
1985 Ferrari 288 GTO

Lot sold	USD 0	Drive	RHD
Year of manufacture	1985	Condition	Used
Lot number	241	Location	
		Exterior colour	Other
		Car type	Other

Description

Estimate:

\$2,550,000 - \$2,800,000

- Driven only 13,800 actual kilometers
- The first 288 GTO officially delivered in Japan
- Desirable factory options, including radio, power windows, air-conditioning, and Ansa sport exhaust
- Includes original books, tools, and documents
- Recently serviced; one of the finest 288 GTOs available

RETURN OF THE GTO

By 1984, the words Gran Turismo Omologato already carried enormous weight in the Ferrari world. For years the 250 GTO was considered the finest sports racer that Ferrari had ever produced. With an incredible racing record, which was only rivaled by its sensational driving dynamics, the GTO had been cemented into sports car lore as nothing short of a legend. For Ferrari to revive that legendary moniker, the new GTO would be expected to match or surpass the 250's incredible record in motorsport.

Looking to contend in the FIA Group B, Ferrari produced and designed the GTO in order to homologate it for competition within that series, calling for a production run of 200 cars. Group B was incredibly popular following its introduction in the early '80s, especially in Europe, and Ferrari was

eager to jump into the fray. They were certain that their car would be unmatched in competition. However, Group B was canceled shortly thereafter, leaving them with a fully developed and homologated car on their hands but no series to compete in. It was clear that the public was highly anticipating Ferrari's newest no-compromises supercar, and the GTO was certainly not going to disappoint the brand's fans or customers, even without a place to race.

While it shared visual cues with the 308 and 328, there was no denying that the 288 GTO (as it was later dubbed) was much more special. It was visually much more aggressive, with GRP and carbon compound utilized for the majority of the bodywork, and while the doors, deck lid, and bonnet were formed from lightweight aluminum, its imposing shape hinted at what lay under the hood. The race-bred, 2.8-liter V-8 engine with twin IHI turbochargers pumped out a monstrous 400 hp with 366 foot-pounds of torque. The GTO could rocket to a top speed of 189 mph, making it the fastest road car ever produced at the time of its unveiling. Its acceleration was equally impressive, and the car could reach 60 mph from a standstill in 4.8 seconds and 100 mph in 10.2, which was fast enough to keep everything short of a fighter jet in its rearview mirror.

Performance aside, the GTO's interior was graced with a host of modern amenities. The Kevlar-framed bucket seats were lined in leather, and buyers could request air-conditioning, electric windows, and an AM/FM radio/cassette stereo as optional extras. Other than those few extras, the GTO sacrificed nothing to distract the driver from the task at hand. The new GTO clearly resonated with Ferrari's clientele, as 272 examples were built by the time production ceased, which was over 25% more than the amount required for homologation. The GTO was the first in the lineage of modern Ferrari supercars, and it remains incredibly rare, as they are seldom seen out and about and even less often offered for public sale.

CHASSIS NUMBER 55237

The example offered here, chassis 55237, was the 137th Ferrari 288 GTO built and was fitted from the factory with air-conditioning, power windows, red seat inserts, and the optional Ansa sport exhaust, as noted in Joe Sackey's definitive work *The Book of the 288 GTO*. According to said book, only a handful of 288s were originally equipped with the sport exhaust, and fewer yet with optional air-conditioning and power windows. On 10 April 1985, it became the very first example of its kind officially imported into Japan, by official Ferrari importer Cornes & Company. The original owner was someone very prominent in Ferrari circles, Yoshiho Matsuda. One of the world's foremost automobile collectors, Mr. Matsuda was particularly noted for what was, at the time, the world's finest and most complete Ferrari collection, housing some of the marque's most valuable and significant automobiles, including a trio of 250 GTOs, in his museum-like setting.

Mr. Matsuda registered this car for the road and used it regularly on local streets in Japan, undoubtedly garnering significant attention. The car remained in his collection for a remarkable quarter of a century, a testament to the 288 GTO's impressive driving dynamics. By the time it left his ownership in 2010, it had accumulated just 9,500 km from new. Just prior to its sale that year, the car had received a major service, including a replacement of the timing belts, at a cost of over ¥2,000,000, ensuring that it was ready for its next owner.

Following its Matsuda ownership, chassis no. 55237 remained in Japan until its importation to the U.S. in 2015. The following year it was acquired by a new owner for his own esteemed stable. It was acquired by its most recent former owner shortly thereafter, in whose fastidious ownership it had only been driven about 3,000 km since leaving Japan. The GTO was acquired by the current owner in 2018 and then properly serviced to ensure the car runs and drives as expected of Ferrari's first supercar. Importantly, it is accompanied by a history file that, by 288 GTO standards, is remarkably detailed and complete, including the original Japanese importation forms, registration documents, and service receipts, as well as the original tool set, jack, and spare keys.

The GTO, now heralded as the first of Ferrari's incredible series of supercars, was robbed of its chance to earn its name through the crucible of motorsport. However, it has more than lived up to its predecessor's reputation as a fabulous driving machine. The 288 has become a staple in many of the world's greatest collections of Ferraris, just as this fine example was for Yoshiho Matsuda.

Exceedingly rare even when compared to its contemporary brethren, the 288 GTO is a must-have for any discerning collector. As such, high-quality examples are becoming more and more difficult to acquire and command a significant premium over fair examples. This GTO has proven itself worthy of the finest Ferrari collections on the planet, and it will undoubtedly continue to do so for its next caretaker.

Please note that due to California emissions, this vehicle must be sold to a dealer or out-of-state resident.

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