



Dardo

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The Dardo, a spider based on the mechanicals of the Alfa Romeo 156, is yet another example of Pininfarina's passion for the car, the research for innovative forms of expression, research which, in the run-up to the "67° Salone Internazionale dell'Automobile di Torino 3a Rassegna Mondiale dello Stile", has focused on a make like Alfa Romeo which embodies some of the best qualities of the Italian car: sportiness, imagination, technology and performance.

More than ever before, the car today is not only a technological and functional product, but above all an object capable of arousing emotion; styling can play a role of great importance, it can really make the difference, it can represent a decisive added value for the market success of a car in a panorama of models which, segment by segment, tend to be more and more equivalent in terms of performance, technology, quality and price.

In fact, the appeal of a model, seen as a blend of fascination and aesthetic personality, is the element that first attracts the user, provides the first, decisive purchasing motivation, on a par with those competitive and fundamental requirements such as quality, performance, price and aftersales service, which have been increasingly optimized.

With this in mind, Pininfarina presents at the Turin motor Show a pure styling exercise with no production prospects: the Dardo, a spider with a strong emotional appeal. The car was inspired by the Alfa Romeo 156, the new saloon from Alfa voted 1998 Car of the Year, which is enjoying considerable success, a car with a particularly strong character and image.

The Dardo's realization is born out of a Pininfarina initiative in the spirit of the long tradition of cooperation with Alfa Romeo, which began in the early 1930s with the construction of one-off models for individual customers and continued through the years, extending to all the most important aspects of Pininfarina's activities: from advanced stylistic research (18 prototypes and research studies developed since the 1960s) to the design of mass produced models destined for manufacturing by Alfa Romeo (one example will suffice, the Alfa Romeo 164 of 1987), and the design and production by Pininfarina of what are now known as niche models (considering the most meaningful productions, over 160,000 units of the Giulietta Spider and Duetto were built).

In all, about one hundred different Pininfarina Alfa Romeos models have been realized: in fact, all the Alfa Romeo spiders from the 1950s to the present were the fruit of industrial and styling cooperation with Pininfarina. From the Giulietta Spider in the 1950s to the Duetto in the 1960s (marketed for 27 years), and the Alfa Spider of 1994: they have all represented and continue to represent, each in its own period, an element of great technical and stylistic innovation compared to the model that went before.

Also the Dardo is not inspired by cars of the past, but interprets the Alfa Romeo "spider" theme innovatively, reiterating the sporty spirit, class and particular personality of the Portello brand. Briefly the Dardo, which is based on the engineering of the V6 2.5 litre version of the Alfa Romeo model, has a two-seater "barchetta" body 438.5 cm long, 179.5 cm wide and 125 cm high, with some striking features: the Alfa Romeo logo at the front, closing the imposing bonnet which resembles the point of an arrow, the play of lines on the



waistline and sides, the design of the rear which reiterates the dominant theme of the triangle, the extra-large wheels and the light clusters of new design.

Dardo. The Italian word for a dart, a slender shaft of wood or metal with a sharp point, a swift, aerodynamic object whose strongest element is the triangular, pointed front end .

In Pininfarina's intentions the name "Dardo" is well suited to the form study, presented at the 67th Turin Motor Show, which is an innovative interpretation of the theme of the two-seater open car, whether it be called a "spider", a "barchetta" or a "rondster".

The Dardo, which is free from industrial constraints, relates, in a spirit of pure stylistic research, to a mass produced model such as the 156 saloon, and to a brand like Alfa Romeo that is synonymous with passion and sportiness. A car and a brand whose success and technical, sporty image constitute a strong creative stimulus in the search for concepts and shapes which represent the historic core of Pininfarina's activities, alongside design development and manufacturing.

Deliberately devoid of references to the past, no matter how interesting, without indulging in nostalgia, the Dardo is projected aggressively into the future, free from the classic legal and industrial constraints that standard cars are subject to. The Dardo is a dream of a car designed to fly through the wind, a dream that is translated into complex, appealing shapes, shapes that come together naturally and seamlessly, and a dream which vigorously carry forward the strength of the Alfa Romeo brand and its shield logo.

Today, in the world of prestige cars and high performance models, one of the most decisive elements for the customer is the manufacturer's trademark, not a simple decoration, but a real added value, to be exploited and enhanced because of the image and sensations that it immediately imparts to the product: the evidence given to the Alfa Romeo logo in the Dardo is basically due to these considerations.

Based on the platform of the 156, with a slightly shorter wheelbase (254 cm compared to 2604, but the same architecture (front wheel drive) and the 2.5 litre V6 24V engine (140 kW), the new Pininfarina study is presented as a compact two-seater "barchetta" (438.5x179.5x125 cm) with a dynamic, original shape, and a strong personality. The Dardo marks a clear break with the classic tradition of open cars; it reflects the spirit of the Italian sports car and links up innovatively with Pininfarina tradition with the Alfa Romeo Giulietta Spider and the Duetto first, and later with the current Alfa Romeo Spider: true turning points in their sector.

It is a complex, sophisticated shape in which the sleek lines and soft volumes combine to emphasise the pointed front, the three lines linking the logo and the large windscreen, the front wing and the spoiler, the side panel and rear wheel, returning once again to the triangle in a fascinating game, on the front, sides and rear of the car, with its two characteristic small domes behind the two front seals.

The following are briefly the most significant styling elements of the Dardo, which mark the car's personality. Softness and Strong lines.

The shape of the Dardo gives an impression of smoothness and softness, but also of originality and vigour. It is a sensation born out of several elements, but based above all on what can be considered the "guidelines" of the Pininfarina research project. The first originates from the framed Alfa Romeo shield which gives force to the imposing bonnet and links up with the very short pillars that thrust the windscreen skyward. The second guideline goes in the same direction; starting from the front wing, just above the wheel, it outlines the upper part of the side to terminate in the rear wing. The third line goes in the opposite direction, another clear sign which cuts through the side from the rear mudguard, emphasising the triangular shape it creates.



The Logo dominates the front

The classic Alfa Romeo shield sits firmly on the front, with the "whiskers" that link up, near the side air intakes to form a triangle with the foglights. Further up, buried in the front, are the twin head lights.

Developed jointly with Valeo Eclairage et Signalisation, they adopt patented Baroptique® technology for the dipped function. This considerably reduces dimensions compared to conventional headlights and gives the car's "eyes" a futuristic, hi-tech look whether they are on or off.

The inside light cluster governs the full beam function, with a polyelliptical headlight surrounded by six small spot lights, which recall the rear lights, while a thin ambercoloured neon bulb acts as the direction indicator, with a shape that recalls both the air intake motif on the sides and the rear lights.

The V-shaped shield with the Alfa logo and chromeplated frame, completes the bonnet, which is also triangular: it is the point of the dart, but the front as a whole, with its incorporated bumpers and spoilers also resembles the sleek prow of a boat. The position and size of the Alfa Romeo logo guarantees that the product is immediately recognisable.

Refined work on the sides

The triangle motif reappears on the sides of the Dardo, which are impressive, animated by carefully intersecting lines. The point of the triangle, recessed in the body of the car, hides the engine air outlets, thus combining a stylistic element with functional utility. Perfect integration between styling and technology which Pininfarina, faithful to its tried and tested design philosophies, does not renounce even in this form study. It is interesting to note that these air intakes evoke the pattern of those positioned at the front, thus returning their design. In order to keep the sides smooth and compact, the door handles are positioned in the waistline.

A large "V" in the tail

The rear end blends with the overall line of the Dardo, proposing yet another triangular shape, a large "V" which develops strongly to envelop the light clusters, indirectly reiterating the sign of the Alfa logo. It terminates at the base between two small aerodynamic stabilisers, and at the top in the spoiler that encircles the higher reaches of the car.

The Styling of the wheels

The size and design of the wheels contribute significantly to any car's personality. In the case of the Dardo, Pininfarina studied the matter in detail, adopting 18 inch tyres and very sporty wheels, decorated with five large circles. This choice recalls equipment on the 156 saloon, and helps to underline the Dardo's balanced, dynamic shape, emphasised by the short overhangs.

Pininfarina's red barchetta has two roll-bars behind the seats. The link with the 156 is underlined by the adoption of its fascia, which is itself very sporty, recalling those of great Alfa Romeo sports cars.

The interior of the Dardo was designed to respect the Alfa Romeo spirit, which emphasises the values of sportiness and technology: special fabrics and very "hi tech" metallescent leather upholstery were used for the fascia and seats. Given the car's sporty personality, Pininfarina cooperated with Sparco to the design of the seats, while developing extremely rigid shells for greater driving sensitivity; this was achieved by both the particular shape of the shells and their state-of-the-art carbon-kevlar-carbon sandwich technology.



The design of the padding is consistent with the other features of the car.

Other elements suggested by Sparco experience are: TRW Sabelt TF 4-point seat belts (3 " wide with lever release), aluminium sheet pedals, and an aluminium gear lever knob.

The luggage compartment is under the rear spoiler.

In creating the Dardo, Pininfarina intended to design a form which, anticipating stylistic trends, would offer a new interpretation of a type of car that has always appealed to the public.