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THE ‘BABY’ BUGATTI TYPE 52: THE REBIRTH OF A LEGEND AS A COLLECTOR’S PIECE OF ART



In 1926, Ettore Bugatti sought to celebrate the fourth birthday of his youngest son, Roland, with a uniquely special gift. Inspired by an icon close to his heart, he decided to build an exquisite half-scale interpretation of the inimitable Bugatti Type 35 — the legendary vehicle that would go on to become the most successful racing car of all time — and marking the birth of the Bugatti Type 52. Also known as the ‘Baby’ Bugatti, it is now reinterpreted as a piece of art, a quintessentially

2026 BUGATTI AUTOMOBILES S.A.S.

special limited series of collectors' sculptures infused with the vision of Ettore Bugatti himself, and realized by Bugatti's first Pilote Officiel, Pierre-Henri Raphanel.

Today, only a handful of the extraordinarily beautiful 'Baby' Type 52 examples remain, relics of an era that celebrated both luxury and pioneering design. Now, through Pierre-Henri Raphanel's deep-rooted passion and lifelong dedication to Bugatti, this iconic configuration has been meticulously recreated. His company, 'Nations Racing Legends,' has brought the Type 52 back to life as a limited series of artful masterpieces, crafted to be admired and cherished as heirlooms of automotive and artistic heritage.
Pierre-Henri's journey with Bugatti began in 2005, and since then, he has become synonymous with the brand's uncompromising standards and visionary spirit. Having conducted more than 10,000 road-tests around the globe, he has amassed a depth of experience that few can rival. His celebrated career in racing — including competing in Formula 1, the legendary 24 Hours of Le Mans, and setting a world-record top speed of 431.072 km/h with the Bugatti Veyron 16.4 Super Sport in 2010 — adds a unique dimension to his role at Bugatti. Pierre-Henri now channels his extensive experience, profound historical knowledge of the brand, and deep automotive expertise into every detail of the Type 52 series.

This exclusive series, limited to just 99 hand-crafted pieces, embodies Bugatti's near-century of celebrating luxury and excellence in a 'baby' package. Each artwork has been created with an unwavering commitment to authenticity, employing original crafting techniques and the highest-quality materials that Ettore Bugatti himself had chosen. The result is a collection of timeless artworks, reflecting the marque's dedication to elegance, precision, and unyielding passion for perfection.

Each Type 52 creation is far more than a replica; it is a masterful reinterpretation, paying homage to Bugatti's heritage while celebrating Pierre-Henri's own legendary journey with the brand. Designed to be treasured and displayed as pieces of art, these creations not only preserve Bugatti's legacy but elevate it, bringing together nearly a century of tradition, Pierre-Henri's unparalleled expertise, and the finest craftsmanship that French artisanship can offer. In each Type 52, Bugatti's storied past and Pierre-Henri's personal devotion to the brand unite to create a tribute worthy of exhibition and admiration for generations to come.

"Pierre-Henri has been a wonderful brand ambassador for almost two decades. His incredible knowledge of the Bugatti brand and his passion for our inimitable legacy and Ettore's visionary spirit and philosophy — as well as his great love for detail and ambition to being faithful to the original car — brings so much authenticity and uniqueness to his oeuvre d'art. We are incredibly proud to complement our portfolio with these state-of-the-art sculptures designed for Bugatti enthusiasts and art collectors."

WIEBKE STÅHL
MANAGING DIRECTOR AT BUGATTI INTERNATIONAL

Carefully honoring the spirit of the original model — with steel, aluminum, wood, and leather weaved into the design with a wealth of precision — and delivering a unique fusion of the worlds of artisanship and art, achieving such a feat was no simple task; it was one that demanded the care and attention to detail that had endeared Pierre-Henri to Bugatti. Committed to doing justice to this precious ethos, he traveled across France — seeking out and gathering master craftspeople from different fields, whose treasured and unique skills could bring the Type 52 to life as a true piece of art, in immaculately recreated detail.

"To revive this automotive icon and stay true to Ettore's original work, we at 'Nations Racing Legends' have curated a team of exceptional artisans throughout France, each possessing an incomparable gift. We have meticulously handpicked bodyworkers, founders, turners, saddlers, and painters to offer the most authentic and respectful piece of art that stays true to its most original form. These skilled craftsmen and women, all recognized masters in their respective crafts, have come together and worked intensively over the last few years to create a unique tribute to the legendary 'Baby' Type 52. In retrieving and studying more than 100 manufacturing plans, examining period photos and analyzing the rare models still in existence, we have noted each and every detail of the legendary model. We have fused that respect for Ettore's forward-thinking mind, using a fading savoir-faire and giving more time to craftsmanship, instilling the unmatched attention to quality and beauty needed to give my Type 52 artwork collection its own unique identity."

PIERRE-HENRI RAPHANEL

The steel-frame rails, hand-beaten aluminum bodywork, nickel-plated brass radiator, wooden brake drums, leather-upholstered seats — all were created out of poring over the plans, production techniques and archives charting the creation of the original 'Baby' Type 52.

With each work individually numbered, 60 of the examples are dedicated to privileged customers to individualize according to their preferred color-palette, with some appointed in

official vintage racing liveries. These iconic hues represent nations from France to Italy and Monaco, all woven into the fabric of motor-racing's long and star-studded history. Reflecting the unique artistic flair of Bugatti's special-edition vehicles, 39 of the exquisite models represent bespoke versions of the iconic 'Baby' Type 52; defined by exclusive configurations and materials, the series includes 12 'silver legends' — eight of which are finished in mirror-polished aluminum and four in unique artists' proofs — and 12 'gold legends', with eight replete in highly complex mirror-polished brass and four also finished in artists' proofs.

Concluding his reflections, Pierre-Henri elaborated on the symbolism of the project:

> ''The remarkable group of craftspeople and artists I have assembled share a common vision to honor Bugatti's truly unique story — reviving the spirit of inimitability that the 'Baby' Type 52 represented, and embodying the ethos that has made each Bugatti model incomparable. The artworks we have created, with incredibly intricate crafting processes and precious materials, is entirely faithful to the original vision. Designed as sculptures, these timeless bespoke creations are a beautiful testament to the spirit of legacy that compelled Ettore to bestow the original 'Baby' Type 52 to his son, honoring the brand's legacy and customer-centric approach.''
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> PIERRE-HENRI RAPHANEL

Priced from €95,000*, a series of 99 examples will be produced — with a third of models already reserved by brand enthusiasts and collectors. To explore Pierre-Henri Raphanel's story and masterpieces further, discover [more here].

*Prices exclusive of taxes.

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