

CLASSIC DRIVER

This Porsche 356 Pre-A proves less is more when it comes to sports cars

Lead
Tired of overpowered and overweight modern sports cars? This Jade Green Pre-A Porsche 356 coming up for auction at Aguttes' Autumn Sale on December 14th is just the palate cleanser you need.



In 2022, if you're on the hunt for a shiny new sports car, you have your work cut out for you choosing from the multitude of options on the market. However, in the 1950s, that decision was somewhat simpler. If you wanted a pedigree grand tourer with an emphasis on top speed, then the Jaguar XK 120 and Mercedes 300 SL provided two equally enticing options. If open-top style was more to your tastes, then the BMW 507 would have been a perfect match, whereas if you wanted a race car for the road, then the peerless Ferrari 250 SWB was the obvious choice. However, if you wanted a combination of all those attributes; ultra-sweet handling, gorgeous styling, long-distance competence, and an extra helping of old-fashioned German reliability, Porsche was where you wanted to spend your hard-earned cash.





We imagine a similar thought process would have occupied the mind of this car's first owner when he placed his order. This stunning piece of automotive sculpture is a [1955 Porsche 356](#), and as the eagle-eyed among you will notice, this particular car is a very rare Pre-A model. As some of the earliest cars Porsche ever built, these Pre-A 356s were once disregarded by enthusiasts in favour of the faster and more modern 356 B and C models. However, what the Pre-A 356s lacked in outright pace, they made up for with their undeniable purity of design. We think you'll agree, this particular example is quite the looker.



The first Pre-A giveaway you'll notice is the windshield. While the very first 356s ever made feature a split-window design, later Pre-As like this example use a 'bent' glass windshield that fit into the same aperture. You wouldn't believe it based on that timeless design, but these early Porsches predate curved windshields, giving them a distinctively attractive look.





This example was delivered by the importer Amag to the Swiss town of Schinznach-Bad in November 1955. We have to commend the original owner on their impeccable taste, because we doubt you could specify a better colour than Jadegrün (Jade Green) on a 356; it's a hue that just works so well on this Porsche's organic curves. Inside, this Porsche was fitted with beige leatherette upholstery, perfectly complementing that light metallic green exterior. We can only imagine the joy this car's first owner experienced whilst getting to know his new sports car on the outstanding mountain passes Switzerland is so famous for. Surely, he must have felt he made the right choice, we doubt the more powerful but larger offerings from Porsche's competition would have been able to keep up with the lithe little Porsche on the twisting Swiss tarmac.



This 356 would enjoy Switzerland's roads until the early 1960s, when it would be exported to Sweden, staying there right up until the 2000s. Following its sale to a German enthusiast, it was decided that the little Porsche deserved a restoration. In 2020, it was purchased by the current owner, who completed the project and brought this 356 into the impeccable state you see today. Over 600 hours were spent on the bodywork alone, while the paint job was thankfully resprayed in its original fantastic colour. During this time, 356 specialist Jean-Philippe Duval ensured that the engine, gearbox, and running gear were restored to the highest level, while the upholstery was also brought up to the same impeccable standard.



With two years and 210,000 euros spent bringing this outstanding and early 356 into the utterly gorgeous state you see here today, now is the perfect time to add this Porsche to your collection. While subsequent Porsche models have naturally exceeded the 356's performance figures, in our opinion, none will ever truly compare to the car that established the Porsche design language we all know and love.

As an extremely rare and well-sorted example of one of Porsche's earliest models, this would make a fantastic addition to any collection of Stuttgart's finest. So, if this Jade Green beauty has caught your eye, you'll want to check out [Aguttes' Autumn Sale in Paris on December 14th](#).

Photos by Simon Gosselin

Gallery

