



PAST BLAST

JOHN BOWE



Ferrari Daytona

THIS V12 PRANCING HORSE WAS DESIGNED TO BE THE **ULTIMATE INTER-CONTINENTAL EXPRESS**. JB TRIES IT ON THE ROAD AND TRACK



TOP Beautifully crafted gauges easily legible through wood-rim wheel
ABOVE 'Plexiglass front' replaced by pop-up headlights in 1971

I think most kids dream about Ferraris. Ferrari has done arguably the best marketing of any car company, ever. They have this beautiful, magical, mythical aura about them – and they always will have.

That magic aura is partly due to Ferrari's technical prowess. I remember when I was a kid there was a then-new Daytona in Hobart in 1970. Think about a Holden in 1970 – it would have been an HT series with a first gear that you had to stop the car to engage, plus drum brakes on the front. The Daytona had a front-mounted, quad-cam V12, six down-draft Webers, five-speed manual 'box, four-wheel disc brakes ... it was a true exotic, like something from outer space! It was a serious, 175mph motor car.

This one is owned by Peter Edwards, who I drove with at the Bathurst 12-Hour in a Ferrari F430 GT3 car. When I was given the opportunity to drive his Ferrari, I jumped at it! It was for a Maranello Motorsport drive day at Phillip Island and it meant I could drive it on the open road, not just around a few urban streets.

This is an early car so it has what is known as the 'Plexiglas front'. They're quite rare because fairly early in this car's production, Ferrari went to a pop-up headlight design to satisfy American design rules – the pop-up lights are higher.

The driving position is a bit of a compromise – you sit back in it with your arms fairly well stretched out. If you get your arms right, your legs are too cramped and if you get your legs right, your arms are too stretched out! I tend to sit a little closer, with my legs spread around the steering wheel.

It's not just a Ferrari thing – the Lamborghini Miura is worse and there are lots of Fiats and Alfas of the era that were just as bad. It's all part of that Italian charm!

The interior is beautifully appointed, with a classic simplicity sprinkled with chrome. There are toggle switches and a beautiful wooden Nardi steering wheel. Look at those gauges – big Veglia speedo and a great big cable-driven tachometer that's right in front of you. You couldn't miss seeing it if you tried! But I wonder how accurate they are – after all, they were made in Italy...

Around the city, the steering is heavy and the gearchange is Ferrari's trademark metal grid. Let me tell you, it works much better when you change gears quickly! If you had to drive it around the city every day, the gearshift would probably drive you nuts, but at higher speeds it makes sense.



ABOVE Period Michelin XWX tyres wrap beautiful 15 x 7.5-inch Cromodora alloys

BELOW Driving position is a compromise, a choice of over-stretched arms or cramped legs



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I Own One...

PETER EDWARDS IS a no-worries car nut with diverse interests: he also owns an XM Falcon and an ex-Telecom International C1300 truck! "I've owned the Ferrari for about five years," says the Melbourne-based managing director.

"It's one of those situations where I saw one driving around Melbourne and thought to myself, 'One day, I'll get one of those!' I really appreciate most cars, but I've always loved the shape of these, so when the opportunity came up, I grabbed it. Owning it is not too bad – the worst thing is I don't get to drive it too much. And when I want to drive it, sometimes the battery is flat from lack of use." – **GT**



TOP Daytona name came from the media. Official title is the unromantic 365 GTB/4

ABOVE Beautiful Nardi steering wheel; gated shift best when you change quickly

It's shod with Michelin XWX tyres, which were the tyre of the time, so all-in-all this is a very original and beautiful car. To drive it is just fantastic. The engine is simply beautiful to experience – there's a real mechanical symphony going on. You can hear the camshafts working the valves, the pistons going up and down, the heartbeat of the creature. It whirs along.

I love the sound of a straight six-cylinder

engine singing and this engine, being like two sixes, it's just glorious! The exhaust provides a howl over a sonorous mechanical foundation. It's orchestral with all these layers of sound. It's just great and also delivers serious grunt.

The faster you drive it, the better it feels, the more nimble and lively it becomes. In that way, it's like a lot of cars from that era. They seem to lighten up and pick up their skirts a little when you get more pace on them. Of course, I was hampered by Victoria's draconian speed limits on my way down to Phillip Island, but I was lucky enough to drive it on the track, too, and although it's not a racetrack car, at least you can make it go fast!

It really starts to feel nice at 160-plus, but having said that, it's not a car that encourages aggressive driving. It doesn't beg you to rush up to a corner and then stand on the brakes.

Sure, it had four-wheel disc brakes – discs were 10-year-old technology by then – but it's a car that rewards smooth pace. So I was very lucky I got to experience driving it in the city, then on the open road, then on the track, and the difference in those three conditions is remarkable.

I can just imagine what it would have been like in the 1970s, driving along the French coast with a pretty girl alongside, on the way to some exclusive resort...

This car fills you with exhilaration, it's



ABOVE Classic Pininfarina Ferrari GT shape continues right up to the present-day 599 GTB
BELOW Quad-cam, six-Weber-fed V12 able to push the Daytona to an incredible 280km/h

mood enhancing. I can't think of any other car that exudes character like this. The Daytona was created by enthusiasts who wanted to make fast cars and make people look good driving them. They had the heart and soul of the people who created them. 🍷

The Daytona is currently for sale through Melbourne Ferrari specialists Maranello Motorsports. For further enquiries call Mark Coffey on 0418 389 086



Fast Facts

- 1969 FERRARI 365 GTB/4
- ENGINE 4390cc V12, DOHC, 24v
- POWER 261kW @ 7500rpm
- TORQUE 432Nm @ 5000rpm
- WEIGHT 1633kg
- GEARBOX 5-speed manual
- WHEELS 15 x 7.5-inch
- BRAKES discs (f/r)
- 0-97KM/H 5.4sec*
- TOP SPEED 280km/h*

*Autocar, September 30, 1971

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