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Peter Marriott looks at a splendid Rivarossi model based on one of the world's best trains

PHOTOS: Peter Marriott

In October 1883 the first original Orient Express ran from Paris through the Alps, Budapest and Bucharest to Constantinople. This legendary train continued to carry royalty and celebrities between European cities up until its 1920s heyday. After World War II other forms of transport led to the last service of the Orient Express as a regular passenger train in May 1977.

The legendary luxury train was saved by entrepreneur and rail enthusiast, James B. Sherwood. In 1977 he bought two of the train's carriages at a Sotheby's auction in Monte Carlo. Over the next few years \$16 million was spent locating, purchasing and restoring some 35 vintage carriages. Many of the current day Venice Simplon-Orient-Express carriages date from the 1920s. In May 1982 the famous train was reborn when the Venice Simplon-Orient-Express made its maiden run from London to Venice. Today the train continues to run as one of the world's most exclusive trains.

The model

Rivarossi, part of the Lima Group, began manufacturing model railways in Italy in the 1940s and they are now owned by Hornby International www.hornbyinternational.co.uk. One of their latest HO-scale carriages is a CIWL Cruising Service Car for use on the Orient Express luxury train. The buffers are sprung and there are a lot of already applied parts such as pipes and handrails. The carriage runs well on its metal wheels. The model comes with several add-on details including piping for the brakes though these parts can only really be fitted if the model is to be static because they would be fouled by the coupling if the model was running. There are a lot of nicely applied decals and raised details on the model although they need a magnifying glass to get the most

from them. The carriage is numbered 4013 and is the one that David Suchet posed next to whilst making the ITV programme "David Suchet on the Orient Express" shown over Christmas 2010. This is one of a set of carriages that form part of the Rivarossi Orient Express Collection. This model is Rivarossi HR 4137. It costs £61.50 and is available in the UK from On-Tracks www.ontracks.com and other retailers. For more information about the actual carriage go to www.irps-wl.org.uk/4013.shtml 

