



HEAD to HEAD



Four-seater supercars are as rare as they are fast. Ferrari, the masters of the grand tourer, faced stiff competition in the 1970s when Lamborghini launched the Espada. But which one has the bragging rights as being the best in its class?



Ferrari **365 GTC/4**

ON THE ROAD

HANDLING Effortless power steering ensures that driving the Ferrari is a joy; it responds nicely and has a comfortable ride.

CORNERING The 365 GTC/4 is a no-compromise Ferrari around bends, demonstrating itself to be a sports car with a high degree of grip.

ACCELERATION The Ferrari boasts very strong acceleration, with enough low-rpm torque to move it along at low speeds.

PRICE The 365 GTC/4 was conceived for luxury buyers who wanted a fast cruiser, but it still cost nearly 30 percent more than an Espada.

Lamborghini **ESPADA**

ON THE ROAD

HANDLING The steering may be heavy but the Espada feels good, enabling you to exploit its sophisticated chassis to the fullest extent.

CORNERING Traction and grip are two of the Espada's strongest points. The well-designed suspension keeps body roll to a minimum.

ACCELERATION The Espada has massive power reserves at high rpm. At low revs, however, it feels very sluggish.

PRICE Retailing at \$21,000, this was Lamborghini's most expensive model in 1969. It went on to become the company's all-time best seller.



HEAD to HEAD

Ferrari 365 GTC/4



Composed and agile, the 365GTC/4 is a thoroughbred grand tourer. The powerful V12 gives the performance expected of a Ferrari.



Braking

Braking is superb on both cars. The Ferrari's slightly lighter weight means that its braking distances are marginally shorter, but there is really not much to choose between the cars.

Accommodation

The Ferrari emerges on the winner here as there is more of the essential panache in the back seats, although the Ferrari is still a generous coach. While the Espada offers comfortable seating in the rear, there isn't nearly as much available headroom as there is in the Ferrari.



Handling

In terms of pace and response, the 365 GTC/4 is superior. The Espada handles competently, but there is a sense of a series of unconnected stages that is the Ferrari.

VERDICT

These are two differing approaches. The Ferrari is more subtle and sportier, whereas the Espada is more 'traditional'. The GTC/4 is more spacious, has a better ride, and comes with air-conditioning.

STATISTICS



Lamborghini ESPADA



Rig and wide, the V12 Espada is a powerful performer. The composed chassis ably takes all the gnat. The unique Barban design makes it a real head-turner, yet it is a genuine four-wheeler.



Roadholding

Ferrari's choice of alloy and functional wheel put the middle down in the right edge here. The heavier race spec alloy wheels are more than a full inch wider, giving it slightly more grip and reaction. The Espada's steeper tie-rod angle, it needs to and has some gripping roadholding capabilities.



Ride

Ride is important when carrying four occupants. Although the suspension on the two cars are designed for heavy carrying, neither is unambitious. However, the Ferrari's well-tuned suspension provides the same level of ride quality regardless of the load. Its ride is good for a sports car of this class, whereas the Lamborghini offers and ride suffers.

INSIDE STORY

Ferrari has a strong history of four-seater cars. The 365 GTC/4 is a direct development of the pure-bred Daytona sports coupe and shares its tubular chassis. The all-independent suspension including Koni self-leveling rear shock absorbers and four-wheel disc brakes is also carried over. Unlike the 365 GTB/4 Daytona, however, the GTC employs a conventional transmission in place of the rear-mounted five-speed transaxle.



Ferrari purists may have maligned the 365 GTC/4, but this handsome four-seater was fast and sold extremely well during its brief lifespan.

POWER PACK

The 365 GTC/4's engine can be traced back to 1947 when Gioacchino Colombo designed the company's first V12. By 1971, it had been expanded to 4.4 liters and developed between 320 and 340 bhp. It has four camshafts (two per bank of cylinders), an aluminum block and heads and six Weber 38 DCOE twin-barrel carburetors. This engine survived in the later 365 GT/4 and 400, the latter with a stroked 4.8-liter version.



Unlike the 365 GTB/4 Daytona, all 365 GTC/4s came with pop-up headlights regardless of where they were sold.

INSIDE STORY

The Espada was born out of the Marzal show car. Its 104.3-inch wheelbase is four inches longer than other Lamborghinis and it has a pressed steel chassis. The front-mounted engine, steering and four-wheel disc brakes are shared with the earlier 400 GT. The suspension is an effective mix of unequal-length A-arms and coil springs at each end with two anti-roll bars. Initially, a five-speed manual transmission was the only choice, but the market demanded an automatic, so Lamborghini obliged.



When launched, the Espada was the most expensive Lamborghini you could buy and was also one of the longest lived. Production ended in 1978.

POWER PACK

The V12 quad-cam engine in the Espada was a jewel to rival any Ferrari engine. Its 4.0-liter displacement may be relatively small for a V12, but it does not lack power. In its original guise, it developed 325 bhp, but that rose to 350 bhp in the Series II version and to 390 bhp at 7,500 rpm in the Series III. Its block and heads are made of aluminum and there are six Weber twin-barrel carburetors.



Dramatic from any angle, the Espada is nevertheless a practical car featuring a lift-up rear hatch.

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