



95-76-UL

#170
Renault
12 TL
(1972)

IXO

Period: 1969-1980
Built: c. 4.1 million

Engine: 1.3-liter 4-cyl.
Power: 60 PS
Top speed: 142 km/h
Price: fl. 7,993

Predecessor:
Renault 10
Successor:
Renault 18

Date acquisition:
2006



Approx. first plate Approx. last plate
94-74-MV **FF-73-KJ**



RENAULT
CRÉATEUR D'AUTOMOBILES



LES ANNÉES 60 / 70

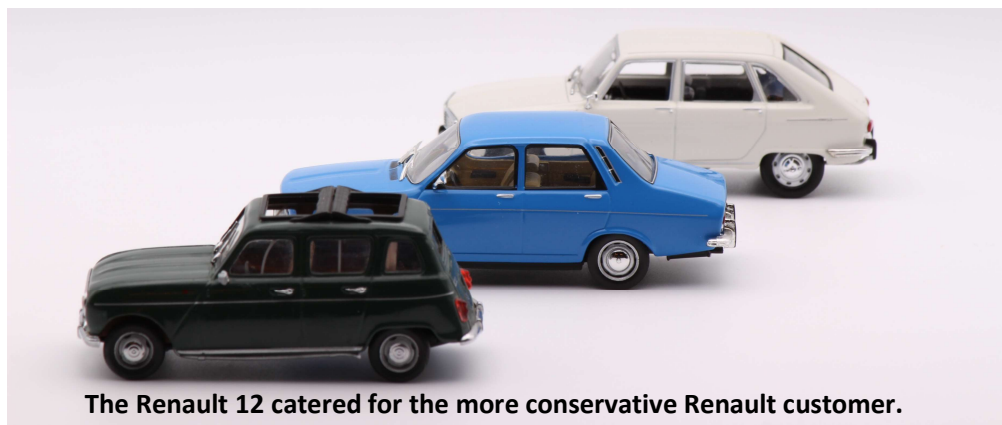


After the launch of the modern-looking R4, R6, and R16 all as hatchbacks, Renault introduced the R12 in 1969 to continue to cater for the more traditional customer who wanted a more conventional three-box saloon. At the presentation of the R12 in its 25 September 1969 issue, Autocar wrote: "In recent years the Regie Renault has devoted the majority of its resources to the production of versatile, five-door vehicles which offer high standards of passenger comfort allied to unusually good load-carrying abilities. Although the new R12 has a mechanical layout similar to that of [the R4, R6, R16], it is a conventional four-door saloon".

Although the downward sloping boot gave the car a very distinctive – perhaps even gracious – profile, it was otherwise a rather unremarkable looking car. The shape of the roof was seen as quite distinctive at the time of the R12 launch. AutoCar explains: "The Renault 12's unusual profile has been dictated, in the main, by practical considerations. Renault's aim has been to provide the rear seat occupants with accommodation comparable with that afforded by the front seats. From the top of the steeply raked windscreen, the roofline rises gently, reaching a maximum above the rear seat. It then undergoes a slight, but abrupt, step-down

before continuing the last few inches to the top edge of the concave [rear window]. The R12 was also available as very capacious Break (stationwagon), and sportier Gordini model. The model in my collection is the more "up-market" TL (Tourisme Luxe") which had two separate seats rather than the base version's single front bench. Although it is a fairly rudimentary model car, the fuel cap at the rear that puts the license plate annoying off-centre is a nice detail.

Despite its conventional looks the R12 was a huge success for Renault. Until 1980 around 2.5 million R12s were built in France. A further 1.6 million were built in Turkey until 1999! In addition, nearly two million were built as Dacia 1300 in Romania between 1969 and 2004, where it had been one of the few cars on sale during the communist era. When I visited Romania in 2004 the R12-based Dacia was still by far the most common car on the road. I even rode in one [an orange Break] on a private tour to the Bran castle, including an episode where the elderly woman driving it attempted to overtake a truck on a secondary road, only to realize the car lacked the necessary accelerative power and tuck back behind the truck in a break-and-steer manoeuvre I was happy to survive...



The Renault 12 catered for the more conservative Renault customer.



One of the Renault 12's rivals is the Opel Ascona.