

CLASSIC DRIVER

[What not to miss at the 2015 Concorso d'Eleganza Villa d'Este](#)

Lead

Held in the immaculate grounds of the Grand Hotel Villa d'Este and neighbouring Villa Erba, and set against the picturesque and tranquil backdrop of Lake Como, the Concorso d'Eleganza Villa d'Este is one of the most beautiful (and tradition-steeped) events on the classic calendar...

It's telling of the surging interest in more modern classics that the overall theme of this year's [Villa d'Este](#) (one of the world's premiere concours event, let's not forget) should celebrate the Seventies and its proud and distinct style. As well as dedicated classes in the concorso for vehicles of the era, there will be a 'Seventies Style' event on the Saturday evening, held in the pavilion at the Villa Erba. What's more, our own 'Seventies baby' J. Philip Rathgen will have a prominent role in the automotive pageant: the Classic Driver lifestyle editor has been selected as one of the concorso judges.



Focusing on 'design, originality and perfect preservation', the 50-odd historic cars assembled to contest the Concorso d'Eleganza's coveted 'Best of Show' award are as varied and special as you'll find anywhere. Nine classes have been devised, ranging from 'Pre-War Coachbuilt Luxury' to the more intriguing 'How Fast is Fast Enough - Mid- and Rear-Engined Supercars from the Disco Era' (the latter being one of the classes to slot under the aforementioned overarching theme). The opulent Rolls-Royce Phantom, celebrating its 90th anniversary this year, will also have a dedicated class.



Since 2011, historic motorcycles have been celebrated at Villa d'Este, too, alongside their four-wheeled counterparts. This year's Concorso di Motociclette will comprise five classes, featuring 'Experiments in the Fifties - Beyond the mainstream' and 'Connoisseur's Choice - Extravagance on two wheels'. Rarities will include a Motobécane SSC Gran Sport, an unusual art-deco-style 500cc machine from 1934, and a 1912 Puch Typ N, one of the few remaining vehicles from the early years of Johann Puch's eponymous company.



BMW's unique Art Cars will be celebrated with an exhibition in the Villa Erba's rotunda. Reflecting the art and culture of the time, four of the five cars set to be displayed aptly herald from the Seventies, including the very 3.0 CSL which, having been painted by Alexander Calder in 1975, began the famous tradition.

Speaking of the 3.0 CSL, BMW has chosen Villa d'Este to reveal its [new 3.0 CSL Hommage](#), which we teased just last week. It'll take pride of place on the gentle shores of Lake Como, alongside some 15 other modern concepts and prototypes, of which one will be chosen by the public as the winner. If you like your prototypes older, fear not: this striking [BMW-Glas V8](#) - the only one in existence bodied by Pietro Frua - will cross the block at [RM Sotheby's Villa Erba sale](#) on Saturday evening.



While Saturday's concorso d'eleganza at the Villa d'Este is strictly reserved for competitors and entrants, Sunday's 'Days of Elegance' at the Villa Erba is open to the public. Arrive extra early, grab an espresso (or an Aperol, if you so desire) and soak up the extraordinary atmosphere as the cars make their way from the hotel to the show ground.

Photos: Rémi Dargegen for Classic Driver © 2014

Gallery

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