

CLASSIC DRIVER

This Maserati Merak was the Geneva show car for very good reason

Lead

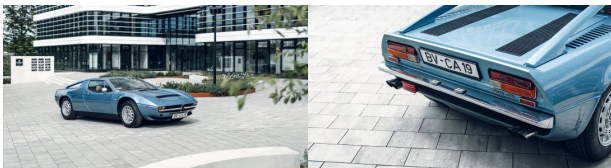
The 'Tipo 80' was the final – and finest – version of the Maserati Merak, and the bigwigs at the Trident marque were clearly proud enough of this particular example to put it in pride of place on their Geneva Motor Show stand in 1981...

Expectant visitors to the Geneva Motor Show in 1981 would have been greeted by this very Merak SS 'Tipo 80' on the glamorous Maserati stand.



The ultimate iteration of the pretty Giugiaro-penned V6-powered 2+2, the so-called 'Tipo 80' did away with the temperamental Citroën-sourced hydraulic brakes, replacing them with a more reliable and effective conventional system featuring discs at the wheels rather than on the central differential, and featured the luxurious driver-focused dashboard from the Bora. Perhaps more important to collectors is the fact that Maserati only built 65 of these run-out specials, compared to 993 'regular' Merak SSs.

It was likely this car's fabulous specification – elegant *Celeste Chiaro* paintwork over sumptuous *Senape* Connolly leather with darker brown accents – that earned it the call up for the Geneva salon. Maserati first registered this Merak on a factory Modena registration (a rare characteristic indeed) before it was sold to an Italian enthusiast via a dealership in Bologna.



It remained in Italy until 1996, when it was sold to an Austrian who reportedly maintained the car fastidiously. The handsome Maserati's current German owner has cared for the car since 2014 but has decided it's time for somebody else to write its next chapter, hence why it's currently offered for sale by the [Classic Driver dealer Bastian Voigt](#). Save for a respray in its original shade a number of years ago, this Merak is presented in wonderfully original condition, its luxurious cabin boasting the kind of charming patina that can only be acquired with years of sparing and careful use.

Considering the Maserati Merak SS Tipo 80's considerable rarity and this particular matching-numbers example's wonderful specification and provenance, we reckon it's a thinking man's alternative to the much more common Ferrari 308 GTB and Lamborghini Urraco. And who could ever tire of peering through those magnificent flying buttresses at the rear?

Photos courtesy of Bastian Voigt Collector Cars GmbH © 2020

Gallery

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