Building the Gunze Sangyo

Ferrari 250 GTO

by Alex Kustov

Ferrari. The cars from Maranello are staying on top of autiomotive world for more than 50 years, due to the unique combination of beautiful design, superior handling, and brutal power. Ferrari is the legend of the race tracks, and a red Ferrari has a special place in the heart of every automotive enthusiast.

The Ferrari 250 GTO is probably the best known Ferrari of all, and arguably, the most beautiful car in the world. In 1962–64, this Ferrari won almost every race it entered. The car was equipped with a 12-cylinder V-engine of 2953 cc, and it produced about 300 HP at 8200 rpm.

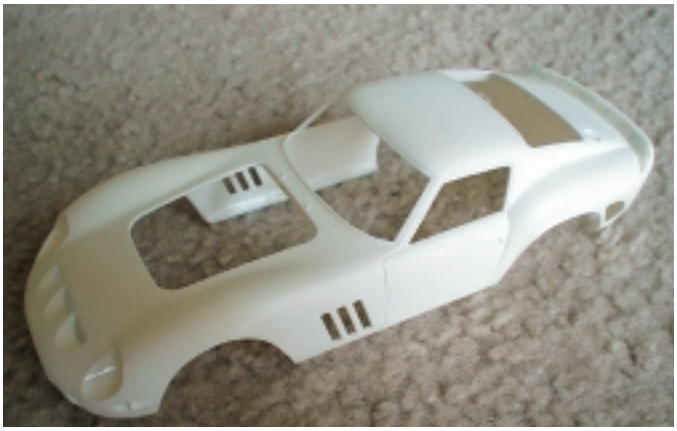
There were several 1:24 plastic kits of the Ferrari 250 GTO issued over the years, but none is currently in production. In 1986, Gunze Sangyo of Japan issued 3 similar kits of 250 GTO in their beautifully detailed Hi-Tech series. The kits have not been reissued since, and now are very rare and sought after by builders and collectors alike. You still may be able to find one of these kits on eBay, but for a price. We will build the most detailed version of the three, the road car with a white metal engine. The only aftermarket additions are a Detail Master battery kit, DM battery cables, Chrome Bare-Metal Foil (BMF), and DM flocking. Let's get to work!

The kit at a glance

Pros: Great detail. Incredible number of parts allows to build a very accurate and detailed replica of one of the best performing cars in motor racing of early 1960s. Excellent body

proportions, great photoetched parts, good chrome plating, and an amazing white metal engine. Turned and white metal parts give a solid feel to completed model.

Cons: Kit glass is too thick, incorrect tires, some parts don't fit very well. The quality of the metal castings is quite low, and it takes a while to clean the flash and other imperfections. All metal parts require use of CA glue or 5-minute epoxy, which makes assembly more complicated. There are no decals in the kit. The instruction sheet gives only a basic color guide, and the assembly directions are not clear and are misguiding. I would recommend getting good reference photos to help you assemble this kit.



1 This is the body as it comes out of the box. Gunze used a very brittle plastic, but it responds very well to sanding. The surface of the molding is smooth and the body has almost no flash or mold lines.

2 The only problem with the body that must be corrected before painting is a huge sink mark on the rear spoiler. I fixed it with Squadron white putty and sanded it smooth after the putty dried.

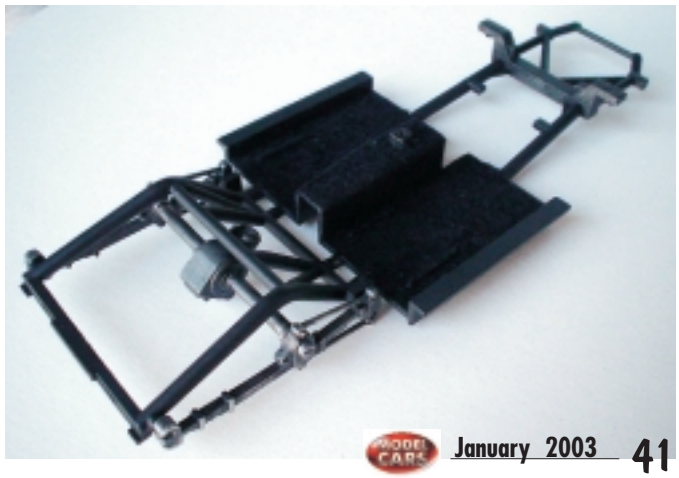
3 After prepping the body, I sprayed it with white Tamiya Fine Surface primer, and then three mist coats and three wet coats of Tamiya Italian Red TS-8 lacquer.

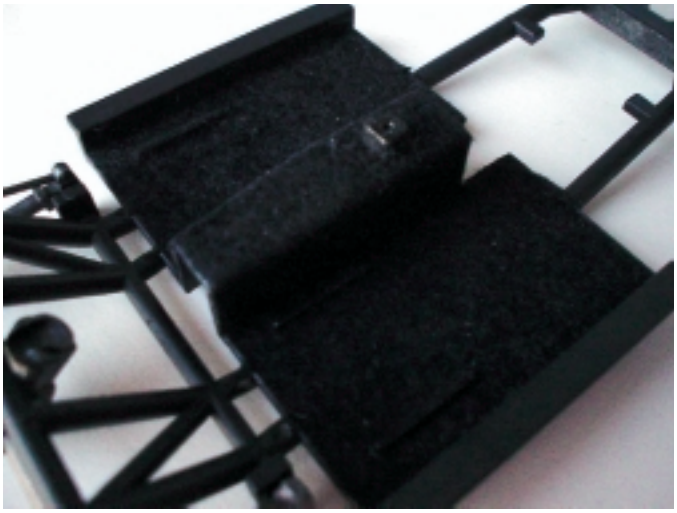
4 I use these products to polish my paint, but you can use other polishing compounds and waxes that work best for you. The ones that I have also used with very good results are Novus, Tamiya, and Turtle Wax.

5 After paint dried completely (4-5 days) all imperfections were sanded with fine (6000 grit) wet-or-dry sandpaper, and then the body was polished with 3M polishing compound and waxed with The Treatment The Final Detail wax.

6 I applied Bare-Metal Foil to the window trim. The process was simple because there were no complex curves.

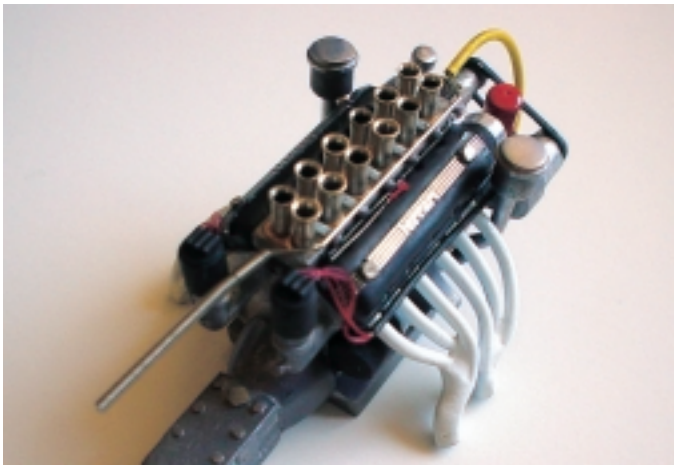
7 The chassis frame was painted flat black. At this point I also installed the rear axle, some suspension parts, and leaf springs. They were painted with Testors Titanium metalizer and accented with a black wash mixed from Tamiya flat black (XF-1).



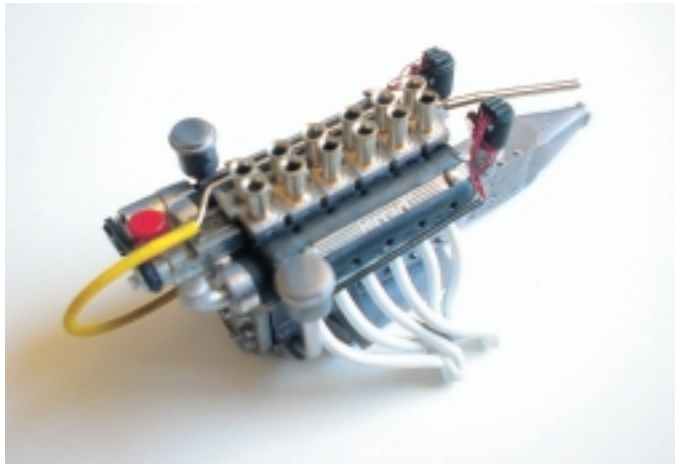


8 I used Nick Mason's Ferrari 250 GTO car as a reference, so the interior was flocked with Detail Master black flocking. I used Elmer's white glue as an adhesive base for the flocking.

9 The seats in a real GTO were usually upholstered in blue cloth. The seats in the kit are made from vinyl, so I sprayed a coat of primer, coat of blue paint, and then flocked them.

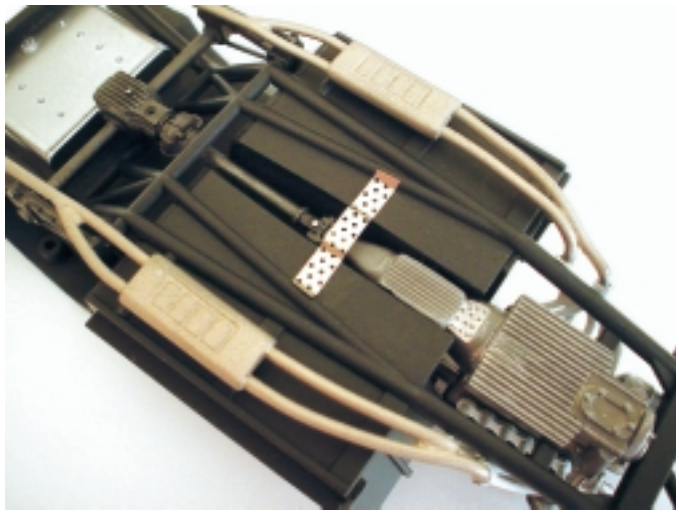


10 This is the completed motor. I later did some drybrushing on carburetors with bronze paint, and with rust paint on exhaust manifolds. Spark plug wires are included in the kit.

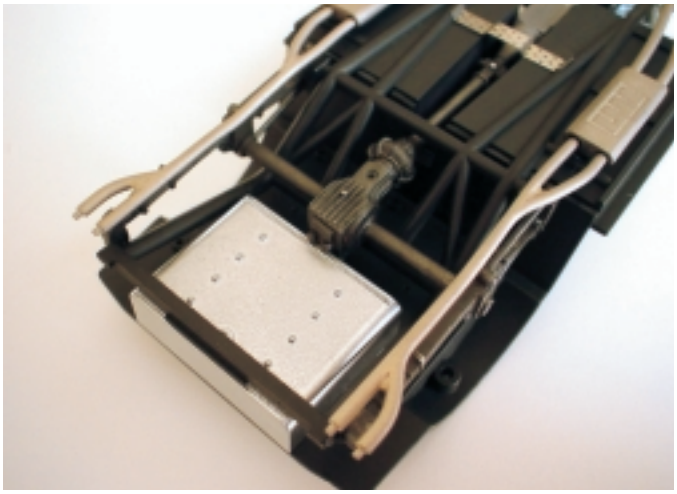


11 Many photoetched and turned metal parts grace the engine. Because all parts are made from metal, the assembled engine is very heavy and it gives the model very solid feel.

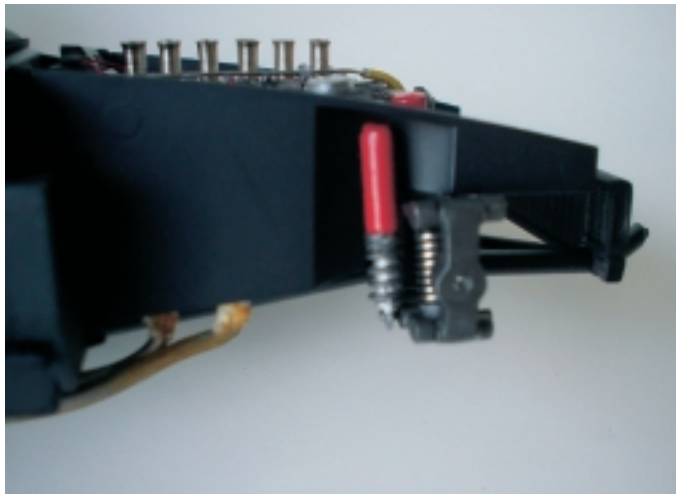
12 Here are the dashboard instruments. This is actually a three-piece assembly: two photoetched parts,one with the instruments and one is a cover, and a clear sheet of plastic sandwiched in between to simulate glass.



13 The engine was glued into place, together with exhausts, driveshaft, and supports.

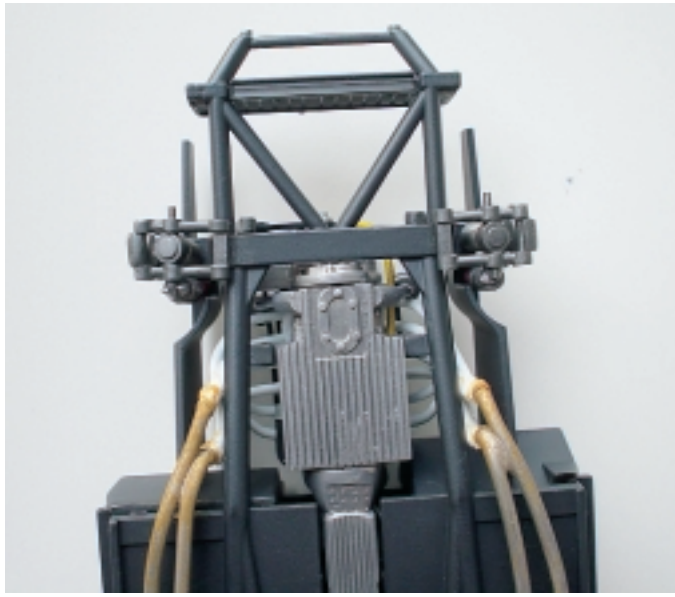


14 This shows the location of the fuel tank. It is a plastic part, but I painted it with a Testors Metalizer to make it look like aluminum.



15 This is the right side front suspension. Note the spring (all parts were supplied in the kit) and white metal shock absorber with another spring. The accuracy of the model is amazing!

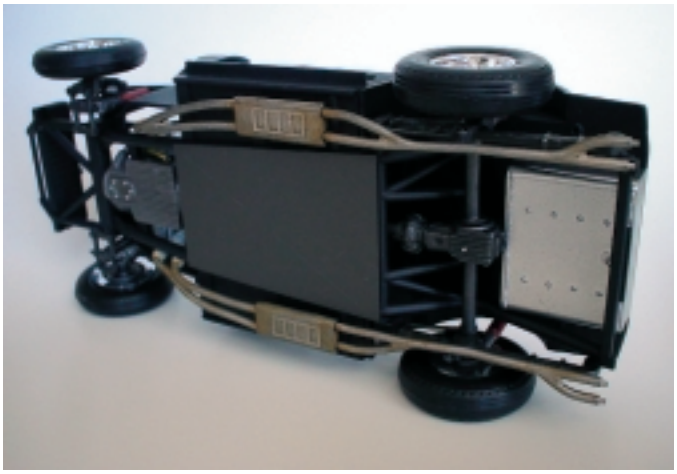
16 Left side of front suspension. On this shot you can also see the rust where manifold connects to the exhausts. I studied several books and hundreds of photos, and every single car has such rust spots.



17 The exhaust pipes were slightly smaller in diameter than the manifolds, so I used thin stripes of masking tape and wraped them around the joint, to make a smooth transition.

18 Another look at the chassis, this time with the rusted exhausts. Part of the chassis will be covered with a huge mudguard later.

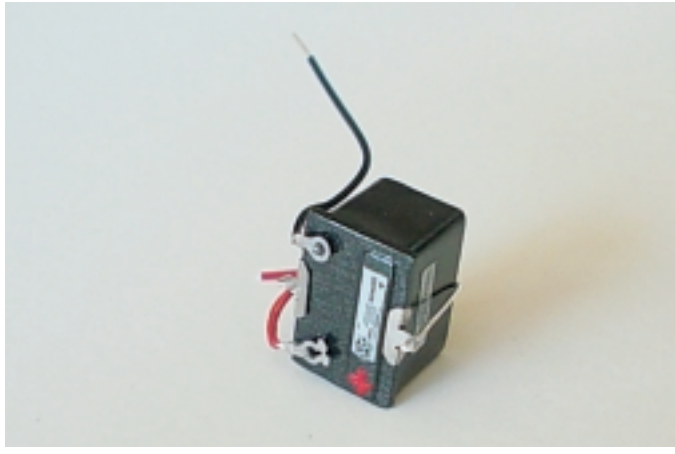
19 On this you can see how the rear suspension is constructed. I used a see-through drawing of Nick Mason's GTO to paint the entire chassis in the correct colors.



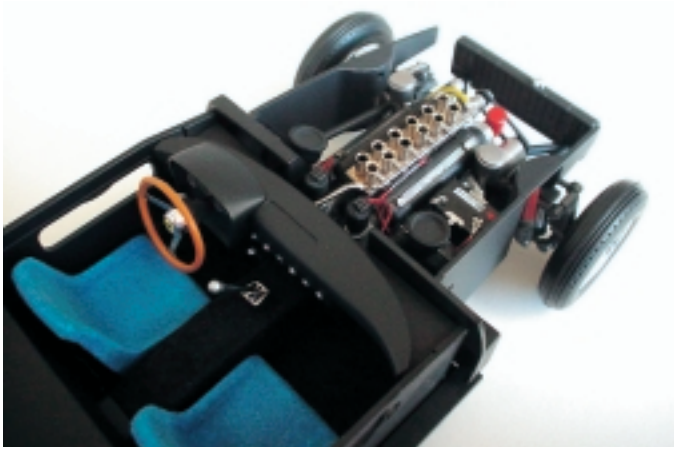
20 Completed chassis with wheels and brakes installed. See the mudguard plate? The Borannis in this kit are very good (10-part assembly each), but the no-name tires are not as good, and need to be replaced with period correct Dunlops.

21 I took this photo when I completed the chassis, just before installing the brakes and wheels. Note the photoetched chassis plate on the left side. Very neat touch!

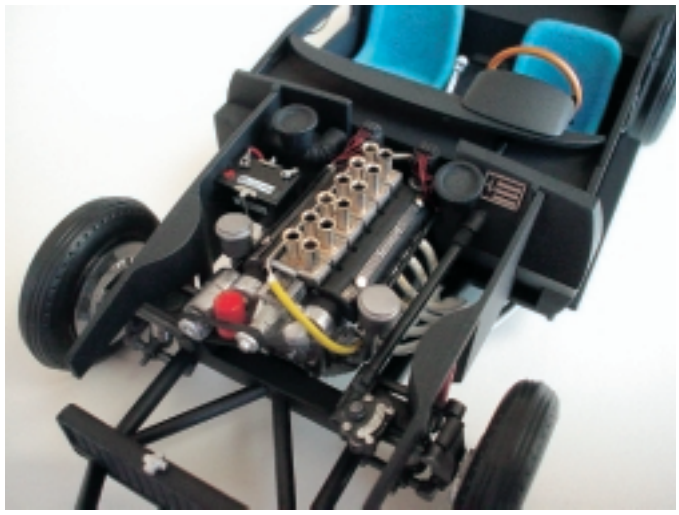
22 Then I installed dashboard, door panels, seats, steering wheel, hand brake, shifter, and all minor interior details. The firewall and inner fenders were added to the engine bay.



23 The battery that came with the kit was not good. It was looking like a…well…square piece of plastic. I scratchbuilt the new battery and used Detail Master photoetched set to make it look more like a real battery. Decals are from my spare parts box.



24 The battery was mounted on the right inner fender, and steering links, air pipes, and some minor parts were added to the engine bay.



25 Completed engine bay. In this photo you can see the battery and steering box with all its linkages in close detail.

26 The interior is pretty simple, but it looks very realistic. I painted the steering wheel with a mixture of orange, gloss yellow, and brown paints from Tamiya.

27 The final touch of realism—exhaust tips. I drilled out the kit tips and installed additional aluminum tubes inside them.

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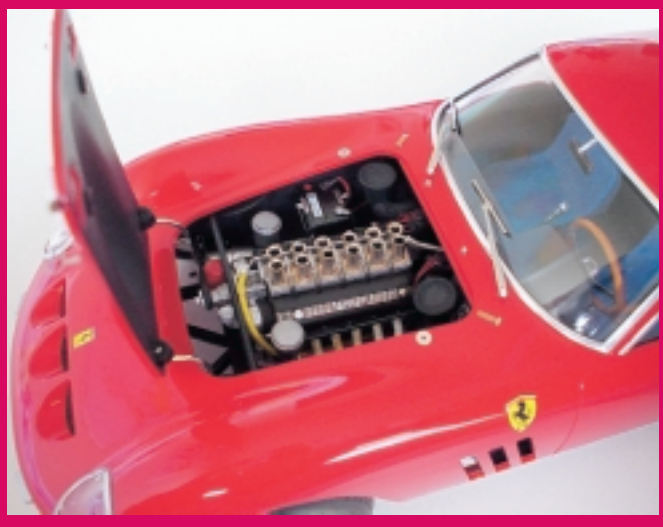

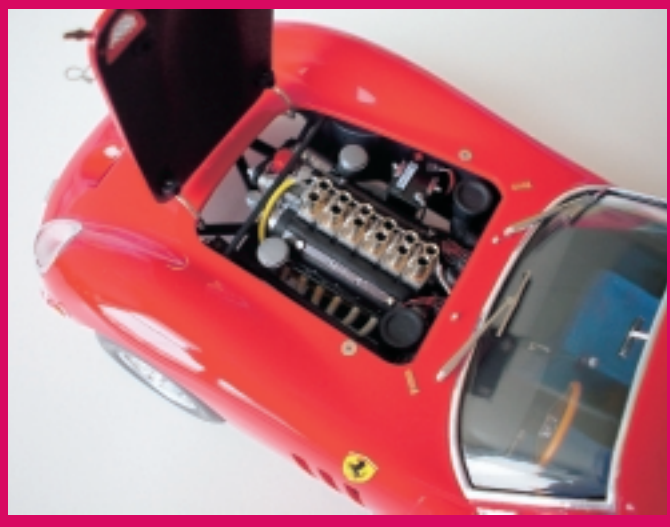

This is a very complicated model, but it represents the car well. Despite its drawbacks the finished kit looks amazing, however, tires must be changed to period-correct Dunlops. I would not recommend this kit to somebody just starting building models. Save it till you put together at least 20-30 models—it requires a lot of skill and some tools that you might not have in your toolbox if you a beginner modeler.