



# Berlinetta Motorcars Ferrari Testarossa

As a career objective, flea marketer looks better and better.

BY LARRY WEBSTER

“How are the brakes on this thing?” the passenger asked uneasily, just after a thunderous blast to 120 mph.

“Don’t know yet,” replied the writer/driver. Which is definitely not the reassuring response someone—in this case, the father of the car’s builder—hopes for when riding shotgun in a twin-turbo Testarossa with a writer/driver intoxicated by the overload rush of insane acceleration.

“You know,” said the passenger, “going fast makes me sick.”

No matter how powerful a car is, there will always be people who want more. Car owner Ralph Fasano, a 50-year-old flea-market entrepreneur, wanted more. At Ferrari club meets, the power of his stock 1986 Testarossa simply wasn’t enough, so

he asked Doug Pirrone, president of Berlinetta Motorcars, to help.

Pirrone’s company has been restoring and tinkering with Ferraris since 1979. A few of his restorations have been class leaders at prestigious car shows. A Berlinetta-restored 1959 long-wheelbase California Spider won its class at Pebble Beach in 1984, earning Berlinetta Motorcars a reputation for quality work.

When numerous customers wanted more from their cars, restoring branched into modifying. For example, Pirrone extensively modified a 308, and in 1992 he entered it in the GTO class at Lime Rock and finished sixth out of eight. An impressive showing considering the class was dominated by the likes of Steve Millen, his factory-sponsored 300ZX,

and a considerable racing budget.

The car on these pages was built in two stages. Stage one cost about \$16,000 and involved installing two Garrett turbochargers with twin air-to-air intercoolers, along with the necessary plumbing and a slightly different fuel-delivery program. Because all other mechanical pieces remained the same, Pirrone kept boost at 10 psi to avoid overstressing the engine.

Fasano liked it, but still he wanted more. This lust for power would have made J.P. Morgan proud. Stage two cost a little more—oh, about \$150,000—and mainly beefed up the engine to allow higher boost. Stronger pistons (which lowered the compression ratio from 9.2 to 8.3:1) cylinder liners, connecting rods, and cylinder-head studs fortified the engine. A