



GY-04-TF

#201
Renault
Fuego GTX
(1981)

IXO

Period: 1980-1986

Built: 83,725

Engine: 2.0-liter 4-cyl.

Power: 110 PS

Top speed: 190 km/h

Price: fl. 30,560

Predecessor:

Renault 15/17

Successor:

none

Date acquisition:

12/09/2016

Approx. first plate Approx. last plate
GF-83-LV NR-93-KD



LES ANNÉES 70 / 80



Clamshell rear window also on later R11 and R25



The Renault Fuego was introduced in 1980 to replace the Renault 15 and 17 coupés. At the front, the car had a clear resemblance to the 18, on which it was largely based. At the rear it had a large glass clamshell tailgate that gave the car a modern and distinctive appearance. The highly aerodynamic design was characterised by a black profile line running from the front indicators towards the back where it ran all around the clamshell window (a feature later adopted on the Renault's 11 and 25). In its road test (20 December 1980), Autocar described the Fuego design as an "arresting combination of styling and aerodynamics, showing that such sometimes quarrelling disciplines can be married".

The GTX version in my collection was topping the range until the arrival of the Turbo in 1983. As indicated behind the rear window, the GTX was fitted with a 2-litre engine. The typical wheels with two parallel grooves also featured on the 18 Turbo. As a world's first, some versions of the car were equipped with remote central locking, an innovation that only became mainstream in the early 2000s.

The car was an initial success. It outcompeted the Opel Manta and Ford Capri in Europe where it was the best-selling coupé in 1981 and 1982. Sales started to dwindle soon after, however. Given the shrinking market for affordable coupés the car was not replaced at the end of production in 1986.

In its canonical road test, AutoCar rated the Fuego GTX quite favourably as "a desirable machine". It praised the car's excellent performance levels and good balance between sporting character and driving comfort: "By Renault standards, the ride is very firm and rather joggly at low speeds with competent damping and comfortable absorption of most bumps as the speed rises". Levels of refinement, however, left ample room for improvement. For example, AutoCar noted: "All power steering systems are slightly noisy; [however], the Fuego GTX one makes a not unpleasant deep moaning sound when working hard, during manoeuvring. The test car's engine suffered from a tappet-like click, its dashboard from a small occasional rattle, plus a squeak from behind suggesting a loose exhaust bracket". Other areas for improvement included the slightly notchy gear change and "intrusive noise levels even at middling speeds".



The Renault Fuego was essentially a Renault 18 Coupé.



In 1981 and 1982 the Fuego outsold the Ford Capri in Europe.