



REVIEW SA Weekend

What's it like to drive a hire Ferrari through the Hills?

You'll get a glimpse into how to live the lifestyle of the rich and the famous, meandering through the Hills in luxury cars. But is the drive experience worth the price tag?



Supercar thrills in the Hills

Get behind the wheels of some of the most exotic cars on the planet and then make your way through some of the most picturesque countryside in the state. It won't come cheap, but it'll be memorable

Story JO SCHULZ

Look, it's no ordinary Sunday drive. We're setting off on a full-day luxury driving tour, and I've buckled my visiting overseas friend Johnny in for the ride.

But there will be no back seat drivers today (and in some cars, no back seats at all) – today we are in the hot seat and behind the wheel of driving not one, but five luxury supercars.

We pinch ourselves, several times.

It's not Christmas, but seeing the cars lined up under the trees outside Mount Lofty House sure feels like it is.

Far from being chauffeured around, we will each get a turn at driving the twin turbocharged V12 Aston Martin DB11, a McLaren 570S, Ferrari F8 Tributo, Lamborghini Huracan EVO and Porsche

911 Carrera S (992). It's no token drive. We are taken on a 200km-plus route weaving our way around picturesque Adelaide Hills towns, in a loop which meanders around Lenswood, Gumeracha, Williamstown and Hahndorf, among its pit stops for driver changeovers.

Let's just say those picturesque windy roads are perfectly made for thrills in the Hills. There are stops at Pike & Joyce cellar door for coffee and morning tea, and The Lane Vineyard restaurant for a deliciously magnificent lunch after our celeb-style arrival where we take the "rock star" parks, pulling up our supercars right out front.

The entire day cruises like another well-oiled machine – we're guided by our Prancing Horse hosts Matt, Jessie and photographer Erik all in the lead vehicle

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who use two-way radios to tell us of the upcoming turns, stops and any drive obstacles.

Co-owner Matt Thio says the bulk of those signing up for the full-day drive experience are celebrating a milestone birthday or anniversary.

“It's a privilege for us that people line their special occasions up to do an experience with us,” he says.

“We get friends, we get a lot of couples, wanting to do this experience – it's not a cheap experience by any measure but it is an experience that is very, very special.

“There's two seats in each car and we never partner strangers together or have instructors sitting next to individuals.

“It's really a great experience to be paired together with someone that you know.”

The Prancing Horse team also holds a 100 per cent strike rate for the “10 to 15” marriage proposals over the years – with Thio highly recommending the question be asked as early as possible on the day.

“When we do get people planning it as a surprise ... they are already so nervous



From far left: Prancing Horse's Audi R8 V10 Plus, Aston Martin Vantage V8, Lamborghini Huracan EVO, and Ferrari F8 Tributo (also above) at The Lane Vineyard in the Adelaide Hills; and, below centre, a McLaren 570S. Pictures: Erik Rosenberg/Prancing Horse



about that, and then they might be nervous or apprehensive about the driving experience and driving expensive cars, so we don't want that to compound.

"But it's been a privilege when we know about it and don't disclose it to anyone else on the day, and then we might line up plan A, plan B, plan C (to propose on the day) ... and when it does happen it's a beautiful thing to be a part of."

Most drivers, though, are there for the sheer driving buzz.

For me, the distinctive engine crackle of the Lamborghini Huracan might just be my new favourite sound, commanding just as much attention inside the car as it does slicing through the crisp, quiet Adelaide Hills air.

A group of young kids returning from their day with fishing rods in hand looked

on in awe at the head-turning spectacle of the supercars driving in formation, egging us on to hear a loud engine roar or horn blast.

We obliged and then laughed in the car like big little kids ourselves.

Perhaps just don't take your supercar for a ride during the Bay to Birdwood, or else the classic car enthusiasts will soon tell you which cars they prefer.

Thio recalls a drive last year with an unavoidable stretch during the historic motoring event near Gumeracha: "We kind of hooked into this procession of cars, and there were people just enjoying the cars – kids were going off their heads, seeing us come through."

"We were following a Torana, so there was the red Ferrari behind the Torana, and I got a glimpse of a guy sitting with his

wife on a couch on the side of the road and he had a sign, and as the Torana rolled past he lifted it up and it said '10'.

"As soon as he saw the Ferrari he just put it back down in his lap like he wasn't interested," he laughs.

"There's no stickers on the cars so it feels like you own the car – so you're receiving the highs and the lows."

And it really did feel like my very own collection of special supercars on the day.

My favourite? I'll take the Aston for my morning city commute and the Lambo for weekend driving fun, thanks! Of course, that will all be pending my big lotto win that I'm certain is just around the corner.

Until then, I'll be clinging to the memories of this experience for what really was a rare glimpse into how to live the lifestyle of the rich and the famous.

BOOK IT NOW

The rundown

Prancing Horse offer luxury driving tours in various locations across Australia, returning to the Adelaide Hills from October 20 to November 19, and again in April/May 2024. Bookings are for two people and include morning tea and lunch at a fine dining restaurant.

What's on offer?

The new Ferrari F8 Tributo and Lamborghini Huracan EVO are definite inclusions on every drive, with the three other supercars from their stable kept a surprise until the day.

Cost is from \$3990 a couple.

Details: prancinghorse.com.au