

CLASSIC DRIVER

Alfa Romeo 8C wins 'Best of Show' at Concorso d'Eleganza Villa d'Este

Lead

A stunning, bright blue 1932 Alfa Romeo 8C 2300 Spider by Figoni in highly original condition has deservedly won the 'Best of Show' trophy at this year's Concorso d'Eleganza Villa d'Este.



Created by the visionary engineer Vittorio Jano, the Alfa Romeo 8C 2300 with its supercharged eight-cylinder engine was one of the most successful cars in 1930s motor racing, winning Le Mans from 1931 to 1934 and the Mille Miglia from 1932 to 1934. However, the Alfa Romeo 8C was also a desirable road car: available in a long or short chassis, it was used by coachbuilders such as Touring, Zagato, Brianza and Figoni to create some of the most elegant sportscars of the era.



The Alfa 8C 2300 that won this year's Concorso d'Eleganza Villa d'Este is one of only ten road cars bodied as a Spider by the coachbuilder Figoni. Its first owners raced the car in the Paris-Nice Rally in 1933 and 1934 as well as the Grossglockner hillclimb, before legendary US Ferrari importer Luigi Chinetti sold the Alfa to the father of Henri d'Autichamp, who gifted the Alfa Romeo to his son, a naval academy graduate, for his 21st birthday in 1937. While the proud owner served in the Navy in Asia during the Second World War, the car was hidden away in a barn and rarely used until the 1970s.



Owned by the same keeper for 77 years, the car remained unknown until the 21st century, surviving in authentic original condition hidden away in France. When Henri d'Autichamp was 98 years old, the Alfa was finally revealed in 2014. On Sunday night, the current Belgian owner of this remarkable, time-warp condition Alfa 8C 2300 proudly accepted the 'Best of Show' trophy at Concorso d'Eleganza Villa d'Este.



The jury had chosen the Alfa Romeo from a strong selection of class winners, including a Ferrari 335 S that raced in the last Mille Miglia, a black-and-burgundy 1933 Rolls-Royce Phantom II Continental in stunning razor-edge design, a fascinating 1956 Maserati A6G/54 bodied by Zagato and featuring the famous 'double bubble' roof, and the McLaren F1 that had already claimed the 'Coppa d'Oro' trophy on Saturday.

Photos: Rémi Dargegen for Classic Driver

Gallery

