

VOLANTE CLASSICS: RESTORING EUROPEAN PASSION

There is something to be said about European sport cars and sedans from the 60's and 70's. They look charming, cute, different, and some may even raise an eyebrow, but all have one thing in common: they were created out of passion and an economic necessity that reigned over Europe back in the days. We are not talking about the six or seven figure Lamborghini, Rolls Royce or Bugatti, but rather the more unpretentious, yet equally fun to drive Alfa Romeo's and Lancia's to name but a few.

Growing up in Italy, Roberto Donati always had a passion for these cars and, together with Robert Salter, started Volante Classics to focus on a segment of the classic car market that they felt was

underserved in New England: affordable European classics from the height of the "golden age of motoring". Throughout the years, Roberto has established a solid reputation of a reliable, honest and upfront car enthusiast. A fact that many seem to appreciate and that reflects on how he brings his cars from Europe to the US.

Traveling four to five times a year to countries such as the Netherlands, Switzerland and Italy, Roberto makes it a point not to waste his time on cars that are in an average condition when hand-selecting new inventory. Having a mechanical and restoration background, combined with a keen eye for detail, Roberto picks only the very finest and understands – often within minutes – the real history of the vehicle by thoroughly inspecting it. As he is known to only purchase the very best of quality, his connections know better than to bother him with subpar offers, but instead guide him to those special one-owner cars that stand out in excellence and style.

By the time the car reaches the newly opened shop in Wilmington, all that's left is a detailed inspection of every single piece, carefully performed by the Volante Classics team. Roberto prides himself that the cars leave in top condition, as it sends an important message to his clients

“The steering wheel goes back to the essence of the car in that it is all about the passion for driving.”

Roberto Donati





by not only providing them peace of mind, but also emphasizing the family oriented business feeling that is so important to Roberto.

His passion and enthusiasm becomes evident when he starts talking about his latest acquisitions. Sitting side by side in the newly painted showroom are two white Alfa's, a seemingly matching 1963 and 1967 Alfa Romeo Giulia Sprint 1.6 and a GT Veloce. While these cars were officially not produced until 1964, the 1963 model is unique in that it was a limited showroom edition, to be used to entice people to buy the new car while production was in full swing. Roberto walks us through the small differences between the cars: "take a look at the sky and velour seats", he says, while he continues by pointing out that the steering wheel has exposed aluminum in this showroom model, and that the paneling is completely different as well. Then he pops open the hood "the '67 model does not have this", gesturing at the telescopic hood prod. And even the front and rear bumpers are different: made in one solid piece, while bumpers on the '67 are made from two separate pieces; even the Borrani wheels are slightly

The main goal of Volante Classics is "to provide clients with a reasonably priced classic, but one that gives the owner the same thrill as a million dollar car."

Roberto Donati

different, Roberto points out. As he continues, it quickly becomes evident that the passion Roberto and his team exhibit in restoring European cars, is something that stems from the heart. And that is considered priceless!

