



**DZ-16-LR**

**SA 413579**

**#173**

**Fiat  
Ritmo  
75 CL  
(1979)**

**IXO**

**Period:** 1978-1988

**Built:** 1.79 million

**Engine:** 1.5-liter 4-cylinder

**Power:** 75 PS

**Top speed:** 160 km/h

**Price:** fl. 18,750

**Predecessor:**

Fiat 128

**Successor:**

Fiat Tipo

**Date acquisition:**

17/10/2015

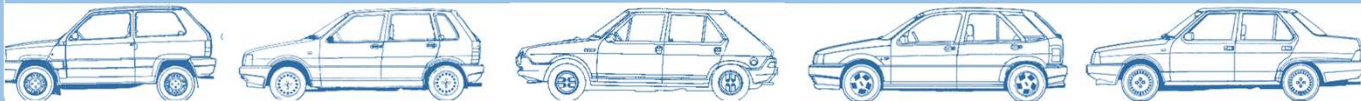
Approx. first plate    Approx. last plate

**DG-86-XT    TG-11-PG**

# FIAT



*gli anni ottanta*



Love it or hate it? Fact is that the Fiat Ritmo was a remarkable car in a class dominated by the straightforward if not dull car design of cars such as the VW Golf, Ford Escort and Opel Kadett D. The Ritmo's design by contrast is a curious play on symmetry. The front and rear side windows are near mirror images of each other, and so are the side profiles of the front and rear bumper. The identical slopes of the A and C pillar give the car its instantly recognizable shape. The play of symmetry is punctuated by several non-symmetries such as the differently sized air intakes in the front bumper and the oddly placed air intake in the hood. The distinctive wheels, symmetrical only on one axis, conclude the theme.

The controversial design, penned by design house Bertone, appeared too much for the average consumer, and the Ritmo's design was heavily toned down with an early facelift in 1982. About 1.79 million Ritmo's were built in the period 1978-1988, although very few survive because of the Ritmo's propensity to rust. Those that do survive are typically the sporty TC and Abarth versions. Personally, I love the Ritmo's daring design and this light blue IXO model is one of my personal favourites.

The Ritmo was available in three- and five-door hatchback and two-door cabriolet. As with other 1980s Fiats, a number (initially 60, 65 and 75) indicated the engine horsepower and trim levels being "L" or "CL".

The Ritmo (called Strada in the UK) was promoted in the UK with a very extensive TV publicity campaign with the strapline "Hand-built by robots". Although the Ritmo's underpinnings were modified from the strong foundation of the Fiat 128 rather than all-new, the Ritmo stood out for its high-tech production methodology. AutoCar explained (6 May 1979): "Like too many other manufacturers here and abroad, Fiat have their quality control problems; they are claiming to beat a lot of them on the Ritmo with almost entirely automated assembly and welding of the body shell (...). Computer-controlled, the system involves robot welders working with gate-like frames to position parts suitably and is claimed to be very flexible. The painting of the Ritmo is also automated with the same aims".



**The Ritmo was based on the underpinnings of the 128 but much more frivolously styled.**



**Ritmo stood out from a crowd of conservatively styled rivals.**