

CLASSIC DRIVER

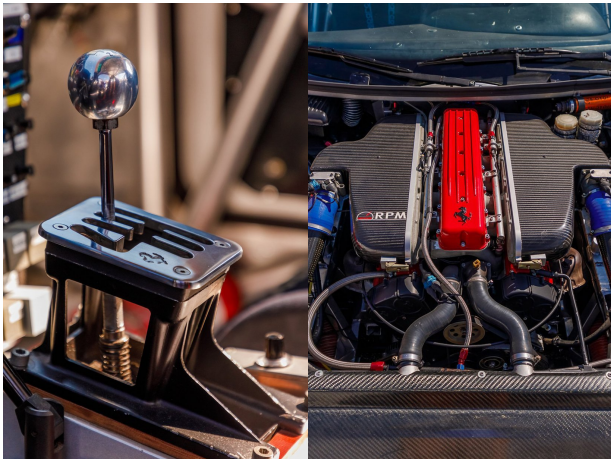
[This is the Ferrari 550 race car you didn't know about](#)

Lead

The 550 is one of Maranello's finest grand tourers and many will have heard of Prodrive's race car, but you may not know about XL Racing, who built two 550s into track superstars of their own.



The road-going Ferrari 550 has undeniably earned itself a place among Ferrari's greatest front-engined supercars and is undoubtedly a modern classic. With 12 cylinders of Italian operatics mated to an open-gate manual and some of Pininfarina's finest bodywork, the 550 Maranello offers an experience that cannot be replicated by any new Ferrari two decades later. XL Racing clearly recognised the 550's brilliance from the start because, like Prodrive, they decided it would be simply unethical not to grace the racetracks of the world with a car this spectacular. Ferrari were reluctant to let private teams create competition cars, but eventually they relented and thus two identical XL Racing 550 Maranello GTEs were born.



In order to ready the cars for track duty, XL Racing lightened the original aluminium bodies and replaced the doors, trunk, and bonnet with carbon fibre panels, shedding a remarkable 400 kilos. The 5.5 litre V12 didn't escape unscathed either and was modified to produce 580 hp, 130 up from the units found in the road cars. Luckily the gorgeous gated shifter made it to the final product, gaining a stunning exposed linkage which only adds to the drama of this red racer. XL Racing's two babies raced at Le Mans in 2003, however, it was only this car, [chassis #108536](#), that managed to find the chequered flag. That year, Ferrari's then Formula One World Champ, Micheal Schumacher, would take this car for a shake-down on MÉRIGNAC circuit near Bordeaux, leaving his signature on the white roof as evidence. That wouldn't be the last famous signature to grace #108536's bodywork, as in 2005, when the current owner was racing in GT2, he bumped into Alain Prost, who also kindly agreed to sign the berlinette. Now going under the hammer at [Osenat's Automobiles de Collection Auction on July 4th](#), this could be your chance to acquire one of the best looking, and best sounding racers to bear the Prancing Horse.

Gallery

Related auctions:

Osenat - Automobiles de Collection July 4th 2021

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