

CLASSIC DRIVER

What not to miss at Monterey & Pebble Beach Week 2015

Lead

Like the proverbial 'swallows returning to Capistrano' each year, tens of thousands of the world's most rabid classic car enthusiasts converge on California's Monterey Peninsula for the automotive equivalent of Woodstock...

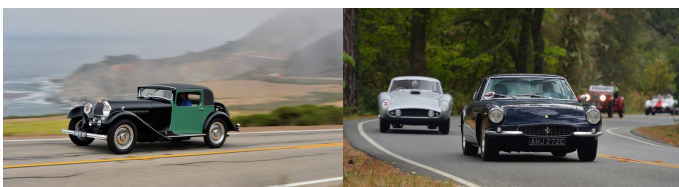
It's always the Summer of Car Love in central California for what used to be called 'The Weekend' but has grown to become 'The Week'. And if you haven't made your travel plans yet, best get Google fired up, because rooms, flights, and hire cars rapidly become fully booked - and at top dollar.

The Concours



The Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance has, for more than 60 years, been the epicentre of Monterey Car Week. Expect about 200 of the finest and rarest classics, arguably the best on any given single day, anywhere in the world. It happens on Sunday 16 August at the world-famous Pebble Beach Lodge, and highlights this year include an historic gathering of early Shelby GT350s, celebrating that seminal Mustang's birth 50 years ago. There are several special classes dedicated to Ferrari again this year, and expect a fly-by appearance of the 1955 Mille-Miglia-winning Mercedes-Benz 300SLR #722, along with its most legendary pilot, Sir Stirling Moss (a long-time Honorary Judge at Pebble Beach). More additional special classes are dedicated to DuPont, Carrozzeria Touring, pre-WWII British, Cunningham, and the 75th anniversary of the original Lincoln Continental.

The Tour



The most hearty and knowledgeable types will show up at the field's entrance at around 6:30am for the Hagerty Insurance-sponsored Dawn Patrol gathering to witness the entrants' arrival onto Pebble's vaunted 18th Fairway. If you're in town as early as Thursday, pick a spot along the route of the Pebble Beach Tour d'Elegance (we recommend arriving early in Carmel's Ocean Avenue for prime viewing real estate), an 80-mile on-road run that puts the show on the road, and costs nothing to witness.

Auction action



Enjoy the frenzy of some of the world's most expensive cars trading hands among skyrocketing bids and record-setting prices? Well there's plenty to choose from. Gooding & Company presents Pebble's officially sanctioned two-day sale, while RM Sotheby's also runs a multi-day dazzler in nearby Monterey. The RM Sotheby's highlight this year is a single collection of sports and exotic cars judged to be among the best ever assembled, called The Pinnacle Portfolio. Meanwhile, Mecum Auctions has substantially upped its game with great offerings lately, this year including Steve McQueen's last, bought-new, special-order 1976 Porsche 930 Turbo Carrera coupé. Bonhams is also back for its annual Quail Lodge sale.

The Quail



If you insist on "the right crowd and no crowding", check out 'The Quail, A Motorsports Gathering' in Carmel Valley. Ticket numbers are limited, helping to keep the crowd and parking more manageable, and your very expensive admission includes a day's worth of fine international food and drink, and spectacular motors.

Aficianados unite, at Laguna Seca and beyond





Historic racing aficionados are likely to look in at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca, for a weekend of classic tin running hard at the Rolex Motorsports Reunion. If you're all about Porsche, check out the Porsche Club of America's Werks Reunion programme on Friday 14 August. And if you love seeing (and drinking) red, feast on the 'Celebration of Italian Style' that is Concorso Italiano (cars, bikes, boats, fashion, food) on the following day. Plus there's a happy home for non-Porsche Germans called Legends of the Autobahn. Something else special and new this year is a celebration of the former Pebble Beach Road Races, formally dubbed the Del Monte Cup, that ran through the forests there from 1950 to 1956, prior to the opening of Laguna Seca Raceway in 1957. This year, a group of historic racing Ferraris will retrace the original race route taken by winners that included Jim Kimberly and Phil Hill, the latter being the only person to win the Pebble Beach sports car races and Best of Show at the Concours. This commemorative run is open to public view, and is taking place on Friday 14 August.

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Gallery

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