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Turkey's largest car museum



Torbali is a small town, with 150,000 residents, on Turkey's western coast. But many visitors to Turkey have never heard of it – mainly because of the glitz to be found in the city of Izmir, just a few kilometres away. But now there's good reason to plan a trip to Torbali : because, as of several years ago, the town became home to the largest car and motorcycle museum in Turkey.

The KEY Museum displays over 170 vehicles on 7000 square metres of exhibit space, everything from an original replica of the Benz motor vehicle from 1886 to contemporary sports cars. In addition, there are model cars, historical car mascots and many other exhibits, including an original US petrol station in 50s design. Every year 20,000 visitors make their way to Torbali to view the collection. Each vehicle on display is restored in meticulous detail – and when it comes to paint, the museum relies on products and know-how from Standox.

"Each car should look like it did the day it was made"

One of the largest car dealerships in Turkey

The museum's proprietors are the brothers Murat and Selim Özgörkey, who head up a conglomerate based in Izmir. They are also one of the leading auto dealers in Turkey, whose brands include, among others, BMW and MINI.

The affinity for BMW explains why so many of the vehicles exhibited in Torbal sport the blue-white signet: Like the BMW Dixi, the first car to appear on the market under the BMW name, or the model 328 from the 1930s, which established BMW's reputation in motor sports. Post-war models like the 501 and 503 are also part of the exhibit, as are the legendary Isetta midget cars and the so-called "new class" models that ultimately gained BMW a luxury class ranking starting in the mid-60s. The selection ranges all the way up to the M4 GTS from 2016, which can go from zero to 100 km/h in just four seconds.



Examples of every major automotive brand

But the KEY Museum doesn't limit itself to just one brand. "We select our exhibits according to their significance, their value and their uniqueness in automotive and motorcycle history", says museum director, Efe Uygur. 15 employees in the in-house workshop see to it that all the vehicles are in outstanding technical and optical condition. "Each car should look like it did the day it was made", says Uygur.

And of course the finish plays an important role in that. "We always try to determine what the original colour was", says Uygur. "But a lot of records have been lost, especially when it comes to cars from the first half of the 20th century."

Standox supplies paint and know-how

For cases such as this, the painters in Torbalı rely on state-of-the-art paint and colour technology, like the digital colour gauge, Genius from Standox. Or they ring up a Standox dealer, who is often able to provide precise information about original historic colours. Modern paint technology is also used in providing a finish. "We work exclusively with Standox products, like the VOC system filler, for example, Standox basecoat and the Standocryl VOC-Xtra clear lacquer", explains Uygur. Not just because of the quality of Standox products, but also because of the great service. "The folks at Standox have often helped us recreate an old colour," Uygur says. "And they provide us valuable support with the repair process as well."

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