

# CLASSIC DRIVER

## The De Tomaso Deauville was the Jaguar XJ's suave Italian nemesis

### Lead

Best known for the outrageous Pantera and Mangusta, the fabled Italian brand De Tomaso didn't just build crazy supercars in the 1970s. This Deauville is a prime example of the marque's more practical creations and it's heading to Oldtimer Galerie Toffen's October sale.



Norman Greenbaum's 'Spirit in the Sky', the chant-inducing chorus of Dexy's Midnight Runner's 'Come On Eileen', and the then-cutting-edge music video of Aha's 'Take On Me' were great songs when they released, and all have stood the test of time to become small segments of pop culture. But what do they all have in common, and what the hell do they have to do with this sleek seventies Italian cruiser? Well, those aforementioned songs are the top three 'one hit wonders' as compiled by Rolling Stone Magazine, and for many, De Tomaso are the ultimate automotive one hit wonder, but we don't strictly agree with that...



Often dubbed as a Jaguar XJ copy, the De Tomaso Deauville is far more than just a slightly more elegant looking big cat. It's more of an Italian designed and developed saloon built by one of the country's more illustrious manufacturers, seeking to turn loyal owners of grand tourers like the Lamborghini Espada, Jensen Interceptor and the odd Aston Martin toward something far more unique, complete with four full-sized doors. Beat that Lamborghini!

We have to thank Lee Iacocca for the existence of the Deauville, who was in charge of Ford Motor Company during the 1960s and had worked with Alejandro De Tomaso on the Pantera project. He became friendly with De Tomaso's stylist and then-head of design at Carrozzeria Ghia, Tom Tjaarda, a talented designer and someone Iacocca could share many design inspirations with, one of which being the Jaguar XJ. During his next visit to their Italian design house, the opportunity for this quirky Italian brand to create a luxury four-door saloon, designed of course by Tjaarda, was put into motion. Shortly after, the Deauville was unveiled at the 1970 Turin Motor Show.



Both the Pantera and Deauville used the same Ford-sourced cast-iron 5.7-litre V8, which in the Deauville was rated at 275 horsepower, more than enough to comfortably blast four occupants' cross-country. Mated to the V8 was Ford's three-speed Cruise-o-Matic automatic transmission sending the power to the rear wheels via a Salisbury diff, the very same one used in the XJ6. Being a De Tomaso, this was a sophisticated saloon, but one that packed a real sting in its tail. Its chassis and suspension were developed by Gian Paolo Dallara, but it came at a price. At launch, the Deauville cost 10,000 francs more than the cream-of-the-crop offering from Jaguar, which featured a V12 over a V8, too. This surviving example, of which there aren't many today, was treated to a full exterior and interior restoration in 2012, totalling over 70,000 Swiss francs. Since its completion, the exotic Italian has only been driven around 500 kilometres and today presents naturally in very good condition.

If you're seeking an understated super saloon that is guaranteed to drum up some queries at your local cars and coffee event, this De Tomaso certainly ticks those boxes! Elsewhere in [Oldtimer Galerie Toffen's October sale](#), you'll find more gems including an [Iso Griffo](#), a stunning [Cadillac Series 62](#), [Ferrari Testarossa Monospecchio](#), a [BMW M3 E30 Cabrio](#) and many more, with over half starting with no reserve!

*Photos by Bruno von Rotz (Zwischengas.com)*

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