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CLASSIC

TIME CAPSULE: 1978 MITSUBISHI LANCER



The story of this 1978 Mitsubishi Lancer Deluxe is scarcely believable, not entirely for the narrative but for the conclusion, and for getting the story across properly, we must start at the end and trace out its beginnings. This warped narrative, reminiscent of Chuck Palahniuk's *Survivor*, a book which starts with Chapter 47 on page 289 and ends with Chapter 1 on page 1, is actually needed to focus squarely on the incredible fact that this Lancer has a mileage of 16,418 km's.

To put that figure into context is easy. The average reconditioned Toyota Axio or Premio sold in Dhaka has a mileage of around 15,000-20,000 km's, and they're billed to customers as practically brand new and are charged a premium for it. In that context, this Lancer is practically brand new, and rides and drives like a brand new car.

Md Shariful Islam Sunny is a business owner from Lalbagh and it was by a stroke of luck that he got to be the second owner of this pristine Lancer. His mechanic gave him a call one day and asked if he'd like to take a look at a classic car that was up for sale. He went to the address provided by his mechanic and got the shock of his life – the Lancer was flawless and in completely original condition. The bodywork had a few scratches and a couple of dents, but otherwise the car was a veritable time capsule, with original wheels and tyres, paint, interior and toolkit. Another incredible aspect to the Lancer was what was hiding in the glovebox – original owners' manual and service booklet, with detailed descriptions outlining the service work done



on the car and the amount paid for each item, meticulously documented since 1979. Flipping through the service booklet, it's astounding to realize that the previous and first owner, Kazi Mahbulul Haque of Road 12, Dhanmondi, had taken the time to document the service work when most people wouldn't have bothered with it. The service history also points to another fact: the car has never had any work done on it. The chrome bits are shiny, original and scratch free. The fantastic front grille is dead straight and still gives the car the sleekness that made it stand out from its Japanese competitors like the Toyota Corolla KE and Datsun 120Y. The wheels are small and prim, and carry a stylised Mitsubishi "M" logo that anyone would confuse with the Suzuki logo at first. They're still wrapped with the Dunlop tyres the car

came equipped with from the factory. Risky, but original.

Inside, you're treated to uncovered seats that look and feel new, while the thin doorcards and manual window winders are still well put-together and not flimsy or fiddly as they usually are after decades of use. The original floor mats are still in place, and tiny details like the intricate patterns on the back of the headrests are well preserved. Of-course, given the condition of the rest of the car, you'd expect the original FM radio to work, but actually seeing it function without any hiccups at all, 40 years after it was made in a factory in Japan, is still quite a big shock. It starts on the first try, without coughing,

years, it's safe to say most of that mechanical horsepower has been retained. On the move, the Mitsui is quiet, composed and glides over bumps and potholes with ease. It's very disconcerting – you expect continuous shaking, rattles and creaks because your eyes tell you you're in an old car, but your ears and body send completely different signals as you realise this Lancer shows none of the signs that this is a four decade old car.

Shariful Islam Sunny has one goal: to keep this car running for as long as possible and treat it with utmost respect and care. It's not often that you're put in charge of maintaining an actual, real-life time capsule, and it's not a responsibility to be taken lightly and he

knows that. He'll make sure this Lancer survives for another 40 years.

For a complete story tracing out the history of the Lancer and an interview with the both first and current owner, keep an eye on our Facebook page.

WORDS: SHAER REAZ
PHOTOS: RAHIN SADMAN ISLAM



every time. The 1200 cc 4G36 straight-4 cylinder motor turns over with the softest of purrs, and the Lancer moves forward with the least amount of resistance thanks to the smooth 4 speed manual gearbox putting about 55 HP of power to the ground. That number doesn't seem like much, but considering the minimal wear and tear this motor has faced over the

COLLECTIBLES

QUIRKY FRENCHIE

1/43 CITROEN 2CV

The Citroen 2CV isn't pretty or fast. The French car was built from 1948 to 1990, remaining mostly unchanged. Its specialty included a 9 HP air-cooled engine that is as easy to work on as a French tomato. It had very long suspension travel for a soft ride and easy ploughing through muddy countrysides. If you wanted air conditioning, you just had to roll back the canvas roof. It had bits of the body work made of corrugated metal to maintain strength without weight. It would still fold like a tin can. It's one of those cars that easily top the 10 most iconic cars list.

Here we have the Atlas Collections version in 1:43



scale. The roof is rolled back to show off the saprtan interior. Checkered cloth pattern around reminiscent of romantic French hilltops picnics. There isn't a lot of car but it is full of character. The model is all-pro and nothing to complain about. It's brilliant inside and out. If you want one, a 1:43 model as low as \$10 on eBay for a Corgi version. Not a lot of detail though. Vitesse makes the most detailed ones priced around \$25. For more on this, head to our online section.



ALL IN THE DETAILS: VOLVO XC90

Luxury SUVs are a dime a dozen these days. With Jaguar and Bentley wading into the depths of soft-roaders and catering to both urban moms and investment bankers in the same breath, the luxury SUV market is so congested that unique selling points are becoming harder and harder to come by.

Enter Volvo's incredible XC90. An exercise in design simplicity and engineering excellence, the XC90 carves out its own niche among the luxury contenders with an astounding level of attention to detail that sets the Swede apart from its competitors.

In Bangladesh, two models of the XC90 are available via Eurocars, a company of Anwar Group. Powered by a 2.0 litre inline-4 turbocharged motor, the T5 Momentum produces 254 HP and 350 NM of torque. The T6 Inscription has a higher power output

from the same motor, coming in at 320 HP and 400 NM. Both models are filled to the brim with tech options such as collision avoidance systems, lane departure systems, hill-descent control, parking assists, as well as 4-zone climate control air-conditioning, infotainment system with a 9-inch screen, and more. While all of this is impressive, Volvo is striding ahead globally as well, having recently launched an Autonomous Vehicle pilot project with Uber.

Aside from the equipment levels, the interior comes equipped with a huge range of luxurious design touches, with top-shelf materials blended together to create an ambience unmatched in this class.

Watch this space for an in-depth review of the XC90, soon.



12th Dhaka Motor Show 3rd Bike Show and 2nd Auto Parts Show

A three-day motor show will kick off at International Convention City Bashundhara in Dhaka on March 23. CEMS Global, an international event management company, is organising the show, which is the country's only international exhibition on the automotive, commercial vehicle, bike and auto parts sectors.

The 3rd Bike Show, 2nd Auto Parts Show and Commercial Automotive Show will also take place simultaneously at the same venue, CEMS said at a press conference at Dhaka Press Club on Monday.

The three-day event will be attended by leading automotive brands, motorcycle distributors, parts manufacturers as well as after-market service companies and will be held from 23rd to 25th March, 2017 at International Convention City, Bashundhara, Dhaka. The show will remain open from 10.30am to 8.30pm.




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