



'58 Alfa SVZ: No Two are Alike, and This One's Worth \$537k

Keith Martin's Sports Car Market™

The Insider's Guide to Collecting, Investing, Values, and Trends

VOTED
THE BEST
CLASSIC CAR
MAGAZINE
IN THE
WORLD
www.about.com

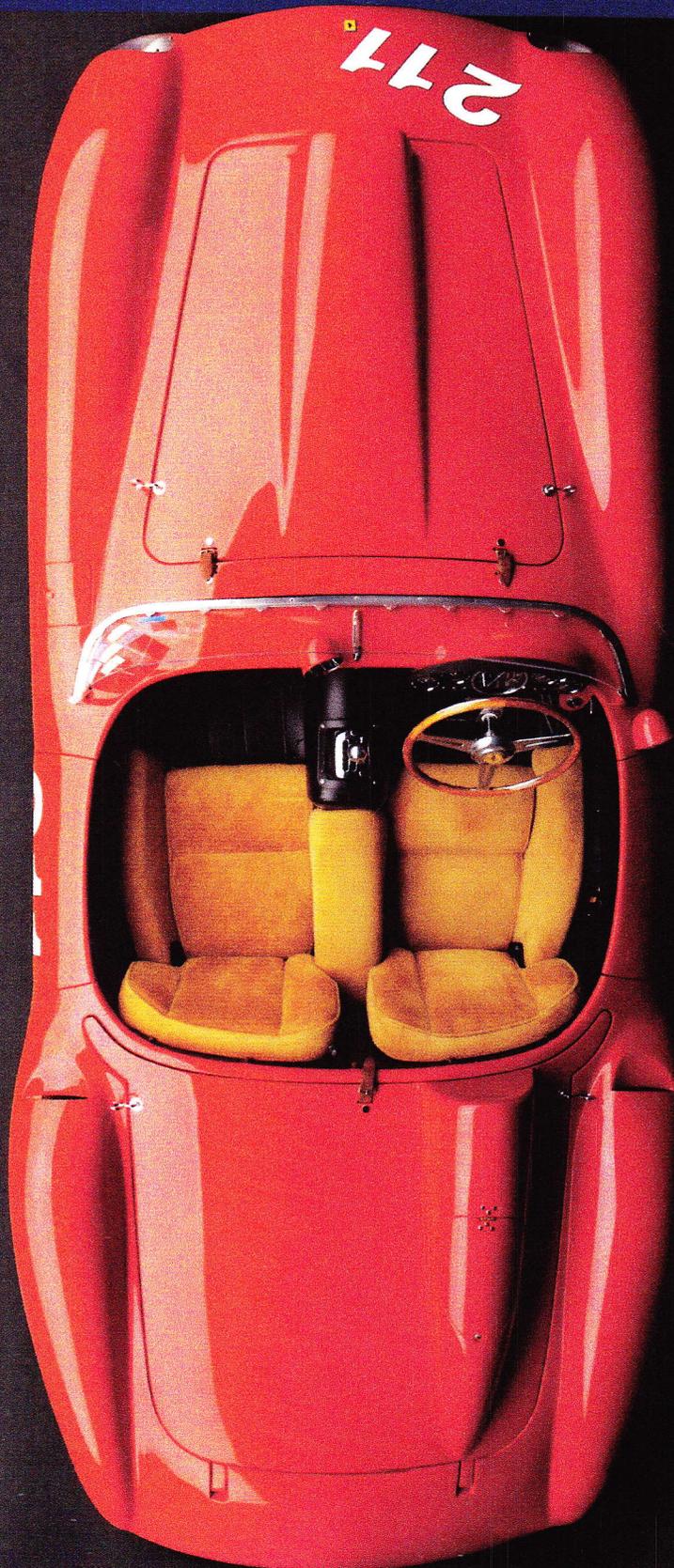
Rare \$6.5m Beauty

1957 Ferrari 625 TRC Spider

Affordable Classic:
1966-73 Fiat 850 Spider
— Slow, Rusty and Fun

**Legal Files: What You
Need to Know Before
Going to Auction**

**DB4GT Zagato Sanction II:
At \$1.9m, One-Third the
Value of an Original**



August 2012
\$7.99



www.sportscarmarket.com

1958 Alfa Romeo Giulietta Sprint Veloce Zagato

These cars were built to order. They are truly bespoke cars, and no two of the 16 are exactly the same

by Donald Osborne

Photo Credit: Simon Clay ©2012 Courtesy of RM Auctions



Chassis number: AR149306184
 Engine number: AR131530825

From the legendary pre-war 6C 1750, the combination of Zagato's lightweight bodywork and Alfa Romeo's sophisticated engines and superb chassis has led not only to competition successes but to the creation of some of the most stylish sports and GT cars to come from Italy as well.

Among the rarest of this exclusive club are the 16 Sprint Veloce Zagato coupes built between 1956 and 1959. All slightly different in detail execution; they are the ancestors of the Alfa Romeo SZ and TZ that would follow. That the line began with an accident is fascinating and tells a compelling story of mid-20th century Italian racing. Massimo Girolamo Leto di Priolo was a gentleman racer who took delivery of a new Alfa Romeo Giulietta Sprint Veloce in May 1956.

Four days later, he drove his new car in the Mille Miglia, where he promptly crashed into a riverbed, essentially destroying the bodywork. Rather than having his car repaired to factory standards, Leto di Priolo instead had the remains taken to Zagato, where craftsmen cut the wrecked panels off the platform and built a new body in its place. With a more aerodynamic shape and an alloy body weighing more than 220 pounds (100 kg) less than the steel-paneled factory car, this "Sprint Veloce Zagato" coupe was soon racking up a string of victories through the remainder of 1956 and into 1957.

This car, chassis 06184, has a known continuous history and is documented in Gino Giugno's book, *Giulietta Sprint Veloce Zagato*. Having been stored for almost 20 years in the shop of Gianni Torelli, it was sold to noted Italian collector and restorer Franco Meiners in 2007. Restored to a very high level, 06184 was shown at the 2009 Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance and re-

mains today in superb condition. This Giulietta is stated to be ready to run.

SCM Analysis This car, Lot 370, sold for \$536,648, including buyer's premium, at RM Auctions' Motorcars of Monaco sale on May 12, 2012.

You don't have to be a dyed-in-the-wool Alfista to believe that nearly all of Carrozzeria Zagato's Alfa Romeos of the 1950s and 1960s occupy the realm of the clouds nearest the peak of Mount Olympus — traditional home of the gods. They do so for good reasons — not only were they produced in limited numbers and are among the most successful competition cars of their time, but all have the iconoclastic style for which the Milanese coachbuilder is famed.

Years before Colin Chapman famously said, or did not say, "To add speed, add lightness," Zagato understood the relationship between a light, sturdy body that was fitted with light-but-supportive seats and success in competition.

Among these most prized Alfas, the brilliant SZ, TZ and TZ-2 are arguably the best known and among the most efficacious of the track weapons born of the collaboration.

It is unlikely that we would have had them if it were not for the SVZ, and for that reason alone, the model has great historical significance. That this all started with accident repair is remarkable.

Consider, if you can, a manufacturer such as Porsche creating a new race car inspired by a customer's crashed Carrera GT as rebodied by say, Bruce Canepa, which outperformed the factory's own car.

A major factor in the SVZ's success was that the FIA

Details

Years produced: 1956–59
 Number produced: 16
 Original list price: \$5,536 (Sprint Veloce and Zagato body)
 Current SCM Valuation: \$450,000–\$600,000
 Tune-up cost: \$275
 Distributor caps: \$20
 Chassis #: Engine bulkhead
 Engine #: Intake side of engine, near front
 Club: Alfa Romeo Owner's Club, PO Box 12340, Kansas City, MO 64116-0340
 More: www.aroc-usa.org
 Alternatives: 1956 Alfa Romeo Giulietta Sprint Veloce lightweight, 1958 Porsche 356 Carrera GT, 1958 Lancia Appia GTS
 SCM Investment Grade: A

Comps



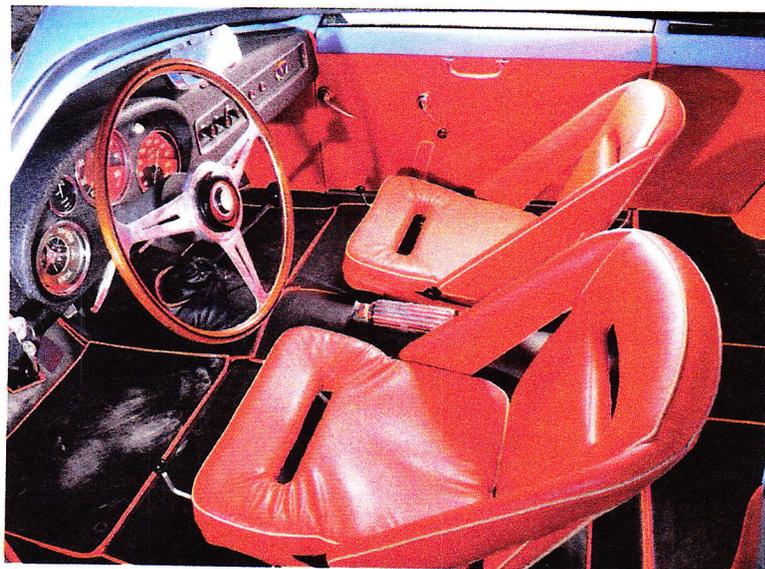
1964 Alfa Romeo TZ-1
 Lot 126, s/n 750006
 Condition 3
 Sold at \$895,014
 RM, Carmobbio, ITA, 5/21/11
 SCM# 177926



1961 Alfa Romeo Giulietta Sprint Zagato
 Lot 255, s/n 1012600067
 Condition 2
 Not sold at \$180,000
 Bonhams, Carmel, CA, 8/14/09
 SCM# 142055



1956 Alfa Romeo Giulietta SVZ
 Lot 45, s/n 1493011521
 Condition 2
 Sold at \$59,850
 Coys, London, U.K., 3/1/98
 SCM# 6442



considered them an all-alloy variant of the lightweight Bertone-bodied Giulietta Sprint factory cars, which were steel with alloy doors and hoods. As such, they could run as homologated GT cars, a much friendlier place than the Sports Car category. That the SVZ not only out-performed the factory lightweight Giulietta Sprint but also looked quite lovely while doing it didn't hurt.

Complete history boosts value

Although they are divided into two series, these cars were built to order. They are truly bespoke cars, and no two of the 16 are exactly the same. Each has a certain family resemblance to the others — as well as to other Zagato cars of the mid to late 1950s — but they are different enough that it has both helped and hindered in the identification of original cars.

All 16 cars are well documented today, with Gino Giugno's book *Giulietta Sprint Veloce Zagato* being the best reference. Nevertheless, imaginative people have labored to benefit the world with additional copies.

The international cottage industry in artisanal high-end classic car reproduction has remained a bright spot of profit potential in uncertain economic times. The level of the work performed at small firms is truly remarkable, and at times seems to even surpass that of the original craftsmen who created the automotive masterpieces that occupy the summit of the collector world.

That the details of each car vary also makes it simpler for the forger, as he (or she) can take small liberties and not be immediately caught out with an incorrect line or element. The handsome price paid for this Alfa SVZ is a tribute to their talent and artistry. When an example of a car so easily faked is offered with a complete history and only one long stretch of storage — properly documented — people pay attention

and cash in equal measure.

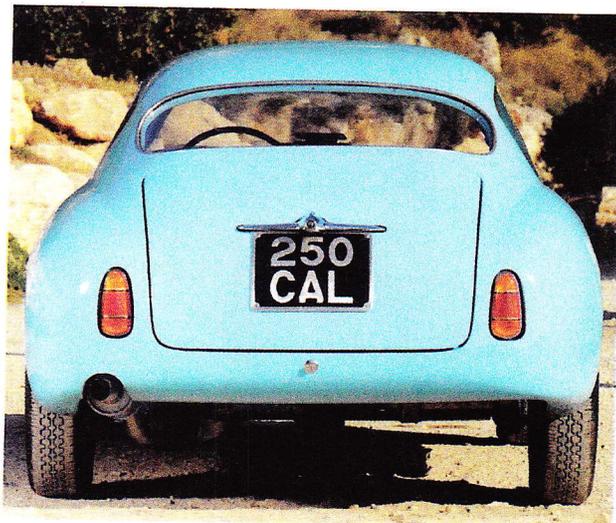
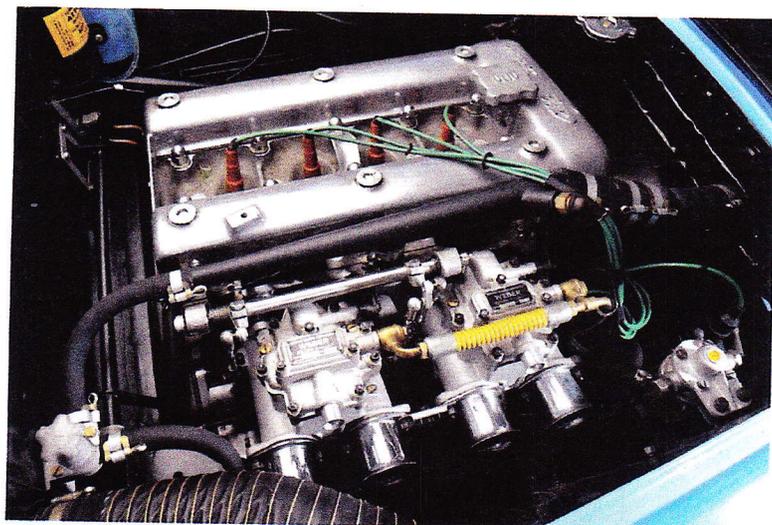
Welcome on the road and the very best fairways

As its display at the Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance demonstrated, the SVZ is welcome just about everywhere fine cars are seen. Restored to a fine level but not over-restored in any way, this Alfa would be ideal for any major collection or as the centerpiece of a new one.

The panel fit and gaps appear period-correct, the finishes in the engine compartment are as dull as they were the day it was delivered, all of the alloy exterior trim is complete, the Tecnomagnesio wheels show it means business on the road, and the just-broken-in Zagato racing seats in the correctly trimmed interior are testament that it has been driven.

This Alfa should be driven in events, and if necessary, onto concours lawns. The car will do brilliantly well in either setting. There's no doubt this SVZ cost a lot of money — nearly twice the price of the nicest Lightweight Sprint Veloce or SZ — but no matter which course of action is taken by the new owner, it was worth every penny. ♦

(Introductory description courtesy of RM Auctions.)



The Cumberlandford Perspective

Performance precursor of egg-like perfection

By Robert Cumberlandford

“Coda Tonda” Alfa Romeo Giulietta SZs are the most desirable Zagato cars of the past 60 years.

I’d rather have one SZ than two Zagato Aston Martins. As in all Zagato designs, considerations of function supersede style, and seeking formal beauty is almost never part of the equation. Production SZs with more rear glass are a bit better looking than this early car, but they are heavier. And there’s a hard, straight line down the side, stiffening skin panels but diluting the formal purity of this example.

In 1964, some friends had a suburban New Jersey Alfa dealership, where they accepted an SZ as a trade-in. It smoked on acceleration — but really scooted. Realizing it was something special, Tom and Jim O’Brien entered the Bridgehampton Double 500, handily winning the 1300-cc class. They thought they might race it again, so they parked it in my home garage for the winter before selling it.

I could — and should — have bought it, but I didn’t, and I regret it even more than the \$3,500 Ferrari GTO or \$3,000 Ford GT40 I passed on long ago, neither road-usable like the Alfa. SZs are more than a hundred times as expensive now, but if my wife ever wins the lottery, I intend to ask for one. SZs are worth whatever they cost — this one-off-cum-prototype even more so. ♦



FRONT 3/4 VIEW

- 1 Transverse hood section is highly crowned, so the entire lower body is essentially barrel-shaped, modified only by the front fenders.
- 2 The headlamp tunnels are beautifully integrated into the nose, with acrylic covers generating the teardrop fender forms.
- 3 Single-bar outer air inlets are simpler than on later SZs, and their straight upper perimeter keeps this early car from appearing excessively egg-like.
- 4 Squared-off wheel openings avoid cutting into the fender curve, which gives some longitudinal linearity.
- 5 The upper body pulls inward to the rear in plan view, providing

the impression of rear haunches without any rising surfaces over rear wheels.

6 The absence of the iconic “double bubble” Zagato/Abarth style is much appreciated. It emphasizes the egg-like character of the Coda Tonda (round tail) SZ.

REAR 3/4 VIEW

- 7 This early SVZ has a quarter window and C-pillar treatment almost identical to the 1950 Lancia Aurelia GT.
- 8 Door cuts clearly show the very rounded barrel sides of the body, which were later changed with a linear undercut.
- 9 High ground clearance of the sills is typical of 1950s designs.
- 10 One little exhaust pipe seems inadequate today, but the engine

was only a 1300, and it breathed very well, thank you.

11 Recessed lamps without trim rings were typically Zagato. Here they are wider at the bottom, but later SZs with flatter lenses reversed that.

12 The trunk holds a spare wheel and tire, not much else. This early car has a lighting fixture above the plate, which was later replaced with body color lamps below it.

INTERIOR VIEW (see previous page)

- 13 Simple, very light, astonishingly comfortable and clearly well-ventilated, Zagato seats are masterpieces of functional and aesthetic design.
- 14 The classical Nardi-style steering wheel set even inexpensive Italian cars apart from products of all other sports-car-manufacturing nations.
- 15 Nicely styled crackle-finish instrument nacelle is cheap and easy to make — and purely functional.

