

CLASSIC DRIVER

Rally raid: Lancias invaded the Peak District last weekend

Lead

Spring is well and truly underway, and enthusiasts have gradually begun waking their classics from hibernation. When we caught wind of a flock of Lancia Deltas descending on the UK's Peak District, we sent photographer Jonny Lau to investigate.



It's the end of April, and as usual, the Instagram posts and stories have come flooding in from across the Channel following one of the most iconic automotive rallies, Tour Auto. Having experienced my share of FOMO, I needed my fix of motoring over the weekend and, by chance, a good friend invited me along to a gathering of Lancia enthusiasts in one of the most picturesque places in England: the Peak District.



This meant an early rise on Saturday morning for a 3-hour dash up north to the annual gathering at a country club on the edge of Peak District's national park. On my arrival, I was greeted by quite the sight for tired eyes: a multitude of cars from Lancia's rallying heyday. There were all variants of the ever-popular Delta Integrale strewn across the car park; both the 8v and 16v were represented, as well as the legendary Evo 1s and Evo 2s. Alongside a duo of Stratos recreations hiding among the throng of cars, we also have to mention the Fulvias in attendance as the model that helped first cement Lancia's off-road reputation.



My ride for the day was with my friend James and his stunning Integrales Evo 2 in Monza Red with an all tan Alcantara interior. One of the few original UK-delivered cars, this example was built in 1993. James has mostly kept it standard, apart from some subtle mods such as Bilstein B6's to tighten up handling and lovely white magnesium 17" Speedline Corse wheels. I couldn't wait to get started on the day's driving.



Our route took us on miles of twisty country back lanes perfectly suited to our speed, heading towards the iconic Winnats Pass. Although I was only riding shotgun, the Evo 2 felt incredibly nimble and did not skip a beat on the narrow, undulating roads. We even took a slight diversion up some rough gravel-strewn bridleway, contending with some mountain bikers, to take in the sights of a local disused quarry. Throughout it all, the Delta ate up the terrain with ease.



We arrived at the infamous Winnats Pass, which unfortunately was teeming with weekend traffic and prevented a clear run, but nonetheless, the sight was magnificent. The pass led through jagged sheer rock formations down the valley where we reconvened for a quick lunch stop at a quintessential English pub.



After some much-needed tea and sandwiches, we took the opportunity to round off the day with a group photo by Langsett Reservoir. Hopefully the image captured on my drone shows the variety of Lancia present at the rally, even if it only includes a fraction of the attendees! It was definitely a "taste the rainbow" moment, with some of my favourites being a 1 of 9 Derby Green Evo 1, a brilliant one-off purple custom build to commemorate the success of the Integrale, and a stunning pearlescent Bianco Perlatto Evo 2.



I drove home later that day grinning from ear to ear, with the experience only confirming the Delta Integrale's place on my dream car list; it really is one of the coolest modern classics out there. Lastly, I'd like to extend a much needed thanks to James for the invitation and the chance to capture the passion for Lancia that is very much alive in the UK!

Photos by Jonny Lau

Gallery

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