be put to best use.

A powerful expression of mid-century automotive design, the 330 GTC Speciale exudes the individual character and artistry of a bygone era in custom coachbuilding. Not only is 9653 a striking example of the coachbuilder's art, it also possesses an impressive and fascinating provenance that includes notable Ferrari collectors Norm Silver and John Mecom Jr. The fact that the three other 330 GTC Speciales have survived and reside in distinguished Ferrari collections speak to the innate appeal of these remarkable cars.

Those with an appreciation for the prestige, glamour, and sophistication embodied by an extremely limited-production coachbuilt 330 GTC should recognize the appearance of this exceptional 1960s Ferrari as the opportunity of a lifetime.

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