

CLASSIC DRIVER

This unique AC Aceca-Bristol is the thinking man’s 1950s Grand Tourer

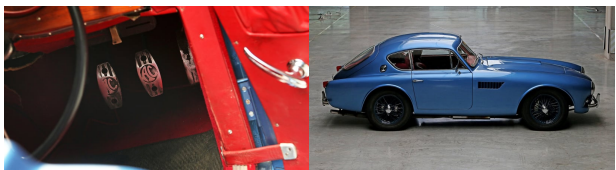
Lead
The Cobra might be the machine for which AC Cars is most well-known, but it could be argued that the Anglo-American roadster would never have come to be without the preceding Aceca-Bristol – a faster and more luxurious hard-top version of the humble Ace. Here’s your chance to own a unique prototype...



One of just 169 Aceca-Bristols built, this particular example – recorded in the factory ledger as the ‘Ex-Prototype Wide-Track Aceca’ – was originally used as a testbed for various technological advancements by the Thames Ditton company’s co-owner Charles Hurlock. It differs to other Acecas in numerous ways, not least in its sophisticated wishbone and coil-over suspension, rack-and-pinion steering, and GKN differential, all of which are said to greatly improve the car’s handling and road-holding.



There are a few visual tweaks, too, such as the subtly flared wheel arches and sporty slotted vents on the front wings. It’s perhaps in the sumptuous red interior where the changes are most noticeable. Thanks to an engine mounted further forward in the chassis, the cabin is more spacious and the driving position far more comfortable, especially for taller drivers. Alas, financial restrictions meant that the prototype features were limited to this car, making it entirely unique and something of an enigma.



After its prototype duties were complete, the Aceca-Bristol’s subsequent owners included the late Sir Antony Richard Pilkington, who was a keen classic car collector. An elegant, hand-built Grand Tourer boasting both a unique provenance and specification, ‘3 KPC’ [will be sold at Aguttes’ forthcoming Les Grandes Heures Automobiles sale](#) at Monthéry on 30 September, where it will have an attached pre-sale estimate of 200,000-300,000 euros.

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