
1959 Facel Vega Excellence

Lot sold	USD 0 GBP 0 (listed)	Drive	RHD
Year of manufacture	1959	Condition	Used
Gearbox	Automatic	Location	
Lot number	164	Exterior colour	Other
		Car type	Other

Description

"The Facel Excellence occupies a special place in the history of the automobile. Firstly for the marque itself, Jean Daninos launched the luxury French brand in 1954, at a time when the country had lost its most prestigious manufacturers. Secondly for its body, a low, elegantly styled saloon that was as luxurious as a Bentley and as fast as a Jaguar thanks to its powerful and reliable American engine. Finally for its rarity, between 1958 and 1964, just 145 examples of the Excellence Series One and eight Series Two were produced. Presented in 1956 and available from 1958, the Excellence was distinguished by its subtle blend of luxury and exclusivity, the painted dashboard packed with dials had a sporty feel in keeping with the 5.9 litre Chrysler engine that allowed it to match some of the best sports cars around.

The Excellence was a top performer and could hold its own among the best GTs Europe had to offer. Some high-performance American cars, most notably Chrysler's 300 'letter series' models, could probably outrun an Excellence in straight-line performance but they were neither as refined, well built, nor had the 'panache' of a Facel Vega. The Excellence was considerably shorter, narrower, and most of all, lower than its American counterparts and its comparatively compact measurements gave it the edge in the handling department which came in handy, especially under European road conditions.

In an article for the November 1985 edition of Collectible Automobile Magazine, noted automotive historian Richard Langworth stated his opinion that The Excellence is a large vehicle...better suited as a car of State rather than a daily driver. How he came to this conclusion despite the unanimously positive reviews regarding the road ability of the Excellence from the contemporary motoring press as

well as its owners, has been a matter of debate ever since.

This 1959 EX1 was originally exported by Facel Vega, Paris to the USA where it spent nearly 40 years before being imported to the UK in the late 90s in need of restoration. Our vendor purchased the car in the early 2000s, he was already the owner of two other Facel Vegas and set about a restoration process spanning nearly 18 years. Now presented in stunning deep blue with new opulent cream leather trim, this example is nearing completion and has been described as 'in the final leg of the restoration'. Our vendor has commissioned the services of JBR Ltd, West Sussex, who have experience with Facel Vegas, to undertake the full body-off restoration and the quality of the workmanship is nothing shy of outstanding thus far.

The restoration work has been carefully catalogued, photographed and detailed throughout, evidence of which can be found in four box files of history along with a list of items that are required for the finish of the car. The restorer, a Mr. Brown, has indicated that for a nominal fee he would happily consult any new buyer through the final restoration stage, should a new owner require. Given his experience with the car and others, we think this is invaluable knowledge and the vendor is also grateful for his offer to consult.

Upon inspection, we are informed the works required to complete the car include wiring and the final fit only. It starts and runs with the gearbox selecting correctly when requested. We believe, although the quality of finish should be upheld, finishing this project should be a short process with parts that are yet to be ordered readily available, the restorers JBR Ltd, have provided a list for these and details of the correct suppliers.

This Facel is now UK registered and is presented with a UK V5 registration document, NOVA Certificate and a history file containing countless invoices, details and correspondence. A quick scan through the invoices gives the impression that, thus far, the restoration costs have exceeded £300,000, this is testimony to the quality and time taken on this gorgeous example. Thankfully for a fraction of that cost the car can be a finished by a new owner allowing this example to, once again, grace any promenade and steal admiring glances from all that set eyes upon her. This is an unique opportunity to own and complete one of our all time favourites.

..

Historics Auctioneers

Title Mr

First name Inquiries

Last name Historics

Iver

SL09HF

United Kingdom

Phone +44-01753639170

<http://www.historics.co.uk>

<https://www.classicdriver.com/en/car/facel-vega/excellence/1959/681310>

© Classic Driver. All rights reserved.