

# CLASSIC DRIVER

## The Ferrari 550 Sperimentale Prototype was the blueprint for manual V12 bliss

**Lead**  
To many, the Ferrari 550 Maranello is the sweet spot in terms of analogue driving joy. Now you could add this incredible 550 prototype to your collection.



If we described a front-engined, naturally aspirated V12-powered, manual grand tourer with a Prancing Horse on the front, you'd probably expect a seven figure price tag to follow shortly after, but many fabulous Ferrari 550 Maranellos can be found on the Classic Driver Market for far less. However, with just over 3,000 units made, it doesn't quite tick the exclusivity box for some. As luck would have it, though, an ultra-rare 550 Sperimentale Prototype has just come up for sale with [Charles Pozzi SAS](#).



Used by Ferrari as the development car for the 550, internally designated F133, this prototype was built in 1996 and would be continually modified by Maranello's mechanics and designers to test new ideas and concepts for their forthcoming grand tourer. The 575 Superamerica-style silver ringed headlights will serve as the first hint of this car's incredible backstory, however, perhaps the coolest aspect of this prototype that didn't make production are its wild side-exit exhausts. Not only would this have provided better performance thanks to its increased diameter, but the lack of a traditional exhaust allowed Ferrari stiffen the chassis. Despite being around 200mm longer than a standard 550, two additional cross members made the prototype 10% stiffer than the production car.



Other unique elements include a longer hood and front fenders, and an air ducting system designed to help with fuel cooling. Finally, there's a reason taller drivers should be jumping at the chance to sample this rare prototype, because it features an adjustable pedal box and steering column — as seen on the La Ferrari — while the carbon-backed driver's seat is fixed. So, while test mules and prototypes often play second fiddle to their production counterparts, there's plenty of fascinating details and a handful of killer features that make this 550 Prototype even more of a driver's dream than the finished product.

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