

CLASSIC DRIVER

Concorso d'Eleganza Villa d'Este 2011



With an entry of just 48 cars invited to take part in this year's Villa d'Este concours, it's amazing where the day went. But from early on Saturday morning to the point where the heavens opened at 5pm later that day, there was something to do and something to look at - all set in the most perfect location by the waters of Lake Como.

The event was first held in 1929. Of course in those days, it was for what were then 'contemporary', modern cars. As it is nowadays with the popular 'Concept Cars & Prototypes' class. Today, a number (that normally equates to just 50) of the world's most beautiful, stylish and downright got-to-have-one desirable cars assemble in the gardens of the luxurious Villa d'Este Hotel to be judged.

As befits the fairytale setting, it's very much 'who is the fairest of them all', and it's down to a panel of experts flown from all corners of the world to make that decision.



After the morning's judging, [Geneva-based, multi-lingual classic car guru Simon Kidston](#) provides an informative and witty commentary for the post-lunch car parade.

The BMW group (BMW, MINI and Rolls-Royce) is the main backer of the event, and was present in force with a selection of Rolls-Royces, including the most delightful 'Chinese Eye' Silver Cloud in dove grey and the state-of-the-art 102EX Experimental Electric Phantom. As cars presented by the sponsor, though, none of them was eligible for a prize.



As it was 75 years since the BMW 328 was announced, the Bavarian company celebrated the fact in style with the 328 'Homage'. This was displayed alongside the other modern concepts but, naturally enough, was not eligible for the silverware.





New for 2011 was a motorcycle concours at the nearby Villa Erba and [RM Auctions' first collectors' car sale held on Saturday night](#).

Top prize in the concours, 'Best of Show', went to Clive Joy's gorgeous, 'The Birth of the Supercar' class 1968 Alfa Romeo 33 Stradale, while the Coppa d'Oro (a prize decided by public voting) went to Corrado Lopresto's 1942 Alfa Romeo 6C 2500 SS by Bertone, competing in the 'Closed for Comfort' category.



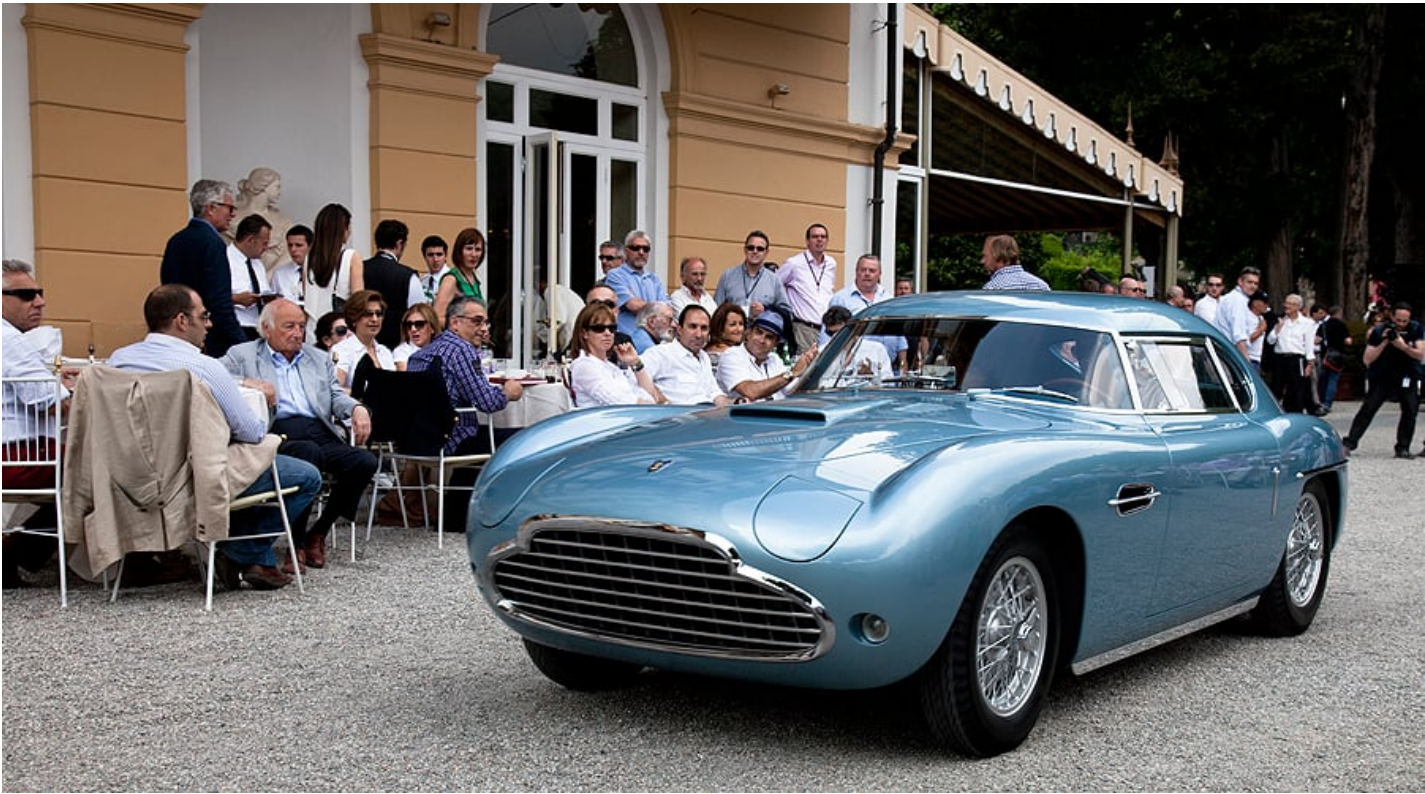


The modern concepts made their appearance in a torrential downpour, so much so that the Japanese 2011 Infiniti Etherea wore sombre black rainwear that trailed in the gravel.





The concept class was won, quite deservedly in most people's opinion, by Aston Martin's latest collaboration with the great Milanese styling house Zagato.





The Classic Driver car of the show? I'd go for the Alfa Stradale, too – even with a 250GT SWB, 275GTB/4, Alfa TZ and all manner of beautiful 1930s cars to choose from, this would be the one.

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