

# Sheehan Speaks

by Michael Sheehan

## A Two-Year 2 + 2

**D**ear Mr. Sheehan: Over 25 years ago I nearly bought a '67 Ferrari 330 GT 2+2 and have kicked myself ever since for not doing so. Now, being richer but not necessarily wiser, I would still like to own this car. I realize it's not a "collector," but it is a V12 Ferrari.

If one could find a reasonably good example for \$50,000 to \$60,000, with the idea of driving it for a year or two (weekends, nice days, etc.), what kind of routine operating expenses might be expected? I'm not expecting to sell at a profit. I just want to have the experience of owning the car for a while. Hopefully I can get the damn thing out of my system without losing my house.—H. N., Redwood Shores, CA.

In the early 1970s, *Road & Track* chose Ferrari owners for their first owner's survey, and in that survey was the fateful sentence that inspired my first Ferrari purchase, "It's the nicest thing I ever did for me." Since you only live once, you should get the car of your dreams.

While lacking the voluptuous good looks of their cousins, the 275 GTBs, the 330 2+2s offer

the same performance at less than one quarter the cost. Choose the later two-headlight version and you have an attractive mount with a bullet-proof five-speed, perfunctory air conditioning, power windows and even power steering—all in all a very user-friendly package.

Since no one wants to have their dreams turn to nightmares, your first mission is to look at every 330 2+2 that comes up for sale within a reasonable distance, as well as 250 GTEs, 365 GT 2+2s and 400s. Try to go to a couple of the larger auctions where there are usually a few affordable V12s on offer. The more cars you look at, the better.

Fortunately for you, many Ferraris were restored or over-restored in the crazy late 1980s. Your goal is to find a 330 2+2 that once had a \$100,000 restoration but is now priced under \$50,000.

When you find the right car, have it inspected by a Ferrari shop and get their estimate of recommended repairs in writing. As well as the usual bad ball joints, loose tie-rod ends, rubber hoses as hard as hockey pucks and the seemingly standard issue oil leaks, the car will prob-

ably also need a minimal mechanical service, a wheel alignment, an oil and filter change and a flush of the hydroscopic brake fluid. Also, make sure the body is inspected by a qualified body shop for rust and previous damage or repairs, an area many overlook.

Don't be surprised if the best car you find needs \$5,000 to \$10,000 in recommended repairs and deferred maintenance. Use the shop's estimate as a negotiating tool to drive the best deal possible.

If you do your homework, have patience and negotiate well, you'll find the right car. Then you can write the checks for the car and the recommended repairs, and drive off a happy first-time Ferrari owner. Since you will probably be driving the car 3,000 miles a year, you should only need to change the oil in the first year and possibly repair frozen heater valves or cables, replace dead window switches or any of the other minor gremlins that seem to appear in all 30-plus-year-old exotic Italian cars.

The only substantial maintenance you can count on in the first 10,000 miles of ownership is a \$3,000 minor service, including a plug change, carb synchronization, valve adjustment and distributor setup. In the end, you will not only keep your house, but you will finally have that Ferrari you've dreamed of, while doing "the best thing you ever did, just for you." ♦

