ForeWord Reviews

HISTORY

Lamborghini: Forty Years
David Jolliffe Tony Willard
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Snorting Speed: Ferruccio Lamborghini owned several Ferraris, but he thought they were too noisy and the cabins lacked quality. So he phoned fellow Italian industrialist Enzo Ferrari for a meeting to discuss these flaws, but felt snubbed as there was no response. Lamborghini, born under the star sign of Taurus the bull, decided to make his own quality automobiles.

In *Lamborghini: Forty Years* (MBI Publishing, color photographs, 10 x 10 , 190 pages, hardcover, $40.00, 0-7603-1945-6), David Jolliffe, Lamborghini automobile importer for thirty years, and Tony Willard, motor industry journalist for twenty-five, have assembled the story of Automobili Lamborghini SpA, accompanied by numerous dramatic photographs. Lamborghini, who took unused army trucks from WWII and successfully converted them into farm tractors, decided he could build his own exotic sports cars. In 1964, together with independent coach designer Franco Scaglione and visionary engineer Giotto Bizzarrini (recruited from Ferrari), Lamborghini introduced his first car, a four cam 3.5 liter V12 350 GT berlinetta, at the Turin Motor Show. His logo was the fighting bull of Spain.

The automobile company successfully manufactured cars of artful design, rapturous sound, and driving exhilaration. In 1973, however, due to a recession, labor unrest, and high gasoline prices, Lamborghini sold the company to two Swiss businessmen, who in turn sold to a pair of Frenchmen. Later, the company was owned by Daimler-Chrysler, then sold to an Indonesian syndicate; since 1998 it’s been owned by Audi, who are bullish on its marque and mystique.

The Murciélago R-GT is one of three current models. It’s a rear-engine V12 with a snorting 580 horsepower heart that blasts off like a F-16 fighter jet. One photograph shows its yellow trapezoidal design awash in gleam against a black backdrop in chiaroscuro. A bargain at under $200,000.

An elegant book about the breed of a car company.