



## ASTON MARTIN DB4GT ZAGATO

## £POA

After the initial success of the all new DB4 Aston Martin decided to raise their game in 1959 with the introduction of the DB4 GT to satisfy the demands of those who wanted a road/race car for competition. Weight reduction of around 90kg was achieved simply by shortening the chassis of the standard DB4 by 5 inches and using reduced gauge aluminium for the bodywork. A substantial increase in power over the original 3.7 litre engine, from 240 to 300 bhp was achieved by the introduction of a twin plug head and triple Weber carburettors. Braking was improved with the addition of upgraded Girling units from the Aston Martin racing stable. A very straightforward set of modifications only economically possible due to the hand built nature of the car produced a machine of startling competence that astonished those who drove it! It was, and is, amazingly quick! The prototype having won its first race in 1959 at Silverstone in the hands of Stirling Moss! Only 75 cars were produced making it one of the rarest and most desirable Astons ever made.

Aston Martin then took it one step further by offering a limited run of even lighter special bodied DB4 GT's using the expertise of Milan based design house 'Zagato'. Each car was shipped to Milan to be bodied with subtle variations, according to the wishes of its owner, before being returned to Newport Pagnell for final finishing. With bodywork penned by the young but talented Ercole Spada, the DB4 GT Zagato was universally acclaimed and all agreed that the shape was jaw droppingly beautiful! However, all this came at an eye watering price that could only be afforded by the well-heeled enthusiast or wealthy racing stable, as a result only 19 examples of this beautiful car were ever produced making it even rarer than the standard DB4 GT!

This DB4GT was initially registered in 1961 to Sir Max Aitken of the Beaverbrook publishing empire. Aitken kept the car until 1967 when he sold it to Bobby Buchanan-Michaelson, a wealthy enthusiast who decided he wanted the car as a 'Grand Toure' rather than an out and out racer. He took it back to Aston Martin Works in Newport Pagnell in 1968 where the car was totally dismantled and re-built from scratch to his specifications. The car incorporated a DB5 front end, DB6 rear end and interior, sunroof, wide wheels, chrome coach line, two tone paintwork and many other enhancements to become Buchanan-Michaelson's 'ideal car' and was uniquely designated by the factory as the 'DBGT Special'.

Upon completion Buchanan-Michaelson allowed close friend Innes Ireland, who was Sports Editor for 'Autocar' at the time, to produce a report on the car for the July 1969 edition of the magazine. As an Aston enthusiast and former Aston Martin Works race driver, Ireland was in a good position to judge the car, but as a friend of Buchanan-Michaelson he chose his words carefully and was generally enthusiastic about it, writing "Not everyone will agree with his ideas, but then not everyone is in a position to indulge!"

Buchanan-Michaelson sold the car after 5 years of ownership by which time this unique car had become well known in Aston Martin circles! It passed through several other hands, including Aston Martin owner (literally!) Victor Gauntlett, until in 2001 its new owner, a knowledgeable Aston Martin collector, decided on a course of restoration to return it to a more original form. He took it to specialist RS Williams to have it totally re-built again this time to DB4GT Zagato specification, absolutely as it would have been in 1961, with the rolling chassis being delivered by Williams to Zagato in Milan for coachbuilding. The car was completed by Williams in 2003 following the same procedure he devised when constructing the famous four 'Sanction 2' Zagatos, however in this case with the added advantage of being built up around a genuine DB4 GT chassis, with a 4.2 enhancement to its original engine and some subtle suspension upgrades.

The car was driven before and after restoration by former race driver, author and journalist Tony Dron who later penned an article about the car in 2003 for The Daily Telegraph. He wrote "It is perfect, it drives like a new car.... Williams believes with some passion that he has saved a lost car"

Since that time the car has had limited road and race use by its current and former keeper with maintenance being carried out by RS Williams and Desmond J Smail.

As this car is a genuine 1961 Aston Martin DB4GT it qualified for historic competition and has competed for the 2014 'Moss Trophy' and the 2016 'Kinrara Trophy' at the Goodwood Revival where the current keeper drove the car to the circuit, raced, and then drove it home again!

The car has since retired from competition and has recently been returned to its original 1961 colour Goodwood Green with black leather but retains the original DB4GT specification. Shows with 7000 miles on the odometer. It has been 5000 miles and is just ready for a Friday Workshop

Jonathan: **07773 685 322** Email: **sales@djsmail.co.uk** **www.djsmail.co.uk**  
 Our original DB4GT Zagato is for sale. Shows with 7000 miles on the odometer. It has been 5000 miles and is just ready for a Friday Workshop at Aston Martin History. It not only appeared in Innes Ireland's original 'Autocar' review but has, since restoration, featured in many other magazine articles, all of which are included in the comprehensive history file that accompanies the car.  
 8:00am - 5:00pm Monday to Friday