

# CLASSIC DRIVER

## [The Talbot-Lago T26 Grand Sport Coupé is a road-bred racer](#)

### Lead

Among the countless sensational news stories, it's easy to forget that there are many seriously special non-Ferrari lots going under the gavel during the Monterey car week. This Talbot-Lago T26 Grand Sport Coupé, to be offered by Bonhams at its Quail Lodge sale, is one of them...

For today's discerning collector, provenance is everything – only the very best original examples, with transparent and documented histories, will suffice. This matching-numbers [1948 Talbot-Lago T26 Grand Sport Coupé](#), with its rakish fastback body by Oblin, presents a rare opportunity to own one of the most exclusive automobiles ever produced. It virtually guarantees entry to the world's most prestigious historic rallies, motorsport events and concours d'elegance.

### Fast, powerful



Following World War II, Anthony Lago was among the quickest to get his company back on track. One of his early visions was a road-going but sporty chassis, perfect for the once again flourishing coachbuilding trade and as close to the famous pre-War Grand Prix cars as was technically possible.

The resultant T26 Grand Sport could well have been the fastest and most powerful passenger car in the world, boasting a Grand Prix car-derived chassis and a highly developed 4.5-litre six-cylinder engine, but it was also astronomically expensive. As such, just 28 chassis were built, each cloaked in individual and exclusive coachbuilt bodies.

### An (almost) perfect provenance



Chassis 110106 has had quite a life, as evident from its glorious patination, especially inside. Delivered to the Belgian [Talbot-Lago](#) concessionaire in 1958, it was then sold to British racing driver 'Goldie' Gardner, who commissioned Vanden Plas to build a one-off cutting-edge body. The off-the-wall result wasn't, admittedly, the Belgian coachbuilder's finest work, but it was nevertheless shown at the Brussels Motor Show in 1959.

There was a subsequent string of owners, one of whom had the car re-bodied by Martial Oblin in the pretty (and much lighter) coupé body it wears today. After enjoying moderate success in period, on events such as the gruelling Liège-Rome-Liège and the Spa 24 Hours, the car has since been regularly used as intended, as well as on various track days. Bar one accident at Spa in 2002 (the roof didn't cave in, thanks in part to Oblin's clever 'Superleggera' construction), the car is remarkably original – just take a look at those seats.

### Brutally enticing



The beauty of this T26 Grand Sport is that it's the quintessential all-rounder. Elegant and stylish, it'd look just as 'right' on the concours lawns at [Pebble Beach](#) as it would bounding along the Côte d'Azur. Yet underneath it's a hairy-chested 190bhp racing car, more than capable of holding its own on the toughest historic rallies and motorsport events. Billed by Bonhams as 'brutally enticing', the car will be offered at its Quail Lodge sale next month with an attached estimate of £650,000 to £880,000. Are you man enough?

**Gallery**















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