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[This Pininfarina-bodied T1 was Bentley's 'Speciale' Camargue](#)

Lead

Made for the 1968 Paris Motor Show – with the intention of luring Bentley's top brass into agreeing to a production run – this one-off T1 'Coupé Speciale' was bestowed with a tailored Italian suit by Pininfarina. Not dissimilar, in fact, to that worn by the Rolls-Royce Camargue in the late 1970s...

The curious tale of the 'Speciale' [Bentley T1](#) began in 1965, when British aristocrat James E. Hanson (later Lord Hanson) approached Sergio Pininfarina with a commission to create a bespoke Bentley. Aware it might lead to a contract from Crewe to produce a new-generation Continental, the Italian happily agreed – but it would be 1968 before the design process started. The wait was worth it, though: by this time, stylist Paolo Martin had joined the company from Bertone. Martin's design CV came to include the Ferrari Dino Competizione and [512S Modulo](#), Alfa Romeo P33 and Lancia Beta Montecarlo, so Hanson's Bentley was in good hands – and it even incorporated some Modenese styling cues.

A political parent-thesis



Before Hanson took delivery of the resulting 'T1 Coupé Speciale', Pininfarina showed the road-ready prototype at both the Paris and London Motor Shows, where it succeeded in catching the collective eye of the [Rolls-Royce](#) bigwigs. However, the now-parent company was not yet ready to revitalise its flagging sister brand, and instead gave Pininfarina's spin-off production model the Spirit of Ecstasy, despite the sports coupé styling perhaps being better suited to the lineage behind the Winged B. Nevertheless, the unique nature of the Pininfarina T1 makes it a very special 'one' indeed – proved by its [£250,000 sale at Bonhams' recent Goodwood Members' Meeting auction](#).

Photos: Bonhams

Gallery

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