

CLASSIC DRIVER

The prime suspects from RM Sotheby's in Amelia Island

Lead
On 6-7 March, RM Sotheby's will return to the Sunshine State for its annual Amelia Island sale. We've picked out our favourites from the 150-lot catalogue...

The headline act



At the sharp end of the catalogue, it's the immaculate 2003 Ferrari Enzo that takes the crown as RM's most valuable Amelia Island car. Having resided in the Lingenfelter Collection since 2005 and showing just 1,700 miles on the odometer, the Rosso Corsa beauty is arguably one of the best examples out there. It's estimated accordingly at 2.75-3m US dollars.

The distinguished gentlemen



Looking for a daily smoker that will get you to where you need to be extremely quickly and in svelte style? Then look no further than RM's 2000 Bentley Continental R Millennium Edition (100,000-140,000 dollars) or 1990 Mercedes-Benz 560 SEC AMG 6.0 'Wide-Body' (220,000-260,000 dollars). The former is the ninth of 10 Millennium Editions cars built to celebrate the turn of the century and features an imposing laser-cut grille and a small forest's worth of wood veneer inside. With a 6.0-litre V8 kicking out 385HP and an in-your-face body kit that's wider than a lorry, the latter is a brute in every sense of the word.

The noisy one





When Bob Tullius’ Group 44 team decided to campaign a Jaguar XJ-S in the 1977 Trans-Am championship at the request of the British marque’s sales VP, few could have anticipated the success that followed. A wildly different beast to the genteel Grand Tourer in the showrooms, the white-and-green Trans-Am XJ-S was faster, lighter and much, much louder. RM’s car was raced in the 1978 season and won an astonishing seven races in a row to snag Tullius the driver’s championship and Jaguar the manufacturer’s title. It was job done on Jaguar’s part.

The eccentric



Auction magic sparked during RM’s Monterey sale last summer when a dinky yellow Ferves Ranger soared past its pre-sale estimate of 30,000–40,000 dollars and eventually hammered for a princely 175,000 dollars. Another of these Italian oddities will be sold in RM Sotheby’s, in the same shade of banana yellow. It’s believed fewer than 50 Ferves Rangers remain of the circa-600 built and they clearly strike a chord with collectors. Will we see a repeat of last year’s epic bidding war? All it takes is two persistent people...

The diva



Who doesn’t love a Lancia Stratos? This rare HF Stradale from 1975 recently underwent a comprehensive two-year restoration and, more importantly, retains its original matching-numbers engine, gearbox and bodywork. It’s also painted brilliant blue, a shade that really makes Gandini’s iconic wedge-shaped design sing.

British brutes





There's a new James Bond film coming out in April, which means Aston Martin will be given some welcome media spotlight. While 007 was galivanting in BMWs in the 1990s, we reckon he'd have much preferred the Aston Martin Vantage Le Mans V600, an angry 600HP gentleman's express. The 38th of 40 built, RM's left-hand-drive example (375,000-425,000 dollars) was delivered new to the Qatari Royal family and boasts a special-order green and magnolia interior complete with the Al Thani royal crest stitched on to the rear seats, gear lever and owner's manual. If you'd rather park your bottom in a car that Bond did actually drive, the low-mileage 2009 Aston Martin DBS offered (100,000-125,000 dollars) is also a lovely car, especially as it's got a manual gearbox.

The one we'd drive home



It would have to be the 1970 Iso Grifo GL Series II (500,000-550,000 dollars) that's believed to have been the personal car of company heir Piero Rivolta. One of just 23 examples fitted with the five-speed manual gearbox, this prototype took centre stage at the Turin Motor Show in 1970, then painted Polo White with a blue leather interior. Following a comprehensive 1,000-hour restoration, the unique car is now finished in grey with the most exquisitely trimmed brown leather cabin. We honestly can't think of many more sumptuous places in which to sit. And how cool are those Campagnolo alloy wheels?

Photos: RM Sotheby's © 2020

Gallery

