



# Etceterini & Friends Market Place

## 1972 Maserati Ghibli Coupe

Chassis number: AM 1151564

**B**y the time the Maserati Ghibli left the factory in Modena, the company had been successfully building luxury supercars for more than a decade. At the heart of their designs were two outstanding engines: the 3,500cc six and the 4,719cc V8, both of which had twin overhead camshafts and provided enough power to sweep the six-cylinder Sebring and the sumptuous V8 Mexico four-seater coupe up to 138 mph at the driver's command. First introduced at the Turin Auto Show in late 1966 as a two-door, two-seater coupe, the Ghibli was initially developed from the Maserati Mexico and, as a result, shared its stiff tubular steel chassis and its well-proven independent front and live rear axle suspension layout.

Weighing only 3,000 pounds, nearly 1,000 less than the Mexico, the car was clad with a sensationally exotic bodyshell of great elegance designed by Giugiaro and built by Ghia. The altogether pleasing Maserati Ghibli became a mainstay of Italian design until 1972 when series production was ended.

It may have been the Ghibli's extraordinary Giugiaro shape, or perhaps the well-engineered drivetrain and motor that appealed to Mr. Frank Sinatra, as he became a Ghibli owner in 1972 when he purchased the silver example pictured. Mr. Sinatra owned the car until the late 1970s when it was sold to its second owner. The current owner reports that the car has logged just under 19K original miles. Notably, the Ghibli was registered with the trademark license plates that Mr. Sinatra's cars were known to have, FAS IV, and it still retains them today.

The Ghibli is fitted with round tail lamps as opposed to the standard square rear lights that Ghiblis were delivered with. The origin of this change however is unknown. With its low mileage and spectacular provenance, this 1972 Maserati Ghibli is a rare find.

*This tired, streetworn Ghibli brought \$43,700 when it crossed the block and was sold at the Christie's Pebble Beach auction in August of 1999. This means that someone paid \$25K for the car, and \$18 large to sit where Frank sat.*

*I'm a fan of Ol' Blue Eyes, but I don't remember him leaning on this Ghibli for the cover of the "Live at the Sands" LP, or tooling around in it with his fellow Rat Packers in "Oceans 11." Nor do I recall seeing period National Enquirer snaps showing Ava Gardner, Mia Farrow or even young Nancy peering out from the Maser (boots not touching the leather seats one hopes).*

*My curmudgeonly thoughts regarding the value-added nature of celebrity-owned cars make me the wrong person to justify paying an extra \$5K for every Sinatra-attributed cigarette burn in the carpet. The fact that Sinatra owned this otherwise run-of-the-mill Ghibli makes a nice story, but wouldn't cause me to add zeroes when writing my check.*



*There are some questions about this car. How did it end up having Ferrari-like tail lamps on its rear—because of a botched repair after a shunt or did Frank commission them? Was the small dent in the fender put there by Frank's cocktail shaker, or by a careless parking lot attendant at LAX?*

*A normal buyer, looking at a normal Ghibli, would want answers to these questions. But when it's Christie's at Pebble Beach, and the champagne and dollars are flowing freely, small details like these seem to get overlooked in the passion of the "I can buy my very own celebrity" moment!*

*In fact, one might wonder just how many cars Frank owned, and will we see one every year for sale at Pebble Beach?*

*Ghiblis have never been cars that trade hands quickly, and there are generally a handful for sale at any given time. Many are in superb condition with low miles and good histories. The night before, at the RM auction at the Doubletree, a brilliant Ghibli SS sold for just over \$30K. This car had a verifiable service history, A/C, a 4.9L SS engine and was in overall better cosmetic condition. Everything on this car worked, and the (brave) new owner drove it through California the following week without incident.*

*Ghiblis produce glorious engine and exhaust notes, are very comfortable to drive and possess a robust engine mated with responsive 5-speed ZF gearboxes. Thirty thousand for an SS in today's market reflects fair value for a great driving GT that is an honest alternative to any Aston Martin V8, Ferrari 365GTC/4 or Iso Grifo.*

*And \$43,700? Given that Christie's got \$178,500 for an ex-Sinatra 1989 Jaguar XJS coupe in 1998 and Barrett-Jackson pulled down \$159,600 for an ex-Sinatra 1956 T-Bird in 1999, paying a mere \$18K premium for Sinatra history may have been*

*the bargain of the Monterey weekend. Especially with celebrity cars, the value and allure is completely in the eye of the paddler.—Steve Serio*

*(Photo and data courtesy of auction company)◆*

Years produced .....	1967-1973
Number produced .....	1,149
Original list price .....	\$19,900 (1971)
SCM Price Guide .....	\$22.5K-40K
Chassis # .....	Below windshield on dash/tag on upper control arm frame member
Engine # .....	At the back of the engine block at the top near the bellhousing
Tune-up .....	\$1500+
Distributor cap .....	\$65
Club address .....	Maserati Owners Club, P.O. Box 428, Moss Beach, CA 94038
Alternatives .....	Ferrari 365GTC/4 or Daytona, Aston Martin DBS V8, Iso Grifo, Lamborghini Miura