

Review of 1972 Pantera VIN THPNMBO2410. Mileage: 71,000. Inspection Date: 8/10/21

This Detomaso Pantera was reviewed at Giordano's Vintage Motors, Carnation, WA on Tuesday, 8/10/21. I was told by owner Jim Giordano that the car was coming out of an estate. The woman's husband had passed away with several cars in his collection, the Pantera prominent among them. I did not ask about length of ownership.

General description: *This Pantera is an early 1972 Pre-L version with chrome bumpers, a two-pod dash and a rare flat rear decklid. The paint, which appears to be original, is a one-year only shade of red orange called _____.*

The original sticker with the paint color was still attached to the body ahead of the radiator. The car has all the original brightwork including the dealer-installed LTD mirrors. There are no modifications to the body or interior of the car except for a hidden radio antenna. The interior is largely stock/original black vinyl. The engine has some minor modifications with original parts being included in the sale. The car currently wears aftermarket wheels with the original magnesium Campagnolo wheels included in the sale.

Review summary: This appears to be a very solid car. The body structure top and bottom are very clean and straight with minimal evidence of rust. There has been minor modification for drivability to the engine and suspension. It does show wear and lack of functionality in the usual electrical, mechanical, and cosmetic areas for a 50-year-old Pantera that has been fairly-well cared for and driven. This car appears to be an excellent candidate for either light repairs to begin enjoying now or a full restoration. Early flat-deck pre-L Panteras such as this in solid condition have become rarer than the later models sold under the Ford program.

Key areas to address:

- Headlights are non-operative: this may only be a relay or blown fuse *Note from dealer: There is an apparent relay or wiring problem. Headlight "doors" open and close via 2 wires that can be contacted to battery terminals -switching wires closes the headlights.*
- Steering rack bushing has failed: rack needs to be rebuilt and the outer right bushing replaced
- Engine run needs to be sorted and tuned: seemed to run a bit rough on start-up and the choke does not engage to hold idle on cold start.
- Radiator overflow tank needs to be repaired: rust at the bottom
- Clutch and brake flex lines need to be replaced with braided steel: original flex lines are 50 years old and a potential safety issue

Detail Review: Paint, trim, and body: Paint is very presentable and had a light polishing before the review. No serious blemishes were noted. The stainless trim, bumpers, mirrors, and badging are likewise in a very good, shiny condition. Sighting in the body lines of the car from the front, back and sides does not reveal any twisting or other evidence of accident damage to the structure. A magnet test around the lower half of the car did not reveal any significant body filler or Bondo.

The rockers have been repainted at some point with some minor overrun to the body above the rockers rear of the doors. There is no bubbling through on any of the rockers. The pinch welds along the bottom of the rockers are clean and straight, and no telltale rust came out of any of the rocker drain openings. The doors open a bit stiff but smooth, but otherwise open, close and latch as they should. The front and

rear decklids open and close/latch smoothly and as expected. Weather seals around the doors and decklids are in good, supple condition. Body gages are consistent around the car. Many of the usual telltale cracks at the shoulders above the upper edge of the rear deck opening, around the taillights and other places do not appear to be in evidence. There is rubber trim around the front bumperettes but not the rear. All the glass is in good condition.

Interior: The interior appears to be original save for installation of an aftermarket stereo head unit with speakers in the doors. There is a good bit of the typical delamination of the dash covering above the heater box and in the pocket above the glove box, but the dash covering is otherwise in very good condition. The original seats show only three very small separations of the outer side bolster from the center section on the driver's seat bottom and back. This can be easily sewn back together by a competent upholstery shop. The passenger seat is in good condition. The carpets may have been replaced, and currently show minimal to no wear at the usual places. The console is in excellent condition.

The headliner and sun visors are original and in very good overall condition. There is some minor sag of the headliner at the center of the roof. The door panels are in good condition but do show some bowing in the cardboard backing and minor delamination of the 'stitching' detail: very typical. The door locks were not checked for functionality. The early two-piece seatbelts were in place and in good condition. The steering wheel is in good condition, but the center pad is badly deteriorated.

Switches, gages, and controls: With the key on, all switches and controls were tested. The windshield washer motor works but no fluid comes through the line: the hose or spray nozzle may be blocked. The wipers work normally. The emergency flasher is non-operative. The turn signals work, but only flash once on the speedo light. The turn signal stalk does not hold itself in the 'On' position.

The ignition tumbler turns smoothly and as expected. Did not test the instrument rheostat. The headlight switch works, the parking lights come on, but the headlights do not raise/lower when the switch is moved to the far right. This may be only a fuse. The heater fan switch works in all three (off, low and high speed) positions, but I believe a couple of wires are reversed as the high speed comes on first then the low speed when the switch is moved to the far-right position: this is the opposite of normal function. Both window switches function normally, and both door windows open smoothly through the full range. Window felt appears to be in good condition. The right window does not drop quite as far as the left in the classic Pantera fashion, leaving about $\frac{3}{4}$ " of glass showing when down. The courtesy light switch and light work properly as to the lights in the doors when open.

The tachometer functioned normally when the car was started. We did not drive the car, so speedometer function was not tested. The four secondary gages appear to function properly. While idling it was evident the battery was low as the amp gage was showing full charge to the right. Fuel showed at about $\frac{1}{4}$ tank, oil pressure showed to be strong. We did not run the car long enough to warm up to show on the water temp gage. The AC compressor could be head switching when the knob was turned but the AC was not run. The HVAC levers for heat and defrost worked smoothly but the temp lever felt very vague: not sure if that valve has seized or not. The car was not run long enough get heat through the pipes and into the cabin.

The gas pedal felt normal. The brake pedal took a couple of pushes to come up to pressure, but the car was not running so would likely do better when vacuum is being generated. The clutch pedal moved

smoothly and was not heavy. An effort reduction kit may have been installed. With the clutch in, the lever moved through all 5 forward gears smoothly as well as into and out of reverse. The reverse lights work when the key is on, and reverse is engaged. The emergency brake handle works as it should. There is no more than the anticipated play in the steering wheel likely due to wear of the nylon bushings in the collapsible steering column. There are simple fixes for this. *Note: Seller has purchased a new steering wheel rubber 3 spoke center and will install on the car.*

Front trunk: The front trunk has been well kept. The felt is all in good condition. The original space saver spare was being kept in the front trunk but should be moved to the rear tub. Brake master and booster, clutch master, battery, and wiring appear to be clean and in good condition. The radiator appears to be an original unit but has been retrofitted with one caged pusher fan in front on the right side and one caged sucker fan on the back left side. The car was not warmed up enough to trip the fan thermostats to see how they ran. The front pusher fan may be set up to run all the time as it may be heard turning when the key was on but could not see at the time. The front decklid latch works normally and without issue.

Engine bay: The engine bay is very original but relatively clean with the factory undercoating and electrical/A/C lines running across the right inner fender. There does not appear to be anything more than a little surface rust in the usual areas. The ZF has been well cleaned on the top side. Not sure if the half-shafts are original. All the factory tags are in place. The factory charcoal canister is still under the right-side engine screen but likely no longer functional. The radiator pressure and overflow tanks are in place, but a check of the bottom of the overflow tank revealed a pin-hole leak due to rust.

The original engine screen and side screens are in place. This is a car with the gas filler inside the engine bay, with the access hole in the left side screen panel. The rear deck lid opens and closes properly, and the latch works as expected. The rear decklid struts support the deck in the full open position. The lock was not tested. The engine is reasonably clean. Aftermarket exhaust headers have been fitted in addition to DeTomaso brand valve covers, an aluminum intake manifold and K&N air filter. An aftermarket carburetor may be installed but was not verified. An MSD ignition system has been retrofitted including a 6AL spark control box, distributor, and Blaster II coil. There was no discussion or knowledge as to whether the engine has stock internals or has been rebuilt.

Not sure if a long-throw clutch slave had been fitted but the original red hard-plastic flex line for the clutch was still there and should be replaced with a braided steel unit. The ease of the clutch travel when the pedal was depressed indicates an effort reduction kit was likely fitted as the early clutches were very heavy. This may also be due to installation of a diaphragm-style clutch, but no verification.

Engine run / cold start: The battery was low, so the engine cranked over rather slowly. It did catch quickly but the choke did not engage to hold the idle up until it warmed up. The idle may need to be adjusted. Light blips of the throttle caused appropriate increase in RPM's, no bogging or hesitation. The engine did seem to run a little rough and a bit of gas smell was evident: it is either running rich or one cylinder is not firing completely. That could also be affecting the slow idle. A tune and carb cleaning/rebuild may be helpful here. Also, the MSD spark control box should be checked to be sure it is functioning properly. The engine was shut down to minimize the fumes. A drive test was not performed due to the leak in the radiator overflow tank.

Underside/chassis: In general, the underside of the car is in very good condition. No evidence of serious rust was found. Only two minor dents in the outer frame, one on each side, were noted and likely due to attempts to jack the car up from the wrong location. The rear crossmember which typically is in very rough shape due to jacking the car is clean and straight. There does not appear to be any outward rusting of any frame members front to rear. There is some minor rust through of the valence under the radiator as is typical of an early Pantera but the valence itself is very straight. There is the usual light transmission oil deposits on the bottom of the ZF transmission. The stock oil pan appears clean and free of engine oil leak however the E-brake bracket forward of the oil pan is wet with oil indicating a possible pan or front main seal leak.

The suspension has been retrofitted with poly bushings fore and aft as well as zerck fittings for grease. The A-arms are all in good shape with no evidence of dents or rust. The sway bars and coil-over shocks appear to be original as are the bushings/mounts. The coil-overs still carry the DOT spring spacers front & rear. Status of the rear support shaft and bushings is unknown but appears to pivot normally when weight was taken off the rear wheels. All the ball joint and tie rod end boots appear to be in good condition and still supple. No knowledge of the originality of these pieces.

The rear wheel bearings appear to be tight as do the front. However, when testing the right front wheel from the 3 and 9 positions there is a significant amount of play. This was traced to a failed steering rack bushing on the right side. This will need to be addressed with a rebuild of the steering rack before the car can be aligned properly. Note from Seller: New bronze updated bearing ordered and will be installed by dealer before purchase. After-market exhaust headers have been fitted but the exhaust pipes and mufflers appear to be the original Ansa units. The cans and tips appear to be in very good condition with a good shine on the tips.

The cooling hoses look like they have been replaced at some point but not the tubes, at least the long tubes under the car, appear to be original with significant surface rust. The ends of the heater tubes at the front of the engine bay show significant surface rust but no evidence of leaking coolant. There are no leads showing under the radiator. The brakes were the original units with the front and rear calipers having been painted red with what was likely a spray can. The original brake flex lines are still fitted and should be changed out with braided steel flex lines.

Wheels, Spare Parts, Documentation included in sale: Note from Dealer: American Racing Torque Thrust D grey center alloy wheels and recent performance, radial tires currently installed on the car. The original Factory Pantera 15" alloy wheels are included in the sale. Also included are believed to be original excellent condition, "iron" intake manifold, painted valve covers and air cleaner and gasket. A pair of Pantera manuals are included. Any other documentation including a recent Deluxe Marti Report in seller's possession will be included in the sale.

Thanks to Mike Thomas, President Panteras Northwest, for inspecting this car and providing these detailed, inspection. Mike was referred by Panteras Owners Club of America (POCO) headquarters staff.

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