

Barrett-Jackson Car Auction Tips

Written by Christine Whitton

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Just as Barrett-Jackson rolls into town this month, we asked the pros for tips on purchasing auction-block beauties, along with five picks for their all-time favorite automobiles.



Since the day Barrett-Jackson's "mom-and-pop shop" started in 1967, Craig Jackson, the youngest son of co-founders Russ and Ellen "Nellie" Jackson, has been destined for automotive success. Jackson took the company's driver's seat in 1997, quickly accelerating the small collector car auction business into a \$140 million multi-media empire. From the company's first car show in 1967 at Scottsdale Ball Park, "Fiesta de los Auto Elegantes," Barrett-Jackson has grown to include auctions at the Westworld Equestrian Center in Scottsdale (its signature event); the Mandalay Bay Resort and Casino in Las Vegas; and The American Expo Center at South Florida Fairgrounds in Palm Beach. This June 25-27, Barrett-Jackson will bring its "gold standard of car auction" to the Orange County Fairgrounds in California, adding another venue to its yearly auctions and revving the hearts of many "automaniacs."

Born into the family business, Jackson's appreciation for classic cars began at age nine when his father bought him his first car. Witnessing the evolution of the collector car world, Jackson says that vehicle trends remain similar today, but the reasoning for buying a collector car has shifted. "People [still] want the nostalgic look, but [now] also want something dependable where they can go in the garage, fire it up and drive," Jackson says. "For 77 million baby boomers who still relate to the cars of the 50's, 60's and 70's, most want a car they can have fun with. Last year, the 50's-style convertibles were very popular - great for cruising."

While Barrett-Jackson gears up for its 39th annual collector car auction in Scottsdale on Jan. 18-24, Childhelp, a Valley nonprofit, is also putting the finishing touches on its Drive the Dream Gala - a pre-auction partnership event with Barrett-Jackson, which takes place on Jan.16. In addition to the gala, Barrett-Jackson will also auction off three collector cars, with proceeds going to children's charities: a WD40/Sema Cares Camaro to benefit Childhelp and Victory Junction Gang; a Barrett-Jackson Limited Edition Shelby to benefit Cox Charities; and a CDC Challenger to benefit notMYkid.

Click the next button below to read tips on purchasing.

Bringing Home a Classic Beauty



Looking for the ideal classic car, but overwhelmed by the magnitude of Barrett-Jackson's collection? Steve Davis, president of Barrett-Jackson and leading industry expert, shares some pointers on car-buying and maintenance.

On the Block

For many first-time bidders, the size and scope of Barrett-Jackson can be intimidating, as some people have only seen the auction on television. Davis recommends newbie bidders define a budget, determine what they are looking for, chat with the owners about the car (after all, Davis says there's no better information than directly from the person who owns the car), align themselves with the bidder assistant and, finally, be ready for the auction.

American Beauty

Most blue-chip collector cars, like the 1960 to 1970 Ford Mustangs and early Tri-Five Chevys, appeal to a broader market because of their popularity and inexpensive parts. Their iconic body styles offer a blank canvas for hobbyists to add their own personal suped-up, tricked-out touches. "[Being] lower-priced, these highly sought-after classics represent the collector car hobby in a user-friendly way," Davis says.

Restoring Your Car

Knowledge is key here. "You don't want to start cutting off the fender wells of a 100 percent originally rare car," Davis says. First, be fully aware of what it is you are attempting to accomplish with the restoration. Once decided, "buy the parts that are relevant to the restoration," Davis says. "And be conscious of how you restore the car based on what you started with. It's critical to consider future goals of ownership."

Rear Viewpoint

Oftentimes, collector cars are purchased to rekindle a past memory, while others are scooped up solely for their fun factor. Whatever the reason, "it's ultimately the individual's likes of what the car means to him and what that car will mean once he owns it," Davis says.

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A Little T.L.C.

"A lot of people, especially first-time buyers getting into the hobby, have an expectation that [the car is] going to run and drive as dependably as their everyday car," Davis says. "These vintage cars are sentimental and very sensitive to maintenance. Part of the pride of ownership is understanding that these cars take a little love and attention to keep going."

Click the next button below to see Craig Jackson's Favorite cars.

Craig's Favorite Wheels

Wonder which rides make Craig Jackson smile? *Arizona Foothills'* gives you five of his favorites.

1. 1954 Oldsmobile F-88 GM concept car



2. 1965 Shelby Cobra roadster



3. 1966 Shelby Cobra 427 "Super Snake" (Carroll Shelby's car)



4. 1966 Pontiac Le Mans



5. 1970 Plymouth Hemi 'Cuda convertible

