

CLASSIC DRIVER

The 2022 Monaco Historic Grand Prix was a crescendo of sound, colour, and speed

Lead
The 13th edition of the Monaco Historic Grand Prix was packed to the brim with iconic cars, beautiful people, and of course the fabulous sounds of history’s most legendary Grand Prix cars. Needless to say, it didn’t disappoint!



How do you sum up a weekend like the Monaco Historic Grand Prix? Pre-war and post-war, front-engined and rear-engined, streamlined and high-downforce, sports and Formula one cars, all flocked to the iconic city circuit. Monaco has played host to the most advanced machines and most gifted drivers in the world for more than a century. To be in Monaco is to be surrounded by history, and there’s never more history on display than during the Monaco Historic Grand Prix.





This year we had the immeasurable pleasure of attending the 13th edition of the Monaco Historic Grand Prix as guests of TAG Heuer, and despite no shortage of rare and fabulous timepieces on show, it was exceedingly easy to lose track of time amidst so many legendary Grand Prix cars. Of course, the horological star of the show was the new [TAG Heuer Monaco Gulf Edition 2022](#), a fantastically elegant reinterpretation of a legendary timepiece that incorporates the eye-catching orange and blue of Gulf Oil into a surprisingly understated, yet unquestionably desirable package.



Gulf colours appeared on more than just the dial of TAG Heuer's latest and greatest watch: the orange and blue 1975 Tyrrell 007 might have taken home the title of best-dressed car at any other event, but not this weekend. Warsteiner, Rothmans, Ensign, Penthouse, Essex, John Player Special, and Marlboro all made a strong showing, leaving us yearning for the return of yesteryear's liveries on today's Formula One cars.



However, the first and oldest cars to take to the track lacked any visual embellishments, with the pre and post-war front-engined titans predating the flurry of sponsorships that would become so intrinsic to the world's top flight of motorsport. French racing blue Bugatti Type-35s and Type-51s stunned without flashy paintwork, as did the blood-red Italians, such as the beguiling Alfa Romeo P3, and the abundance of Ferraris and Maseratis.



Above all, sound was the sense that was most overwhelmed this weekend, with the noise produced by the ever-evolving cars on track growing steadily in volume, pitch, and sheer fury as we climbed up through Formula One's different eras. By far the most deafening group of Grand Prix legends was the class of 3-litre cars from 1981-1985, which prompted onlookers to hurriedly don ear protection as soon as they roared out of the paddocks.



While the Formula One cars were no doubt the stars of the show, it would be remiss not to mention the 50s sports racing cars that, although still undeniably rapid, provided an interesting reference point to highlight just how fast these old Grand Prix cars are. The drivers this weekend may not have been quite as on the limit as the fearless racers that originally piloted these vehicles, but their bravery in the pursuit of speed must still be commended.



Speaking of the drivers, a number of famous faces could be spotted around the circuit this weekend. Esteban Gutiérrez got involved in the action, while current World Champ, Max Verstappen was also seen strolling through the pitman on Saturday. Charles Leclerc also made an appearance, taking to the track in the iconic ex-Niki Lauda 1974 Ferrari 312B3, an outing that unfortunately ended in tragedy as a brake failure caused the Monegasque to lose the rear as he entered Rascasse. Thankfully, Charles emerged unscathed and the Ferrari was able to limp home to the pits with only a bent rear wing.



We would have been perfectly happy to watch all this action unfold seated with a glass of champagne at hand, however, when the circuit is as iconic as Monaco's, you have to get up and see all the iconic twists and turns for yourself. A trip to the Fairmont offered a magical view of the Grand Hotel Hairpin, and of course Casino Square had to be paid a visit, ensuring we got our steps in as we traversed the city in search of Monaco's many iconic viewpoints.



Overall, the 2022 Monaco Historic Grand Prix was a truly unforgettable experience, and one made even sweeter thanks to the TAG Heuer's incredible hospitality. We highly recommend planning a visit for the next edition, we know we're already counting down the days until we can return to The Rock.

Photos by Tom Shaxson for Classic Driver © 2022

Gallery

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