

CLASSIC DRIVER

[Are these the three coolest collaboration cars ever made?](#)

Lead

For the most part, car makers work on their own to create some fantastic cars, but on the rare occasions when they do collaborate, that's when the magic happens. We found three perfect examples from the Classic Driver Market...

It's difficult to imagine a world where car brands join forces with the aim of helping one sell more vehicles. The automotive world is a tough one, with each manufacturer attempting to outdo their rivals, creating a never-ending race to be the fastest, most fuel efficient, safest or, in some cases, wildest. Sure, we've seen cars like the latest generation Toyota GR Supra borrow its main ingredients from the BMW Z4, but if we spin the clocks back 20 years and beyond, it was slightly more common to see two powerhouses come together to create greatness. Here's three of our favourites from what could have been a very long list of standout machines born from collaborations in the industry!



Audi RS2 - When Ingolstadt met Stuttgart

We'll start our journey back in time with the most practical machine on our list. It's a car steeped in history and one that has rightfully become one of the most desirable and adored cars in the maker's back catalogue. Of course, we're talking about Audi, who during the early 1990s wanted to bring the fight to BMW's freshly-launched M3, and decided to seek advice from Porsche Engineering, a subsidiary of Porsche AG that has been around since 1931. Porsche had a tricky task on their hands, as despite wanting to compete with BMW, Audi were reluctant to make their new performance car a saloon. Instead, they created the RS2 Avant and fundamentally changed the way performance cars are perceived right up to the present day.



Launched in 1994, the RS2 Avant became both the world's fastest estate, as well as the first Audi to howl its way past the 250 km/h mark. Quite an achievement, and without Porsche supplying the RS2's lightweight wheels and brakes, none of it would have been possible. Visually, the Stuttgart Engineering department also gave their input, providing the RS2 with fog lights and indicators, as well as other key components from both the 964 and 993 generation of Porsche's 911. The result is what many believe to be the greatest estate car ever made, one that oozes effortless presence with the power to back it up. With a mere 2,891 examples produced, it is now an extremely sought-after family hauler!

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Mercedes-Benz SLR McLaren - Talking about my (new) generation

It's hard to believe this magnificent machine turned 21 years old this year. Built to commemorate their seemingly unbreakable alliance formed in Formula One, Mercedes-Benz and McLaren decided the ultimate road car was an ideal way to boast about their on-track success. Taking inspiration from many now-iconic Mercs from their history, with the concept car began as a two-seater that was based on the R129 era of SL-Class and embodied the best of both Mercedes-Benz and McLaren, who were busy battling Ferrari with Formula One hotshot Mika Häkkinen.



The production car is one of those supercars that has well and truly stood the test of time and can successfully cause traffic jams even in a city's supercar hotspot to this day. McLaren were keen to bring their knowledge to the table, and developed the placement for the hand-built, front-mid mounted supercharged V8 engine supplied by AMG. Taking on many different forms over its lifespan, the SLR remains one of the all-time greatest performance cars of the early 2000s with prices steadily increasing year on year.

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Vauxhall Lotus Carlton - Catch me if you can

While this super saloon has its name deeply etched in UK folklore for some slightly more illegal dealings that we'll delve into a little deeper, the Vauxhall Carlton was perhaps the most unlikely candidate to receive performance enhancements from an innovation powerhouse like Lotus. Known internally as Type 104, Lotus took the standard 3.0-litre straight-six engine and promptly enlarged it to 3.6-litres, and equipped it with twin Garrett turbos for good measure, leaving this somewhat vanilla-styled family saloon with a heat-seeking missile under the bonnet. The result is over 375 horsepower, and thanks to some extra handling upgrades and enhancements from the Lotus factory, the Carlton could fend off the fastest cars the 1990s had to offer.



However, it wasn't just supercars that Carlton left in its dust, but the police too. We all know of the infamous '40 RA' story, whereby a Lotus Carlton was stolen in 1993 and subsequently used for various smash-and-grabs, leaving West Midlands' finest police officers unable to get anywhere near the car during a chase. The story is a true roller-coaster, but according to Vauxhall, the '40 RA' plate is now happily back on another Lotus Carlton, and is owned by the very same custodian who had their car stolen back in the day - how cool is that!

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There are a plenty of other collaboration cars we shortlisted for this article, but we'll save those for another day. For now, why not [find your dream car in the Classic Driver Market?](#)

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