

# Invest.**RESTORE.**Keep.\$ell.

This Four-Part Series of articles is about the future of our fascination with the JAGUAR Automobile. The automobile collecting hobby, business, and culture is a 20<sup>th</sup> Century phenomenon brought on by wealth, mobility, super-highways, and the wide-open spaces of this great country.

## PART 4. **\$ELL YOUR JAGUAR . . .**

There comes a time in everyone's love affair with their JAGUAR that must come to an end. The reasons vary from wanting a newer car, too many miles, repair bills are increasing, too old to drive, the list goes on. Recently I been hearing complaints that there are just no mechanics willing to work on the older model JAGS. Bear in mind that when Sir William introduced the SS100, XK-120, E-Type, XJ6 Sedan, the list goes on, he didn't intend for these wonderful machines to go on forever.

He wanted to provide fast, comfortable, affordable, daily drivers that folks would enjoy and grow up with. Those were the days when your dad would get a new car every two years or so. His legendary phrase, "**PACE, GRACE, SPACE**", was exactly that, these cars provided luxury, performance, and style at an affordable price. But, as they say, all good things must come to an end. And so, you have decided to sell your JAGUAR and how do you go about doing that. Bear in mind, the JAGUAR automobile is a unique entity that has a distinct following and reputation good and bad. I guess you could say it was a "love/hate" relationship that continued until either one of you said "UNCLE" or "its time to move on old girl."

So, let's begin with the steps to sell your JAGUAR and maybe recover some of the costs or make sure she goes to good home. Whether you have an old XK-120 or a 2007 XKR the steps are the same. **Presentation, Mechanical worthiness, Maintenance schedule, and Market value** are the key items to consider.

**Presentation** is defined as the condition of the exterior, mechanicals, and interior of the car. The condition of the paint and chrome are the first items you will want to consider. If your paint is faded or needs a good detailing to make it shine it would be worth the investment. If your paint is cracked, peeling, door dings, rust spots, then don't bother with a repaint as this could cost as much as what you are asking for the entire car. A little elbow grease and polish might make the difference in additional value to your car. There are polishes and chrome cleaners that can make miracles of a tired paint job, or dull chrome bumper shine once more. Remember there are buyers out there that may want a car as is so that they can put their personal touch on your car. Interiors are another important area of presentation.

Old English Connelly leather dried out in the warm California Sun and unless you fed it leather food it tended to harden, fade, and crack. The solution was to put sheep skins over the seat covers. In today's market a new replacement leather interior is several thousands of dollars and might enhance the selling price. Again, depending on the condition of your car, the investment of a freshened interior can work wonders. This means shampooing the rugs, cleaning the leather seats, vacuuming the carpets, polishing the wood and chrome bits, and making sure all the lights come on in the interior. As they say, beauty is in the eye of the beholder.

That first impression from the potential buyer is the most important. A well taken photograph can be the difference whether your car sells, stands out from all the other cars out there on the Internet. Best time to take a photo is early morning or late afternoon! Take the time to find a location that will enhance your cars colour, shiny bits, body condition, add drama to the picture. Make sure that your car is clean inside and out, photos of the engine compartment are important as is the condition of the convertible top if fitted, boot/trunk area, and back seating area. Maybe even have your lights on if you take the picture in the early evening or morning.

**Mechanical Condition** is the most important issue when selling a used JAGUAR, no matter the model or year. Historically, well maintained JAGUARS automobiles can last if the owner is willing to maintain it. Simple maintenance routines can produce high mileage and reliable service. I personally have had V12 and 6-cylinder engine Jags with mileage approaching 250,000 miles on the original engine and transmission. All of this was accomplished with routine factory maintenance schedules. With that said, you need to consider the condition of your car before putting it on the FOR-SALE sites. If you are selling the car because you mechanic told you it needed a considerable amount of repair, and you just don't want to invest anymore money into it then you must adjust your asking price accordingly. Passing on your problem to another owner can be a potential headache for you both.

There is the **AS IS** rule when you sell a car. The purchaser has the option to have your car checked by an independent mechanic to confirm the condition of the mechanicals. Be prepared to produce maintenance records for their evaluation. If you didn't keep receipts and a log of your maintenance records, then you open yourself for a difficult time of selling your car. JAGUAR cars have a history of mechanical issues and potential buyers are aware of this reputation and will be on the lookout for them. If your car does need some moderate repair and it might mean the difference of selling at the price you want or not selling at all. A set of new tires can make a big difference, as would changing the brake pads, oil change, adding fuel injector cleaner, new spark plugs, change air filter, recharge your AC, little things can mean thousands in your selling price. Also, when you sell your JAGUAR, you are responsible for the **SMOG TEST** in order that the new owner can transfer and register the car. You are responsible to make any repairs if your car does **NOT PASS SMOG TESTING**. Sometimes a simple oil change, air filter, and an ITALIAN TUNE-UP are all you need. If your car does not pass smog test and your numbers indicate a rich exhaust mixture, then there are a few key components to check. Make

sure your air pump is performing correctly and there are no air leaks in the connector hoses, your oxygen sensor is working properly, your air cleaner is fresh, new spark plugs are gapped correctly, and most importantly, your catalytic converters are not clogged or melted from too rich a fuel mixture.

Maybe having your engine bay cleaned by a professional detailer might be the solution too. Once again, it's how you present your car for sale. Make sure you fix any exhaust leaks, and all your lights are working properly especially the 3<sup>rd</sup> brake light, back-up lights, brake, turn signals, high-low beam, and day running lights. Again, these little things matter and tell the potential buyer you cared for the car. OIL LEAKS are a JAGUAR feature, they just happen, all JAGUARS leak oil from the rear main seal, power steering, and transmission. Usually, it's just a few drops.

**Maintenance schedule** is the key to attracting a potential buyer for your car. It is important to present your car in the best light. A documented routine maintenance schedule is the most effective selling tool you have. A potential buyer does not want to inherit your headache! If you have done your homework and maintained your JAGUAR as prescribed in the owner's manual, then you can ask for the amount that you think your car is worth. Buyers are very aware of car issues and especially old JAGUARS and if you can see your maintenance records as proof of your diligence in maintaining your car then you have a very good chance of a sale.

Don't be surprised if a buyer comes with a magnet in his hand to find BOND-O or rust in your door panels, fender wells, or windshield gaskets. These are typical areas for rust on old JAGUARS. The newer models have much better rust proofing, and their issues tend to be electronic with FAULT CODES and emission issues such as vacuum leaks, dirty air cleaners, spark plug coils missing at idle, window motor issues, leaking hydraulic top hoses, and shock absorber bushings. Front-end wheel alignment is another tell-tale issue that a savvy buyer will be looking for as newer modern cars tend to have wider tires and driven more aggressively. Also, there is the issue of clear-coat burn. The first generation of cars with clear coat, 1995, tended to oxidize and start to peel on the bonnet/hood, boot lid/trunk and cabin top. This can be repaired by a paint shop, not too expensive but it can be avoided with a little wax and car cover. Again, good scheduled maintenance is the key word. Your investment in a little attention will go a long way in the sale of your car when the time comes.

**Market Value**, what is your car worth? This is the \$64 Million Dollar Question. How do you determine what your car is truly worth? There are several resources and sources to use. The most popular Online Websites for selling an automobile are (1) **AUTOTRADER.com**, (2) **Edmunds.com**, (3) **BringaTrailer.com**, (4) **classics.autotrader.com**, (5) **jcna.com**, (6) **classiccars.com**, (7) **oldcarsonline.com**, (8) **streetsideclassics.com**, (9) **cars-on-line.com**, (10) **hemmings.com**. Also, there are the AUCTION HOUSES such as MECUM, RUSSO AND STEELE, BARRETT JACKSON, and BONHAMS, these are the bigger shows and your car will have to command a pretty penny, they also collect a fee, 10% of the selling price.

So, getting back to the main issue, what is your car worth? Assuming your car is a runner and is not damaged by accident or collision, and all the mechanicals are in working order, then you have a good chance of getting top dollar for your vehicle. HOW TO DETERMINE THE PRICE is the next big question. Selling a USED CAR is about supply and demand, that means if you have a desirable model, i.e., XJS Convertible, then you probably can ask for the top selling price that are listed on the popular selling sites. **BUT** you must take into consideration total miles on your car, condition of the paint and interior, if all adds up to a nice package then, you have a possible sale and then its about choosing which website you want to list your car on if you go down that road.

Sometimes letting your friends in your car club know that your car is for sale may be the best way to sell your car. Depends on the model, the demand, and the condition but they see you and your car at events and that tells them it's in good condition and they know you're a responsible owner. **Bottomline, its your decision and your call how you want to sell your automobile, there are many ways to go, it's up to you how you want to do business.**