

XTP880L Buyers Guide

XTP880L has a history in two halves.

It was collected, new, from BMW Munich on 24 January 1972 and completed its recommended "run-in" mileage in almost one trip of 350 miles back to Bonn. The remaining 250 miles was completed in less than a month and the car had its first free 600 mile programme service on 23rd of February, 1972 and headrests were fitted at the same time. It was treated with Tectyl cavity wax on 6 December 1972

The car was used regularly in Germany and given its final Programme Test in Germany at 8200 miles 19 March 1973 and imported tax free into the UK on 3rd of April, 1973. It was registered by the DVLA as XTP 880 L, which was the procedure at the time although it was manufactured in 1971 and its correct date related number plate should end with K.

It was then used regularly in the United Kingdom with several major services undertaken by Froxfield Service Station and Cambridge Garage Portsmouth during the period when BMW Concessionaires held the BMW franchise in the UK and controlled the main distributors. BMW set up its own service network on 1 January 1980.

XTP880L had completed just over 50,000 reliable miles by February 1979 (7 years) before the mileage increased over 4 years with regular trips between Bath and then

Devonport bringing the mileage up to well over 100,000 in 1983.

So, in mid-1983, XTP880L was taken off the road for an extended period for an engine overhaul and some body panel replacements. The work was completed in May 1984.

The car then completed a further 40,000 miles in the 6 years to 1 October 1990 when it was taken off the road for dry storage and replaced by a 2002Ti as the family daily runner.

My plan was to fully restore XTP880L to use as a "classic" after I had completed the bare shell restoration of a 3.0 CSL which I purchased in February 1992 (completed 1995) which was then delayed by a second CSL rebuild started in 1995 until 2015, a period which included a house move in 2003, which added a further delay to the start of the restoration until 2015.

These delays gave me the opportunity to collect parts for the restoration and improvement of XTP880L. A set of original BMW alloy wheels on e-bay (the seller did not realise what they were); a new set of Ti first oversize pistons to go with an E12 cylinder head; a second-hand pair of Ti front struts with bigger discs; a Ti electric clock (XTP880L had the optional rev counter from new instead of the large clock) and a five-speed gearbox. Good second-hand items to replace well-worn and tired items like the rear lights, front indicators and door handles were sourced from auto-jumbles and e-bay.

Restoration started with the complete overhaul of the front and rear subframes including bushes with the replacement of front struts. With the subframes off, the under-side was stripped, the wings removed and a new front panel fitted. Two new doors were fitted and with the engine/gear box removed, the engine bay, front and rear wheel arches were undersealed and then over painted Inka

Orange as was the original finish (no black wheel arches).

The engine was rebored to the first oversize for the new pistons; the crankshaft polished and balanced with the flywheel refaced and fitted. The cylinder head was overhauled by Jaymic with new parts where necessary. The engine was reassembled with new oil and water pumps, new duplex timing chain and new sprockets, new rocker shafts and a complete new clutch. Finally the unmaintainable Solex 36-40PDSI carburettor was replaced by a modern Weber 32-36 DGW twin-choke downdraft carburettor with a new inlet manifold to match. The prop shaft was shortened, a new rear gear box support made and the engine and gear box refitted to make XTP880L a rolling shell.

The outer shell was stripped to bare metal, patch panels were used to repair the quarter panels behind the rear wheel arches and the front ends of the sills and the wings were replaced. The complete underside was then sprayed with the latest Raptor twin pack underseal in matching Inka Orange before the shell was etch primed, undercoated and given its final coat of Inca Orange.

A new head lining was fitted with material matching the original, a new carpet set came from Germany matching the looped grey/black original. The boot floors were replaced, two dipping Cibie driving lights were fitted and an electric fan.

With new tyres the wheels were balanced and the front steering was tracked. XTP880L was then given a gentle first road test.