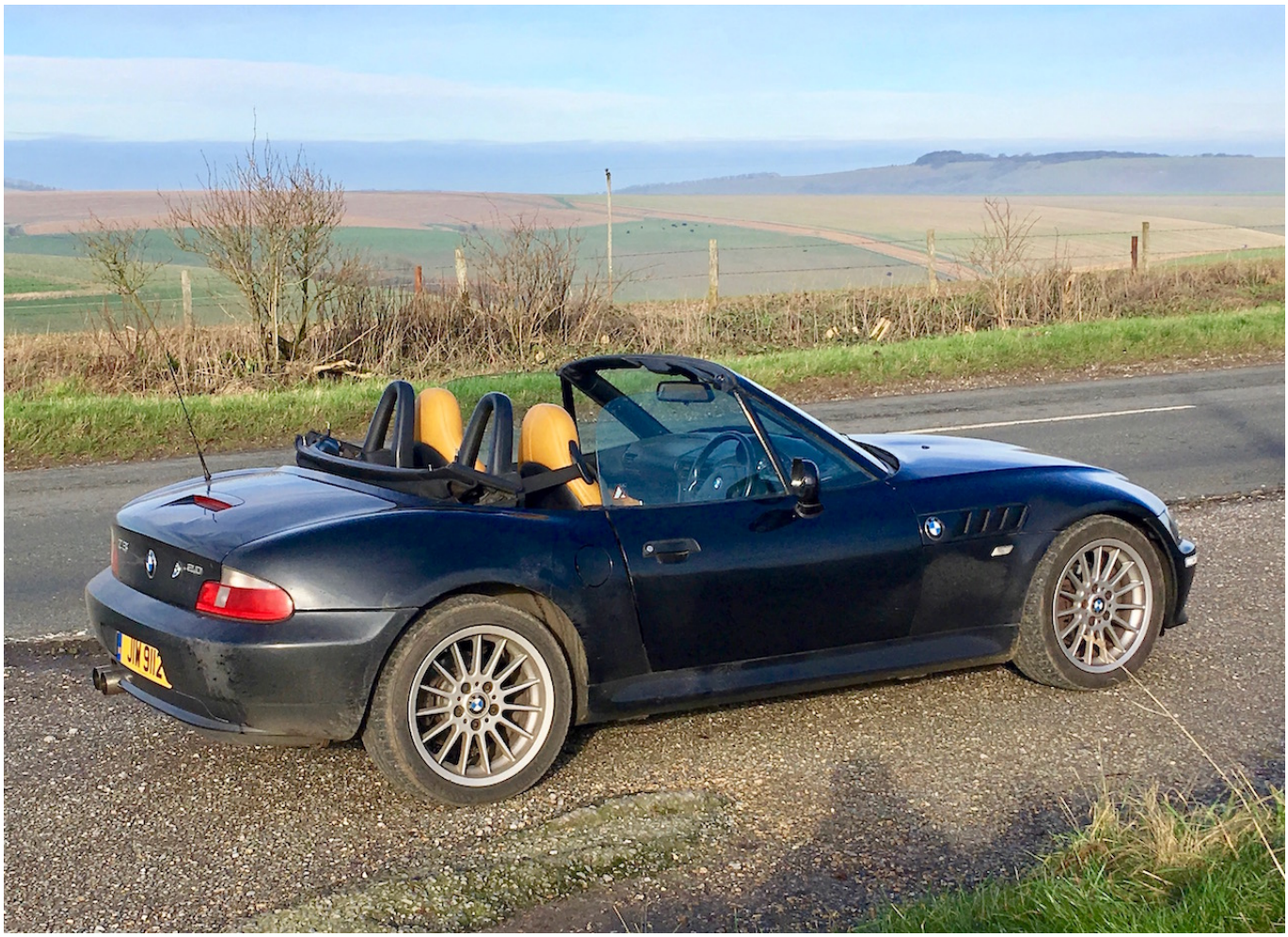
Bargain Basement Bimmer: End Game

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Author: Jeremy Walton

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At that price, no qualms about winter salt use, but it did accelerate wheel arch rust...

In his final part of a three part series, Jeremy Walton tells how he worked through £1000 BMW's job list to a successful trade in...

Kim adds: Jeremy will be well-known to many readers for his numerous well-respected articles and books covering a vast range of vehicles. He has a wealth of experience in

driving sporting machinery on the road and track, and his enthusiasm is second to none.

If you missed, but would like to read, Parts One and Two of Jeremy's Z3 saga, please enter 'Z3' into our website's search box and they should both appear!

Jeremy has also written for Wheels-Alive about his modern classic Audi TT; if you would like to read that feature too, please go to: Jeremy's TT

Here concludes his story about his Z3…

(Note: All text and photographs – except where individually credited – courtesy of Jeremy Walton).

CAR: 2000 BMW Z3 2.0

MILEAGE: 138,985

OWNER: Jeremy Walton

I kept the 'Grand in your hand' BMW Z3 for 14 months and 3,678 fun-filled miles, before trading it for an Audi TT Sport quattro when the Z3 had registered 142,663 miles. I had set out to buy the lightweight, limited edition Audi, when I was unexpectedly offered that 6-cylinder 2-litre Z3 by BMW Individual at that knockdown price. So I had put that Audi ambition on the backburner and motored merrily onward in my sixth privately owned BMW, relishing that a low price meant I did not go into spasms of owner worry as had been my case with a fabulous but flawed Lotus Elise.



This could be the Last Time! End of a BMW era for me, Z3 off to be traded against Audi TT, including a personal plate I used on 635 CSi and 120d.

Initial Z3 moves had been fitting a pair of new Kumhos at the rear, bodge the scarred spoiler and stone chips with eBay-bought paint in BMW Cosmos black and attack the BMW Individual interior leather, focussing on the battered driver's perch.

The big DIY success was Renovo's soft-top canvas cleaner which put the faded Z3 top back in the black, but the driver's seat leather and flattened bolster defeated me over three attempts. So I went to a local Sparkford workshops to discover L.A. and R.W. Piper, trimming and upholstery specialists, who do classy work on the finest classics, but were not elitist about taking on such a marginal/banger motor as my Z3. They charged £140 [£167 with onerous 20% VAT] and made the best possible job of renovating the seat, including side

bolster and remedial steel frame labour to provide safe driver seat support.



As good as could be made of interior without leather replacement: driver bolster still scarred.



Belkin suction stalk was useful for phone/satnav, but vibration prone and base would not detach without fascia damage.

The hazy sectors to the Metallic bonnet finish were beyond DIY too. The Z3 had been poorly repainted, possibly after a bump, as there was no other evidence of accident damage, which left hazy white traces showing through the topcoat. The only visual improvement came from Autoglym Super Resin Polish. I did finally get an estimate for £550 to professionally repair and repaint bonnet and spoiler, but by then car value and some necessary service work costing £532.51p ruled that out.



Discovered bonnet badge glued on, £1 sound used example from a Footman James Show replaced it…



Oh yes, this looks better!

What did the £500+ maintenance include?

Well, at that bargain price, I did not expect a BMW-stamped service book! Since there was not much evidence of works done beyond new brake lines, the first service in ages developed into a near tie between parts and labour charges. Biggest parts expense was a Bosch MAF Sensor [£130.80], plus a split in the air intake hose. Z3 also received synthetic 5/40 oil to suit the VANOS twin cam cylinder head operation, a first set of spark plugs in a long while, new intake hose, restoration of clear headlamp covers and an extensively messy Waxoyl under-seal.



Air intakes assorted, all damaged or redundant, ditched a month after purchase.

The BMW now revved happily to 6400 rpm—it was always eerily smooth, but there were naturally flat spots with that split intake hose. Noted previous owner after market air intake tricks, including a snorkel air intake, which we promptly dumped, and the engine became the star turn. Not all the earlier owner aftermarket moves were wasted: The stainless steel exhaust from 2012 sounded wonderful, proved utterly durable, and had only a drone tone patch around 2000 revs. Even more effective, was a transverse engine bay brace, one that tightens up the Z3 front end so that it points into a corner with conviction, including single Castle Combe track outing..

Other areas where I got a result, included resetting the radio code after a battery disconnection during the leather work and refurbishing the 7.5 x 17 inch front Style 32 alloys, which had spokes flaking. Now there are plenty of original BMW alloys around, but picking the right dimensions to fit and trusting some eBay pictures/descriptions is well dodgy.

I did get a full set of 7.5 x 17s from a trusted eBay seller after too many months searching– and the price for four was about the same as some asked for a pair. They were honestly described and properly packed, prompt delivery via courier service from North of England. In the event, two were so good I used them as slaves; local company Pristine refurbished my original wheels. I had no direct contact with the wheel restorers as I dealt through Checkpoint including multiple wheel changes. The result was excellent and definitely helped the trade-in deal on the Audi, but I’m not going to quote the costs on these as I sold the quartet of eBay wheels to offset those refurbish costs.


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Wheel changes at Checkpoint were routine in Z3’s life, including two new rear Kumhos and set of slave wheels used during refurbishments of original fronts.



Jeremy's 'eBay' wheels…

That's about it, I drove the Z3 into a dealer trade in with the benefit of a final oil and filter service marking my pain free 12-months. This with a vehicle I had used on track without embarrassment and deployed for many more classic car events, including posh Sherborne. Z3 traded in against the Audi TT for slightly more than I paid—but that's not a realistic profit when you take in service and cosmetic charges I happily paid during an educational ownership.

This slideshow requires JavaScript.

VERDICT

Low stress, max fun, but not a keeper. There were bigger bills looming to make this Z3 the Individual example Munich intended. – *Jeremy Walton*



The Z3 about to depart on its last trip in Jeremy's ownership…

Useful Contacts:

Checkpoint [Warminster branch of chain**],**wheels & tyres**: Tel:** 01985.215148
www.checkpointwarminster.co.uk

Interior: L.A. & R.W. Piper**–www.pipertrimmers.co.uk. Tel:** 01963 441431.

Gliptone Leathercare UK: Gliptone products [2]. www.liquidleather.com or **Tel**: 0161839 2941.

Roadster top: Renovo @ www.renovointernational.com—**Tel**:01444 443277.

Chrome/bright metalwork: German-sourced **Autosol** efficient at https://www.autosol.com **Hermetite** Good results, *Hermetite Metal Brite* effective on on engine bay brightwork surface rust.