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Driving Prickly Pear

In 1957 Itzhak Shubinski founded his car company Autocars Company Limited in the harbor city Haifa, Israel. As a brand name for his cars he went for name "Sabra". The same-named prickly pear decorated also the round company logo.

The start was quite hard, as the Autocars Company Limited had absolutely no knowledge about car manufacturing. For this reason they entered into a cooperation agreement with the British car manufacturer Reliant, based in Tamworth. The cooperation stipulated to ship pre-mounted parts by ship from Great Britain to Israel where they were assembled to a running car. 1960 this gradual production, probably with the objective to take over the complete production in Haifa soon, was started. But this plan did not prove to be successful. Even as the car range was broadened by a sportive roadster, by which especially the US-American market should be captured, could not be implemented. It was planned to produce the sports car, developed

by Reliant, entirely in Israel and to supply the US market directly. The roadster of Reliant came onto the market under the name Sabre and the identical Israeli version was sold under the name Sabra Sport. Prominent was its distinctively shaped, deep drawn front nose with its recessed front lights, which marked the car off from its competitors. The car premiered at the New York Auto Show in 1961 and went on production in the summer of the same year.

But the hope and expectation for a success of the roadster fell short. After in total 379 cars, from which only 171 copies left the production line of the Autocars Company Limited in Haifa, the production was ceased in 1968.

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