

bikenews



SOLD ON A COOL CAFE

THERE is a lot to celebrate about the current retro scene.

But for those of us who have been into bikes longer than the kettle has been on the boil, most that fit the category are a bit slow.

Of course, that's not necessarily a bad thing. We all know performance alone need not define how a bike makes you feel.

But if a bike looks cool – and just happens to be great fun to ride because it has decent power – that's surely all the better.

That's where the Kawasaki Z900 RS Cafe comes in.

Unlike some of the other neo-retro fat out there, this new Z900 has its roots firmly planted in the early Seventies.

The original Z900 is largely regarded as the original superbike for the road and was arguably the bike that helped change people's idea of why they wanted to ride.

A lovely ride

Rather than just having a bike to get to and from work, the Z900 was one to leave in the garage until the weekend, when you could go out and scare yourself silly thanks to all the performance.

Stand this latest model next to the old one and you will see what we're getting at.

More than just a homage, the new model is more of an evolution. It's a lovely ride, too.

There are faster and cheaper bikes out there. But there's something about this that is too hard to define.

You feel good. It looks cool and makes you want to ditch the car and ride everywhere.

Show us a biker who isn't looking for those things and we'll point them to the nearest car dealership.

Book a test ride on the Z900 RS Cafe now and see what all the fuss is about.

You can catch Bike World on YouTube or Amazon Prime.



TODAY is Armed Forces Day. To celebrate, Jag has donated two F-Types to Mission Motorsport.

This brilliant charity rehabilitates ex-servicemen and women, using motorsport to aid the recovery of those wounded in the line of duty.

Even better, the charity's Wounded, Injured or Sick programme – WIS – helps former personnel re-enter the regular workforce, and 28 have found full-time work at Jaguar Land Rover.

The WIS recruits helped build the two F-Types at JLR's Castle Bromwich plant. James Cameron, CEO of Mission Motorsport, said: "This has been an incredible gesture by Jaguar Land Rover, and an extraordinary commitment to reinforce our hard work in support of those leaving the armed services."

"It is our responsibility now to harness the excitement that these cars create to help inspire those who have so much to offer. We are very grateful indeed for this transformational gift." Good on JLR, I say.

the Sunday

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LOOK as this absolute beauty of a Porsche, sent in by reader John Plant.

John, from Derbyshire, says: "This is the best Porsche I have owned. It's a Panamera Turbo, with a 550bhp twin turbo engine, four-wheel drive and more toys than the space shuttle. It is a joy to drive. I recently drove it down to southern Spain and back, over 3,000 miles. It returned 29.6 to the gallon on fuel – not bad for a 190mph car."

If you want to see your pride and joy here, send me a picture and brief description to features@the-sun.co.uk

READER'S CAR OF WEEK



VAUXHALL has announced details of its new Combo van.

Available in long and short wheelbase form, it can carry a payload of up to a ton, and ladders, pipes and planks up to 3.4 metres long.

Like other modern vans, it's packed with useful tech. A sensor in the back lets the driver know when it has hit 80 per cent of its payload, preventing overloading.

It uses a camera to act as a rear-view mirror, and boasts Hill Descent and Automatic Emergency Braking.

The new Combo will be available from autumn.

AS I mention in the Ford Focus review below, apparently we expect to buy our dream car by the age of 42.

OK, let's run with that this time. You're 42 (or over), money no object. Where do you go car shopping?

You're not popping down the nearest Evans Halshaw. No, you're best off going to see Tom Hartley, industry celebrity and supercar dealer of more than 46 years.

Imagine your dream car collection, then add in a few examples of exotica you never knew were even on the market. You're getting close to an idea of what Tom's showroom in Swadlincote, Derby, is like.

The latest gem in this fantasy toybox is a 1967 Ferrari 275 GTB/4cam, right, one of only 250 ever built, and one of around 50 to still be alive and well. To sprinkle

DEALER WHO LIVES THE DREAM

more glamour over this highly sought-after classic, it used to be owned by Ferrari nut Nicolas Cage (insert your own Gone In 60 Seconds gag here).

Price tag? Around £2.6million. Tom says: "We believe this to be the best example in the world – it has had a three-year nut-and-bolt total restoration. We are already taking inquiries from as far as Hong Kong, Russia and America."

Tom's entire inventory exceeds £60million at any one time. There's far too many to list here, but one of the highlights includes the only two right-hand-drive Pagani Huayras ever made.

Annual turnover is around

£200million a year in this family business – the company is now co-owned by Tom's son Carl, 30.

Tom, 57, has been flogging motors for almost five decades. One of his earliest coups came when he was just 12, when the original Range Rover came out.

Tom says: "Demand outweighed supply. That happens a lot more on high-end cars these days but back then it was more unusual."

"The list price was £1,750. I got hold of one, sold it for £2,000."

"Back then, in the Seventies, £250 was a lot of money, especially to a 12-year-old kid."

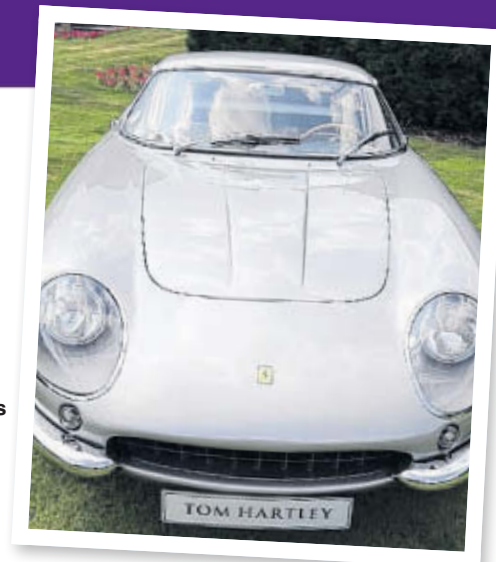
Tom's catchphrase is: "It's all about the deal." By that he means it's

not about what a manufacturer originally sells a car for, but how much people will pay for it.

He adds: "Cars like the LaFerrari and the Porsche 918 are selling for two or three million over the original list price. But it's because there's so few around. Again, the demand outweighs supply."

Perhaps my favourite thing about Tom, though, is his choice of daily car: "I drive a diesel VW Golf. It stops me from getting complacent about how special the cars I sell are."

Head to tomhartley.com if you fancy drooling over cars all day, or follow Tom on Twitter @tomhartleysn and Instagram @tomhartleycars.



EDITED BY NICK FRANCIS

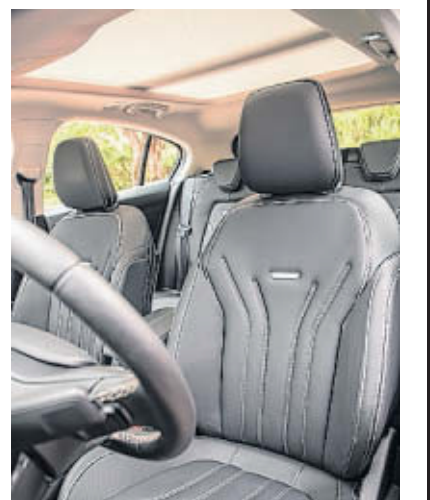
motors

'The Wagon in Vignale spec is all the car you will ever need. It's practical but won't let you down parked next to something worth double the price'

FORD'S SLEEK NEW MODEL IS READY FOR ACTION



Stay Focused



"WE'RE born alone, live alone and die alone."

Orson Welles said that. No wonder he was on his tod, miserable sod.

We might only live for three score years and ten, but there's a lot of fun to be had in the middle. Things to do, places to see and cars to drive.

Here's the good news – apparently most British drivers expect to have bought their dream car by the age of 42. That's according to a survey by, wait for it, Hyundai.

I don't want to sound like Orson Welles here, but I don't buy that. I'm not quite 42 but I know damn well I won't be able to afford a Porsche 911 – the first car to hang on my bedroom wall – in six years' time.

I'm not sad about it because for most, dream cars are just that – dreams.

Until that lottery win comes in, the driver's mission is to find the best motor for the price they can afford.

With that in mind, allow me to nudge you in the direction of the new Ford Focus.

The Focus has always done some things well, others not so well. Finally, after 20 years, Ford has given us a true all-rounder. Or, more to the point, a version for everyone.

Multiple trim flavours are available, with multiple engines. The ST Line is the sharpest looking, riding 10mm lower than the previous generation. There will be an Active

Key facts: FORD FOCUS WAGON VIGNALE

Price: £27,800

Engine: 1.5-litre turbo petrol

Economy: 49.6mpg

0-62mph: 8.5 secs

Top speed: 137mph

Length: 4.6 metres

CO2: 129g/km

version – raised ride height and plastic wheel arches – and an estate, or Wagon.

Engines include a 179bhp 1.5-litre petrol, as well as a 148bhp. Plus there are three diesels and three 1-litre petrol turbos.

The trim level I spent most time with on the launch this week was the Vignale. For eight grand over the £17,930 entry price, you get cornering headlights, a B&O sound system, wide-view rear camera, park assist, head-up display and lashings of leather.

The Wagon in Vignale spec is all the car you will ever need.

It's practical but won't let you down parked next to something worth double the price.

It looks sleek and action-ready, yet still boasts 608 litres of boot space. Design-wise, the Focus has gone a

bit BMW 1 Series/Audi A3. We all know there's no originality in this industry any more, and the shorter, wider look of the Focus earns it stage space at the same beauty pageant as the German hatches.

All versions come with three drive modes – Eco, Normal and Sport. These only alter the throttle map and steering response, but there's the option of mating adaptive dampers to the bigger engines.

And for £406 you can fit the head-up display to any model, which adds a dose of class to the traditionally functional Focus. This, coupled with the fact that there are 50 per cent fewer buttons on the console than the last generation, makes for a classy, clean interior.

When it comes to engines, I can vouch for the spirited performance of the 179bhp petrol. It's a hoot, revving merrily away and delivering a raspy growl from the three-cylinder lump.

But I would avoid the 1.5-litre diesel. I drove the Wagon with this engine and found it seriously lacking in punch. It's too gutless to pull from corners with any vigour, and becomes embarrassing the minute you attempt a hill.

Only a handful of nuts and bolts carry over from the old Focus, and it shows. This is a new car from the ground up. Great tech, more separation and choice between modes, and far prettier design will keep it one of Britain's favourite cars.

Life's not so bad for drivers who still have to dream.