

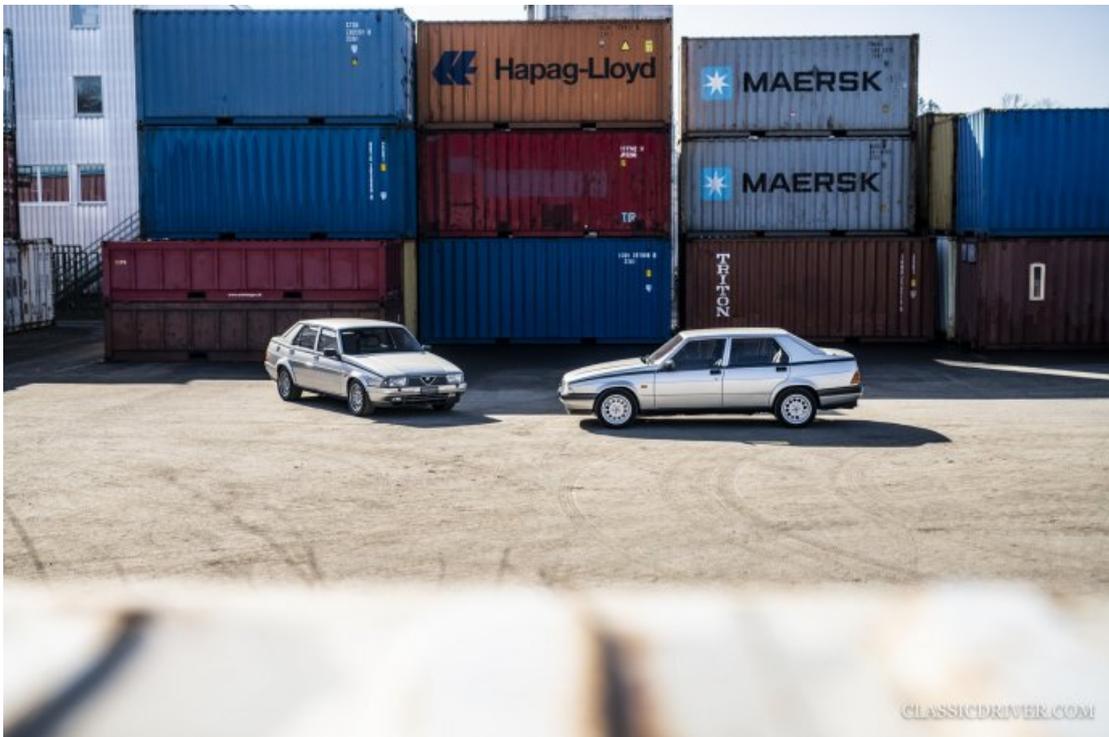
CLASSIC DRIVER



These two Alfa Romeo 75s are getting more desirable by the second

30 March 2021 | Simon de Burton

As an addictive driving machine and one of the last independent cars from Arese, the Alfa Romeo 75 is in the midst of a global revival and desired by Alfisti worldwide. Swiss dealer Andreas Wüest has the two most exciting Alfa 75s in stock – an ultra-rare Turbo and a 2.5 litre V6 'Quadrifoglio'



Since Joni Mitchell's 'Big Yellow Taxi' bemoans the fact that "they paved paradise and put up a parking lot", it's a bit incongruous that another line from the song - "you don't know what you've got 'til it's gone" - might resonate with anyone who misses cars they no longer have.

Such as me and my early Alfa Romeo 75, the wonders of which I didn't fully appreciate during the few months I owned it - probably because it was regarded as 'just an old car' back in 1999 and had such a low resale value here in cold-weathered, cold-blooded Britain that it cost me nothing. It was given to me by an owner who just couldn't be bothered to advertise it.



Likewise, I gave it away to a friend – whose four-year-old son promptly set fire to it after finding a long-lost Bic lighter stuffed down one of the cossetting rear seats. The boy escaped unscathed, but the Alfa perished into a sea of melted plastic and fireman's foam.

But one look at Remi Dargegen's evocative images of this rare pair of decidedly special 1986 75s on sale with [Swiss dealer Andreas Wüest](#) brought fond memories flooding back.





The awkward, typically Italian offset of the pedals, the steering wheel that always seemed slightly too far away, the window switches mounted (bizarrely) in the headlining and the handbrake in the form of a yoke that seemed more suited to controlling a Boeing 747's angle of ascent than providing confidence on a tricky hill-start all remain familiar – but not so much as the car's delicious balance, sublime handling and rev-hungry engine.

Mine was a 'cooking' 2.0-litre model, but the two cars offered by Wüest are far more interesting: one being an ultra-rare Turbo and the other a 2.5-litre V6 'Quadrifoglio'. That they're both finished in Bianco Argento is quite a coincidence, but not so much of a coincidence as the fact they both came into Wüest's possession at almost exactly the same time.



"I acquired them both through my best friend from school, Alex Bianco," explains Wüest. "He has a garage, Autobianco, that specialises in Alfa Romeo and is just down the road from my showroom. Alex knows I have a soft spot for 75s, because my very first track car was based on one – and he built it for me."

Alfa Romeo purists appreciate the 75 not just as an addictive driving machine, but also because it was the very last model to be designed and released by the marque before it came under Fiat ownership in 1986.



Both Wüest cars date from that year, with the first being the 1.8-litre turbo that produces around 150bhp at 5,800rpm. This example is a rare survivor, having covered a mere 75,000 kilometres from new in the hands of just two long-term owners. Not only are the fully rust-protected bodywork and underside in pristine condition but also, unusually, is the interior.

According to Wüest, less well cared-for 75 Turbos often have their dashboards 'butchered' to accommodate auxiliary gauges which, since the original parts are no longer available, means they can never be returned to standard specification. And, even more surprisingly, this one was delivered new to an original owner just a few kilometres away from Wüest's premises.



The V6 car, meanwhile, is an extremely rare, European-specification 2.5 V6 Quadrifoglio, a mere 2,800 of which were made. In this case, the car was acquired in a poor state by an expert panel beater and bodyshop technician who, says Wüest, spent “an incredible amount of time and a huge quantity of money” stripping it to its bare bones before rebuilding it from the ground up, to the point that both the interior and exterior are in virtually as-new condition.





Although not as outright quick as the frantic 75 Turbo, the V6 is clearly Wüest's favourite. "It's more of a high-speed grand tourer, but it's still really wonderful to drive thanks to its combination of naturally aspirated power and light weight of around 1,250kg," he says. "It also has much shorter gear ratios than the later 3.0-litre and doesn't have that car's catalytic converter, either. But what I really love about it is the sound - it really is phenomenal towards the top of the rev range."



As the images show, both cars are fitted with the quintessential Ronal 'A1' road wheels and have the sort of stance that makes one want to just get in and, well, drive. Wüest is asking Sfr 28,500 for the Turbo version and Sfr 26,000 for the V6. And for real Alfaholics who might feel they need one of each for different occasions, he may even arrange a small discount for quantity...

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