

OBJECT OF DESIRE

A beautifully maintained example of BMW's luxurious, high-performance 8 Series coupe, Taylor Patterson's 850CSi remains an exemplary Gran Turismo thanks to some tasteful modifications and exemplary care.

By Helmut Werb Photography by Helmut Werb

Taylor Patterson's dad was a lifelong BMW guy, and he passed on his affection for the marque to his son. When the elder Patterson brought home a sales brochure for the new 850i back in 1991, Taylor fell in love with the car instantly.

"It was like a spaceship to me," Patterson recalls. "I was very much into drawing cars and mechanical things, and so I began drawing the car. I began to appreciate the lines."

He wasn't the only one infatuated with the wedge-shaped car styled by Klaus Kapitzka. The 8 Series made quite a splash when it debuted in 1990. The future had finally arrived, and it was stunning.

As the years went by, Patterson never forgot about that 8 Series. In 2002, he finally got an E31 to call his own: an 850i equipped with the standard-

issue M70 V12 engine and a four-speed automatic. The 296-hp coupe was everything he had dreamed of...to a point.

Although he loved the car's appearance, he couldn't resist the opportunity to make it better.

"I swapped the differential, I tore the interior apart and deep-cleaned the car," Patterson says. "I wanted to learn how it was put together."

His affair with the 850i lasted for eight years until he sold it in 2010.

"I regretted it more than I thought I would," Patterson says, echoing a sentiment felt by so many of us after parting with a beloved BMW.

He wanted it back. Or, more accurately, he wanted another one...a better one. He wanted the last word in 8 Series coupes: an 850CSi.

