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1963 PORSCHE T6B 356 CARRERA 2GT

- 1963 Tour de France entry at the hands of Eddy Meert & Wim de Jonghe and winner of 1964 12 Hours of Huy
- One of sixteen examples of the ultimate specification 2 litre, 4cam competition 356
- Beautifully prepared and a highly successful past participant on the Tour Auto

Chassis number: 125 107

To say that 125107 is amongst the very best and most significant Porsche 356s in existence does not really begin to convey just how important this GT B Type Carrera really is. Porsche's factory notes state that only 16 Carrera 2 GTs were made, but it is unclear how many T6B 356 Carrera 2 GTs made up that number, as the marque does not retain any definitive records on this matter. Indeed, experts believe that the number produced ranges from as few as two to five examples.

We do know that at Le Mans in 1963, Porsche entered their two works Type 356 B 2000cc Carrera GT 'Dreikantschabers' in the 2.0 Litre GT class. In 1964, Porsche's new model, the 904, was launched and this took the factory reins for the next edition of the famous Le Sarthe race, meaning a short works lifespan for the T6B 356.

The T6B 356 is, in essence, a thinly disguised out-and-out road racer. Featuring an aluminium bonnet, doors and rear engine cover, minimal bumpers, Perspex side and rear screens, a stripped interior (including a deleted glovebox lid for lightness!), roll hoop and Porsche designed annular disc brakes, the model weighed in at under 850 kilos, making it lighter than the pre-A racer.

With a body completed by coachbuilder, Reutter, on 21st June 1963 and a production completion date of 25th June, 125107 features super rare aluminium doorframes and a tube-framed rear bonnet. The Porsche was delivered directly to first owner, the competitive Belgique driver Eddy Meert, in July 1963. Meert owned the car for just one year, but during that time he entered two very important events, the most notable being that year's edition of the Tour de France.

During the 1950s, this event had grown in stature and was widely recognised in the early 1960s as the premier motorsports contest for both the GT and Touring categories. Not for the faint-hearted, the event featured nine days of grueling competition including nine circuit races, seven hill climbs and a 5,700 kilometre rally route. Reflecting the GT world at large, the Tour's 1963 entry was dominated by the GTO. However, Meert certainly made an impression with 125107, achieving a notable tenth place in the two-hour race around the Le Sarthe Circuit at Le Mans. There is a wonderful photo collection of the Porsche competing on the Tour in the history file, along with photos of Dickie Stoop's sister car, chassis number 125108.

The other notable achievement by Meert in 125107, was a first place in the Grand Tourisme class at the 1964 edition of the 12 Heures de Huy as number 19. Period reports of the race claim that Meert veritably dominated the class with the 356, which was no mean feat given the competition.

After the Huy event, Meert moved on to the latest 904. 125107 was passed beween a small number of Belgique and German owners until it was brought to the UK in 1996 by new owner and renowned Porsche aficionado, John Ruston. The Porsche was still in very original condition and was maintained then onwards between Maxted-Page & Prill and German four-cam specialist, Karl Hloch. The latter rebuilt the engine in 2009. During John's tenure, the 356 was a regular podium scorer on the Tour Auto, always scoring particularly well on the regularity tests. It also competed at the Liege Rome.

In recent times, the 356 has been resprayed in its original Porsche colour, Ruby Red and fitted with original specification black leatherette seats.

From one of the most revered and discerning collectors, 125107 is offered for sale with HTP papers, a FIVA Identity Card and Porsche certificate of authenticity. As Robert Coucher writes, 'The Porsche 356 is a cult car. The 356 world is more than just the

cars: it's the people, the events, the competition, the racing. Owning a 356, you join an international group of individuals who appreciate engineering excellence in single-minded sports cars.' And, as 356s go, it really doesn't get much better than 125107.

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