

Not Just for Transport

Light cars for fun and fresh air motoring in the last quarter century.

The average car of today, can be described as an enclosed metal box with windows all round, With a temperature controlled interior, comfortable to drive in what ever the weather. This has not been universally desired and a need for a light car to provide an alternative to the hatchback has been recognised by some manufacturers. This article is about the alternatives to the normal car throughout that time.

Writing this article in 2018, twenty five years back is the year 1993. In the period since 1993 I have identified quite a number of models that can be put in the a list of cars that meet the description of For Fun, or provide fresh air motoring.

Motoring Journalists in the early 1990's were suggesting that the convertible car was a thing of the past and would be no more. In the new millennium open air motoring showed signs of revival. The obvious candidates the light sport cars are few in number, the majority are various versions of regular hatchbacks, with a few unique models.

I have listed them in annual order with a few details and a picture gleaned from Wikipedia.

Mazda MX5 Miata.. The Miata was first produced in Japan in 1989 and this version would be produced until 1997, by which time 433,649 had been produced.

A classic front engined, rear wheel drive sports car in soft top convertible or hard top form. engine.



Opel Tigra A. First produced in Spain in 1994 until 2001, a front wheel drive. 2+2 Seats retractable hardtop convertible.



MG MGF. Mk1. First produced in United Kingdom in 1995 until 2002. A mid-engined two Seat soft top or hard top roadster. Production totalled 77,269.



Fiat Barchetta. In Production in Italy in 1997 until 2005 by which time 57,700 had been produced. It was a front wheel drive, two Seat soft top convertible roadster.



Mazda MX5 Miata. Second Series. Replacing the First Series in 1998 and produced until 2005. Again a front engine, rear wheel drive two Seat soft top or hard top roadster.



Peugeot 206CC. Produced in France from 2000 to 2008. It was a 2+2 Seat retractable hardtop convertible.



Citroen C3 Pluriel. Produced in France from 2002 to 2010. It was a four seat convertible hatchback in the Cabrio coach form, which has a roof with five possible configurations. The production total was 105,888.



Smart Crossblade. A two Seat topless mini mid-engined roadster, produced in France from 2002 to 2006, with a production total of 1,983.



MG MGTF. First made in the United Kingdom 2002, then China from 2007 to 2011. A two seat soft top or hard top roadster.



Daihatsu Copen First Generation. A two seat soft top or hard top roadster made in Japan from 2003 to 2012. with a production total of 7,018.



Ford StreetKa. A two Seat soft top or hard top roadster, made in Italy from 2003 to 2006 with a total Production of 37,557.



Smart Roadster/Smart Cabrio. A two seat soft top or Targo-Top mid- engined roadster. made in France from 2003 to 2007with a total Production of 39,587.



Mini Mini Convertible Cabrio. A four seat soft top convertible manufactured in the United Kingdom and the Netherlands from 2004 to present.



Opel Tigra TwinTop B. A 2+2 seats retractable hardtop convertible, made in Spain from 2004 to 2009.



Mazda MX5 Miata. Japan. Third Series. A two seat soft top roadster or retractable hardtop convertible, made in Japan from 2005 to 2015.



Nissan Micra C+C. A 2+2 seat retractable hardtop convertible produced in the United Kingdom from 2005 to 2010.



Peugeot 207CC. A 2+2 seat retractable hardtop convertible in France from 2008 to the present. A replacement for the 206C+C.



Fiat 500C. A four seat fixed profile convertible made in Italy from 2009 to the present.



Renault Wind. A two seat retractable hardtop convertible, made in Slovenia from 2010 to 2013 with a total Production of 12,828.



Mini Mini Coupe. A two seat hard top coupe, produced in the United Kingdom from 2011 to 2015.



Mini Mini Roadster. A two seat soft top coupe, produced in the United Kingdom from 2011 to 2015.



Citroen DS3 Cabrio. A four seat Fixed profile convertible produced in France from 2013 to the present.



Daihatsu Copen Second Generation. A two seat soft top or hard top roadster made in Japan from 2014 to the present.



Fiat 124 Spyder. A two seat soft top roadster made in Japan from 2015 to the present.



Mazda MX5 Miata. Fourth Series. A two seat soft top or hard top roadster or retractable hardtop convertible, produced in Japan from 2015 to the present.



To be extended in the future.