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# Don't Hate Electric Classic Car Conversions



**James Morris** Contributor 


[Sustainability](#)

*I write about the rapidly growing world of electric vehicles*

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If there is one subject that is likely to provoke emotion amongst car enthusiasts, it is when a classic has been converted to run on an electric motor. Some people already have an irrational hatred of EVs, but they lose all perspective when a famous old vehicle has had its fossil fuel engine removed. It feels like the ultimate travesty against a nostalgic view of old cars. However, with some caveats, electrifying classic cars is a very good thing. Here's why.





This Ferrari 308 GTSi EV conversion provokes a very emotional response. [ELECTRIC CLASSIC CARS](#)

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rage are the [Ferrari 308 GTSi converted by Electric Classic Cars](#), and [Lunaz's Rolls Royce Phantom](#). These are iconic vehicles that evoke a sense of history and for many the engines inside them are a big part of that – the exotic V8 in the Ferrari and the huge V8 in the Rolls. Likewise, the [Porsche conversions created by UK-based Evertati](#) miss out on the sound and soul of the legendary air-cooled six-cylinder boxer engines that are replaced by an electric powertrain, which some might consider essential.

It would be a travesty to take a very rare classic and electrify it. Anyone who thinks that there shouldn't be any old fossil fuel cars allowed on the roads really doesn't like automobiles at all. In the same way that buildings are listed to be maintained for posterity, so we allow their shortcomings compared to modern designs, there is a place for well maintained classics. They are part of history, and they shouldn't just sit stationary in museums all the time. Festivals in their honor like the [London Classic Car Show](#) (which I have been attending for years) or [Goodwood Revival](#) are popular with good reason. They are testaments to past human engineering

ingenuity and inspiration for the future.



The Lunaz Rolls Royce Phantom EV conversion is another car that is bound to divide opinion.

LUNAZ

The problem with a lot of classic cars, however, is not just the fact that most of them will have been produced before emissions standards were even conceived, let alone become as strict as they are now. They can also be extremely unreliable. The service interval on a Ferrari 308 was just 6,250 miles even when new. If you own one now, the chances are it will sit in the garage most of the time, unused, and when you do take it out, you probably wouldn't want to drive it on a long and important journey in case it breaks down.

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Electric vehicles, in contrast, are much more reliable than fossil fuel cars. Yes, there have been some software issues with new models like the Volkswagen ID.3 and ID.4. But mature EVs like those made by Hyundai, Kia, and Nissan need barely any attention at all. They are perfect everyday drivers for short trips around town and commuting because they just work.

However, while there's enjoyment in the modernity of the latest EVs, particularly Tesla's radical approach with the minimal interior of the Model 3, the fact they have usually been designed using Computational Fluid Dynamics (CFD) and wind tunnels usually means EVs are quite bland to look at. Very few have the characterful appearance of a classic Ferrari, Rolls Royce, or Porsche. Unfortunately, designing for best airflow tends to lead to similar shapes, whereas the quirks of a classic design are often what makes them less efficient in this respect.



The Triumph Stag had a hugely unreliable internal combustion engine, but this EV conversion can

Electrifying a classic car provides the best of both worlds. You get most of the character of the original design (minus the engine noise and gearchanges), but with the reliability and everyday usage possibility of an EV. For example, UK company [Electrogenic recently converted a Triumph Stag to electric power](#). The Stag is a beautiful design, and every kid I knew back in the 1980s wanted one. But even when new it had reliability problems. I had a couple of friends whose dads had been able to live the dream and buy a Stag, but they never drove them because you couldn't be sure they would ever start.

Classic cars are also not very fast by today's standards. Go back a few decades and anything reaching 60mph in under 10 seconds would be considered sporty. Now virtually every family car can achieve this. Swapping an old internal combustion engine for a new electric one almost always results in more power and a lot more torque. Quite a few Volkswagen Beetles have been turned into speed demons via electrification. In fact, that is almost the perfect platform for conversion, because original Beetles are quite cheap to buy and hardly rare, with 21.5 million produced.



The Watt Electric car is inspired by the classic Porsche 365a. WATT ELECTRIC

It's also great to see new electric cars made to look like classics, such as the [Porsche 365a-inspired vehicle from Watt Electric](#). That is bound to turn heads but is much faster and safer than the original 365, and a car you could use every day. However, the Porsche 964 conversions from Everrati promise driving thrills well beyond what even the original car could offer, via a reliable everyday EV drivetrain. [EV West in the USA](#) has lots of kits for converting classic Porsches and Volkswagens to EVs, too. None of this is cheap, but the end result will be something unique and characterful.

In the shift towards greener transportation, we do run the risk of throwing away a lot of automotive history. It would be a real shame to see roads entirely filled with bland new cars entirely designed for efficiency rather than aesthetic flair. Electrifying classic cars, rather than ruining the past, can make it more visible by ensuring more of these vehicles are kept actively on the road rather than rotting in garages. So don't get angry about it. This is something that can bring the vehicles of the past back into everyday use, preserving their memory rather than burying it.

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**James Morris**

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