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[Lamborghini Jarama 400 GT: A rare breed](#)

Lead

Nowadays, Lamborghini is best known for its hyper-performance sports machines. Forty years ago, though, the company also had a strong reputation for more spacious GTs – cars such as the Jarama.

It was, after all, the grand touring 350 GT and 400 GT series of front-engined cars that launched Ferruccio Lamborghini's car company. While Miura production was nearing its final stages, a replacement for the Islero was urgently needed as a result of impending stringent American safety and emissions regulations. The quirky, dramatically styled four-seater Espada formed the basis of a rapidly launched new model, soon to be called the 'Jarama' – another in the famous sequence of bullfighting-related names in Lamborghini lore. Using the Espada as a basis, newly appointed chief engineer Paolo Stanzini designed the chassis around a shortened version of the four-seater's, with Bertone (where Marcello Gandini was working at the time) penning the bodywork.

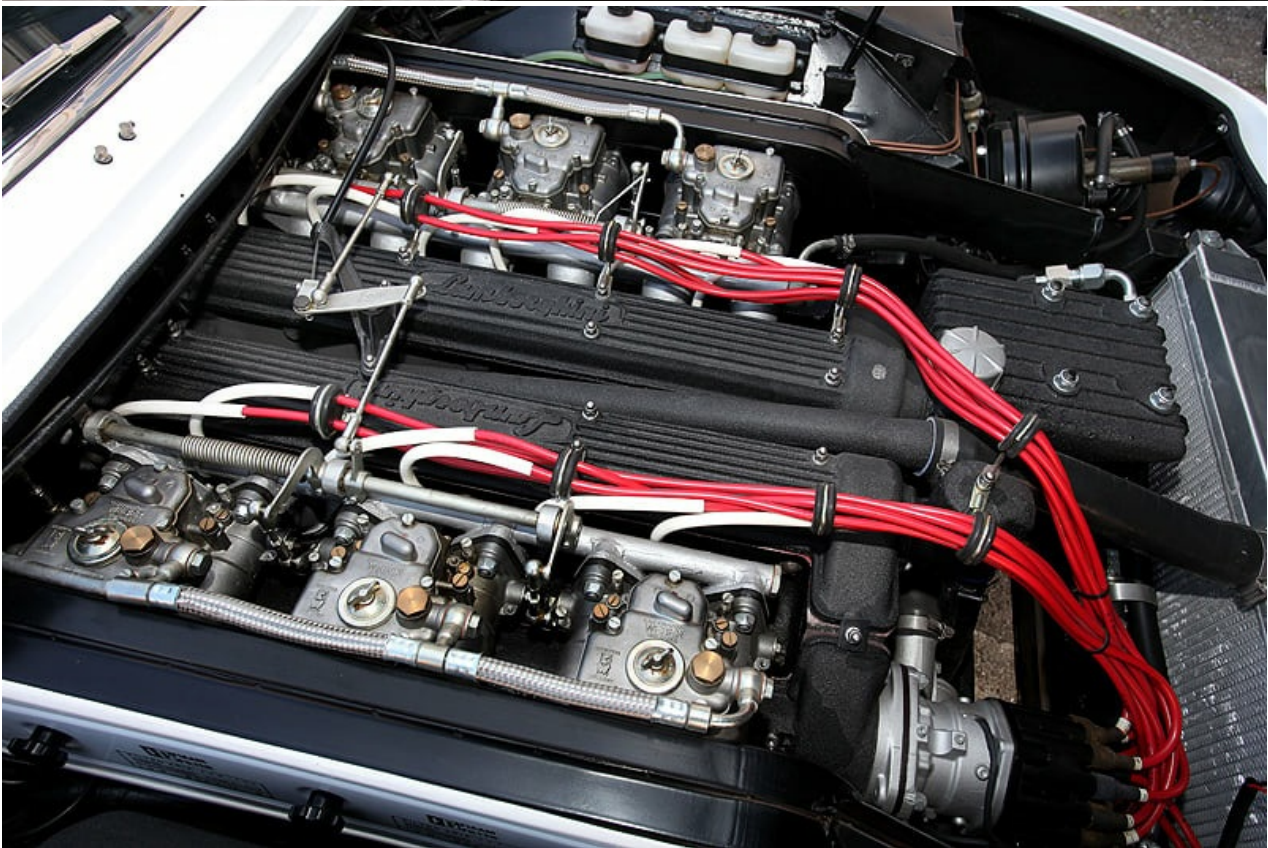




Performance-wise, the Jarama was in similar territory to the outgoing, lighter Islero: 162mph, so Lamborghini said, from the 350bhp, 3,929cc DOHC V12. As a result of shortening the Espada chassis, yet keeping its other main dimensions, the styling was not unattractive: slightly boxy, yet practical. Like many other cars of the era (Ferrari 'Daytona', Monteverdi Hai), a key styling feature was the 'dipping' headlamps. Elsewhere in its design, the Jarama introduced over-large wheelarches to the company's cars, later to be made famous on the Countach.

In a difficult economic climate - with the oil crisis hitting the model in the middle of its eight-year production run - few Jaramas were produced. This car, to be auctioned at RM's 12 May Monaco sale, is one of just 177 'GT' models produced up to 1973. From then until 1978, when production of the now 'Jarama GTS' ceased,

only another 150 examples left the Sant'Agata Bolognese works.





That does make it a rare car. And it looks good in white-with-Bordeaux-hide, as the example you see here illustrates. As with the more staid Ferrari 2+2s of the period (the 365 GTC/4 comes to mind), the edgier Miura might receive the limelight but, given the choice of a car for a long weekend away, or touring in the Italian Riviera, which one would you choose? (An estimate of 60,000 - 80,000 euros on this one helps, too.)

Photos: RM Auctions

Gallery

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