

CLASSIC DRIVER

The AC Ace Bristol is a Shelby Cobra with less muscle and more class

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The Shelby Cobra may be the most widely recognised variant of AC's sports car, but it was arguably the more reserved AC Ace Bristol that offered the sweetest combination of proportions and performance. Now you could own a prime example at Le Bolide's upcoming auction on May 30th.





The 1950s and 1960s was a golden era for sports racing cars. It was a time when aerodynamics and driver safety had yet heavily influence car design, allowing perhaps the purest vision of the artists' designs to make it to the open road. One of the most gorgeous cars to come from this era was undoubtedly the AC Ace, which not only boasted beautiful aluminium bodywork, but also a brilliantly engineered light tubular chassis designed by Anglo-Portuguese engineer John Tojeiro.



However, the Ace was in need of a power plant that could do justice to its stunning coachwork, and in 1956 it was found in the form of Bristol's 2-litre M328 in-line 6 cylinder engine. Equipped with three Solex twin down draft carburetors, the AC Ace Bristol produced a healthy 120 horsepower, and darted up to 60 mph in a respectable 9 seconds. These specs saw the Ace Bristol take home an impressive 10th place overall at the 1957 24 Heurs du Mans, and an even more admirable 7th place overall in 1959, catching the eye of one Carroll Shelby as a result.





This stunning [dark red example is being auctioned off by Le Bolide on May 30th](#), and is one of only 463 Bristol-engined cars ever made. Originally delivered in LHD to New York with a white body, it was first registered in 1960 and reappeared in the 1980s with a V8 under the bonnet. Thankfully, the original engine was kept with the car and reinstalled during a restoration in the 1990s by renowned British Specialist, Brian Classic. This fabulous classic offers a more reserved take on the Shelby Cobra's aggressive looks and a more approachable disposition to match, making it an ideal choice for those of you looking for the quintessential sports car experience.

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