



55-TT-31

#205

**Simca 1100
(1977)**

***IXO Altaya
F013***

Period: 1967-1982

Built: 1,833,485

Engine: 1.1-liter 4-cyl.

Power: 58 PS

Top speed: 138 km/h

Price: fl. 12,995 (GLS)

Predecessor:

none

Successor:

Talbot Horizon

Date acquisition:

24/09/2016

Approx. first plate Approx. last plate

40-79-EU HJ-38-KB



This dainty little hatchback was a definite frontrunner. Although the 1969 Fiat 128 is often seen as the car that set the template for family cars to have a front-wheel drive, transverse-engine layout, the Simca 1100 preceded it by almost two years (the real pioneer was the 1964 Autobianchi Primula, and of course – in a much smaller car – the 1959 Mini). The technical similarities between the Primula, 128 and 1100 are no coincidence. As Autocar explains (4 September 1976): “The Simca 1100 was designed under the guidance of engineer Oscar Montabone, who had worked at [Fiat-owned] Autobianchi on the Primula front-wheel drive car and later moved back to Fiat to oversee the design of the Fiat 128, 127, and their successors”.

A further novelty feature of the Simca 1100 was its hatchback tailgate. Although other five-door hatchbacks had come before it – most notably the Renaults 4 and 16 – it was “not a normal feature” at that time and “a big sales point” for the Simca. For many years throughout the 1970s, the Simca even was the best sold car in France. Yet, despite the clear practical advantages of a hatchback boot, well into the 1970s notable rival manufacturers continued to introduce cars that, while having hatchback-style silhouettes, lacked a fifth door, including notably

the Citroën GS, Alfa Romeo Alfasud, and Peugeot 104.

It’s a shame that the Simca 1100 was very prone to rust and that the engines were not very sophisticated. Despite being a very common sight in most of Europe, most of them have long disappeared from our streets. It is also a real pity that Simca – later rebranded into Talbot – was unable to keep sales momentum. Although the 1100’s successor – the Talbot Horizon – was critically acclaimed (e.g., it won the 1979 European Car of the Year Award) and had innovative features such as optional cruise control and trip computer – it could not match the commercial success of its clever and charming predecessor.

With its very brown interior, this IXO/Altaya model car expresses the spirit of the 1970s very well. The model is an example of a post-1975-restyling five-door hatchback (the range also included a three-door hatchback, three- and five-door estates, as well as van conversions), distinguished from earlier cars by the larger rear-light clusters and a characteristic three-spoke steering wheel. It is a shame that the wheels on this model lack definition and that the small rectangular indicator lamps – directly underneath the headlamps – are missing on this model.



The pioneering Simca 1100 and Fiat 128 set the template for compact vehicles.



The Talbot Horizon could not match the commercial success of the 1100.

