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## 1936 Delahaye 148L

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Lot sold	<b>USD 111 600 - 167 400</b> EUR 100 000 - 150 000 (listed)	Drive	LHD
Year of manufacture	1936	Condition	Restored
Country VAT	FR	Location	
Lot number	64	Exterior colour	Blue
		Car type	Coupé

### Description

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French registration papers

Chassis no. 47612

Engine: 6-cylinder - 20HP - 3557cc

- Unique Delahaye
- Clear history
- In the collection for 52 years

A pioneer of the French automotive industry since the end of the 19th century, Delahaye was renowned for its magnificent luxury cars, but also built lorries and goods vehicles from 1894 to 1954. The company is unusual in that it never built its own bodies. All Delahaye's cars therefore had bodies produced by other companies, either small workshops or famous coachbuilders such as Saoutchik, Chapron, Antem or Labourdette. The model presented here is one such car, chassis no. 47612, which was supplied to Labourdette in March 1936 and displayed at the Paris Motor Show in 1937. It is a Delahaye 148 L Aerodynamic saloon built on the basis of the "Vutotal" patent. This patent was conceived by Joseph Vigroux in 1936 and was intended to improve visibility and comfort for the driver and passengers. This was mainly achieved by dispensing with the pillars and frames normally located on each side of the windscreen and side windows. The first owner of this car was in fact the Vutotal company, which probably used it to promote the patent that it had just been granted by the Ministry of Trade and Industry. In 1942, Vigroux registered the Delahaye in his own name, before selling it to the fire brigade at Saint-Maixent in the Vienne. Monsieur B bought the Delahaye in 1968,

becoming its fourth owner. The car was then in need of a complete restoration. Photographs from the period show the saloon arriving on a trailer; the car had apparently undergone changes to its interior and bodywork, undoubtedly to meet the specific requirements of the fire brigade. The red paintwork can be clearly seen in the photographs, and on the application form to register the vehicle in 1958, the category is stated as: "Special vehicle for use with firefighting equipment". The rear of the car had been modified: a steel trunk had been fitted (whereas the rest of the bodywork was in aluminium) and the rear window enlarged. Inside the car, the bench seats could be converted into couchettes and removable foldaway seats were fitted. Originally, the 148 also had a sunroof. Its owner then set about researching its history, in order to restore it as closely as possible to its original specification. At the time, the internet did not exist, making the research a tedious job, but Monsieur B knew who to turn to. He naturally approached the Delahaye club and got in touch with Madame Hatton, the daughter of Joseph Vigroux, the inventor of the "Vutotal" patent. Thanks to the information and documents provided by his contacts, Monsieur B was then able to embark on the restoration of the Delahaye. A skilled mechanic, he began by completely stripping down the engine in his own workshop. In a letter to Madame Hatton in 1996, he admitted that the hydraulic braking system had caused him a good deal of grief. The photographs taken at the time show the work carried out. In 1995, the bodywork was entrusted to the renowned restorer Dominique Tessier at Chambray-lès-Tours. The bill for Tessier's restoration work came to more than 160,000 FF. In accordance with the different information the owner had collected, the steel trunk was removed and the rear of the car restored to its original design. The sunroof has not been refitted, while the leather upholstery is most attractive and the wood trim is like new. The car was displayed on Dominique Tessier's stand at Rétromobile in 2009. The crown jewel of the collection, this exceptional Delahaye for a time rubbed shoulders with Monsieur B's other Delahaye, a 135 M sold in the USA in 1989. Naturally, this Labourdette-bodied 148 L is listed in Jean-Paul Tissot's book and is in perfect condition today, having been kept in a closed garage. As with all the cars in his collection, it will need to be carefully recommissioned. The extensive history file makes for fascinating reading and includes numerous photographs, bills, handwritten letters and other documents. Part of Monsieur B's collection for 52 years, this unique Delahaye is offered for sale with no reserve, making it an exceptional opportunity for collectors and lovers of concours d'élégance.

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