

AUTOMOTIVE RESTORATION: YAY OR NAY?

All those TV programs about classic car restorations just make you want to get out there, purchase a relic and restore it to new. But there's more to automotive makeovers and the sooner you understand what it entails, the better will you be able to enjoy the fruit of your efforts.

Not just any restored car carries value. Those who determine which do are fickle and only a few have withstood the test of time. The VW Beetle, Ford pickup trucks dating back to the 1950s and '60s, and mid '60s Ford Mustangs are a few examples. Other makes include luxury makes like Rolls Royce, Aston Martin and Bentley.

Preparing for a restoration project

Prestige vehicles are more expensive

It's no surprise that prestige cars are more expensive to purchase and restore. The cost goes up even more if luxury components are added or if specific designs are recreated. If you have a fat budget, there's a lot that can be accomplished by a competent restorer.

Everything hinges on budget

Budget will help decide what the restored car is to be used for. If it's for display purposes then you'll have to spend more to recreate it as close to the original as possible. If it's for your own enjoyment or if you're running a local entertainment service, you can rest assured that it won't cost a bomb since you don't have to get it looking very close to the real thing.

Cost can reduce with self-help

Not everyone knows enough about cars to undertake a restoration which is why professionals are approached. But if there are certain areas you can handle, you can significantly drive down costs. Just make sure you know what you're doing.

Classic cars are built differently with different drivetrains most of which are not available anymore. Some can be procured from classic car dealers and collectors.

They do cost and the rarer the parts the more expensive they are. However, a restoration that comes close to the original not just externally but internally as well will have much greater value and help you recover the cost of the project.

What to expect from a restored car

Professionally restored cars look great and run pretty well. But since the value lies in how well they mimic the original and how well-maintained they are, driving it too often may see damage occur. Show cars, in particular, must be perfectly maintained and indeed can only be restored by a professional.

It's a factor considered by judges.

Classic cars are head-turners and well-restored vehicles even more so. They may be fuel-hungry and not all that great on the suspension but their beauty is unparalleled. While we've progressed in automotive technology, design, sadly, is not at par with the cars of old, bar a few. For senior citizens, the joy of witnessing cars popular during their younger days is priceless which is probably why quite a few turn to restoration as a hobby.

On a more practical level, restoration gives us clues into automobile design and how to perfect it so that it combines beauty and efficiency in all respects. Without restored classic cars, we wouldn't be able to experience first-hand what automobiles really looked like and wouldn't have much of an idea on what areas to improve for safety and aerodynamics.

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