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1967 FERRARI 365 CALIFORNIA SPYDER

This super rare 365 California Spyder, part of an elite group of only 14 cars produced at Maranello between 1966 and 1967, represents an interesting part of the marque's heritage. The name 'California Spyder' is most often associated with the earlier 250 GT series of cars, of which around one hundred examples were made, especially for the US market. This 250 series was extremely successful, with some lightweight aluminium-bodied examples racing at the 24 Heures du Mans and at Sebring. Ferrari hoped to capitalise on this success by marketing its new 365 Spyder under the 'California' umbrella.

The 365 California was a radical departure from the more common 250 GT Spyders. It used the same well-developed chassis as the 500 Superfast, its immediate predecessor and Ferrari's most expensive road car at that time. However, the coachwork fitted to the 365 was an evolutionary Spyder body by Pininfarina. It was the first 365 model to be fitted with a V12 long block 4.4 litre engine. As a total package, the 365 California was designed to appeal to Ferrari's premium customers who demanded a more exclusive and striking coachwork on their grand touring examples. In fact, the 365 California was only offered to select and existing VIP clients of Ferrari.

Looking at the many desirable attributes of this exquisite Ferrari, it is perhaps the Pininfarina styling that sets it apart. As arguably the last of the great coach built Ferraris, unique elements to the car include its covered headlights, pop-up driving lights and door handles which hint at a mid engine air intake. Of particular significance is the design treatment at the rear of the car, which was a significant departure from Ferrari's traditional styling.

This particular example, 9849, was delivered to Luigi Chinetti Motors USA in July 1967 and subsequently remained in the States. The Spyder benefitted from a detailed and exacting restoration that took place between 1988 and 1993, which was conducted by Michael Regalia, formerly of the Merle Norman Cosmetics Collection in the USA. Recently, the car returned to Europe to form part of a significant collection of great 1960s Ferraris. The Spyder was presented to Ferrari where it was awarded with full red book Classiche certification. 9849 has been returned to its original specification of Bianco with Pelle Nera Franzi interior.

We at Fiskens enjoyed taking Ferrari's ultimate high-speed machine on an extensive road test where it won us all over with its impeccable road handling and performance. 9849 epitomizes the charm of the ultimate California. A well-turned out and sound matching numbers example, 9849 will surely prove popular with the organisers of some of the world's most prestigious rally, touring and concours events.

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