

EVENTS/CAUSES

## Luxury automakers reach back into history for Mille Miglia tour

May 15, 2014



*The Bugatti Type 35 will be racing*

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By JOE MCCARTHY

Bentley, Bugatti, Ferrari and other auto brands are getting ready for the historic Mille Miglia race May 15-18 that limits participants to models made before 1957.

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The Mille Miglia race transports auto enthusiasts to the early days of racing when manufacturers were designing some of the essential components currently used. The race also allows automakers to build up their credentials in the eyes of discerning customers.

"You're touching on a sacred subject," said Bob Prosser, CEO of [Auto World Marketing Corp.](#), San Diego. "Mille Miglia is not a small thing to trivialize. It's sort of the first Super Bowl, it's a wonderful race, filled with history, filled with names and wonderful marks.

"For any automaker with a history behind them, they want to compete and involve themselves," he said.

A time to reflect

The Mille Miglia originated in 1927, a time when many automakers were far from their current versions. Indeed, the race was regarded as a "hotspot of innovation," and

automakers seized the opportunity to test new concepts from fuel injections and even windshield wipers.

The cavalier atmosphere ultimately led to its demise in 1957, however, when too many casualties compelled authorities to shut it down.

Since then, the race has loomed large in the auto world's imagination. Today it functions as a way to celebrate the achievements of the past.

Many luxury automakers traffic heavily in historical events and view the race as an opportunity to conjure a sense of the rigorous and imaginative early days.

Bugatti will be deploying its Type 35, the brand's most successful racing model, and the Type 51, which is regarded as the high-point of Bugatti construction.



*Bugatti Type 51*

Bentley will be meeting with members of the Bentley Drivers Club in Brescia, Italy, where the race begins, on the afternoon before the race.



Bentley Motors shared a link.  
May 12

Later this week, Bentley travel to Mille Miglia, to drive this iconic route, bringing vintage Bentley cars to the spectacular roads of Italy. Read more on the Bentley Motors website by clicking this link:



Bentley Motors Website : World of Bentley : News : Classic Bentleys will drive Mille Miglia 2014...  
oak.ctx.ly

Bentley Motors is competing in Mille Miglia 2014 (15-18 May) with two of the company's famous 4 1/2 Litre supercharged 'Blowers' taking on the 1,700 km route. The 1930 Le Mans 'Team Car' once owned by Sir...

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### *Bentley Facebook post regarding Mille Miglia*

During the race, the brand will be participating with two of the company's four-and-a-half liter supercharged "Blowers."



### *Bentley Blower*

Ferrari is building solidarity among its owners by bringing together vintage and modern vehicles for a tribute race a day before the Mille Miglia. When owners feel a sense of camaraderie with one another, the loyalty felt toward a brand strengthens, which generates louder brand advocates and more sale ([see story](#)).



*Ferrari vehicle at Mille Miglia*

Throughout the event automakers will be able to unite fans from around the world with social media updates.

Bring it in

There will always be a loose band of driving enthusiasts dispersed throughout the world. Automakers regularly bring these dedicated owners together for driving expeditions, but rarely do the events have the history associated with Mille Miglia.

For instance, Bentley expanded its driving tours with new locations and partnerships to draw new consumers and treat Bentley loyalists to curated experiences.

The tours travel through Britain, Italy, France and parts of the United States and link up with luxury partners such as Chanel and Harrods. Providing customers with experiences that situate a brand in the larger context of luxury while demonstrating the best of what showcased products can accomplish enables automakers to cultivate loyalists ([see story](#)).

Also, Maserati draws consumers to its Master Maserati driving courses with the promise of an authentic cultural experience.

The available driving courses vary in both duration and intensity, but are girded by culturally resonant activities. Whether conversing with locals, eating prosciutto or tasting local wine, Maserati strives to impart an attitude specific to the brand ([see story](#)).

While any brand can host a driving event, not every brand can participate in an event as hallowed as Mille Miglia.

"You don't earn your chops because you want to claim something," Mr. Prosser said. "You have to earn it."

Final take

*Joe McCarthy, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York*

Embedded Video: [//www.youtube.com/embed/5-jAV\\_mQNW8](https://www.youtube.com/embed/5-jAV_mQNW8)

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