



KING CARLTON

Despite having suffered a serious engine fire, this PV Show-winning 3.6-litre Lotus-built Twin Turbo Carlton is possibly the best of those that are left.

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VAUXHALL
FAST FACTS

- GSI-based 3.6-litre 6-cylinder
- Twin Garrett T25 turbos
- Corvette ZR1-based six-speed gearbox
- Front and rear wishbone suspension
- 9.5 and 8.5x17 inch alloys

When it was released, it caused a storm like no other car. In fact, it was perceived as being so extreme that Vauxhall took a heap of flack for producing it because it was seen as being irresponsible. It had more outright speed than the fastest of the purpose-built two-

seater performance cars of the time, but could carry four (or five if you didn't mind a squeeze) plus luggage in absolute comfort across Europe in an afternoon.

At the time it was the fastest production car ever to be built in Britain, including all your Aston Martin Vantages, Lotus sports cars etc. So all hail the original, outright king of the über-saloons: the Lotus Type 104 — or, to you and me, the

Lotus Carlton. And after 16 years, it can still lay claim to that crown.

Imagine the scene back in 1989, when the only cars blurring the lines between supercar and saloon were the 315 bhp BMW M5 and its Alpina sibling, the B10. At the Geneva Motor Show, Vauxhall announced that it was going to build a 180 mph, £48,000 and 377 bhp Carlton in partnership with Lotus. Initially thought of as being the first of many 'Lotus'

Vauxhall models, the Carlton that first appeared before the crowds was a runner even though the green light for the project had only been given five months before. Everything about the Lotus Carlton was quick, even its development period.

Such speed was, in part, very similar to other cars out of the Norfolk stable. A good deal of the motor's development time was spent being driven back and forth to Italy to