

914 LIMITED EDITION AUTHENTICITY AND VALUE

Warning: This page has been reformatted to make it more readable.

See original here: <https://bowlsby.net/914/CanAm/914LEAuthentication.htm>

How rare is a Porsche 914 Limited Edition?

Several unofficial sources indicate that the 914 LE car production was limited to only 1000 cars, including the highly esteemed book *Excellence was Expected*, by Karl Ludvigsen. In a [letter dated February 4, 1991](#) on Porsche factory letterhead, it is clear from this letter that factory records are not made available which verify the exact number of 914 Porsche Limited Editions produced.

- From the data available, it appears that the 914 Porsche LE cars were manufactured during a 7-week period from mid-February through late April of 1974. The VIN numbers and dates listed on the [914 Can Am Registry](#) indicate there were about 2400 vehicles manufactured during those weeks, so nearly half of the 914 cars assembled in those few weeks were 914 Can Am cars.? That's a lot of U1V9 and U2V9 coming down the production line.

We know there were ~118,000 total 914 cars produced from 1970-76, with 1000 914 LE cars built, so less than 1% of all 914 cars ever produced were 914 LE cars.

Furthermore, with only 1000 914 LE cars produced, an authentic 914 LE car would be three times as rare as the Porsche 914/6, of which over 3,200 examples were manufactured. Based on this limited production quantity, the only factory-produced 914 Porsche cars more rare than a 914 LE cars, are the 914/6 GTs, 914s with Sportomatics and of course the 916 and 914/8 cars. Because of their rarity, special status and unique features, any of the 914 Can Am cars are the most prestigious and collectable of all factory-produced four-cylinder 914s.



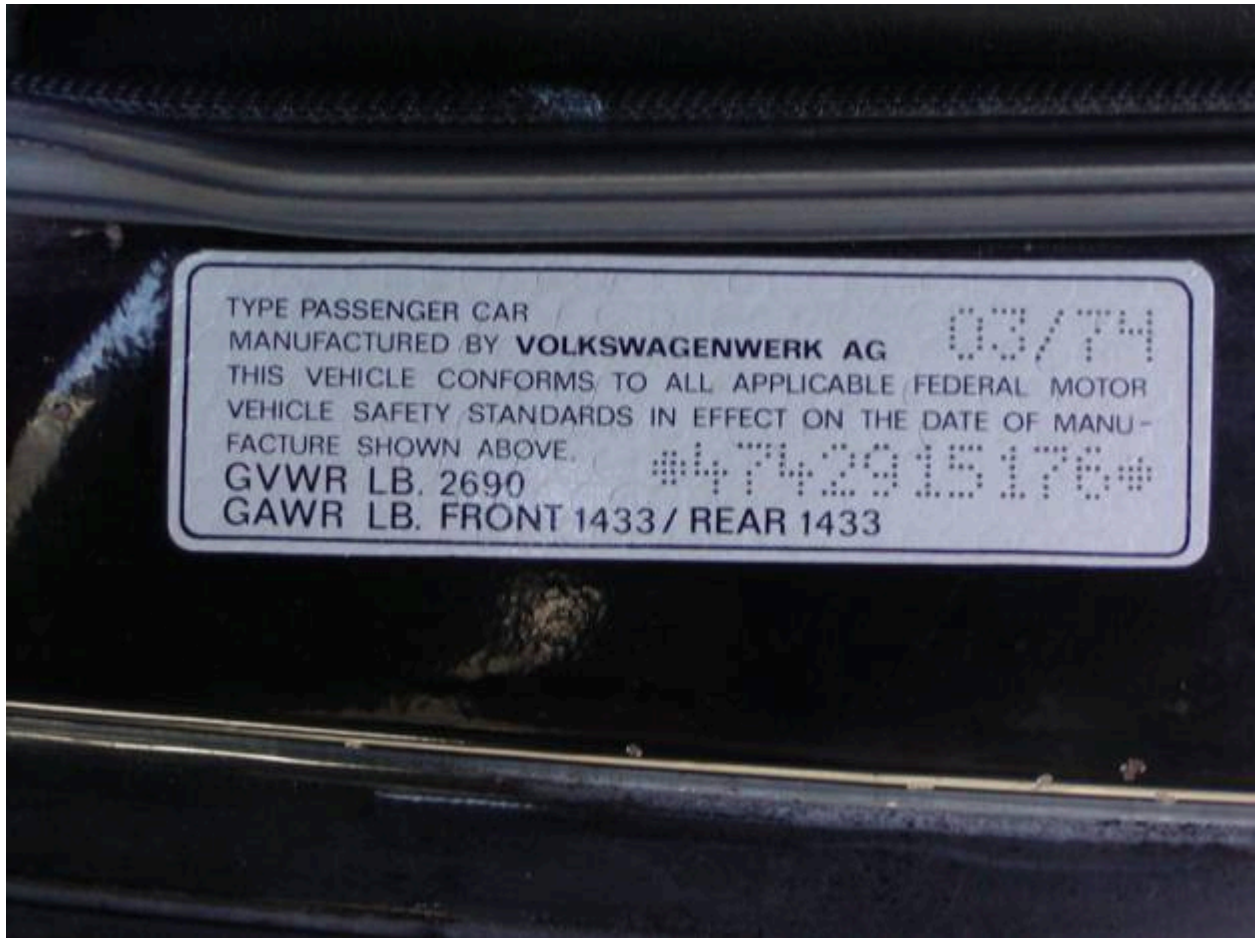
[914 LE WannaBe 1](#) <-----> [914LE WannaBe 2](#)

To authenticate a factory 914 Porsche Limited Edition car, verify the following: If ANY of the following items do not match the vehicle you are inspecting or something else does not seem right? proceed with great caution, ask lots of questions and even get a second opinion. Run away from a forgery if you care about authenticity and resale value.

- If available, confirm the COA information with the vehicle.
- Verify that the vehicle has the equipment listed on the COA, VIN, Chassis plate, Safety Compliance Label and rear trunk numbers. A 914 LE without a COA is significantly devalued, and should be priced comparable to a standard 914.
 - The VIN should be within the authenticated 914 LE VIN range: Between 4742914348 to 4742916764
 - The first three numbers of the Chassis Plate should be within or close to the known range of other 914 LE cars: 071 to 145
- Confirm the remaining typical 914 LE features as illustrated on the 914 LE webpage:
 - Paint code L04I or L80E
 - 914 Can Am Front spoiler
 - Side stripes / accent color at wheels, valences and bumpers
 - Omitted Targa bar vinyl / black exterior metal trim, foglamp grilles

- Light grey headlight relay covers
- 2.0L engine, front/rear anti-roll bars, foglamps, center console
- Black center instrument gauges
- Black plastic tailpanel emblems, windshield washer jets

- Confirm vehicle manufacturing date between February and April 1974, found on the Safety Compliance Label on the drivers door rearward jamb and on the COA.



[914 Porsche Safety Compliance Label](#)

Drivers door, rearward jamb

- Confirm base body color is either Black (L04I) or Light Ivory (L80E), as indicated on the Karmann Chassis Plate on the drivers door forward jamb. Of course the production number on the Karmann Chassis Plate must also match the production number stamped into the right rear trunk floor.



914 Porsche Karmann Chassis Plate

Drivers door forward jamb



914 Porsche Production Number

Right rear trunk floor

Chassis Number and Paint Code: The chassis number is found in two places, on the chassis plate attached to the front drivers door jamb and also stamped into the right rear trunk floor.? The chassis number is actually a code telling us the consecutive number of the particular chassis, and the date production was initiated on that particular chassis.? The chassis production number decodement is:

WW-D-9-5XX

Where:

- WW = the week of a given calendar year
- D = the day of the week of the calendar year (Monday =1)
- 9 = the code for the Karmann Factory at Osnabrueck where all 914 chassis were fabricated

- 5XX = the consecutive chassis number, beginning with number 500 each day for 1974 Porsche 914 cars

The chassis date on the 914 chassis plate, reflects the date production began on each chassis, by calendar week of the given year, and the specific day of that calendar week. The chassis dates from the cars on the Registry, from the earliest to the latest known dates, indicate that the 914 Can Am cars began production between the 7th and 14th weeks of 1974, between mid-February and April of 1974. 914s began production in chassis date order, regardless of VIN.? There is no direct correlation between the 914 chassis date and its VIN number. Certain chassis with higher VINs, began production before other chassis with lower VINs and vice-versa. Chassis and drivetrain components were not always combined in the numerical order in which they were originally produced either. Earlier numbered engines and transaxles were installed into later numbered chassis and vice-versa. Therefore, the vehicle with this chassis plate was the 19th chassis which began assembly on the 4th day, of the 8th week of the year (1974), which translates to the cars "conception" date of Thursday, 21 February 1974. You will need the PCNA COA to know the cars birthdate, which is the date the car was completed, if the factory records list it.

What did a 914 Porsche Limited Edition originally cost?

The equipment and features making a standard 914 Porsche into a 914 Limited Edition were officially available to customers as paint codes U1V9/U2V9, and Can Am Equipment M-778. Porsche conceived the 914 Can Am cars as a way to offer a unique model without extensive tooling and developmental costs. In the simplest terms the 914 Can Am cars were standard 914 Porsches manufactured fully-appointed with most optional factory equipment, with special paint color schemes, a unique front spoiler and specially designed side stripes. I have located three different descriptions of the pricing for a new 1974 Porsche 914 Limited Edition car described below.

In *Excellence was Expected*, the price for a 914 Porsche Limited Edition is given as: \$6050. Base price 1974 914 2.0L + \$320. extra cost + \$300. Appearance Group = \$6670. We know from other sources that there were optional items available and provided with certain 914 Porsche Limited Edition cars such as tinted glass, rear window defroster and other items that would modify these costs.

A 914 Porsche Limited Edition car was bargain-priced compared to a similarly equipped 1974 Porsche 914 2.0L. The table below is the factory price list included in Brian Longs book, with a cost comparison for the two comparably equipped cars.? Using these figures, the 914 Porsche Limited Edition car was more than 12% less expensive than a comparably equipped standard 1974 Porsche 914. There was no Sport Group offered in 1974 as in the previous years, but the Sport Group equipment items were available individually. Note that, for purposes of this comparison, while the comparable standard 1974 914 car would have had the special black base paint color (at additional cost), it would still only have had black painted bumpers and Mahle cast alloy wheels (where most 914 Porsche buyers preferred the Fuchs and chrome bumpers) and it would also not have the special 914 Porsche Limited Edition front spoiler, side stripes or the enviable Cool Factor of the 914 Limited Edition. At this pricing discount level, the 914 Porsche Limited Edition cars could only have been considered as a loss leader for the purpose of attracting more buyers to the standard 914 car.

1974 Porsche 914 Factory Price list comparison					May 1974
Cost comparison of Limited Edition vs similarly equipped 1974 Porsche 914 2.0L					
Item	Description	DM	DM	914 LE	Std 914 2.0L equipped as 914 LE
914-1.8			15750		
914-2.0			16870	16870	16870
Comfort pack			800	included	800
Grand Tourisme pack			990	990	a la carte
Special paint not listed			894		
Special paint on list (for a Bumblebee)			610	included	610
<u>Option Prices</u>		<u>1.8L</u>	<u>2.0L</u>		
M474	Bilstein shock absorbers	337	337	included	337
M485	Pressure cast alloy wheels 5.5Jx15 [Mahle]	726	726	included	726
M596	Forged alloy wheels 5.5Jx15 [Fuchs]	842	842		
M220	Sperr differential (80 percent)	726	726		
M404	Anti-roll bars	316	316	included	316
M102	Heated rear screen	118	118		
M285	Chrome bumpers	316	316		
M568	Laminated tinted glass (except rear)	410	252	included	252
M089	Tinted windscreen	167	included		

M567	Laminated tinted windscreen	316	158		
M640	PVC underseal	68	68		
M591	Centre console (as in Comfort pack)	62	62	included	included
M166	Seat belt for M570	58	58		
M570	Third seat cushion	53	53	included	53
M565	Sports padded steering wheel as in (Comfort pack)	116	116	included	included
M490	Electric aerial	135	135		
M097	Emden radio with electric aerial	365	365		
M095	Wolfsburg radio	288	288		
M572	Two-tone horn (as in Comfort pack)	37	37	included	included
M551	Halogen headlights (as in Comfort pack)	121	121	included	included
M433	Driving lights	37	37		
M659	Fog and driving lights	95	95		
M571	Fog lights	63	63	included	63
M652	Intermittent wipers	37	37		
Totals DM				17860	20027
Total US dollars at an exchange rate of \$1 USD=2.72 DM				\$6,565	\$7,362

And finally, images of several authentic [914 Limited Edition window stickers](#) have been forwarded to me.

A careful review discloses several interesting facts: The dealer suggested retail price of a 1974 914 Porsche Limited Edition was \$6565. and all included options are listed as N.C. (No Charge). Note that Bilstein shocks absorbers are not indicated, the special paint scheme is listed simply as Two-Tone Paint (not color specific) and the cast alloy wheels are listed as simply ?colored?.

The side stripes (Porsche Side Lettering) and front spoiler are also both separately listed. It is interesting to note that the window stickers do not describe the 914 LE as having the GT pack, and that the GT Pack was a not a numbered option such as the M471 cars, rather each included item is described separately.

We already know that the 914 Porsche Limited Edition cars were priced as a loss leader, as compared to a standard 1974 914 Porsche similarly-equipped, and I suspect that economics were a major reason that the production quantity was limited to only 1000 cars at the original conception of the car. VW-Porsche may have covered their costs, but was losing profit with every 914 Limited Edition produced, with the hope for overall market share gain as the only possible incentive. The absorbed profit loss was in effect, a non-cash investment in the rainmaking potential of the 914 Limited Edition cars. It is common knowledge that VW-Porsche never achieved their production goal of 30,000 914 cars each year, a major factor in the eventual demise of the model just two years later in the USA (and the very next year in Europe), even though the 914 had the most successful sales rate of any Porsche ever, to that time.

So what is the value of these 914 LE cars today?

There is no easy answer to this question as each 914 LE sales transaction is unique in terms of vehicle condition, authenticity, buyers discretion, sellers expectations, location, status of the economy, etc. All 914 LE cars are not worth the same value, as the value is always determined by the previously named variables and other factors. The current reality about these 914 LE cars, which will likely always be true, is that the cars are intriguing because they were a unique design and of limited production, but there are many 914 fans that do not like them and therefore would not pay any more for one, so 914 Limited Edition owners and potential owners tend to be a small group of dedicated collectors.

Interest in the 914 LE cars is steadily increasing, 914 LE resale values are rising and they are gaining in popularity as 914 cars become more rare. Remember what happened to the Porsche 356 prices? A car you could not give away is gold today. 914s may be the next Porsche 356 in terms of values, and documented 914 Limited Edition cars will continue to demand the highest prices for all 914/4 cars, when compared to equivalent standard 914 cars.?

Several very nice condition 914 LE cars have sold in the last few years in the range of \$15-16K USD. The highest documented sales price as of May 2009 for a nicely restored 914 LE Bumblebee, is \$16K USD, and these are nice, but not pristine cars. A very original, low-mileage high quality 914 LE would justify a significantly higher value. The value is a reflection of condition, originality and rarity.

Sales values of the 914 LE from documented transactions (mostly from Ebay), parallel standard 914s in comparable condition with an added margin of greater value because of collector interest in the 914 LE model.

Here are some further considerations when buying or selling an authentic 914 Porsche Limited Edition:

- A Certificate of Authenticity is the single most important item which affects the value in a 914 LE sales transaction. If you are a seller, a COA is fundamental to receiving the best price, if you are a buyer, it's the only way to be assured of authenticity. An original window sticker, bill of sale or any other period documentation adds considerably to the value.

- The 914 LE is not worth significantly more than a standard 914 if the exterior color scheme has been changed to look like a standard 914, or if body modifications have been performed because the car no longer appears unique or original. Color changes, non-originality and personalizations can greatly diminish the value of a 914 LE to a collector, as it does for any car. But buying a known LE car that has undergone these changes, if they are reversible can be a good investment opportunity.

- If parted out, the parts value of a 914 LE will be no greater than standard 914 parts, the maximum value for a 914 LE can only be realized for a complete, authentic, documented car.

- Recent 914 LE buyers seem to prefer the Bumblebees more and pay the most for them. The Creamsicles will also continue to be in demand and therefore valuable because of their rarity. I like them both.

Looky here, Porsche continues the Bumblebee tradition in their line of high performance bicycles. This bike was listed on eBay as a Limited Edition model and commanded a handsome sales price, it sold for \$3200 on Ebay in September 2003. Musta been the color scheme?8^)



Porsche Limited Edition Bumblebee Bicycle