

# CLASSIC DRIVER

## [This Peugeot 205 Turbo 16 went from road car to hillclimb king](#)

### Lead

It's one of the most attractive homologation specials ever made, and one of the most capable too. This Peugeot 205 Turbo 16 started life as one of only 200 road cars, but was quickly converted for competition use, where it excelled.



Classic hot hatches have seen an explosion in popularity in recent years, and one of the first to gain favour among enthusiasts worldwide was the beautifully boxy 205 GTI. There's good reason for that, because Peugeot's original hot hatch was a lightweight backroad dream, offering a fizzy naturally-aspirated engine and ultra-sweet handling. However, if you're a regular reader of Classic Driver, you'll know that the GTI didn't sit at the top of the 205 pecking order, oh no. Those honours go to the ballistic Group B-derived 205 Turbo 16, and now you can own this [stunning rally-prepped and period-raced example](#) of one of the world's greatest homologation specials as it goes up for auction at [Aguttes' Tour Auto sale on April 17th](#).



While the 205 T16 you see here currently wears the suit of a 205 T16 Evo 1, it originally started life as one of just 200 road-going homologation specials built to allow Peugeot to duke it out in the Group B arena. Normally a costume change like this would cause some raised eyebrows in the Classic Driver office, but as you'll soon learn, there was good reason for it.



This car's story starts with the birth of the 205 T16 in 1984. Audi had been dominating Group B with their legendary Quattro since 1983, and Peugeot weren't about to let that continue. The 205 T16 was built to assassinate the comparatively heavy front-engined Audi, adopting a mid-engined layout and an ultra-light setup that allowed the 205 T16 to absolutely inhale any rally stage put before it. Come 1985, and the 205 T16 had gained quite the reputation, enough for Bulgarian forklift company Balkancar to decide they wanted one of these French rally monsters for themselves. However, such is the fast paced evolution of racing cars, by the time they approached Peugeot for a competition 205 T16 of their own, the Evo 1s they had been watching on TV were already obsolete, replaced by the Evo 2s that were only available to the Peugeot Talbot Sport factory racing team.



However, where there's a will, there's a way, and Balkancar were offered one of the 200 road-going 205 T16's. This might seem analogous to someone trying to buy an M16 assault rifle and being offered a pellet gun instead, but that's where Bouhier Engineering comes in. At the time, the engineering firm were responsible for manufacturing the Evo 2, and they offered to convert Balkancar's road-legal 205 T16 into a fully-fledged Evo 1. The stunning rally weapon you see here is the result of their endeavours.



Unfortunately, it wouldn't be long before Group B was cancelled for good, but that didn't stop this mighty Peugeot from competing in six European Championship rallies before the world's most perilous racing class ended for good. Following the ban on Group B, this 205 T16 was entered in the 1987 European Hill Climb Championship, which just so happened to have a category for these orphaned Group B racers. Our plucky Peugeot took to Europe's hillclimb scene like a duck to water, finishing second in both 1988 and 1989. Finally, in 1990, this 205 T16 won the championship, proving that despite the end of Group B, these AWD weapons were still highly competitive.



In 1991, this 205 T16 was sold to a Swiss collector, who cherished his Peugeot right up until 2018, when it was purchased by its current owner. Since then, this superb 205 T16 has enjoyed a complete restoration, meaning it's now ready to dominate the timing sheets once more. Accompanied by a detailed history file including copies of the original contracts relating to this car's modifications, various invoices, and other period documents, this represents a very rare opportunity to acquire a championship-winning Peugeot 205 T16 like no other.

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