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## 1999 Saab 9-3 Viggen

AVERAGE SELLING PRICE: \$5,500

Saab has been in crisis mode for the better part of three years now, but True Believers keep the flame burning, and it burns brightest around Trollhättan's performance halo cars like the 99 Turbo and 900 Turbo SPG. The last Saab to tick all of the traditional Saaby buttons—front-wheel drive, hatchback, turbocharged four-cylinder engine—was the 9-3 Viggen.

The Viggen was Saab's defiant chin flip to the performance car market, a three-door coupe with a svelte body kit, painted in electric Lightning Blue and named after the Saab 37 fighter jet, whose name translates to "Thunderbolt." This manual gearbox-only car was propelled by a bulletproof 2.3-liter, 16-valve DOHC four-cylinder whose turbo huffed 20 PSI and made 225hp at 5,500 RPM and 252-lbs.

ft. of torque from 2,500-4,000 RPM. TWR (Tom Walkinshaw Racing) designed the sport seats and tuned the stiffened chassis, which used vented and slotted disc brakes behind 17-inch alloys, and the body kit lowered drag by 8 percent.

A mere 426 Viggens were imported in 1999, and all offered 31 MPG and armfuls of torque steer under full throttle. These hottest of the hatches, 420 of which wore the signature blue livery, were instantly iconic and, thanks to their flexible steer-

ing rack mounts, inherently flawed; with essential upgrades, they are flat-out brilliant-driving cars. The 9-3 Viggen was also built in five-door and convertible versions (and other colors) through 2002, and while the pricier period M3 variants are the default choice, this mental Swede offers so much more individuality and flavor. Viggen values will never be lower, so now's the time to pick one up—if you can handle it.

—Mark J. McCourt



## 1956-1967 Renault Dauphine

AVERAGE SELLING PRICE: \$5,000

Once you stop laughing and compose yourself, take a close look at this little French beauty and you'll see a sporty-looking car with styling all its own. And that's a positive, because the whole point of this exercise is driving and collecting something that the rest of the automotive world has overlooked. And if ever a car has been overlooked, the Dauphine is it.

Okay, so the Dauphine's electromagnetic automatic transmission wasn't the most reliable transmission ever created, but when equipped with the rugged manual four-speed box, you'll have a pint-size machine that's not only economical to own, but a whole lot of fun to drive.

Within its condensed size lies a car just as roomy, attractive and adored as a Fiat 500 or 2CV. Like its predecessor, the 4CV, the Dauphine is overflowing with riveting charisma, thanks to its happy-looking front-end design and rounded style.

With a svelte 1,400 pounds to move, its 30hp OHV four-cylinder engine of just 845cc provides just enough get up and go to get you moving at a good clip, all while returning close to 40 miles per gallon. The engine is located atop the driven rear wheels, so traction in the wet is excellent, with a light steering that makes driving easy and satisfying. Find one with the optional sliding roof and the fun factor will be enhanced beyond expectations. Too bad most of them have rusted into oblivion.

—Richard Lentiniello



## 1980-1993 Ferrari Mondial

AVERAGE SELLING PRICE: \$18,000

So you're one of those people who go to an auction and become stymied by the \$90,000 or thereabouts for Ferraris like a 1990s Testarossa that's been really well kept, or perhaps a 512BBi Boxer. Stop your bawling. If you've gotta get into a Ferrari on the sort-of cheap, here's one way.

Check out a version of the Mondial, a car that we've subjectively noted making a lot more appearances at auctions over the last two years. Conceptually, and given its spot in the modern Ferrari timeline, it should have been one of Maranello's most successful offerings ever. The Mondial followed the 308 GT4 into the market, and while the 308 was styled by Bertone, the Mondial returned this car to the hands of Pininfarina. Scaglietti actually produced the steel bodywork, installed over a box-section frame that allowed the drivetrain to be dropped for maintenance.

Introduced in 1980 as the Mondial 8, its 3.0-liter transverse V-8 was a carryover from the 308, except for new Bosch K-Jetronic fuel injection. It had a stock 214hp. In order, Ferrari boosted that total by adopting four-valve heads and a displacement increase that brought the Mondial to 3.4 liters and 300hp. The final iteration, the Mondial t, debuted in 1989 and repositioned the V-8 longitudinally, while continuing with the transverse gearbox, mirroring Maranello's practices in F1. Ferrari added a cabriolet body in 1983.

More than 6,800 examples were sold, so it was objectively popular, even if self-styled tifosi didn't like its low power and 2+2 layout. At going rates averaging below \$20,000, this is the best bargain Ferrari left on the planet.

—Jim Donnelly