

FERRARI PORTOFINO

24

The gateway - the accessible, open-top V8 GT, the California reimagined

600 CV

Twin-turbo V8 (620 in the M) - the front-engine GT V8, shared with the Roma

Folding roof

A coupe closed, a convertible open - a daily 2+2 GT

2017-2023

Successor to the California T; replaced by the Roma Spider

The Gateway

The most accessible Ferrari - dismissed as 'not a real one,' but it is

01 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Ferrari Portofino is the most accessible car in the modern range, and one of the most unfairly judged. Launched in 2017 as the successor to the California T, it is a front-engined, twin-turbo V8 grand tourer with a folding metal roof - a coupe with the top up, a convertible with it down - and two occasional rear seats. It is the entry point to Ferrari ownership, and a car built for a clear purpose: to be driven every day, in comfort, without ceremony.

It is also where the front-engined V8 GT line begins for this part of the series. The same 3.9-litre turbo V8 and much of the same technology carry through to the Roma and, in evolved form, the newer Amalfi, and are closely related to the V8 in the GTC4Lusso T covered earlier. This paper takes the Portofino on its own terms: a genuine Ferrari that happens to be the usable one, the redemption of the California's compromised reputation, and a car whose dismissal as 'not a real Ferrari' says more about the critics than the car.

Key Finding

The Portofino is a real Ferrari built for a different purpose. Its 600 CV twin-turbo V8 (620 CV in the Portofino M) delivers serious performance and real bite, in a body you can use daily - the closest thing to an everyday Ferrari alongside the GTC4Lusso.

It is the redemption of the California. Where the California was criticised for soft, rounded styling, the Portofino is sharper, more technical and more aerodynamic - a handsome car that looks like a proper coupe with the roof up.

Ownership is relatively undramatic. The twin-turbo V8 is well proven and shared across the GT line; the items to watch are the folding-roof mechanism and the usual electronics, not the engine. Early cars are now running out of Ferrari's seven-year maintenance package.

EVIDENCE BASIS manufacturer data · recorded transaction / auction result

02 THE CAR IN THE LINEUP

The entry point to Ferrari - and the start of the front-V8 GT line.

The Portofino sits at the accessible end of the Ferrari range, the modern equivalent of a long tradition of front-engined, open-topped grand tourers. Its direct lineage runs from the California (2008, naturally aspirated V8) to the California T (2014, the first turbocharged V8 in this line) to the Portofino (2017) and the Portofino M (2020). It was effectively succeeded in 2023 by the open version of the Roma, the Roma Spider - though that car swapped the Portofino's retractable hardtop for a fabric soft top - and its F154 V8 family and front-engined GT concept carry through into the Roma and, in evolved form, the Amalfi. This is, in other words, an early pillar of Ferrari's current front-V8 grand-touring family, its platform having gone on to underpin the Roma that followed.

That role - the entry Ferrari, the usable one - is exactly what draws the lazy criticism that it is 'not a real Ferrari.' This paper takes the opposite view, set out in full later: a marque as broad as Ferrari has always built different cars for different purposes, and a usable GT with 600 CV and genuine bite is no less a Ferrari for being approachable. The Portofino's job is to widen the door, not to lower the bar.

THE SHARED V8 GT FAMILY

One twin-turbo V8 (the F154 family) runs through this whole front-engined line: California T, GTC4Lusso T, Portofino and Portofino M, Roma, and now the Amalfi. State of tune and gearbox differ - 600 to 640 CV, seven- or eight-speed - but the architecture, and much of the technology, is shared. The Portofino is the convertible entry point to that family; the Roma is its coupe; the Amalfi is the latest evolution.

03 DESIGN - FROM CALIFORNIA TO PORTOFINO

The car that fixed the California's reputation - sharper, more technical, properly handsome.

The California was never quite forgiven its styling - soft, rounded and, to many enthusiasts, insufficiently Ferrari. The Portofino is the answer. Penned by the Ferrari Design Centre, it is a markedly sharper, more technical shape: a two-box fastback silhouette unprecedented in a retractable-hardtop convertible, with crisper surfacing, real aerodynamic intakes and outlets (it slips through the air at a drag coefficient of 0.31), and a more aggressive, more purposeful stance. It looks engineered rather than merely styled, and it reads as a proper Ferrari.

The defining feature is the retractable hard top, which folds away in around fourteen seconds. Roof up, the Portofino is a clean, genuinely handsome coupe - one of the better-resolved folding-hardtop designs anywhere; roof down, it is an elegant convertible with a 30 percent reduction in cabin buffeting from its wind deflector. It is a pretty car rather than an aggressive one - not in-your-face, and deliberately so - and it is none the worse for that. The styling is for buyers who want a Ferrari they can live with and look at every day, not a statement parked in a collection.

04 ENGINE AND POWERTRAIN

The shared V8 - well presented, well proven, and meaner than its image suggests.

The Portofino uses the 3,855 cc twin-turbo V8 (F154) carried across the front-engined GT line, here producing 600 CV (591 hp) at 7,500 rpm and 760 Nm from 3,000 rpm, through a 7-speed dual-clutch transaxle to the rear wheels. It is the same engine family - a four-time winner of the International Engine of the Year award in its capacity category (2016-2019) - that powers the GTC4Lusso T, retuned with revised pistons and con-rods, a new intake and a one-piece-cast exhaust header for sharp throttle response with minimal lag. Variable Boost Management tailors torque to the gear, so it pulls cleanly everywhere.

Under the bonnet it is nicely presented, with Ferrari's signature red cam covers - it looks good, as these engines always do, even if it does not have the sheer theatre of a front-mounted V12, which fills its engine bay in a way no V8 can match. What matters more is how it goes: 0-100 km/h in 3.5 seconds, 0-200 in 10.8, and a top speed beyond 320 km/h. This is a genuinely fast Ferrari with real bite if treated carelessly - the GT framing is about comfort and usability, not a lack of pace. First in this type of Ferrari, an E-Diff3 electronic differential integrated with F1-Trac sharpens both traction and control.

Technical specification	
Engine	3,855 cc twin-turbo 90 deg V8 (F154); shared across the front-engined GT line
Power / torque (Portofino)	600 CV (591 hp) at 7,500 rpm / 760 Nm from 3,000 rpm
Power / torque (Portofino M)	620 CV (612 hp) at 7,500 rpm / 760 Nm; from the Roma
Transmission	Portofino: 7-speed dual-clutch. Portofino M: 8-speed dual-clutch
Drive	Rear-wheel drive; E-Diff3 and F1-Trac
0-100 / top speed	3.5 s (M: 3.45 s) / above 320 km/h
Weight	~1,545 kg dry (Ferrari); kerb ~1,660-1,750 kg by spec; 46:54; folding roof (~14 s)
Body / years	2+2 retractable-hardtop GT; Portofino 2017-2020, Portofino M 2020-2023

Sources: Ferrari press and technical documentation; autoevolution and the road-test record. Ferrari quotes dry weight; figures vary by market and specification.

05 THE PORTOFINO M

The sharper one - and a reminder that it does not need to shout.

In 2020 the Portofino M (Modificata) replaced the original. The twin-turbo V8 gained new cam profiles and a turbocharger speed sensor for 620 CV (612 hp), and - the bigger change - an 8-speed dual-clutch gearbox in place of the seven-speed, lifted from the Roma (a different application from the eight-speed used in the SF90 and 296, with its own ratios and packaging). The result is noticeably sharper: 0-200 km/h falls by a full second to 9.8, the brakes gain bite and modulation, and a new exhaust with oval bypass valves (and the rear silencers deleted) lifts the voice.

The M also brought a five-position manettino with a Race setting - a first for this line - alongside the latest Side Slip Control, plus subtle aerodynamic tweaks to the bumpers and intakes. It is the better car to drive, no question. A word on modification: a Novitec package or a Capristo exhaust can make a Portofino genuinely loud and aggressive, but that is not the character of the car, and to these ears it does not suit it. The Portofino's appeal is completeness and ease, not volume; it is the rare Ferrari best left close to how Maranello built it.

06 THE DAILY FERRARI

With the GTC4Lusso, the closest thing to a Ferrari you can simply use.

The Portofino's real distinction is usability. Alongside the GTC4Lusso, it is the closest the modern range comes to an everyday Ferrari - and it gets there by a different route from the mid-engined cars. A 458, 488, F8, 296 or SF90 fits like a glove and asks you to climb into it; the Portofino is a grand tourer you simply get into and drive. There are two occasional rear seats - better thought of as luggage space than as accommodation for adults - a real boot that swallows two cabin trolleys with the roof stowed, a comfortable, refined ride and a quiet cabin with the roof up.

That breadth has widened who buys a Ferrari. The Portofino appeals well beyond the hardcore enthusiast: to first-time Ferrari owners, to buyers who want the marque without the intensity, and often as the second car in an enthusiast household, driven by a partner who wants their own Ferrari rather than a borrowed one. Broadening the ownership base is not a dilution of the brand; it is the point of having an accessible model in the range at all.

07 THE 'NOT A REAL FERRARI' QUESTION

The criticism is not really called for - and it never was.

No discussion of the Portofino, or the California before it, escapes the charge that it is 'not a real Ferrari.' It deserves a direct answer, because it is largely unfounded. The Portofino has 600 CV (620 in the M), a 0-100 km/h time of around 3.5 seconds - the Portofino M slightly quicker - the same engine family as the rest of the front-V8 range, and enough performance to bite hard if its driver is careless. The bare numbers settle it: roughly 2.6 kg per CV and a 0-200 km/h time of 10.8 seconds (9.8 in the M) put it firmly in supercar territory, not grand-touring make-believe. By any objective measure it is a fast, capable, properly engineered Ferrari. What it is not is hardcore - and it was never meant to be.

Ferrari has always built different cars for different purposes - alongside the extreme mid-engined cars and the V12 flagships, there have long been softer, more usable grand tourers. A brand of Ferrari's breadth is entitled to that range, and a buyer is entitled to want the comfortable, open-topped, everyday end of it without being told their car does not count. The Portofino is not trying to be a 296 or an 812; judged on what it sets out to do - usable, elegant, genuinely quick grand touring - it succeeds completely. The criticism says more about a narrow idea of what a Ferrari must be than about the car.

08 OWNERSHIP AND MARKET

Comparatively undramatic to own - and the most affordable way into a modern Ferrari.

By Ferrari standards the Portofino is relatively undramatic to own. The twin-turbo V8 is well proven and shared across the range, with no systemic engine fault of the kind that defines some other models; the items that come up are secondary. The folding-roof mechanism is the one to check - exercise it fully on inspection, as faults, while not endemic, are inconvenient and can be costly; the failure points reported are typically the hydraulic pump and the roof microswitches and position sensors (roof-cycle errors), rather than the panels themselves. Beyond that: battery drain on cars left unused (a conditioner solves it), occasional infotainment or camera glitches, and the usual turbo-V8 and dual-clutch service items. Documentation and a pre-purchase inspection matter as on any Ferrari, but the Portofino is not a car with a reputation for drama.

New Portofinos were supplied with Ferrari's seven-year Genuine Maintenance package covering scheduled servicing - a genuine ownership advantage - but the earliest cars (2017-2018) are now reaching the end of that window, so a buyer of an early example should budget for servicing from here on. Post-package, routine annual servicing runs on the order of USD/EUR 1,000-2,500 for a standard year, more in a major-service year, on top of insurance, tyres and the occasional larger item - modest by exotic standards, but real.

On value, used Portofinos span a wide band by year, version, mileage and market. CLASSIC.COM puts the average around USD 193K, with recorded sales from roughly USD 95K (an early, higher-mileage car) to USD 278K (a 2023 Portofino M). In practice, early Portofinos sit around USD 130-170K, later cars around USD 160-190K, and the Portofino M roughly USD 200-260K, with low-mileage, high-specification M cars approaching USD 280K; European levels are broadly comparable in euros, and the M commands a clear premium over the standard car everywhere.

Several structural factors should support values from here. The Portofino is now a discontinued model; it was the last Ferrari GT with a folding metal hardtop (the Roma Spider moved to a soft top); it offers the lowest entry point into a modern Ferrari with genuine everyday usability; and Ferrari's long-standing supply discipline - building fewer cars than the market wants - puts a floor under series-production values that mainstream marques cannot match. None of this is a guarantee, and values move with the wider economy, but the downside looks better protected than the entry price suggests. On a cost-per-year basis it is among the more sensible ways to run a Ferrari - bought to be used, not stored.

Market reference points (approximate, 2026)			
New list	2017-23	~USD 215K / ~EUR 196-206K	Options add USD 30-80K
Early Portofino	2018-19	~USD 130-170K	Most affordable entry
Later Portofino	2019-20	~USD 160-190K	7-speed, 600 CV
Portofino M	2021-23	~USD 200-260K	Low-mileage / high-spec to ~USD 280K
Average (all)	now	~USD 193K (CLASSIC.COM)	EU broadly comparable in euros

Methodology and a note on flaws

Pricing reflects Ferrari list and observed used levels (CLASSIC.COM average and recorded sale range; European and US listings); specified prices vary widely with options, condition and market. The reliability picture is drawn from specialist buyer's guides and owner reports and is deliberately proportionate: the Portofino is not a problematic car, and the roof mechanism and electronics are the realistic watch-items rather than the engine. Figures are reported as quoted and not normalised across currencies.

09 SYNTHESIS

The gateway Ferrari - genuine, usable, and better than its reputation.

The Portofino is the gateway: the most accessible modern Ferrari, the redemption of the California, and the start of the front-engined V8 GT line that runs on through the Roma and the Amalfi. It is a handsome, well-engineered, genuinely fast grand tourer with a clever folding roof and real everyday usability - a Ferrari for people who want to drive one, often, without ceremony. On its own brief, it is hard to fault. [Ferrari]

Buy it as what it is. The Portofino M is the one to have for the sharper powertrain and the eight-speed gearbox, but both versions are easy to live with and undramatic to own; check the roof, confirm the service history and the remaining maintenance cover, and resist the urge to make it loud. As for the 'not a real Ferrari' charge - it is a real Ferrari, built for a real and legitimate purpose, and all the better for being the one you can actually use. The Portofino opens a continuous line: its platform and V8 underpinned the Roma coupe that followed, which in turn evolved into the Amalfi - three expressions of one front-engined GT idea, the subjects of the next two papers in this part of the series. [Ferrari]

BOTTOM LINE

The most accessible modern Ferrari, and an unfairly judged one. A handsome, usable, open-top V8 GT with 600-620 CV and genuine bite, built to be driven daily; comparatively undramatic to own, with the folding roof and electronics the realistic watch-items, not the well-proven engine. The Portofino M is the better car. Dismissed by some as 'not a real Ferrari' - but it is one, built for a different and entirely legitimate purpose. Buy it to use.

SOURCES

Ferrari press and technical documentation (Portofino; Portofino M; F154 V8). Specifications corroborated against Ferrari.com, autoevolution and the road-test record. Ownership and reliability detail from Exotic Car Hacks, CarsCounsel, FerrariChat and specialist buyer's guides; market levels from European and US listings and trade data, held on file with the series. Ferrari does not disclose model volumes; figures are reported from public sources.

Author. Uwe Riemeyer, Marque Intelligence (an IMP InterMediaPartners venture, est. 1976). Disclosed bias: the author owns and regularly drives a Ferrari 488 GTB, owns a Ferrari GTC4Lusso T and has previously owned a Ferrari FF, and writes from inside the enthusiast and collector market rather than at arm's length from it. This paper is research and commentary, not investment advice; collector-car values are volatile and illiquid, and any purchase decision is the reader's own.