
1968 Maserati Mistral

Lot sold	USD 453 560 - 680 340 EUR 400 000 - 600 000 (listed)	Condition	Used
Year of manufacture	1968	Location	
Chassis number	AM109/SA1 725	Exterior colour	Other
Lot number	15		

Description

1968 Maserati Mistral 4.0 - Litre Spyder

Coachwork by Carrozzeria Frua

Chassis no. AM109/SA1 725

"We do not suppose there are many cars whose names conjure up an aura of exotic glamour to the same extent as that of Maserati. Even now, many years after the company has withdrawn from any form of competition, past glories linger on." - Sporting Motorist.

Maserati's survival strategy for the 1960s centred on establishing the company - which hitherto had mainly concentrated on its Grand Prix and sports car racing activities - as a producer of road cars. The Modena marque's new era began in 1957 with the launch at the Geneva Salon of the Touring-bodied 3500 GT. A luxury aluminium-bodied '2+2', the 3500 GT drew heavily on Maserati's competition experience, employing a tubular chassis frame and an engine derived from the 350S sports car unit of 1956. Suspension was independent at the front by wishbones and coil springs, while at the back there was a conventional live axle/semi-elliptic arrangement. The 3500 GT's designer was none other than Giulio Alfieri, creator of the immortal Tipo 60/61 'Birdcage' sports-racer and the man responsible for developing the 250F into a World Championship winner. The twin-overhead-camshaft, six-cylinder engine was a close relative of that used in the 250F and developed around 220bhp initially, later examples producing 235bhp on Lucas mechanical fuel injection. Built initially with drum brakes and four-speed transmission, the 3500 GT was progressively updated, gaining five speeds, front disc brakes and, finally, all-disc braking.

The next development of the theme arrived in 1962. Built on the short-wheelbase chassis of the

Vignale-bodied 3500 GT spyder, the Sebring coupé featured a five-speed gearbox, disc brakes and fuel injection as standard equipment, with automatic transmission, air conditioning and a limited-slip differential available as options.

Of a more sporting character than the Sebring, the last of these classic six-cylinder Maseratis, the Pietro Frua-styled Mistral, commenced production in 1964. The 3.7-litre version of the famous long-stroke Tipo 109 engine was fitted to most cars, other options being the 3.5-litre or, from 1966, the 4.0-litre unit, all of which came with Lucas fuel injection. A handsome two-seater on a shortened, square-tube chassis, the aluminium-bodied Mistral was built in coupé and spyder versions, the former's opening rear window hatch making it unusually practical for a sports car. A five-speed gearbox, disc brakes and fuel injection were standard equipment; automatic transmission, air conditioning, and a limited-slip differential the options. When equipped with 4.0-litre engine, the Mistral Spyder provided dazzling performance, with the 0-100km/h dash covered in a little over six seconds on the way to a top speed in excess of 240km/h. Production ceased in 1970, by which time a total of 828 coupés and 123 spyders had been built, only 37 being built to the ultimate 4.0-litre specification.

One of the 37 completed with the 4.0-litre engine, this Mistral Spyder was built on 19th October 1968 and delivered new to Naples, Italy. The car's original colour scheme was Azzura Vincennes with Senape leather interior trim, and it left the factory equipped with the desirable ZF five-speed manual gearbox. It should be noted that this car is now on Weber carburettors.

According to its original libretto, the Mistral was first registered on 7th April 1970 to a Mrs Caterina Nappi, a resident of Nola in the province of Naples in Italy, with the registration number 'NA 635866'. It was sold again in 1973 but presumably remained in the same province as the registration did not change. In 1978, the Maserati was sold to a Mr Marcello Zanotelli of Trento and ownership passed again to (presumably his son) Gherardo Zanotelli, also of Trento, in 1993.

The Mistral is offered from long-term private ownership since 1997 and has recently been mechanically re-commissioned with fresh fluids, new brake pads, engine tuning, etc. following a period of static display. A further shakedown is advised before enjoying its sparkling performance to the full. A real driver's car, ideal for classic tours or holiday driving, this exotic and Mistral 4000 Spyder is certain to delight the fortunate next owner.

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