

TRAVELS WITH MY BROTHER (or “Never trail a Tuscan”)

A few weeks ago my brother and I took the loves of our lives, our TVR’s, to Devon for a long weekend break.

I’m sorry, my wife has asked me to rewrite that sentence!

A few weeks ago my brother and I took the loves of our lives, **AND** our TVR’s, to Devon for a long weekend break. Yes, of course our wives went as well! Although at times, I think they would have preferred either to have been at home, or in our “everyday” cars, or “armchairs”, as my brother calls them, complete with heater and roof! It’s not that they don’t like our TVR’s - they think they are great, as long as the hood is up and they are stationary! My wife says mine is noisy, bumpy, cold and there’s no room for luggage - to which I reply, “Yes, but is there anything actually wrong with it?”

When I picked up my 1989 S2 from David Gerald it was a damp Saturday afternoon 18 months ago, and it was the only car parked outside (the garage was about to close for the day). Another couple were looking round the showroom, and as I came out of the office, having picked up the keys, they saw this enormous grin on my face, and, turning to my wife said, “Is that your new car out there?”

“Yes,” she replied. “Wow!” they said, “I bet you’re excited!”, to which my wife responded (and here I have to apologise to all TVR owners on her behalf), “Why? It’s only a car!”

That was 18 months ago, and even now, if the Tiv is in for some work, and she takes me over to pick it up, I always invite her to come in and look at the other Tiv’s, but she still says, “Why would I want to look at a load of old cars!”

Still, there’s no accounting for taste - I mean, she did fall for me over 30 years ago, so her tastes can’t be all bad!

But, back to the travels with my brother, John, who owns a new (2001) Tuscan. We stayed at a friend’s house, on a quiet housing estate in Paignton. Every time we parked both cars on the drive there was a flurry of activity from all the neighbouring houses as the kids (mainly boys) came rushing out to look at the cars. Or to be more accurate - to look at the Tuscan!

“Cor! Mate! Bet that was expensive!” was the most common remark, along with “What is it?”, “Can I sit in it?”, and “How fast does it go?”. This happened every night when we got back from our daily trips to the seaside or into the country, visiting our old childhood haunts of Teignmouth, Dawlish and surrounding areas. The trouble was, all these comments and questions were addressed to my brother about the Tuscan. No-one seemed to be bothered about my S2. Rotters!

In fact, it even got to the point that my brother allowed them to sit in his car, amidst squeals of delight, but they didn't seem to want to try mine out. So I **made** them sit in it, which they did very reluctantly!

However I did manage to score some "brownie" points with one youngster. Looking at the back of my car he asked, "Why have your lights got Ford written on them?", to which I responded, "Because they were made by Ford!" At that, the little boy's eyes lit up as he realised they were the same lights on the back of his Dad's car, and he was last seen running up the road shouting, "Wicked! We've got TVR lights on our car!"

But whenever we went out, it was John's car that got all the admiring glances, whilst traveling behind, I was virtually ignored! In fact, when we stopped for petrol at one garage, the mechanics came out of the workshop to admire the Tuscan, and one even did a mock bowing motion towards it. I had to shout across the forecourt, "Oi! What about mine?", to which he said, "Sorry, mate!" and did a quick bow, and then headed back to the safety of his inspection pit! Heathen!

By now, my wife had virtually disappeared under a car rug - her excuse was that she was cold - in practice she was probably embarrassed at these two grown men showing off their toys!

Still, I did find one way for me to steal the show, that was for me to go in front. Then, as I approached other road users, I got some admiring glances! Trouble was, at one point, doing xx miles per hour down a very straight road (the actual speed has been removed to protect the innocent - or guilty!), John needed to show me the way, so he came past me with such amazing acceleration that I had assumed that I had stopped, and got out to find out why!

Traveling two TVR's together is great fun, especially if you're both out and out posers - as we are! But if you want to get some admiring looks my advice is - never trail a Tuscan - go in front - unless of course you've got another Tuscan of your own (Ah! Dream on!). In the meantime, I'll keep telling my brother "age before beauty..." - actually - that's a point - he's older than me!

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