



Citroën 2CV enthusiast, Jean-Claude Dochy

Rob I'm here with Jean-Claude Dochy, who is an expert with 2CV's. What do you do with a 2CV?

Jean-Claude Well, I restore them, for a start, because that's what I enjoy. I like a vehicle that moves, not necessarily good-looking, but with the kind of patina, you know, that tells the story of the car. I want it to function so that I can take it for a drive when I feel like it. I also like to transform them. I've already worked on a few, but... not for me but for friends. I changed them into convertibles, and racers. I've even got a 2CV which I drive on an all-terrain circuits, to let my hair down a bit.

Rob So these 2CV's are for your use, rather than for re-sale?

Jean-Claude Well they're not for sale, they're really for my own pleasure. I have in the past worked on restoring cars for people, when I was running my own business, which I did for 5 years. But at the moment, I do this for my own enjoyment.

Rob What's so special about a 2CV? Why are you attracted to this car, rather than a Renault Espace, or something?

Jean-Claude Well, when I got my driving licence in 1990, my first car was a Renault 12, in which I almost died when the brakes failed! After that, I went on to a 2CV. I, I don't know, but something got me hooked! And it remained a passion, a pleasure.

Rob For English people, it's a very distinctive sound, and a very distinctive look. Does the 2CV have the same "cachet" for French people?

Jean-Claude Yes, I think so, because it has a pleasing shape, all rounded, very "sympa". And the simplicity of the car has made it popular. You can't get anything simpler. There are a lot of features in other cars which are not found in this one, cooling fluid, head gasket and so on. They're not found in a 2CV, so you can't get problems with those. And, yes, it does have a special sound, which you can make out from a distance.

Rob So, it's a car that anyone can maintain?

Jean-Claude Yes, but it's getting more and more difficult now, because fewer and fewer garages want to deal with a 2CV. Today's garages are full of younger mechanics who are trained in electronics for modern cars; when they are faced with a 2CV, they really don't want to bother with them. They're not interested.

Rob So you think this car is for old people?

Jean-Claude Oh no, fortunately there are plenty of younger people, who are passionate about 2CVs! Thank goodness!

Rob If someone has a 2CV that needs repair, can they come to you?

Jean-Claude No. As things stand, I don't have any time to spend doing repairs. I have a job which takes a lot of my time. At weekends, I have plenty of my own things to do. So I have very little time to spend on doing up 2CVs. I can give advice, no problem. But to work on the cars, no, I just don't have the time.

Rob You told me you were thinking of starting a museum.

Jean-Claude Yes, it's not really a 2CV museum; it's a display of all my old vehicles. I have 2CVs for sure, but I also have other old vehicles, an AMI 6, an old motorbike, a VeloSolex. All these I want to put in my little garage, for my own pleasure. If people want to come and take a look, they can, of course; they're welcome. But it's really for me, when I want to potter about. In fact, it once was a functioning garage in the 1960's, with old tools, old enamel signs, and an old petrol pump which I had a lot of trouble finding! All those old, old things make, make it look like a garage from those olden days. I want to have the impression that I'm back in a 1960s workshop!

Rob You're a nostalgic person!

Jean-Claude Yes, very!

Rob Jean-Claude Dochy, thank you very much for your time.

Jean-Claude You're welcome.

