



The middle classes, crowned heads of state and Hollywood stars all queue up for a Lamborghini supercar...

An aspiring Lamborghini owner usually has to wait 18 months to receive the car of their dreams.

Today, fifty years after the birth of the House of the Bull, a capillary sales network covering every corner of the globe books orders for cars which, despite the constant development and fine-tuning of production processes over the last five decades, are still delivered only after a long wait. This is because of the sheer number of orders, the company's policy to produce fewer cars than are required to satisfy demand, the high percentage of hand-craftsmanship in the manufacturing process, and the extensive personalisation options available for each individual model.

The names on the Sant'Agata Bolognese based manufacturer's waiting list over the last 50 years show how democratic it is. Right from the very first customer, the musician Giusti who led the famous band at the Capannina nightclub in Forte dei Marmi, and who Ferruccio Lamborghini won over at the Turin motor show in 1963 with a 350 GTV still under development. When the Miura was presented in Geneva in March 1966, and then in Paris in June of the same year, personalities of the caliber of the Sultan of Brunei, Dean Martin, Elton John, Paul McCartney, the Shah of Persia, the model Twiggy, Frank Sinatra and Princess Grace of Monaco queued up in line to buy one, together with Italian stars of the period including Gino Paoli, Claudio Villa and Little Tony. But a nostalgic Ubaldo Sgarzi - the Sales Director at Automobili Lamborghini right from the outset - remembers how initially, before the sales boom generated by the Miura, he used to promote the futuristic car manufacturer's brand by visiting supercar owners and enthusiasts first in Italy's main cities, and in following years throughout the world, so that they could test drive the new models developed in Sant'Agata Bolognese.



Starting in spring 1966, Automobili Lamborghini's Sales Office and production facilities were inundated with calls: "the telephones never

stopped ringing, with customers from all over the world asking if their order was ready" - recalls Ingrid Pussich, the company's Sales Office and international relations assistant since 1965 - "I spent my days walking across the yard, with the order in question carefully noted in the lined notepad that was our order book, to check up on the progress of that particular customer's car and to try and speed things up. Often customers with famous names and backgrounds turned up in person at the factory gate to check up on how work was proceeding and to have a look at the dream-like place where it was performed. And while they waited for the mechanics to finish their work, they were entertained by a jolly Ferruccio Lamborghini who, in order to while away the time, took them to visit the nearby tractor factory. Over the years, many of these customers became our friends, staying for dinner in our homes and helping clear the table!".

Although the sales network was growing constantly (the brand's ambassadors included Marquis Gerino Gerini in Milan and the Achille family with its network of contacts extending into the Middle East), there were also customers who wanted a direct link with the company and to arrange "made to measure" deliveries to their homes. During the year, the company's managers and engineers frequently set off for exotic destinations to deliver cars personally and, sometimes, to teach customers how to drive them, like the King of Morocco, Arabian princess Madawi and Liz Taylor who, they say, took her driving test exclusively to be able to drive the Countach she had bought.

Life in the Lamborghini Sales Office has always been as extraordinary an experience as it is engaging, so much so that Director Sgarzi and his assistant Pussich spent more than 30 years there, also living through periods of financial difficulty when Countachs were manufactured only after receiving full payment in cash, and when new models to present to the market were



produced by the company while it was in administration. But despite the trials and tribulations of the House of the Bull during these first fifty years of its history, cohorts of famous personalities and stars have

fallen in love with these cars, which aren't always the easiest to drive. The Countach was the the car chosen not only by Liz Taylor, but also by Malcom Forbes of the US publishing dynasty, by Formula 1 driver Keke Rosberg and by oil baron Walter Wolf, whose love for this particular model contributed to its longevity in the form of a "special" variant prepared for him by Ingegner Dallara. And then there was the Diablo, chosen by Arnold Schwarzenegger; the Espada, which perfectly embodied the car Ferruccio Lamborghini wanted to create when he began Automobili Lamborghini; and finally the futuristic Marzal (which remained a prototype and was never 'mass' produced), driven by Prince Ranieri with Grace Kelly at his side at the start of the Monte Carlo Grand Prix in 1967.

Today's owners, served by 125 dealers covering every corner of the planet, include Ralph Lauren, David Beckham, Nicholas Cage, Kobe Bryant, Cristiano Ronaldo, Gerhard Berger and Tamara Ecclestone. And while it is true that the typical Lamborghini customer is slowly changing, with businessmen and professionals joining the ranks of the Sant'Agata supercar's enthusiasts (and no longer just Arab sheiks and Hollywood stars), the cars produced by the "House of the Bull" are created to convey strong emotions, to arouse desires, and to give their owners extreme and uncompromising sensations...



Curiosity

The greatest expert on Lamborghini history anywhere the world? A genteel 76 year old lady

Who can tell you with precision when the first Miura was sold and the identity of its buyer, who bought the first Lamborghini in the United States and the serial numbers of the cars owned by the Shah of Persia?

Of Italo-Dalmatian descent (she was born in 1936 in what was then Constantinople and brought up in Vienna, Bologna and Lipari), Ingrid Pussich was Sales Office assistant at Automobili Lamborghini for more than 30 years. Recruited by Ferruccio Lamborghini because she spoke and wrote five languages fluently, Ingrid Pussich certainly didn't have time to get bored in her long career at the Sant'Agata Bolognese company and says: "It was a working life full of satisfaction and novelty. For many years, although we worked long hours, we were unable to satisfy demand (and at certain times the waiting list was more than two years long), while at other times we were uncertain whether the company would stay in business. But there has always been a close bond between the employees, customers and dealers of this brand, who even during the periods of greatest uncertainty have had the strength to ensure the company's survival."