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PRICE GUIDE
Cars of the
1940s &
'50s

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Classic motoring in the real world



Built To Last?

*All You Need to Know About
Buying a Peugeot 504*



Rustin' Peace

Scrapyards Revisited



Hatch Match

'Supermini' Classics



Restoring A Rover

Renovation of a P2



Mainstay of the Peugeot range through the late '60s and the 1970s, the 504 is now seldom seen in everyday use but still has much to offer. WILL SHIERS investigates whether this oh-so-French workhorse is a sensible classic buy

THE FRENCH CONNECTION



PEUGEOT 504 SALOON/ESTATE

I want you all to cast your minds back to the prehistoric 1970s; what springs to mind? Kipper ties, *The Sweeney*, or perhaps listening to Abba on your state of the art in-car entertainment system (the MW radio in your Vauxhall Viva)? What about the new cars on the road? I bet you can recall all those Cortinas, Dolomites and Allegros that made up the core of the comparatively small traffic jams.

It's strange to think that by 1998, *The Sweeney* has been repeated umpteen times, '70s clothes and music have somehow managed to come back and haunt us and most of the period's cars are still seen in relatively large numbers on our roads, in car shows and on the pages of classic car magazines. I say 'most', because there are some exceptions. For instance, whatever happened to the Peugeot 504?

Between 1968 and 1982, Peugeot sold almost three million of their flagship car in saloon, estate, cabriolet, coupe, pick up, van and ambulance guises to almost every corner of the globe. In fact, the cars have actually been built on at least four continents that I know of. This figure might be as high as five, but sadly the

staff at Peugeot UK's press office couldn't help; they seem to have forgotten what a 504 is, and then they aren't the only ones! The classic car press seem to have forgotten too; at least they've totally ignored the worthy saloon and estate models. As a result, prices have remained low and restorations are almost unheard of. Here at *Real Classics* we think it's about time the 504 got some of the recognition that it so rightly deserves. Perhaps we can even persuade you to go out and buy one. After all, in the words of Peugeot's 1973 sales brochure, 'A purchase of a 504 is an investment with which you will be highly satisfied'.

THE CAR

The story began in 1968 with the launch of the all new four-door saloon. This was quite a big event since new designs from Peugeot were few and far between. This

was proven by the 404 which was already in its eighth year, yet was barely half way through its production life! The new car was greeted well by the motoring press who loved the modern Pininafarina styling. They waxed lyrical about the quality of



TOP: Quite a rare sight nowadays - a Peugeot 504 parked in a British driveway!

RIGHT: The 504 Estate was always marketed as a capacious load carrier

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ride and handling, and complimented the French manufacturer on the use of innovative mechanical design features. It came as no surprise when the 504 took the title of '1968 Car of the Year'.

The first cars to reach the UK did so in April 1969, and came with a 1796cc petrol engine. All cars had Peugeot's new independent rear suspension with hypoid final drive and disc brakes all round. The only choice for customers at this stage was whether or not to opt for the single carburettor model or go for fuel injection (Ti).

In late 1970, a 1971cc engine was added to the range, again with fuel injection for the Ti model. The single carb 1.8 was limited for use in the entry level L model, whilst the GL took the new 2.0-litre engine. Cars were now offered with the excellent German built three-speed ZF automatic transmission. This year also saw the introduction of the very attractive coupe and cabriolet models, but only on the Continent. Although the cars shared the same floorpan and running gear as the saloons, that's where the similarities ended. Both cars were not only designed by Pininfarina, but their bodies were actually built in Italy too. These weren't to



make it to the UK for another two years.

The final major addition to the 504 range was the immensely practical estate, which hit our roads in October 1971. This had a six inch larger wheelbase than the saloon and was

capable of swallowing just about anything you could throw at it! The 'Family' version had the same outward appearance, but had the addition of a third row of forward facing seats. Both estates had a live rear axle.

By 1973, the 504 was proving to be extremely popular on mainland Europe, and although never selling in such high numbers in Britain, it was certainly giving competitors a run for their money. The 2.0-litre single carb 504 was both cheaper and faster than a Triumph 2000 and had a ride quality that rivalled a Mercedes-Benz.

In the mid 1970s, a 2112cc diesel engine was added to the range. It might only have mustered a top speed of

82mph, but with 35mpg and, of course, guaranteed Peugeot reliability, who was complaining? Cabbies certainly weren't.

Throughout the decade, the trusty 504 developed a reputation for strength and durability following victories in various

'Launched in 1968, Peugeot's new 504 was greeted well by the motoring press, who loved its modern Pininfarina styling'



Buying



TOP: 504s were sold (and made!) in many, many countries. This 504 Estate was spotted in Tunisia

LEFT: This late model GR saloon came as standard with a 1.8-litre petrol engine. A diesel-engined GRD was also available



international rallies. In 1975, a 504 Ti took first place in the 1975 East African Safari Rally, beating rivals such as the Lancia Stratos! As the 1970s dragged on however, so the 504 began to suffer from a serious lack of investment. The interior trim was

beginning to look dated, its exterior styling had aged considerably and both performance and quality of ride were now being surpassed by more modern rivals. When the car was first introduced, its main competitors included the Ford Zodiac, Austin 1800, Vauxhall VX4/90 and Volvo 144. However, by the late 1970s, the ageing 504 found itself struggling against cars like the MkII Ford Granada, Vauxhall Carlton, BMW 5-series and the Rover SD1.

Another damaging blow to 504 sales came in 1975 with the introduction of the 604. This car used the new PRV V6 engine and had internal luxuries that 504 owners could only dream about. It was the new flagship of the range and naturally stole customers away from the 504. The final nail in the coffin however, came in 1979 when the 505 saloon hit Europe's roads. Although the new car was clearly a replacement for the

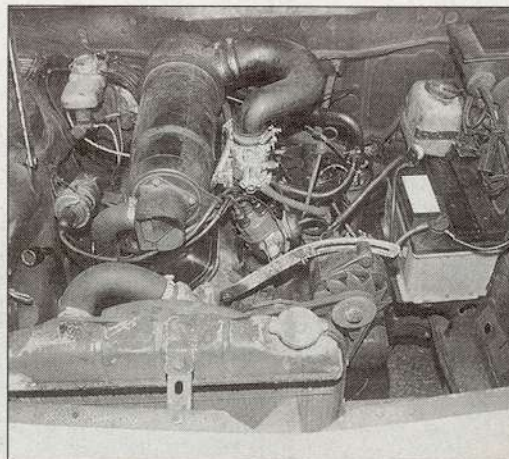
'In later life, the 504 was somewhat stripped of its former glory, becoming something of a budget car'

504, the two vehicles were allowed to stand side by side in showrooms for more than two years.

In later life, the 504 was somewhat stripped of its former glory, becoming something of a budget car. Few buyers were attracted to the saloon

which had now lost its fuel injection and was available only as a 1.8 in GR form or with a diesel engine as a GRD. These downgraded saloons now shared the same live rear axle as the estates and diesel cars. Gone too were many of the luxuries the car had once been adorned with. For instance, 504 saloons no longer came with halogen headlamps or headrests in the front. How many 'W' registered saloons have you seen? The 504 estate however, was still available with the 2.0 litre unit and it would continue to sell very well until 1982 when the 505 estate belatedly arrived on the scene.

In 1982, after an impressive 14 years, the 504 finally took its retirement, although it wasn't completely pensioned off. Not only did Peugeot decide that the pick-up had many more years of life in it, but it sent 504 tooling to locations across the world, where production



TOP: The 504 pick-up remained on sale in the UK well into the early 1990s, more than a decade after the last of the Estates was withdrawn

RIGHT: All 504 engines are reliable and long-lived

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was to start all over again. Sixteen years later, the saloon, estate and pick-up are still advertised on the official Peugeot website, and it is believed that the cars are still being made in Argentina, Kenya, Zimbabwe and China (pick-up only).



blow head gaskets, but this was ironed out. Most desirable option is probably the Ti with its 2.0-litre injected engine which musters up a presentable 103mph. The Krugelfischer injection unit is excellent, although warm starting has been known to be a problem. The 2.0-litre carb is very

MECHANICS

Despite their poor survival rate in the UK, your average 504 is as reliable as a James Bond film over Christmas. Both the petrol and diesel engines will go on indefinitely with the minimum amount of routine maintenance. Club Peugeot UK secretary, Keith Herbert, has recently acquired an Australian 504 diesel which has been driven from Bombay to Bath. The car is close to reaching 750,000km and is still going strong. John Graham owns a garage in Carshalton that specialises in Peugeots, and he confirms this point. He regularly sees 504s that are on their third or fourth time around the clock.

Few cars in the UK are diesel engined, but if you are fortunate enough to get your hands on one you won't be making a mistake; they are almost unbreakable. Early cars had the 2112cc engine which at its launch was the most powerful diesel powered car in the world. In February 1977, a 2304cc unit was added to the range. The petrol engines are excellent too; there really is very little to warn you about. Some had a tendency to

reliable too, and with a top speed of 100mph it's only fractionally slower than the Ti. The smallest petrol car is the 1.8, which again is a perfectly sensible option. These hard wearing motors are well tried and tested, having been derived from the 1618cc engine found in the earlier 404. According to an early road test carried out by *Motor* in 1968, this unit will propel the 504 to 97 mph, and with 0-60mph in 14.5 seconds it certainly isn't underpowered.

BODYWORK

When you find your 504 in the classifieds, you can safely assume that it will have had a hard life and will be showing signs of old age. The cars are rarely restored, so dents, scratches and other 'war scars' associated with high mileage vehicles are inevitable.

Back in the 1970s, virtually every advert for the 504 droned on about Peugeot's 'double protection' against corrosion. All 504s were totally immersed by an electrophoretic process and then key areas received a PVC and bitumen

Buying

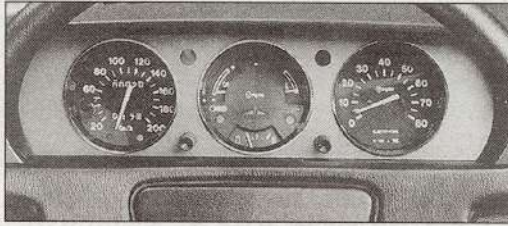


LEFT: Finding a 504 in a scrapyard nowadays isn't easy. Examples such as this can yield a useful supply of parts

coating. Believe it or not, it seems to have worked! The sills and outer door skins tend to attract 'tin worm', but quite often the rest of the bodywork on unrestored cars remains relatively rust free. Naturally it is well worth giving the floorpan a thorough check, although quite often these remain unscathed too. The only real problem area under the car are the rear struts, especially on older vehicles. It's well worth a thorough examination as replacement will be costly.



Early cars had a vinyl interior but towards the end of the 1970s, cloth became the norm. Leather was an option for the Ti model, yet is rarely seen in the UK. There is ample leg and head room and all cars will carry 4/5 adults in comfort; the Family estate will take up to seven forward facing passengers.



As comfortable as the cars are to drive in, creature comforts are few and far between. Front head rests, a heated rear window, a rear arm rest and a below par heater are about as exciting as your

INTERIOR

All 504s have a well laid out, spacious interior which is spoilt only by a dated facia. The motoring press complained about the plastic and chrome dashboard in the 1970s, and it certainly hasn't improved with age. Most noticeable feature from the driver's seat is the over proportioned steering wheel. This was a necessity in the days of non assisted steering, but why did Peugeot choose to keep it when PAS was introduced to the Ti in 1978?

In a typical French manner, the seats are very comfortable and hard wearing.

average 504 gets. Ti's, on the other hand, had the addition of electric front windows and a sliding steel sunroof. For some unknown reason, the sunroof also became standard on carburettor saloons - but only on the automatics!

1998 Argentinean built 504s now come with air conditioning.

SPARES

In many peoples' eyes, 504s have yet to achieve classic status, so market prices are at 'rock bottom'. You could pick up at tatty road-going example for about £200, whilst £1000 would get you an

TOP: 504 interiors were never exactly luxurious, although they were cleverly designed. This 'double bed' doesn't look too comfy though ...

RIGHT: In Saloon or Estate form, the 504 certainly had distinctive rear end styling!



Buying



USEFUL ADDRESSES

Geoffrey Sizzey

Wisborough Green, Billingshurst

Deals in quality used and classic Peugeots. This company has sold more 504 cabriolets than anyone else in the country.

John Graham

99 Stanley Park Road, Carshalton, Surrey SM5 3HX

A garage that has had many years' experience with the Peugeot marque, ranging from road to rally cars.

Club Peugeot UK

John Saxby (Membership Secretary)

22 Stevenson Drive, Spital, Wirral, Merseyside L63 9AH

	Ti Saloon	Family Estate (diesel)
Capacity	1971cc	2304cc
Max Speed	103mph	81mph
0-60mph	11.4 secs	25 secs
Overall mpg	23.1mpg	37.7mpg
Brakes	Discs	Discs
	all round	on front
Steering	Rack and Pinion	Rack and Pinion
Load Volume	16 cu ft	15/35 cu ft (min/max)
Overall Length	14' 9"	15' 9"
Tank	12.3 gallons	13.2 gallons

excellent Ti. We strongly advise that you shop around for the best example you can find because some spares are becoming a little scarce. Peugeot dealers can certainly help you out with regularly replaced service items, but anything a bit unusual might prove problematic.

You would be very fortunate to find a 504 in your local breaker's yard. Most MOT failures are snapped up by exporters, then shipped to Nigeria where they can command good prices as whole cars or parts donors.

Unless you've got friends in Argentina we would strongly advise joining the helpful Club Peugeot UK.

Despite the car's superb ride quality, reliability, immense

practicality and sheer strength, the 504 is fast disappearing from our roads. The car clearly has so much to offer yet has been shunned in favour of Rovers, Triumphs and the other more 'mainstream' classic cars. This is a fate shared by other 'alternative' classic saloons such as the Renault 20/30, Peugeot 604, Chrysler 180 and Talbot Tagora.

Having just bestowed the car's great virtues on you, I can't help but feel that I've just 'shot myself in the foot'. Despite wanting the 504 to regain some popularity in the UK, the last thing I want to do is encourage you all to go out and buy one. After all, I'm on the lookout for one myself! **RC**



TOP: The 'Farina-built 504 Coupe is viewed by most as an undisputed classic, mainly for its gorgeous styling. If only the humbler versions could be seen in the same light ...

LEFT: The 504 Saloon boasted a good sized boot, aided by the spare wheel being slung underneath