

DALLAS  
ENTREPRENEUR  
COLLECTS  
EXOTIC CARS—  
TO RENT

# Heavenly Rides

**MOST OF US CAN ONLY IMAGINE WHAT IT WOULD BE LIKE TO DRIVE EXPENSIVE, EXOTIC SPORTS CARS.** Generally, only celebrities and the very rich get the chance, but occasionally, even the average Joe gets to experience heaven on Earth.

Benny Black, owner of Platinum Motor Cars in Dallas, Texas, still hasn't gotten used to it. "I've always loved these cars and to have a chance to work with them everyday is a dream come true," he admits.

Renting exotic cars to people who would like the experience—but not the car note—or to celebrities who want a nice ride when they're traveling, is a great concept. But it took a chance meeting with a celebrity before Black could realize his dream. Black had been working at a limousine service when he heard Scooby Pippin who was in town to play the Dallas Mavericks, and had requested a Bentley Amage to drive.

"I happened to know someone with an Amage. I asked

him if he would loan it to me, we worked out a financial arrangement, and I had the car ready for Mr. Pippin when he arrived. That's when I realized this was a great niche and I needed to pursue it," Black beams.

A graduate of Texas Tech University with an associate's degree in business administration, Black put together a business plan shortly afterward and with the support of investors and \$1 million, he opened Platinum Exotic Car Rental in November of 2004.

Initially there were challenges, particularly, getting exposure for his company. He established an I'll-scratch-your-back-if-you-scratch-mine arrangement with local car dealers and worked out a marketing collaboration with one of Dallas's most exclusive boutique hotels, Hotel ZaZa, that caters to celebrities. When

their guests request a special vehicle, the hotel gives Black a call. Clients have included Jamie Foxx and Tom Cruise.

An ongoing challenge remains figuring out what vehicle will be hot for the season, the car that people will want to rent. He keeps about 15 automobiles in his fleet and with so much invested in each, a dud car is a very expensive mistake.

According to Black, two out of three customers choose a Lamborghini or Ferrari. One of the most popular to rent is the Lamborghini Gallardo Spyder, even though the convertible goes for \$1,800 a day. Black says, "I also provide a 'try-before-you-buy' service to customers. If you're going to drop \$200,000 on a new Gallardo Spyder, \$1,800 is just a little extra to make sure you want to invest in this kind of car," he reasons.

A ten-cylinder engine with 520 horses and 376 foot-pounds of torque pow-

ers the Gallardo Spyder. It has permanent all-wheel drive with viscous traction control and a six-speed manual transmission. The Spyder accelerates from zero to 60 in 4.8 seconds, and can achieve a top speed of 195 mph.

"It's a dream car," adds Black. "It must also raise dopamine levels because when you get behind the wheel, you just can't stop smiling."

Black and partner Michael Felts expanded the business to incorporate sales as well as rentals, and renamed it Platinum Motor Cars. The decision appears to be a good one.

Black credits his faith in himself and God for his success. "We sell a lifestyle here," he says. "I'm supplying a want not a need."

And wantin' is gettin' for Black and his customers. ■

To learn more about Platinum Motor Cars visit [OnWheelsInc.com](http://OnWheelsInc.com).

