

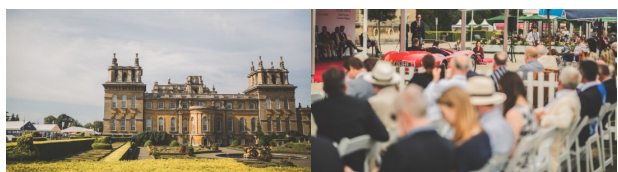
# CLASSIC DRIVER

## Salon Privé is the late-summer event you'd be silly to miss

### Lead

On 5–8 September, the collector car world will descend on Blenheim Palace in Oxfordshire for Salon Privé, a glamorous garden party showcasing automotive history's most spectacular cars. Whether you're planning on attending as an exhibitor or a visitor, here's what not to miss...

Held in the stunning grounds of Blenheim Palace, the spectacular Baroque-style stately home that is perhaps most famously known as the birthplace of Sir Winston Churchill, Salon Privé is an all-out celebration of beauty, glamour, and luxury, automotive or otherwise. And the 14th edition, which is poised to take place on 5–8 September, promises to be the finest yet, with a raft of exciting attractions planned



The event is centred around the Salon Privé Concours d'Élégance by Chubb Insurance, which comprises a diverse selection of blue-chip cars every bit as grand as the location in which they're displayed. Its premier status has been officially recognised by The Peninsula Classics, which now lists Salon Privé as a partner concours for its 'Best of the Best Award' among other prestigious automotive beauty pageants including the Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance and Concorso d'Eleganza Villa d'Este.



To give you an idea of the format and calibre of the cars vying for the discerning judge's affections at Salon Privé, the class of 2018 was divided into 13 classes ranging from pre-War Bugattis to supercars of the 1970s and included the famous ex-Ron Fry Ferrari 250 LM, Rod Stewart's old Lamborghini Miura, and a bright orange Bizzarrini 5300 GT America. The coveted 'Best of Show' trophy was ultimately awarded to an exquisite 1932 Bugatti Type 55 Roadster – a worthy winner.

This year sees an equally fabulous and eclectic line-up of automotive treasures, including a rare 1931 Alfa Romeo 1750GS, a beautifully regal Bentley 8 Litre from 1932, and one of the finest Ferrari 500 TRCs on the face of the earth. There are also a staggering five Ferrari 250 GT 'Short Wheelbases' already confirmed, and that number is expected to rise still.



This year's 'Best of Show' will be awarded on the afternoon of Friday 6 September, which is Ladies' Day by Boodles. Ladies' Day is chance to cut a dash, socialise, and ogle the cars without the competitive pressures of the concours. It's also a fantastic chance to peruse the numerous stands of high-end manufacturers, luxury brands, and collector car dealers (many of which list their wares here on Classic Driver).



It's all change on Saturday 7 September, when Salon Privé will transform into one giant birthday party for Bentley, which of course celebrates its centenary in 2019. Bentley Masters by Chubb Insurance, Pirelli, and Lockton Private Clients will see 50 of the opulent beauties built at Cricklewood, Derby, and Crewe over the last 100 years – ranging from pre-War ‘Blowers’ to contemporary Continental GTs – invade Blenheim Palace for a thoroughly British affair.



Star cars already confirmed include the 1920 EXP 2, the oldest surviving Bentley and the first to win a race, the 1932 Barnato Hassan Special, and perhaps the most significant R-Type Continental of them all, chassis BC1A from 1952, the first production R-Type to be delivered. A further 1,000 Bentleys will arrive during Sunday's public Salon Privé Classic & Supercar for the Bentley Drivers Club Concours, in what promises to be one of the sights of the weekend.



There's nothing quite like sitting among an assembly of achingly beautiful classic cars, sipping Pommery champagne and tucking into a lobster lunch – especially if the English weather plays ball and the late-summer sun chooses to shine. The atmosphere at Salon Privé is convivial, the relatively small crowds and generous space lending an added air of exclusivity. As a digital media partner, we sincerely hope to see some of you on the lawn at Blenheim Palace come early September.

*Photos: Robert Cooper for Classic Driver © 2019*

**Gallery**



























