

FEATURE THE P1 CLUB

# Welcome to the super-club

**T**he photograph you see here may set you wondering why you don't recognise the obviously rich and successful international celeb who is enjoying some of the finer things in life. The answer is that the geezer in the photos is me, and, despite my best efforts, I have yet to crack the secret of even Z-list status, let alone acquire the Midas touch that would make the champagne, the Ferrari 360 Modena and the country house mine.

I was a playboy just for a weekend. The country house was in fact a hotel, called Lucknam Park, in Bath, which attempts, almost successfully, to make

**Sean O'Grady** spends a weekend sampling the lifestyle - and the cars - of the rich and famous

you feel as though you're not a paying guest but there at the pleasure of some Edwardian grandee. The borrowed Ferrari 360 made a wicked change from the environmentally-friendly Toyota Prius I usually drive. And it was apple juice, not Dom Perignon.

Still, apart from feeling a bit of a fraud, I had a very enjoyable weekend, I have

to say, courtesy of the P1 Club, which describes itself as "the most exclusive and exciting supercar club in the world". My proxy experience doesn't allow me to endorse that hyperbole, but for those who have the wherewithal, the P1 Club could make sense. It was started by the former Formula One champion Damon Hill, who ought to know what the super-rich like.

Apart from Hill, there are 250 members, and for a subscription of £11,750 they get to use some very exotic machinery for 50 to 70 days a year, depending on the car and the timing, on a points system. By exotic I mean a Ford GT, Aston Martin Vanquish S, Lamborghini Gal-

lardo, Noble M400 and multifarious Porsches, Ferraris and Bentleys.

As the club points out, £11,750 doesn't even cover the annual depreciation on most of those. So, the argument runs, you can explore a lifetime's worth of supercar experimentation without having to shoulder the normal cost of owning and maintaining such machinery. Also, you get to network with other extremely rich people, although, as far as my own limited experience in that field goes, this can be a little double-edged.

I don't really think, though, that membership of the P1 Club or its rival, Revo250, is really about economising on running



**Flash Harry: the writer enjoys temporary status**

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costs. Revo250, by the way, also have a few yachts at their disposal in the south of France, should you be interested: top-end membership there costs £30,000. I should also mention the much cheaper (£500 join-

ing fee plus £3,000 annual sub) Classic Car Club, a sort of poor man's P1.

No. The sort of people who are likely to join any of these clubs are the types who'd regard a Range Rover, say, as a town runabout to complement a Ferrari and a classic Porsche. For those lucky souls nothing can replace the thrill of ownership, but they might care to dabble in something different or intriguing for a weekend or two. That way they really can have it all.

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