

CLASSIC DRIVER

5 collector cars to put into your garage this week

Lead

This week's Market Finds include a golden Gordini, a bespoke Bentley built for the Sultan of Brunei, a charming convertible to complete any BMW 3 Series collection, a rally Volvo for daredevils, and the perfect Porsche 996 Carrera 4S. As always: send your enquiries quickly before they're all gone!



'SuFaCon'

While the market for supercars in the 1980s and 1990s was rather small by today's standards, one particular client kept luxury car brands and design studios busier than any other buyer. In fact, the Royal Family of Brunei – a tiny nation on the island of Borneo sitting on large oil deposits – can be seen as a pioneer for the customisation hype that boutique brands from Bugatti to Lamborghini are fully embracing today. One of Sultan Hassan Bolkiah's and his brother Prince Jefri's preferred brands at the time was Bentley, and of course the luxurious Continental coupé launched in the 1990s wasn't quite special and fast enough for these demanding clients. So Prince Jefri ordered 14 special commission cars that – thanks to new turbochargers and further modifications – boosted the output of the 6.75-liter V8 from 426 hp to 534 hp. Dubbed the Bentley Continental R Superfast, or simply SuFaCon, it instantly became the most desirable of the 1990s Continental range. The stealthy black-over-black car you see here is the last of the 14 built, completed by Bentley in October 1994 – and it is now for sale with Classicmobilia in the Classic Driver Market.

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Menage à Trois

To us, one of the most iconic daily drivers of the 1980s and 1990s is the BMW 3-Series. In fact, the sleek, understated, yet highly recognizable four-headlight front and silhouette conceived by Claus Luthe has aged better than most other car designs from the era. And while we are particularly fond of the chunky M3 Evo and the all-wheel-drive Touring models, the perfect three-car 3-Series garage needs a convertible. This manual, lipstick red over black 1987 BMW 325i Cabriolet with its charming French yellow headlights ticks all boxes for us. Having been first delivered to Monaco, and with just 2 owners and only 95,000 kilometres on its odometre, we'd love to jump right in, throw the tennis rackets onto the back seat, put a Vanessa Paradis cassette into the tape deck and drive off into spring. Tu viens?

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Goldini

There is something free and inspiring about designers who create cars in their spare time: think of Pininfarina's Paolo Martin and the Ferrari Modulo, or Michael Boué and the Renault 5. When his supervisors found out about the sleek hatchback he had penned after work in the early 1970s, they immediately kicked off a programme to further develop the idea. In the end, the tiny Renault became the most successful French car of the era, with more than 5 million units built until the late 1980s. And while even the modest, standard-spec R5 is becoming more and more appreciated among design-savvy car collectors, the sporty special editions like the pocket rockets tuned by Alpine and Gordini have become highly desirable – and painfully expensive. Luckily, this 1979 R5 Gordini for sale at Duke of London won't cost you a fortune, despite the gorgeously golden paint, elegant pinstripes and iconic machined wheels.

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The one!

If someone asks us for our favourite cars – and we get asked that a lot – our answer is always "It depends". Because for us, it might start with the right make and model, but the real task is to find the perfect example in terms of variant, engine, spec and trim; a mix that fits with the use case and our own personal memories of that car. As many of you will know, finding the perfect car can be a long process, but the search makes it even more rewarding. So when this 2003 Porsche 911 Carrera 4S popped up in the Classic Driver Market a while ago, we knew it was the one. Of all 996-generation cars, the all-wheel-drive 4S with its chunky hips and crisp engine sound is our favourite. Painted in Midnight Blue Metallic over a beige full leather interior with a manual gearstick in the center console and just below 90.000 kilometers on the clock, this example literally ticked all boxes.

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Go North!

Next winter, instead of fleeing the grey weather towards the Maledives, why don't you embrace the cold, buy a 1972 Volvo 142 S Group 2 racer, drive up North and harden yourself during a winter rallye in Finland? If you need inspiration, go to YouTube and look for period footage of Markku Alén and Hannu Mikkola, two of the Finnish rally legends who raced a Volvo 142 in period. This particular car was built up by Finish specialists Matti Tarkki and in Finland developed further by Kari Aittomaa. The Volvo has the original, tuned up B20 engine, which produces about 165 horsepower. The gear ratios are customized for rally use and the car has a differential lock. After driving in about 10 winter rallies in Finland, the car is waiting for its new owner. Are you up for it?

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