

# CLASSIC DRIVER

## [This 1935 Duesenberg Model SJ Speedster is The Peninsula's Best of the Best](#)

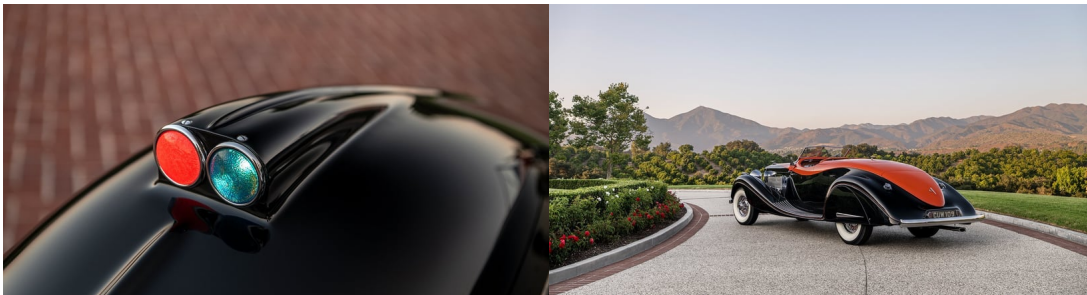
### Lead

Of all the incredible accolades to win, it is international hospitality brand The Peninsula's 'Best of the Best' award that is the one so many dream of winning. Claiming it for this year is a wonderful 1935 Duesenberg Model SJ Speedster.



Some do it for the glory, others do it for the subsequent opportunities, few do it for the fame, and then there are some, who enter cars into concours event to mark a life-long ambition and dream, only to go ahead and bring home the prize. There are plenty of incredible awards to be won out there, but The Peninsula's 'Best of the Best' is the one to win, given the choice. After some truly jaw-dropping entries, it was this delectable Duesenberg Model SJ Speedster that claimed the top spot, marking an emotional moment for its custodians.

The prizewinning Duesenberg comes from the private collection of late U.S. Air Force Major General William Lyon, whose lifelong passion for automotive and aviation design prompted him to establish a museum celebrating both in Orange County, California. Bill H. Lyon, who now represents Lyon's classic car collection as well as the Lyon Air Museum, was more than appreciative to celebrate his father's legacy, "It is a great honour to receive this award on behalf of my father. Among elite collectors, The Peninsula Best of the Best Award has long been known as a pinnacle of recognition."



Famous for their opulence and might, the Model SJ Speedster was built as one of just 38 models out of 481 to be fitted with a supercharger, making it one of the most powerful American cars available in the mid 1930s. The car was also the only example delivered to Gurney Nutting's senior coachbuilder, John Gurney Nutting, who worked his magic on this example giving it unrivalled presence and glamorous mystique. Initially ordered as a car destined for a life of royal duties for Maharajah Holkar of Indore, the car boasts some unique elements, including red and blue lights on the front fenders to indicate whether the Maharajah or the Maharanee was driving the car.



Like so many others, we at Classic Driver fell completely in love with this 1930s drop-top, and our CEO JP Rathgen had this to say about it, "The Duesenberg is a wonderful example of how flamboyant car design can look. I am extremely happy to see another Concorso Villa d'Este Best of Show car winning at the marvellous Peninsula Classic Best of the Best. For me personally, this was a special moment, seeing the entrant win with the car that last won at Villa d'Este before I made the tough decision to leave the jury of this fantastic concours."

Hosted at the newly opened The Peninsula London on 3 September 2024, from the 4th to 14th September, guests and visitors to The Peninsula London will be able to enjoy a closer view of the winning Duesenberg, which will be exclusively on display in The Lobby. If the staring has you working up quite the appetite, a limited-edition automotive-inspired Classic Car Afternoon Tea has also been designed to commemorate this year's Best of the Best Award nominees.

#### Gallery





















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