

Barrett-Jackson's "Six of the Best" Blue Chip Collectible Cars

Each January, the Scottsdale-based Barrett-Jackson Classic Car Auction has over 800 classic and collector cars cross its auction podium. With a marketplace now seeing increased interest by enthusiasts and investors looking to purchase collector cars, Barrett-Jackson releases its "Six Of The Best" selection of blue chip collector cars. Each will be enjoyable to drive and should also see an appreciation in value.

"Look for the best condition car you can find," says Craig Jackson, president of Barrett-Jackson. "Restoring a car correctly, even if only partially, is a daunting task and usually a more expensive undertaking than planned."

1962-1968 Jaguar E-Type Convertible

This quintessential British sports car is as desirable today as it was revolutionary when introduced in 1961. Its clean lines and high tech specs were a sensation for the day, and the 150 mph rocket became an instant "must have" for the Hollywood set. Not much has changed; today, they are still one of the most recognizable collector cars and have been referred to as "the world's sexiest roadster."

A good restored convertible can be found in the \$30,000 to \$50,000 range. Stunning examples command over \$100,000.

1964-66 Ford Mustang Convertible

One of America's most popular cars, this is a superb "first classic" and weekend toy. A number of engine choices and option packages were offered throughout the production years, the most desirable being the Hi-Po convertible, with pony interior and GT package. With nearly every part still available through a number of suppliers this car is a great way to get started.

Good examples are easy to obtain with values ranging from \$25,000 to \$45,000.

1970-1974 Plymouth 'Cuda Coupe

During the height of the muscle car era, the Mopar image was as much from Chrysler's marketing people as it was their engineers. The Plymouth 'Cuda was street legal, but also had specifications to compete in the top race series, which it did with much success. With very rare Hemi-engine 'Cuda convertibles fast approaching the seven figure mark, the 'Cuda coupe represents a great opportunity.

The market range on these cars is \$45,000 to \$65,000 and climbing, so don't wait too long.

1957 DeSoto Adventurer Convertible

The 1957 DeSoto was characterized by up-swept tail fins and a massive bumper and grille. The Adventurer series was the high-performance line and the first base model US car to provide one horsepower per cubic inch. Convenience options available seemed endless, so the ones today with the most factory options command the highest prices. Much overlooked and ready for recognition.

Market value is \$35,000 to \$55,000.

1955-1957 MB 300SL Gullwing Coupe

A timeless automotive design conceived specifically for the American marketplace, the 300SL Gullwing was an automotive sensation when it was introduced in New York in 1954. To this day, it remains highly revered by car collectors. This car is capable of being driven leisurely, as well as at speed (even vintage raced) with great enjoyment. Its classy looks defy its performance. Buy one and you will probably own and enjoy it for a long time. The average ownership of Gullwings is longer than any other collector car. Examples with Rudge wheels and fitted luggage are considered the ultimate combination by Mercedes-Benz aficionados.

Market value is \$200,000 to \$350,000.

1962-1965 AC Cobra 289

The legendary AC Cobra is one of the world's ultimate no compromise sports cars. The result of Carroll Shelby's desire to combine British chassis expertise with the power of an American V-8 engine. Forty years since its debut, this much imitated car is revered the world over. It's everything you ever wanted a sports car to be, and more. The 289s are sought after at the moment more than the raucous 427. All Cobras are well documented so check the history.

A good example, and they nearly all are, will set you back \$150,000 to \$175,000.

The Valley hosts five major collector car auctions each January, with two by local firms Barrett-Jackson and Russo and Steele.

BARRETT-JACKSON: For more information about the Annual Barrett-Jackson Auction in Scottsdale each January and Palm Beach, Florida, during April, visit www.barrett-jackson.com

RUSSO AND STEELE: For information on the Russo and Steele Auctions in Scottsdale each January and Monterey, California, during August, visit www.russoandsteele.com, ■

