

To my wife, Sandy, who has always encouraged this other passion in my life. *Norm Mort*

To Catherine, who completes the picture in my life. *Andrew Mort*

CONTENTS

PREFACE	5
FOREWORD	6
INTRODUCTION	8
ISO	9
DAIHATSU TRIMOBILE	27
MOTO GUZZI ERCOLE	38
NEW MAP SOLYTO	47
PIAGGIO APE	61
AUTOBIANCHI & FIAT	70
FINDING & RESTORING	87
INDEX	95

under a single head unit. Trojan trucks featured a similar engine design. Although factory prepared Isettats had fine finishes in the 1954 and 1955 Mille Miglia endurance races, everyday maintenance in the hands of owners was another thing.

The BMW Isetta was first fitted with a 245cc, single-cylinder R25 motorcycle engine of its own design. It was a four-stroke engine with slightly more power and proved to be considerably more reliable. The BMW Isetta was also extensively re-engineered to provide a more comfortable ride, improved braking, lighting and better road-holding.

The BMW Isetta was also continually upgraded and improved in every respect, including a slightly more powerful and larger engine.

At the same time, ISO didn't have the widespread dealer network and parts depots to compete with Fiat and other long-established builders in Italy.

Velam of France purchased its engine from ISO and

made only a few minor engine changes, but extensively modified the overall Isetta design. Velam would go on to build 7115 French Isettats from June 1955 to January 1958, but couldn't compete in the marketplace with the Citroen 2CV or small Renault.

Conceived by ISO as a four-wheel design, it was the British who offered the Isetta with three. The British Isetta continued in production after most of the other manufacturers had abandoned the market, with the last being built in 1964.

ISO had great plans for its Isetta that went well beyond the original successful concept created by aeronautical genius, Ermenegildo Preti. Preti believed in designing small cars as small cars, and not just scaled-down large cars. It was unlikely Preti supported the idea of turning his little egg into a larger omelette. Meanwhile, the company certainly saw the possibilities of offering small ISO trucks using the Isetta as a basis.

The Isetta body was extensively modified and a

Although the creator of the Isetta, ISO itself built relatively few of its ingenious design in either car or truck form.





The IsoCarro 500 pickup featured a sizable box, considering its overall dimensions.



were fixed. A rubber mat covered the floor and basic pressboard panels were fitted on the sides and door.

Power from the tiny ISO was transferred via a driveshaft, to a solid rear axle and differential.

Driving impressions of an IsoCarro 500

Egress and ingress into an Isetta is not as easy as it may appear and takes a bit of mastering, particularly when it comes to the smaller IsoCarro cabin. The door is not light and is held open by a pneumatic strut, but weighted and carefully angled so as to not fly open. Still, one wants to ensure it is slammed shut, chiefly because the steering is hinged to the door.

Once you've stepped inside and closed the door you appreciate the fact you can easily slide along the bench seat. Sitting behind the steering wheel of an IsoCarro 500 pickup is predictably not unlike driving an Isetta. What there is of instrumentation can basically be ignored as breaking the speed limit won't be a concern. The remote

Egress and ingress is not as easy as it may appear.

In 1958 Daihatsu introduced its newest line of small truck known as the Trimobile.



4

New Map Solyto

France's long-standing, very basic micro workhorse

Despite the relative obscurity of its name today, New Map was a long standing Lyons, France-based company known for its motorcycles, scooters, tiny cars, and utility trucks. It was a diverse operation from the start and was destined to become even more so.

Founded in 1920 by Paul Martin, over the ensuing decades, New Map concentrated mainly on the building of motorcycles and scooters. These two-wheelers were powered by proprietary engines ranging in size from 98-998cc (6-61cu in).

In 1938, the company introduced its first car under the Rolux name manufactured by a sister company. This stylish, two-seater, pre-war roadster was one of the first in a new wave of micro cars that started to appear in the depression-ridden thirties. This first Rolux model was powered by a 100cc, single cylinder, air-cooled, two-stroke Fichtel and Sachs engine placed in the rear. Rolux built an open version and, reportedly, a commercial vehicle.

A 1940 re-organization of the company had seen Robert Robin effectively replace Paul Martin as head of New Map's production facilities.

Following WWII, New Map focused on the under- 250cc scooter market, but also re-introduced an up-dated Rolux to compete in the latest micro car boom.

In 1947, the New Map division, now known as Societe Rolux in Clermont-Ferrand, built the Rolux Baby VB 60, which featured a single-cylinder 5hp, 125cc (7.6cu in), Ydral air-cooled engine mounted in the rear.



**The Solyto came in a full line of body styles
to fit the needs of both city merchant
and farmer.**

subtle with the fitting of traditional door handles and additional padding in the leather cloth bucket seats. This provided marginally more comfort and featured a different stitching design to Fiat. The steering wheel and parcel shelf differed only in detailing, whereas the dash was smooth and rounded with none of the Fiat sculpturing. In reality, the Fiat dash would have suited the sculptured exterior of Bianchina, while the curved, smooth dash would have better matched the rounded styling of the 500.

Behind the front tilting seats was a railing system. This effectively stopped any cargo from sliding forward into the front seat area. It also doubled as a tie-down, while adding slightly to the overall rigidity of the body. A similar tubular rod stretched from B-pillar to B-pillar just below the roof which also added somewhat to the strength, but conveniently doubled as a rail to hang a curtain or act as part of a framework for those wanting to install a more permanent and secure metal partition.

Behind the railing in the floor was an unlined, covered storage area of 940mm x 432mm x 152mm (37in x 17in x 6in) with a painted ribbed lid similar in appearance to the flat rear cargo area.

The load platform area of 1245mm x 1118mm x 683mm (49in x 44in x 26.9in), or 84cu m (about 30cu ft), was also painted, but fitted with aluminum rubbing strips.



Such was the high style of the Bianchina Van that, at one point, management was considering making it the volume model.

The loading height was a convenient 508mm (20in), and numerous tie-downs were provided on the floor and sides for securing cargo.

The storage area was painted to match the exterior colour with screwed on interior side panels, painted a colour to complement the vinyl on the doors.

A second compartment at the rear, with a hinged lid, concealed the Fiat two-cylinder engine mounted horizontally.

The Bianchina Van, like the Giardiniera, was powered by the now standard Fiat 499.5cc engine. The featured 1966 example was rated at 21.5hp (SAE) with an advertised top speed of 95km/h (59mph).

The suspensions on the Fiat 500 and Bianchina Van differed only in stiffness, while the steering, electrical, wheels and even standard hubcaps were identical to that found on the Fiat.

Although higher priced than the Fiat 500, the instrumentation remained very basic.

