

# One of These Cars is Worth £350,000 ... and it ain't the Blue One!



## NuBodi Tribute Koupé

**NuBodi** always does a more than decent job on their demo vehicles but this one a personal crusade by boss and latest **TKC Mag** columnist, **Richard Bird** really does take the biscuit. It really is very, very special as **STEVE HOLE** recently discovered.

**Y**eah, yeah, yeah, I know you don't spell Coupé with a 'K' and so do Richard Bird of NuBodi Automotive and Chris Welch of Tribute Automotive, but they like a bit of Special K in their respective worlds; so their 250 SWB convertible is called 'Kalifornia', the Cobra inspired Z3 conversion is known as 'Kobra' and yep, you've guessed it, this one is the 'Koupé'.

For the record, it all works quite nicely. Tribute makes the kits and Richard builds and sells them. A lot of them. Clearly, between them they are obviously doing something right, as there's currently an eighteen-month waiting list for turnkey models.

For his latest vehicle, the one featured here, Richard decided that he wanted to replicate a specific Ferrari 250 GT SWB, a famous car in its own right, driven in period by none other than Sir Stirling Moss and so as a result went way beyond the call of duty to source the most correct-looking components possible stopping only to eat his lunch on Christmas Day!

Thanks to all body conversions based

on a production vehicle floorpan (a completely un-modified floorpan) being IVA exempt, it means you don't have to worry about projections and 'sharp' edges and pretty much anything goes, within reason. This is particularly advantageous when you are trying to replicate a specific look, as in this case.

The NuBodi replica evokes the looks of a car worth a cool £20m if you could find one (and you won't) and even if you had a Mercedes Sprinter van stuffed with £50 notes it stands to reason that components will cost a small fortune. For example a rear bumper for one of the original cars, (a repro at that) can easily set you back





Timberland leather belt adds a sense of cheeky fun to this conversion.



Wing mirror and sliding windows all part of the conversion

## TECH SPEC

### ENGINE AS TESTED:

3.0-litre BMW straight 6, remap. 265bhp.

### ENGINE OPTIONS:

The full range of Z3 options in pre and post facelift form. Typically, 2.0, 2.8 and 3-litre.

**CHASSIS:** Unmodified Z3 structure. Additional bolt-in roll cage.

### SUSPENSION:

Standard Z3 with adjustable coil-over strut conversion.

### STEERING:

Standard Z3 power-assisted steering rack and column.

### BRAKES:

Original Z3. Servo assisted.

### PRICE:

£4995.

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As you'd expect, the driving position is largely as per the BMW. The windscreen located rear view mirror now offers a view of the headlining and needs moving to the dash top, but otherwise it's all fine.

Fire up the 3.0-litre straight six and Richard's choice of exhaust isn't one we'd follow! His chosen fabricator offers three levels of silencing and Richard opted for the noisiest... it's ludicrously antisocial, popping and banging on the over-run and otherwise just *loud*.

Decibels aside, other driving impressions include a firm but acceptable ride (it's lowered from standard) and performance potential that will be entertaining if fully exploited. Braking, steering and other dynamics are largely unmolested from the original Z3 and none the worse for that.

And if you think it's a shame to have a convertible base vehicle and then permanently put a roof over the cabin, it's

always worth remembering that Nubodi can also offer the Kalifornia (featured September 2015 issue 106), which is effectively a Koupé without the roof. Although never a reality in terms of authentic replica, it obviously offers the wind in the hair experience which is otherwise lost.

As previously mentioned, the extensive kit package starts at £4995 (£3995 for the Kalifornia) and a decent homebuilt example should be possible for £15,000. If you want someone else to do the spannering, the factory built examples start at £28,000.

As with all proper panel kits, the unmodified nature of the donor means that the Koupé is exempt from the IVA test with which conventional kit cars must comply.

To see examples of other colour schemes, both race and road focused, head to the Nubodi website where you'll also find considerably more detail on the kit contents and the other models on offer. ■



Knock-

Lots of period detailing to be found on Koupé.



Oh I say. Exquisite isn't the word ...

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