

Ferrari 1960 250 GT PF Coupe. BY TOM LAPOINTE

IT'S PURPORTEDLY BEEN 100 years since Enzo Ferrari attended his first automobile race, and 20 years since his passing, yet vehicles bearing his name inspire more passion in the hearts of car lovers than ever before. This is evidenced by the recent record-setting sale—for any vehicle in any locale—of a 1961 Ferrari owned for 25 years by Academy Award-winning actor James Coburn for the equivalent of nearly \$11 million. As some of the ultra-rare Ferrari collectibles push into the multimillion-dollar stratosphere, pristine examples of mainstream production vehicles such as the 250 GT continue to grow in desirability and price.

Launched in 1954 as Ferrari's first "volume" production vehicle (at 250 or so per year), about 2,500 250 GTs rolled down the hand-assembly line until 1964. The GT designation refers to Gran Turismo, or grand touring, and for its time was one of the greatest performance sports cars in the world. The small-bore, 12-cylinder engine purrs with a magical symphony that is purely Ferrari. While the American muscle car era gave birth to progressively larger displacement, European performance revolved around the 3-liter Formula 1 requirement and maximum road performance. Thus, while relatively docile by today's standards, the 250 GT's 3.0-liter engine put power to the rear wheels through a four-speed manual gearbox with overdrive, cranked out 240 horsepower, and boasted a top speed of more than 130 miles per hour—stunning credentials for the time. Various race versions of the car won events across the globe, helping Ferrari earn its legendary status. The model's sleek, sporting character, its race heritage, and its exclusivity made it the vehicle of choice for members of royalty, movie stars, and the social elite.

The 250 GT shown in these pages has been referred to as a long-wheelbase version since the more-shapely SWB (short wheelbase) joined the model line in the late 1950s. As with many European car makers of the era, Ferrari produced the engines and then passed them on to a variety of coachbuild-

ers to design, assemble, and attach the chassis body. During nearly a decade of production, the 250 GT model line bore coachwork from Italian notables such as Pinin Farina (known today as Pininfarina), Scaglietti, and Vignale.

This 250 GT is designated PF for the Pininfarina body and is unique among the 250 crowd as one of only a handful known to be ordered with the distinctive hood scoop. Painted in grigio conchiglia (silver) to accent its artful lines and upholstered in red Connolly hide, it is in flawless mechanical condition with a well-tuned Colombo V12 engine. It was fully restored to its stunning factory-certified condition about four years ago by Gran Touring Classics in Long Beach, California. Chassis 2017 was originally purchased in southern California

by a doctor, whose heirs kept it in the family. They were rumored to have turned down a six-figure offer, only to sell it during the late 1990s in mechanical disrepair for around \$40,000 to noted Ferrari collector Paul Forbes.

The current owner acquired it around 2000 for an undisclosed amount and commissioned the restoration. Since then, the vehicle's provenance has grown steadily, with accolades at several important shows. It is the only known PF

coupe to ever show at the Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance (2007), it was exhibited at the Quail Motorsports Gathering (2004), and it has received Coppa Bella Macchina and Platinum Awards at the Cavallino Classic (2003).

The 250 GT represents the "entry level" into vintage Ferrari collecting, as prices for vehicles such as the Ferrari SWB California push well into the millions. This vehicle is offered at \$400,000, which is appropriate given recent sales and the fact that this vehicle has Ferrari Factory Certification, distinguished provenance, books, tools, and restoration documents.

Interested parties should contact Norbert Hofer of Gran Touring Classics at 562.290.0110.

