



**Own an original Mini?**

Tell us! Simply e-mail helen.webster@futurenet.co.uk if you'd like to have it photographed for a buying guide

**PRODUCTION HISTORY**

**1991 LAMM Mini Cabriolet**

75 cars were produced for the UK market in 1991, based on the 1.3 carb Mini Cooper. All cars came in Cherry Red with dark red hood and can be identified from the later Mini Cabriolet by flexible plastic windows for the hood and LAMM Design decals on doors. Many others were produced in lhd form for the German market up until the mid-90s. The LAMM Cabrio was used as the basis for Rover's production model two years later.

**1993-96 Rover Mini Cabriolet**

Less than 300 cars were produced between June 1993 and end of production in mid-1996. The Rover Cabrio was based on the Mini Cooper 1.3i and available in Nightfire Red or Caribbean Blue, with British Racing Green metallic a later option, and identified by wind-down glass rear side windows. The LAMM and Mini Cabriolet share the same Mini Cabriolet badge on the bootlid and have a similar bodykit and wheels.

That show car was just a taster as Rover wasn't in a position to manufacture the car at that time; in fact the first cars rolled off the Longbridge production line in June 1993. Two colours were available, Nightfire Red (with a red hood) or Caribbean Blue (with a grey hood). Later, a British Racing Green option (with a grey hood) was added.

It was envisaged that 700-1000 cars would be built in the first year of production but there simply wasn't sufficient demand for a £11,995 luxury convertible when

you could buy a Cooper saloon for £6,995. This was slightly less than the LAMM Cabriolet that had sold out so fast in 1991 but while people were prepared to pay a hefty premium for the LAMM's exclusivity, the same wasn't true for a run-of-the-mill production version. At such a price it was never going to sell in large numbers, a fatal flaw that Rover never addressed.

Production of the Cabriolet quickly slowed to a trickle, even stopping for months at a time, until the last batch of 20 cars was

built in summer 1996. The price remained unchanged at £11,995 in the three-year production period and less than 300 Mini Cabriolets were made in total, a far cry from the 1000 a year that had been hoped for. It's a pathetic sales figure when you consider that Rover had over 700 dealerships at that time and the firm must have lost a lot of money on the project.

These days the Mini Cabriolet is a rare beast indeed, ensuring that it remains one of the most expensive and sought-after variants around.

**IT'S MY MINI**

**Tracey Lippett**

**1995 Rover Mini Cabriolet**

If you're a regular at Mini shows you'll have spotted Tracey and her multi-concours winning Cabrio. With more trophies under her belt than Chelsea and a comprehensive knowledge of convertibles, her Mini was a perfect candidate for our buying guide.

**Have you always wanted one?**

"We were at Mini In The Park about five years ago and I thought: 'I'll never have one of those — I could never afford it!' We came across this one about two and a half years ago though and it was a real bargain so we got it. We had to really — it was the same colour as the one I'd seen at MITPI!"

**What should potential buyers look for?**

"Look for the bits that are difficult to replace. The fabric for the hood is £600 alone! There's a Rover stamp in each arch where it meets the 'bumper', so check the styling kit is genuine, and there's a bit of plastic on the bottom of the rear window mechanisms that tends to snap, so make sure they work OK. The joins on the top of the windscreen panels can rust, too, but otherwise they're pretty much the same as standard Minis."

**Best thing about owning one?**

"Nothing prepares you for the reaction — people come to look at it in car parks all the time — and nothing beats bombing around in the sun with the roof down!"

**Any downsides to owning one?**

"You daren't leave it anywhere! They just attract so much attention."

**How much should people pay?**

"I think ours is worth about £8000 now, but you might get one in poorer condition for as little as £4000."

