**The 1960 Giulietta SZ lines up for the 101st edition of the Targa Florio**

Alfa Romeo belongs to the tradition of the Targa Florio: it is one of the brands that has won the most prizes over the long history of the event. The Giulietta SZ taking part in the 101st edition of the race is a 1960 second-series model with the distinctive "cut-off rear" (or Kamm tail) and amazingly efficient aerodynamics that put 200 km/h within comfortable reach. Under the bonnet, a 1290 cc straight four engine capable of generating 100 HP. The model's other key features are its disc-type front brakes and tapered nose.

The birth of the Giulietta Sprint Zagato, famous as the SZ, was very complex - Alfa Romeo did not simply "order" the car from the Milan carriage works. Its roots lie in a curious sequence of events related to the racing world: in 1956 Dore Leto di Priolo, one of Italy's best known gentlemen drivers of the time, badly damaged his Giulietta Sprint Veloce during the Mille Miglia. When he took it to Zagato for repair, Dore asked Elio Zagato not merely to rebuild Bertone's coupé but to reduce its weight as much as he possibly could, even if this proved complex and expensive. In response, Zagato stripped all the panelling from the chassis, fitted it with a lightweight tubular steel structure and covered it with an aluminium body. The result was the SVZ, a more rounded, contoured car in many parts, with greatly improved aerodynamic penetration. What's more, it weighed an incredible 145 kilos less than the ordinary Sprint Veloce. The SVZ soon proved its qualities on the race track, and the first consequence was that Zagato's order book filled up fast, enabling the bodywork builder to develop his idea further. In just a few months, dozens of drivers ordered their own "custom" version, with more and more effective aerodynamics and lighter and lighter weight, while at the same time the engine tuners squeezed more and more power out of the little 1300 cc twin cam unit: the SVZ was becoming invincible. From the stylistic point of view, the SVZ cars moved further and further away from Bertone's original Sprint Veloce and began to prefigure the lines of what was to be the SZ.

Alfa Romeo appreciated the quality of Zagato's design and made it into a "standard" production model, on a shorter chassis. So after the success of its "custom" cars for private buyers, in 1959 the Milan carriage works officially began production of its Sprint Zagato: the car's body was highly streamlined and it weighed just a little over 850 kg. The model taking part in the Targa Florio is the next version, from 1960, owned by the Museo Storico Alfa Romeo - La macchina del tempo at Arese.

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