

An Alfa Library

his list manageable, let's dis-
l the single-model volumes,
der reference books, manu-
tle that is not an overview of
r its cars since 1910.

ws the list to about 20 books.
is a list of personal favorites
e of the volumes are now
an be found with a bit of

o - All The Cars from i Fusi

nd the "Alfa Bible" because
Fusi there would be little
historical data and specifica-
an Alfa Romeo engineer-
o assembled a personal
eprints, specifications and
would be otherwise be lost
om the 1930s onward.

he became the curator of
um. The book is a monu-
ological list with specifica-
gures and small black and
of every model made by Alfa
hird edition, printed in

1978, begins with the 1910 ALFA 24 and
runs through the 1977 Giulietta. Text is in
Italian and English. Some choose to argue
details along the lines of whether chassis
prototype number 3 was later re-stamped
7, but without Luigi Fusi there would be
no data to discuss. The book was approxi-
mately \$65 new, now approximately \$300
used, when available.

■ The Alfa Romeo Tradition by Griffith Borgeson

Published in 1990 by *Automobile Quar-
terly*, "The Alfa Romeo Tradition" is an
overview of the people who created the
cars, ran the company and substantially
contributed to the history of Alfa Romeo,
and includes their accomplishments and
short biographies. Borgeson's trademarks
were exhaustive research, documentation
and organization. Each section has a
theme and era. The photos are both rare
and relevant, some from family albums,
others from sources beyond typical Alfa
Romeo archive images. Borgeson was a

Californian who moved to France as an
adult and his prose is easier to read than
that of most historians.

■ Alfa Romeo Cars by Peter Vann and Jurgen Lewandowski

Published in 1991, the text is in Ger-
man, but fortunately "Alfa Romeo Cars"
is a principally a large coffee table photo
book. And what photos! Thirty-eight
historic Alfa Romeos are presented in
several poses plus detail images, from the
1921 RL-TF (Targa Florio) car to a 1990
Zagato. Between them are 8C 2900s, a
Ghia coupe, 159 Alfetta, all three BATs, a
6C 2500 Competizione, Bertone's 1900
Sportiva, the 1960 Pinin Farina Super-
flow. This is the finest photographic
collection of Alfas I know of.

■ Alfa Romeo From 1910 to 2010 by Mario Tabucchi

An update was published in 2015 and
re-titled "Alfa Romeo From 2010 to the
Present", which appears to have half a
chapter grafted onto the last pages. One

Recommendations for a "best-of" collection for the enthusiast's bookshelf By Dave Hammond

of the best-known and respected Italian
car historians, Mario Tabucchi chose to
tell the story of Alfa Romeo and its cars
segmented into decades. Text and photos
are balanced approximately 50/50 over its
318 pages. The book is typically priced at
\$45 to \$50. This is one of two books I sug-
gest to novices looking for solid, general
overviews. The other is a light-duty,
80-page synopsis, "Great Marques - Alfa
Romeo" by David Owen.

■ Alfa Romeo Centenary by Giorgio Nada

At 16 x 22 inches with an actual Alfa
Romeo car emblem attached to the cloth
cover, this is an impressive monster of a
book. It is nothing less than the official,
Alfa Romeo-sanctioned history by Gior-
gio Nada as part of the 100-year celebra-
tion in 2010. Two versions were printed,
one in Italian, the other English, and 999
copies were to be published, each num-
bered. It arrived inside a case that looked
more like a small tabletop and opens by

pulling on a black ribbon. As you can
imagine, the emphasis is large-format
photography and it does not disappoint.
The spreads are 32 x 22 inches, generally
reproduced with excellent image detail.
Going by memory, the price was \$250 re-
tail, but the publisher's website offered a
one-day sale in 2010 at 40 percent off any
one book. It did not list the Centario
book, but I had recorded the item number,
entered it and the order went through. If
you can find one, expect to pay more than
\$300 (disregard any sites asking \$1,500, it
ain't gonna happen).

■ Alfa Romeo 70 anni di immagini by Alfa Romeo

At the far end of the light-reading-but-
fun spectrum is a black and white book
(even the dust jacket) published by Alfa
Romeo for its 70th anniversary in 1980.
Some of the image quality is poor and
high contrast, but the photo subjects are
eye-popping. In addition to the expected
factory photos of cars are buses, trolleys,

marine engines, turbines, car carriers,
bulldozers, military vehicles, kitchen
stoves, mining equipment, a Boneschi-
bodied 6C 2500 woody wagon, a couple of
Alfa-powered airplanes ... virtually any
item some division of Alfa Romeo ever
made, most spreads covering one year. On
one page is a 1951 speedboat with a mod-
ified 159 Alfetta racing engine. Captions
are in Italian, but who cares? This is Alfa
Romeo via Woodstock, baby. A rare book
but worth searching for.

Purists may howl that Hull & Slater
and other sacred Alfa Romeo reference
texts have been left out of this list, but
many such books were written for hard-
core nuts such as me who want to flip to
page 347 and verify whether bumper
mount support positioning was inboard
or outboard of the frame on a 1939 6C
2500. The book by Tabucchi covers much
the same territory, with later info and
color photos. Reference, model-specific
books and thin, cheap paperbacks might
become subjects for separate articles. ■

