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An Ace for Audi

Giorgio Giugiaro – an Italian designer honored with the award “Car Designer of the Century” in 1999 – founded the company Italy-Styling in 1967. Shortly afterwards it was renamed to Italdesign Giugiaro S.p.A. In the early 1970s he created a series of 3 cars under the term Asso (Italian for ace).

The first car of his series was called Asso di Picche (ace of spades). As chassis he used the recently presented Audi 80/B1. Over the state of the art at that time he put new bodywork, which looked like a mixture of two former design studies of him. One named Boomerang – deducted from a Maserati Bora – and the other one was an Alfa Romeo Caimano made in 1971. The Asso di Picche wore the typical four rings between its narrow grill quite natural like it would have been made at the Bavarian plant of Audi in Ingolstadt. Nevertheless the unique car was built without any contribution of Audi.

None of the standard Audis was such angular shaped and designed for sportiness

like the Italian design study. Straight lines characterized the entire shape of the car and the small, off-center positioned air inlet on the rectangular hood was meant to be a real eye catcher. Furthermore they renounced on front and rear bumpers. This and maybe the front line of the car, which could be recognized - with some imagination - as a shark's mouth, might be too daring and outlandish for the customers of the brand with the four rings. But at the Audi headquarter they saw definitely the potential of the design study. Nevertheless they couldn't bring themselves to borrow and to produce the car of Italdesign in series.

The Italian design study was presented at the international motor show in 1973. But all the interested and excited visitors hoped in vain – the Asso di Picche remained a dream.

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