



### CATALOG DATA

<b>Authorship</b>	Parent company: FIAT Auto. Manufacturer: SEAT
<b>Place of Production</b>	Barcelona, Spain
<b>Place of origin</b>	Alcoi (l'Alcoià)
<b>Title/name</b>	SEAT 600 D
<b>Date</b>	1969-1973
<b>Measures</b>	1150 mm width x 3340 mm length x 1405 mm height
<b>Materials/Technique</b>	Steel, plastic, rubber, glass and crystal
<b>Inventory Number</b>	7024
<b>Location</b>	Permanent exhibition <i>It is not easy to be Valencian</i> ; "The City", "From the cart to the bicycle" area

### DESCRIPTION

Tourism car manufactured by the Spanish brand SEAT (Spanish Society of Tourism Cars) thanks to a transfer of the Italian brand FIAT (Fabbrica Italiana Automobili Torino), builder and original designer of the vehicle. Produced between 1957 and 1973. The one on display at L'ETNO is a SEAT 600 model D.

### REREADING

<b>Related Topic</b>	Gender Roles Gender and Space Gender Stereotypes
----------------------	--

### Rereading

The SEAT 600 is one of the elements that remain linked to the 60s of the last century in the collective imagination of various generations of Spaniards. An emblem of the economic and social transformations of the Spain of that decade. Its appearance on the market coincides with a very specific period in the history of Spain: the end of the Autarchy and the beginning of the new economic policies promoted by the Franco regime from 1959, with the Plan of Stabilization of that same year and the Development Plans that took place between 1964 and 1975.

One of the pillars on which these new economic policies were based was automobile industry, its impulse allowed to create jobs at the same time that it provided the middle classes and workers to buy vehicles. It is in this context that the SEAT was born 600, with the idea of putting on the market an affordable car within the reach of those social classes that, until now, they had not been able to access the property of their own vehicle. Although, in fact, this accessibility was not so evident, the first models had a cost of 65,000 pesetas (about €18,000) that could be paid in installments, which meant 42 months of a average worker, to which additional expenses had to be added, such as putting it into circulation, luxury tax (11,200 pts) or registration costs in cash (12,150 pts). As can be seen, the much-advertised accessibility of the SEAT 600, which was shown in the advertising of the time like the <<Spanish popular car>>, it was not so obvious. Despite everything, the 600 became a symbol of modernity and progress, as well as an emblem of social prestige, in definitively, one of the most precious objects of desire of the consumer society of the Spain of end of the 50s and 60s of the last century.

The vehicle shown in the permanent exhibition at L'ETNO is a SEAT 600 D, which appeared in the market in 1969. One of the main novelties offered by this model was the change in the direction of the opening of its doors. Until that time, all previous models presented those known colloquially as <<suicide doors>>, that is, with the latch in the front of them and the hinges on the back. The doors opened in the direction contrary to the more conventional doors such as those used in most of the vehicles today. The nickname of "suicides" is given to them by the fact that, at open in favor of the movement of the vehicle, its opening is favored when driving at high speed due to air pressure. This situation is aggravated when cornering, especially if you are not wearing safety belt, (its installation in cars was not mandatory in Spain until 1975). Due to this characteristic, one of the nicknames with which the 600 was popularly known was "mirabragas" [panties looker] since, when it was driven by women and they wore skirts or dresses, it was possible to catch a glimpse of their underwear as they exited the vehicle.

Although some women have been driving since the first decades of the 20th century in Spain (they are well-known various women taxi drivers and concessionaires of regular passenger transport lines since the 1920s), the SEAT

## Museographic Itineraries in Terms of Gender

600 was, on many occasions, the first vehicle for many of them, especially when it was ceded to them by the husband or another man of the family when acquiring this one of bigger dimensions or newer. The enactment in 1961 of the Political Rights Law, professional and employment of women, as well as the increase in jobs available for women due to rising tourism and the economic growth of these years, favored a process of incorporating women into the public labor sphere, especially in the administrative sectors and services. Despite this, women continued in a subordinate position, both economically and socially and legally speaking. Proof of this, and regarding the SEAT 600, is the fact that the person who requested the purchase of the vehicle was usually the man, except in case he had any professional blemish or was not addicted to the Regime, in which case it was requested by the wife.

A key element to understand the relationship between women and the 600 is found in advertising which was made of it at the time, generally directed at men. Both in writing and in appeared on television or in NO-DO reports, women appear driving this vehicle and forming part of the new impulse of modernity that this meant. However enough with analyzing some of the ads to find clear indications that said impulse of modernity was not all that it seemed, and that the conception that was promulgated of the woman continued being the same since the beginning of the dictatorship. In an advertisement that appeared in the NO-DO in 1958 the following can be heard: << This utility car appears many times driven by hands of woman. It is easy to drive and for this reason it is a suitable vehicle for the family and for the job. [...] This new owner of the car has solved the problem of displacement in the great town. Now, behind the wheel of his new easy-to-learn vehicle, he begins his first trip through the streets.>>. It was therefore a car made by men (in the SEAT factory in Barcelona women held positions in the kitchen, cleaning and offices), but whose easy learning and management made it "ideal" for women. Ten years later the situation has not changed, various announcements of the financial company FISEAT appear in the press and in one of them it is ensured that << Buying a SEAT is a matter of three, your wife, you and FISEAT. Make no mistake, she chooses the color and leads. You drive the car and pay., That's life...>>. While in this ad it is affirmed that it is the woman who makes the decisions, at least in relation to the color of the vehicle... two others, illustrated by drawings by Mingote [a Spanish well-known cartoonist], she states: << It is the SEAT that I like >>, and he answers << but you pay as it suits me >>, assertively stating with his finger index and making it clear who makes the important decisions in the couple. In a third, while the man appears concerned about the relevant aspects: << It is handled with great safety! >>, it seems that the woman is only interested in the frivolous: << She is a beauty! >>. From the same year is another significant advertising of FISEAT, which follows the same line as the previous ones. In it two women They talk in front of a supermarket (location not chosen at random...) while one of them prepares to get into the driving seat of the car, the dialogue between them is as follows:

<< Hello, you finally got your husband to buy you the car, eh...

Yes

How wonderful!

But thanks to FISEAT! >>

For the Spanish women who drove a SEAT 600, it came to symbolize a certain degree of emancipation, a vehicle that allowed them some level of freedom, as well as the occupation of the road, practically vetoed for them until that moment. However, it would still be years before women equaled their position behind the wheel with the men. And many more until they were incorporated into the assembly lines or the stalls executives of automobile companies. On the other hand, and fortunately, it is becoming more and more strange hearing in the streets and highways that of "woman you had to be...! [Typically women!].

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

---

<https://www.abc.es/archivo/periodicos/abc-madrid-19680420-144.html>

<https://www.abc.es/archivo/periodicos/abc-madrid-19681102-54.html>

<https://www.abc.es/archivo/periodicos/abc-madrid-19681117-60.html>

(Accessed on September 25, 2020).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nwX3icz4O0c> y

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4tjAlszidoA>

(Viewed on September 25, 2020).

MARTÍN-SÁNCHEZ, Isabel. "El seiscientos, un símbolo social de la España del Desarrollismo". *Historia Contemporánea*, 2019, 61, 935-969.

<http://doi.org/10.1387/hc.19535>.



## Museographic Itineraries in Terms of Gender

ROMO PARRA, Carmen. "El desorden de la identidad persistente. Cambio social y estatus de la mujer en la España desarrollista". *Arenal: revista de mujeres*, 12: 1; enero-junio 2005, 91-109.

Foto: L'ETNO. Autor Pau Monteagudo.