

LAUNCH OF THE 5 TURBO



FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THEIR HISTORY RENAULT HAD REVERSED THEIR USUAL TREND. THEY BEGAN BY TREATING THE RENAULT 5 TURBO AS A COMPETITION MACHINE AND DECIDED LATER TO MARKET A PRODUCTION VERSION WHICH WOULD PROFIT FROM ALL THAT THE ENGINEERS HAD LEARNED IN COMPETITION. IN 1980 THE DAILY RATE OF PRODUCTION AT THIS TIME WAS 5 CARS ASSEMBLED IN THE LITTLE ALPINE FACTORY. THE MINIMUM NUMBER NEEDED FOR HOMOLOGATION WAS 400 EXAMPLES AND AS THAT NUMBER HAD ALREADY BEEN ORDERED BEFOREHAND THE PRODUCTION RAN ON TO 1000 CARS BY THE END OF 1981 AND PEAKED AT OVER 1300 BY THE END OF 1982.

Launched in France on 1st July 1980 it was planned to appear in Germany and Italy in the November of that year and in 1981 it would enter Austria, Belgium, the Netherlands and

Switzerland. No plans were ever made to produce a right hand version for Europe or Australia and therefore the UK market was never considered.

Although known originally as the 5 Turbo the car has tended to have now been re-named the Turbo 1 as to distinguish it from the later model the Turbo 2 launched on 1983 and to avoid confusion with the 5 Gordini Turbo, and later on the Mk1 and Mk2 versions of the GT Turbo that appeared in 1986. This is all very confusing if you do not know your Renault Turbo models.

So thoroughly equipped was the 5 Turbo that the options came down to just four : Leather upholstery, radio, tinted windows and a heated windscreen. The colours initially available were just two, a metallic Pomegranate Red and Olympian Blue a pearl white car appeared at the very end of 1980 for the 1981 year of production.

The 5 Turbo's interior decor, instrument layout and seating matched up to the striking outside appearance. Its dashboard was covered with a parchment finish, underlined by a bronze -coloured horizontal band. Opposite the passenger was a deep cubby-hole. The centre carried a rectangular ventilation grille, with a variable-direction air flow, while heater controls, ashtray and cigar lighter followed the base GTL and GS Renault 5 model in design. Beneath there was a pile - trimmed console extending to the floor and containing provision for a radio.

The instrument panel contained 10 circular dials coloured bronze and boxed - in, these were arranged symmetrically to right and left of