

Contact: Ron Kiino
Bryan Zvibleman

50 Years of Heritage: The History of the 124 Spider

November 18, 2015, Auburn Hills, Mich. - In November 1966 at the Turin Auto Show, the Fiat 124 Spider debuted to great critical acclaim. In the nearly 50 years since its introduction, the 124 Spider has remained an icon for collectors and car buffs alike.

Widely considered the best affordable mass-produced sports car of its generation, the Fiat 124 Spider was first sold in the U.S. market in 1968. The roadster featured a five-speed manual transmission, 1438cc twin-cam engine, four-wheel disc brakes, intermittent windshield wipers and steering-column-mounted lighting controls. Available in seven colors, the 124 Spider sold with a 12-month or 12,000-mile warranty for \$3,265.

The 124 Spider, which evolved from Fiat's mid-range 124 sedan, was a true sports car with broad appeal. Fiat chose the design firm Pininfarina, a longtime partner and the largest and most respected name in Italian coachbuilding, to style and build the 124 Spider.

Americans loved the Spider's proportions and unassuming Italian styling. Its water-tight soft top could be lowered quickly and easily from the driver's seat, and the glass rear-quarter windows provided good visibility.

In fact, the 124 Spider's design was so successful that the vehicle was never extensively redesigned during its 19-year production run, and is still considered one of Pininfarina's greatest commercial hits.

Less than 10 years after its introduction to the U.S. market, the Fiat 124 Spider was such a sales success here that Fiat began producing the vehicle exclusively for the U.S. market in 1975. In 1979, the vehicle was renamed the Spider 2000, referring to its new 1995cc engine.

Toward the end of 1981, Pininfarina took over the entire production process of the vehicle, and sales in Europe resumed. In 1982, production of Fiat and Pininfarina Spiders overlapped as Fiat built the last Spider 2000 models and Pininfarina began production of its own version, sold in the U.S. as the Pininfarina Spider Azzurra and in Europe as the Pininfarina Spidereuropa. The Pininfarina Spider Azzurra included leather trim, stereo/cassette player and power windows as standard.

Production of the roadster ended in 1985 after nearly 200,000 Spiders had been built. Its extensive 19-year production run means the Fiat 124 Spider outlived nearly all of its contemporary sports car competition, excluding the Alfa Romeo Spider.

More than 170,000 124 Spiders were sold in the U.S. from 1968 to 1985. Today, there are nearly 8,000 still registered here.

With its global debut at the 2015 Los Angeles Auto Show, the 2017 Fiat 124 Spider revives the storied nameplate, bringing its iconic Italian styling and performance to a new generation.

FIAT Brand

FIAT brand celebrates 125 years as an automaker and some things haven't changed. Iconic Italian design and refinement, plus a fun-to-drive factor, come standard with every Fiat.

In early 2024, FIAT brand will launch the [Fiat 500e](#), the first Stellantis retail battery-electric vehicle offering in North America and the best-selling city EV in Europe.

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