

CLASSIC DRIVER

We promise - this six-wheeled Range Rover by Carmichael is not a prank

Lead

This rare six-wheeled Range Rover is one of just 400 made by Carmichael Ltd in the 1970s. Now it could be yours at Aguttes' Aumale Rally Official Sale on April 3rd.



The 'classic' Range Rover has made its mark in all the chic neighbourhoods from the western suburbs of Paris to the most lavish ski resorts, and is enjoying a huge come-back these days. As Gautier Rossignol, the Director of Aguttes On Wheels Department, explains, "The classic Range Rover, launched in 1970, has become one of the most iconic cars in the world thanks to its great looks, comfort and practicality. It has thus become the paragon of the chic and elitist car".

Still, we have found enthusiasts who would not be satisfied with a standard Range Rover. For them, [this six-wheeled, four-wheel drive Range Rover sold by the Parisian auction house Aguttes this weekend](#) might be their car of choice, which leads Gautier Rossignol to add with a smile: "You actually don't need to pay 600,000 euros to drive a six-wheeler and have the pleasure of parking in front of the Ritz in Paris! "



Even more offbeat, especially in continental Europe and in left-hand drive, this six-wheeled Range Rover has a singular history. In fact, the base will not be unfamiliar to the British, as it was made by Carmichael Ltd, a company that started to convert Range Rovers into six-wheel drive cars as early as 1971. Carmichael Ltd then targeted a commercial use with fire and rescue tender vehicles. The long-wheel base Range Rover proved to be an ideal vehicle, providing extra carrying capacity and extra space for rescue equipment. No less than 400 units were produced; the majority for commercial use, and a small percentage for private use. This Range Rover is therefore a real rarity.



Augustin Delalande, one of Aguttes On Wheels car specialists recalls its history: "the owner of this very special car, Mr D, is a Parisian antique dealer and a huge fan of long-distance adventures. He came to the Range Rover's world thanks to a close friend of his who happens to be one of the most knowledgeable Range Rover specialists in France."

In the early 2000s, the duo decided to enter a trans-African race with a Carmichael Range Rover. Unfortunately, an accident in the African desert, in which the car flipped over, dashed their dream of finishing and put an end to the car's life. After they returned to France, the duo looked for a second Carmichael. Mr D, who still dreamed of adventures crossing Africa, loved the idea of driving a six wheel Range Rover in Paris to transport his numerous art pieces.



In 2008, Mr D's knowledgeable friend sourced him a white 1976 Carmichael Ltd six-wheel Range Rover in the UK, which is said to be an ex-BBC car, and possibly a car that had been made to order for the Pope's visit in the UK before it got cancelled. Mr D. purchased the vehicle on the spot and drove it back from the UK to France, which was quite an adventure as he recalls, "I was driving on my own, I had to get out of the car at every French highway tollbooth to pay, which earned me a volley of horns every time!"a



The original plan was to drive this car on a daily basis in Paris, but after reliability and rust issues, it was decided to fully restore it in 2012. And Mr D decided to do it to properly: the original tired body was removed and replaced by a LHD P38 lengthened body made by Christian de Leotard, the French expert of everything with six wheels. If de Leotard is known for his LWB six-wheeled Range Rovers, he is also renowned for creating a one-off R5 Turbo powered by six wheels!

As for the engine, it was decided that the more powerful Range Rover 3.9l V8 would replace the 3.4l V8. As Augustin Delalande says, "All in all, this car gathers the best of both worlds: a Carmichael Ltd chassis with the elegant de Leotard body. Let me add that today this car is a 6X4, as its previous owner had removed the driveshaft between the two rear axles. It is of course possible to return it to a 6X6 configuration with the set up of an extra new driveshaft."



The car with its very distinctive allure has become a regular sight among art dealers in Paris. Once on board, you immediately notice how the beige leather interior wears a beautiful patina, typical of a classic Range Rover. It is also embellished by the presence of a panoramic sunroof bringing additional light into the interior. As for the car's body, it has been recently completely repainted. Only a few defects inherent to a handcrafted assembly are visible.



Augustin Delalande, who drove the car around Paris, especially in Place Vendôme, was very pleasantly surprised by the car's handling: "First of all, you don't have the impression of driving a car that long, the handling is really surprisingly easy. We drove it around Place Vendôme and all tight corners were actually 'swallowed' very smoothly. This car is disconcertingly easy to drive and comfortable."

Unfortunately, Mr D did not have the opportunity to travel to Namibia with his 6X4 due to his busy life and the recent travel restrictions following the global health crisis. The only consolation was a recent long-distance holiday trip to Spain, which confirmed that this atypical car is very reliable thanks to regular maintenance.



Aguttes On Wheels will exhibit this very rare Range Rover this weekend in the Rallye d'Aumale's paddock, located at the Polo de Chantilly near Paris. It will be offered for sale on Sunday at an auction with an estimate of between €40,000 and €60,000. Note that the French collector's registration card mentions the Carmichael make, probably the only one in France with this mention, and indicates the chassis number 35522156D.

For those who love Range Rovers and want to stand out from their neighbours, this car should be a grail not to be missed!

Photos: Kevin van Campenhout © 2022

Gallery

Related auctions:

Aguttes - Aumale Rally Official Sale 2022

Source URL: <https://www.classicdriver.com/en/article/cars/we-promise-six-wheeled-range-rover-carmichael-not-a-prank>

© Classic Driver. All rights reserved.