

CLASSIC CHOICE

FERRARI F430 COUPÉ

By Jim Mc Cauley

For some, the definition of a classic Ferrari is one built several decades ago, but unfortunately for many the cost is prohibitive. However, a younger generation of classic models offers tempting affordability with the recently introduced security of Ferrari Approved warranty.



A range of modern classics was on display at the opening of the new Charles Hurst Ferrari dealership in Belfast recently with the F430 looking an interesting proposition. Buying a used Ferrari puts the new owner on the first rung of ownership and access to some of the Italian marque's finest without joining a lengthy waiting list for a factory fresh latest model.

As a Ferrari may be the second or third car in the owner's car parc, most have led a privileged life and used examples tend to be pampered with lower than average mileage.

While there is an exciting range of Ferrari colours, red immediately identifies the car and

the test vehicle came complete with the Scuderia wing badges and cream leather. Extras fitted to the car included matching cream leather roof lining, Carbonio dash trim, rear parking sensors and red brake calipers.

Controls are surprisingly simple to manage with a traditional key to switch on power and the push-button starter, along with a power mode selection switch set into the steering wheel spokes – F1 style. This particular car had an automated manual gearbox with manual override accessed via the steering wheel paddles. Dubbed F1, it is a long way from providing snap changes, with hesitant movement particularly at lower speeds. However, the saving grace is the manual override which allows the driver to maintain more rapid and indeed smoother pace, and permits the car to get into character. Another advantage of the manual choice is the driver's ability to take the engine revs to a higher crescendo and enjoy the note and tingle of the V8 just inches behind. At normal road speeds, it never felt that there was the best part of 500 bhp available, but to be fair it may take a track session or unrestricted European motorway to experience its promised delivery at 8,500 rpm.

Steering is lighter than expected, but appreciated at slower speeds while ride is definitely on the firmer sports side.

The car driven was a 2006 model, priced at £79,900 but with less than 11,000 recorded miles. Weighed against the cost and waiting time for a new model, a used Ferrari with a full service history represents an excellent alternative for first time buyers to establish themselves in this exclusive club.