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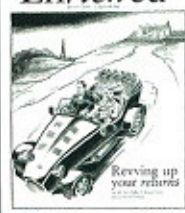
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The drive of your life

SUPERCARS COST THE EARTH AND CAN BE A NIGHTMARE TO RUN.
BUT THERE ARE LESS EXPENSIVE ALTERNATIVES

There are two things you can guarantee about Bond villains: one is that they will try to take over the world, the other is that they will have a garage full of the fastest, most expensive cars in the world. This means that, depending on what sort of mood they're in or where they're going, they can pick and choose whichever car they fancy from their collection.

Unfortunately, not many of us have a spare few million pounds on hand to buy – or the space to store – all these cars. But while this is an undoubted stumbling block to becoming the king of the road, there are plenty of other ways to make sure you get the ride of your life.

One option provides access to over 40 of the latest prestige and performance cars around. And, as well as adding a bit of va va voom to your life, you will also be able to save yourself the money, time and hassle associated with the ownership of a supercar.

hassle-free motoring

In simple terms, you let someone else own and look after the cars on your behalf. And, for the financially-astute car enthusiast, that 'someone' is a company called P1, which was co-founded by ex Formula 1 world champion Damon Hill. Basically, it takes care of the drawbacks of ownership: depreciation, maintenance and insurance, leaving its 200 members free to enjoy the use of the cars in return for an annual membership fee.

At up to £13,750 a year, plus a £2,500 joining fee, it might seem a bit steep, but membership of P1 does make financial sense. For example, you might want to treat yourself to an Aston Martin Vanquish. Now this is some ride – a beautifully sleek yet muscular brute, with a purring, guttural engine that has to be heard to be believed. The sound is so impressive that members have been known to drive up and down tunnels just to revel in the engine's heart-stopping roar.

by NICK ROME

To buy this beast outright would set you back £165,000. But depreciation means that the likely trade value after one year would be around £125,000. You are also going to have to shell out around £2,000 on servicing and maintenance and a further £3,000 on insurance during that period. Effectively, this means that the first year of



ownership costs around £45,000.

One thing that ownership does guarantee, however, is that you can drive the car any time you want. With P1, you are only likely to get between 50 and 70 driving days a year.

yours to pick and choose

But the beauty of the club is that you are not stuck with one car. You can pick and choose whichever one you want, whenever you want it. For example, you might want to impress clients, or simply enjoy a weekend of fun driving the car of your choice along country lanes. Another bonus is that the range of vehicles on offer may help you decide on the next car you buy. And the instant availability means that you don't have to worry about waiting lists for some of the top-end cars, which can be as long as five-years.

The group's impressive stable of cars currently includes the Lamborghini Gallardo, Ferrari 360 Challenge Stradale and Noble M12 GTO-3R, along with a number of more practical, top-of-the-range BMWs, Mercedes and Range Rovers, among others. And it will soon be adding the Ford GT – there will only be 28 of these in the UK, so membership

of P1 may be the only way for enthusiasts to drive this much-anticipated model.

As well as providing access to the cars, P1 also runs a number of events, giving like-minded members the perfect excuse to network.

Highlights include the opportunity to drive Formula 1 cars at Magny Cours with Damon Hill and track days at the UK and Europe's best circuits with Ferrari Challenge, Porsche Carrera Cup and Radical Cars. It also organises unique hospitality for members at events including Le Mans, the Monaco Grand Prix and the Goodwood Festivals.

alternative track

There are a number of other ways in which to experience the thrill of driving a super car, though, whether you just fancy hammering round a track for a day or want to enjoy the experience for a week away. Renting is the most obvious. Unfortunately, the choice of vehicles is somewhat limited and they are not cheap. For example, Bespokes car rental and Eurostyle both charge around £4,000 a week to hire a Ferrari 360 Spider.

For those of you wanting to spend less on your need for speed, an alternative is the Ferrari experience with Red Letter Days. This provides you with the chance to appreciate the phenomenal acceleration, breaking and handling of Maranello's breathtaking beauties. The day, which includes the chance to drive a Ferrari and have a ride as a high-speed passenger, costs £249. Similarly, if you want to drive round Silverstone, the home of British Motor Racing, a range of driving experiences is available.

useful websites

- www.p1international.com
- www.eurostyle.uk.com
- www.bespokes.co.uk
- www.redletterdays.co.uk
- www.silverstone-circuit.co.uk