



evo

THE THRILL OF DRIVING

Sex Bomb!

£45K JUNIOR SUPERCAR DRIVEN

*Alfa 4C – poseur's toy
or driver's dream?
The evo verdict*

FORD COSWORTH!



*"The Cossie was Britain's
Skyline GT-R"*

PLUS

NEW ELISE TESTED
CATERHAM AERO7
AUDI S5 v NEW
BMW 435i



TECH DETAILS
More power, less weight. Yes!

205MPH ASTON
First drive – new V12 Vantage S



December 2013 evo.co.uk £4.50



Official fuel consumption figures for the Audi RS 6 Avant 4.0 TFSI quattro 560PS 8-speed tiptronic in mpg (l/100km): for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results. Image for illustration purpose only and may

Audi Sport
Vorsprung durch Technik



No mouth. All trousers.

The new 560PS RS 6 Avant.
Power from a less obvious place.



RS 6

Urban 20.3 (13.9), Extra Urban 37.7 (7.5), Combined 28.8 (9.8). CO₂ emissions 229g/km. Standard EU Test figures show items that are over and above the standard specification. For more information please visit www.audi.co.uk/rs6

The new A-Class.



A Daimler Brand

Official government fuel consumption figures in mpg (litres per 100km) for new A-Class range: urban 32.1 (8.8)
Official EU-regulated test data are provided for comparison purposes and actual performance will depend on driving style, road conditions and other non-technical factors.
£570.00, 19" AMG alloy wheels multi-spoke design painted black at £970.00 and brake callipers painted red at £330.00 (on-the-road price includes VAT, delivery, 12 months' Road Fund correct at time of print 09/13).



Mercedes-Benz
The best or nothing.

- 62.8 (4.5), extra urban 48.7 (5.8) - 85.6 (3.3), combined 40.9 (6.9) - 74.3 (3.8). CO₂ emissions: 161 - 98 g/km. The new A-Class range starts from £20,370.00 on-the-road. Model featured is a new A 45 AMG 4MATIC at £39,715.00 on-the-road featuring optional Intelligent Light System at Licence, number plates, first registration fee and fuel). Some combinations of features/options may not be available. Please contact your Mercedes-Benz Retailer for availability. Prices



British chic, Swiss excellence: Breitling *for Bentley* combines the best of both worlds. Style and performance. Luxury and accomplishment. Class and audacity. Power and refinement. Perfectly epitomising this exceptional world, the Bentley B06 chronograph houses a Manufacture Breitling calibre, chronometer-certified by the COSC (Swiss Official Chronometer Testing Institute), the highest benchmark in terms of precision and reliability. It is distinguished by its exclusive "30-second chronograph" system enabling extremely precise readings of the measured times. A proud alliance between the grand art of British carmaking and the fine Swiss watchmaking tradition.

For your nearest stockist in Great Britain and Ireland telephone 020 7518 7010

breitlingforbentley.com

THE ESSENCE OF BRITAIN

Made in Switzerland by BREITLING



BENTLEY B06

BREITLING
— *for* —
BENTLEY

HONDA
The Power of Dreams

WORK PLAY

The Civic 1.6 Diesel

Discover the perfect balance of practicality
and performance.



Featuring a combined fuel economy of 78.5mpg, 118.4 brake horsepower and low CO₂ emissions - meaning you pay no car tax.

Book a test drive today

honda.co.uk/civictestdrive



Fuel consumption figures for the Civic 1.6 i-DTEC ES Manual in mpg (l/100km):
Urban 70.6 (4.0), Extra Urban 85.6 (3.3), Combined 78.5 (3.6). CO₂ emissions: 94g/km.
Fuel consumption figures sourced from official EU-regulated laboratory test results,
are provided for comparison purposes and may not reflect real-life driving experience.

Model shown: Civic 1.6 i-DTEC ES Manual in Alabaster Silver metallic paint at £21,095.

Subscriptions

Telephone 0844 844 0039
Email evo@servicehelpline.co.uk
Online subscriber service www.subsinfo.co.uk
Back issues 0844 844 0039

Editorial

Telephone 020 7907 6310 Fax 01933 667309
Email eds@evo.co.uk
Website www.evo.co.uk
5 Tower Court, Irchester Road, Wollaston,
Wellingborough, Northants NN29 7PJ, United Kingdom

Editorial director Harrison Metcalfe

Editor Nick Trott
Motoring editor Mike Duff
Art director Rob Gould
Features editor Henry Catchpole
Production editor Ian Eveleigh
Staff photographer Dean Smith
Film-maker Sam Riley
Staff writer Stephen Dobie
Sub editor Dan McCalla
Designer Will Beaumont
Staff writer (website) Matthew Hayward
Contributing editor Jethro Bovingdon
Contributing editor Richard Meaden
Contributing editor Tiff Needell
Road test contributor David Vivian
Columnist Richard Porter
Columnist Dario Franchitti
Office administrator Jane Townsend-Emms

Contributors (words)

Kim Adams, Simon de Burton, Andrew English, Peter Tomalin

Contributors (pictures)

Stuart Collins, Gus Gregory, James Lipman, Drew Phillips

It wouldn't have been possible without

Cameron Hill, Sam Sheehan, Shaun Smith, Raceworks Motorsport
and everyone at the Bedford Autodrome

Advertising & Promotions

Telephone 020 7907 6773 Fax 020 7907 6601
ISDN 020 7580 0297

email ads.evo@dennis.co.uk

30 Cleveland Street, London W1T 4JD

MD of advertising Julian Lloyd-Evans
Advertising director Sarah Perks
Advertising manager Tim Deeks
Business development manager Shaza Agabani
Account manager Neale Salt
Sales executive Alexander Rumble
Inserts executive Abdul Ahad
Lifestyle director Sophie Kochan
Group advertising manager digital Elaine de la Cruz
Production executive Michael Hills
Marketing & events co-ordinator Traci McLean
Newtrade director David Barker
Direct marketing manager Liezi Hollander

Creative solutions

Commercial director Jonathan Kitchen
Designer Rob Callaghan
Senior project manager Avril Donnelly
Project co-ordinator Lauren Groblewski

Licensing & syndication

International director Ian Bedwell
Syndication senior manager Anj Dosaj-Halai
Licensing manager Carlotta Serantoni
Licensing & syndication assistant Nicole Adams

evo Cars for Sale

Telephone 0207 907 6660 email chris@motormutt.com
Commercial director Chris Wood

Publishing

Publishing director Geoff Love

Dennis Publishing Ltd

Group managing director Ian Westwood
Chief financial officer Brett Reynolds
Group finance director Ian Leggett
CEO James Tye
Chairman Felix Dennis

evo

ISSUE 189
DECEMBER
2013

Ed Speak

'The new evo digital edition is revolutionary'



THE EVO DIGITAL EDITION IS CHANGING. WE HAVE taken a good look at how one of our favourite cars, the Porsche 911, has evolved over the years to become the benchmark in its class... and ignored every lesson it can teach us.

The word is over-used these days, but I genuinely feel that the new **evo** digital edition is revolutionary. The quality of content, the frequency with which it's delivered, and the integration with other **evo** platforms is such that what you'll see is unlike any other motoring digital edition in the world.

The key change is how the content is presented (via a scrolling homescreen) and how often it's updated. The hunger for **evo**'s unique content in the digital landscape, as demonstrated by the success of our YouTube channel (**evoTV**), is so great that the notion of publishing once a month is no longer viable. In our research, you made it clear that you have an insatiable appetite for **evo** – so we're responding by delivering content into our digital edition more frequently. For instance, all the week's key road tests will be delivered into the digital edition every Wednesday. Why Wednesday? That should be obvious...

We're also including features, videos and news stories on a 'continuous publishing' basis, which means we have created a digital edition that gives us the ultimate flexibility to offer content at any time. Simply put, we are no longer constrained by a traditional four-weekly schedule. For you, the reader, it means that you can open the digital edition and expect new content frequently.

But what's the point of this revolution if you can't view it on all tablets and smartphones? Now you can – we've made the new digital edition available on all Android smartphones and tablets, Kindle Fire, and iPhones and iPads using iOS7.

When we launched our original digital edition for iPad in the latter half of 2010, it was the world's first, and best, interactive motoring tablet edition. I'm proud of what the team achieved with this, but I find the next chapter in our digital story even more exciting and packed with even more opportunities. Some will miss the once-a-month 'magazine format' app, but I hope that you'll find the new digital edition more intuitive to use and more rewarding, more of the time.

This continues to be an exciting time for performance cars, for the media, and for **evo**. As I write this, **evo** is 15 years young, and we've maintained our status as the world's most exciting and dedicated performance car magazine by delivering the best content by the best team in the business. And while there'll be no let-up in our dedication to the **evo** print edition, our reinvented digital edition is a giant leap into the future. I hope you'll join us for the ride.

Nick

Nick Trott Editor



Visit
www.evo.co.uk/newapp



- Get **evo**'s trademark reviews, photography and exclusive videos, updated more frequently
- Enhanced functionality – offline access, saving favourite articles and searchable content
- Available on iPad, iPhone, Kindle Fire and Android devices

evo Worldwide EDITORS-IN-CHIEF

Argentina Pablo Perez Companc Bulgaria Georgi Ivanov Croatia Nikola Curic Czech Republic Petr Ehrlich
Egypt Omar Khalifa France Stéphane Schlesinger Italy Maurizio Mozzali Malaysia Albakry Salehuddin Middle East Bassam Kronfli
Singapore Sheldon Trollope Slovenia Matjaž Korošak Thailand Chettha Songthaveepol Turkey Burak Ertam Ukraine Igor Kravtsov

evo is available for international licensing and syndication. Email Carlotta_Serantoni@dennis.co.uk

evo

ISSUE 189 DECEMBER 2013

CONTENTS

106

EVO TRACK CAR OF THE YEAR 2013



'You know you're about to drive something serious when a man in a McLaren-branded shirt has to brief you'



© Copyright Evo Publications Ltd which is a subsidiary of Dennis Publishing Limited. Evo is a trademark of Evo Publications Ltd.



Photographic repro by Evo Magazine. Printed in the UK by BGP, Bicester, Oxfordshire OX26 4QZ Printed in China by C&C Offset Printing Distributed by Seymour, 2nd Floor, 2 East Poultry Avenue, London EC1A 9PT Tel: 020 7429 4000. Fax: 020 7429 3625. Web: seymour.co.uk
ISSN 1464-2786 USPS 024-183



When you have finished with this magazine please recycle it.

Features

060

ALFA ROMEO 4C

The supercar for everyman that could revitalise one of motoring's most famous marques. Dickie gets his hands on the beautiful 4C in Italy

072

GALLARDO SQUADRA CORSE

The most extreme Gallardo ever made, and the very last one. We promise. Probably

084

TONY FERNANDES

Harry grills the Malaysian magnate on how he plans to turn Caterham into a global force...

090

CATERHAM AEROSEVEN

...plans that start with a carbon-bodied 21st-century take on the stalwart Seven

094

ASTON MARTIN V12 VANTAGE S

Henry puts a bright yellow Vantage through its paces in rural California. Definitely doesn't look conspicuous...

106

TRACK CAR OF THE YEAR

From extreme hot hatches to single-seaters for the road: eight machines do battle for our track car gong at Blyton Park

120

FORD SIERRA RS500 COSWORTH

A mind-scrambling saloon that went unbeaten in the BTCC for three years: we revisit one of the maddest cars of the '80s



120

094



072



060



090



Regulars

012

NEWS

BMW spills the beans on its new M4, while Audi moves forward with its new Quattro plans

051

COLUMNS

Harry reckons electric vehicles have an image problem, while Porter fears for the V8 engine

057

LETTERS

Last month's Future Icons stirred you into action to point out the potential gems we missed

128

LONG-TERM TESTS

The controversial RS Clio 200 Turbo joins the fleet, while Dobie says bon voyage to the Lobster

145

EVO KNOWLEDGE

With the Mk7 Golf GTI now in showrooms, the Mk6 offers a cut-price alternative

178

ART OF SPEED

How a tubular alloy chassis from the 1950s created the beautiful gullwing door concept

Driven



026 LOTUS ELISE S CLUB RACER

030 ROLLS-ROYCE WRAITH

034 BMW 328i GT

036 VAUXHALL INSIGNIA VXR SUPERSPORT

038 AUDI S5 v BMW 435i M SPORT

042 MERCEDES-BENZ S63 AMG

045 BMW X5



evo (USPS 024-183) is published monthly by Dennis Publishing Ltd, 30 Cleveland Street, London, W1T 4JD, United Kingdom. For subscriptions in the USA and Canada, visit www.imsnews.com, phone 1-888-428-6676, fax 1-757-428-6253, or email cs@imsnews.com. U.S. Agent Pitney Bowes International Mailing Services, 158 Mt Olivet Avenue, Newark NJ 07114-2114. Periodicals postage is paid at Paterson NJ and additional mailing offices. US POSTMASTER: Please send address changes to Pitney Bowes International Mailing Services, 158 Mt Olivet Avenue, Newark NJ 07114-2114. Subscription records are maintained by Dennis Publishing Ltd, 30 Cleveland Street, London, W1T 4JD, United Kingdom. Subscription prices: UK £47.99, Europe £58.20, Rest of World £88.40, USA \$115. All for 12 issues.

Remember, if your local newsagent doesn't stock evo, just ask them to order it for you

The Editors and Publishers of this magazine give no warranties, guarantees or assurances and make no representations regarding any goods or services advertised in this edition.

Just ask!



M4 is unleashed

First look

The low-down on a star car of the future

BMW confirms details of M3 coupe replacement. Power increased to 424bhp, despite two fewer cylinders

Words: Mike Duff



LAST MONTH, BMW showed off the styling of the forthcoming M4 with a 'design concept', albeit one pretty much identical to how the finished car will look. Now the company has filled in most of the blanks, giving us a full briefing on the technology that will underpin both the coupe and the M3 saloon that will be launched alongside it next summer.

That in itself is the first surprise: we anticipated the four-door turning up after the coupe. But M division, it seems, has different ideas – including doing a fair amount of trampling on BMW's carefully cultivated notion that the new 4-series is an altogether

different car from the 3-series. 'As far as we're concerned, they're exactly the same car, just with different numbers of doors,' said Albert Biermann, M division's head of engineering, at the technical preview event in Germany.

'The engine is very much an M powerplant, designed to deliver power and to rev'

It's also clear that BMW's decision to numerically enhance the coupe hasn't met with M's universal approval, with the performance division's senior managers referring to the 'fifth-generation M3' throughout the day.

Marketing dogfights aside, most of the details are as we predicted.

There's a new twin-turbocharged 3-litre six-cylinder engine in place of the sonorous V8 of the recently retired E90/E92 M3. Regardless of any other considerations, BMW's ongoing commitment to slash the

CO2 emissions of all its models, including those wearing 'M' badges, had condemned the thirsty V8 to an early grave. Biermann admitted that the decision to switch to the smaller engine was made three years ago.

Yet the new engine is very much an 'M' powerplant, having been

designed to deliver power and to rev. Output has risen only fractionally over that of the previous M3, with the straight-six producing 424bhp from 5500rpm to 7500rpm compared to the V8's 414bhp at 8200rpm. But as you'd expect, torque has gone up considerably, with 'more than 500Nm' (369lb ft) arriving at less than 2000rpm. The E92 managed 295lb ft at 3900rpm. Emissions and economy have improved dramatically, too: BMW claims the new M4 will produce less than 200g/km of CO2, which will translate to around 33mpg on the official EU consumption test. And insiders who have driven the new car promise it can manage more than 30mpg in real-world conditions.

p16 GERMAN CHIEFS ON THE FUTURE

Bosses of AMG, quattro and M division are grilled on their creations



p18 BMW i8 DESIGN IS FINALISED

Revolutionary hybrid supercar gets shown off at Frankfurt



p21 FERRARI COOL ON HYBRIDS

Cost of development means LaFerrari tech won't be shared



p24 VOLVO'S POWERPLANT REVOLUTION

Swedish marque prepares multi-purpose turbo four for all large models



Weight savings (versus E92 M3)

- 1 ENGINE -10KG (OF WHICH MAGNESIUM SUMP -2KG) 2 CARBONFIBRE ROOF -6.5KG ON M4, -5KG ON M3
3 PLASTIC/CARBONFIBRE BOOTLID -5KG 4 CARBONFIBRE PROPSHAFT -5KG

ALSO: ELECTRIC POWER STEERING -3KG SUSPENSION LINKS -5KG FRONT, -3KG REAR MANUAL GEARBOX -12KG

The new engine is mounted in-line with a 30-degree slant, and shares its swept capacity, bore and stroke with BMW's existing 'M55' 3-litre straight-six – the motor that powers the M135i. But we're told that it's an all-new engine with a unique alloy block, featuring a low-friction cylinder coating instead of liners, plus a forged crankshaft and lightweight cylinders. The induction side is fed by two small high-speed turbochargers, each one fed exhaust gases from three cylinders via a cast manifold, and with electrically actuated wastegates. The turbos are claimed to spin faster for longer, improving throttle response and reducing lag. They supply air to the engine through a sizeable water-to-air

intercooler positioned on top of the engine, with low-resistance design meaning the turbos only need to produce 1.25bar of pressure.

We've not been told exactly where the rev limiter lies, but we know it's north of the 7500rpm peak power point, probably by 200-300rpm. 'A high-revving engine is critical to the character of an M-car,' said Biermann.

Particular attention has been spent on making sure the M3 and M4 are suited to life on track. The lubrication system uses two separate oil pumps, with return intakes on both sides of the engine to counteract lateral G when cornering. The turbos get their own separate oil pump as well, plus an electric water pump to ensure

continued cooling when the engine is switched off. The exhaust has switchable flaps to improve noise at higher engine speeds, and like the V8 in the M5, the six-cylinder's sound is 'electronically augmented' through the audio system in the cabin to boost its harmonics.

The transmission line-up is as expected, with both a developed version of the seven-speed DCT twin-clutch 'box from the previous car and the continued (and welcome) presence of an optional six-speed manual. Although around 80 per cent of E90/E92 M3s were specified with DCT, M still regards the option of a manual gearbox as being a must on the new car. The DCT 'box is

basically the same as that in the M5 and M6, with the same gear ratios but a lower final drive. The manual 'box is essentially the same as that fitted to the 1M Coupe, but with a twin-plate clutch to accommodate the extra torque. Both transmissions are connected to a new carbonfibre propshaft and work with a version of the M5's electronically controlled limited-slip differential, capable of varying its degree of lock-up between zero and 100 per cent to maximise traction and to improve agility and braking stability.

Mention of the carbon propshaft brings us to the aggressive weight-saving programme that M has adopted for both cars, resulting in a target kerb



'The turbos are claimed to spin faster for longer, improving throttle response and reducing lag'

Below: DTM drivers were on hand to administer passenger rides at M3/M4 tech day



weight below 1500kg. In addition to the propshaft, carbon is also used for the roof (on both the coupe and the saloon this time), for the front strut-brace assembly and for the frame of the lightweight bootlid (the outer surface being plastic). At the front there's an aluminium bonnet – carbon is too hard for modern impact standards – and the engine gets a magnesium sump to save a few more kilograms. In total, we're told the new car will weigh about 80kg less than the E92. And that's with steel brakes – for the first time, carbon-ceramics will also be offered as an option to reduce mass further.

As with all M-cars, the new M3 and M4 use the suspension mounting points of the basic car, but with dramatically uprated components. Here that includes a widened track, forged aluminium front wishbones and a rear axle subframe that's bolted directly to the body. Switchable dampers will be standard, as will electric power steering – this using a completely different rack and drive motor to that of the standard 3-series – triggering some obvious concerns. Biemann said that M is well aware of the pitfalls of electric assistance, and promises we'll find the new system

considerably better than that fitted to the 991-generation Porsche 911, which he agrees is 'disappointing.' We'll see.

One thing BMW hasn't released is full performance numbers, although there have been more than enough clues to guess them with a high degree of certainty. We're told this car will improve over the E92 by a similar margin to what the E92 managed over the E46. That suggests a 4.5sec 0-62mph time and a Nordschleife lap around 7:50. 'To be honest, I don't care what you speculate,' Biemann said with a grin. 'It's all good for us.'

Pricing is where it gets more

tentative, although a BMW GB spokesman told us that price increases will be 'a couple of grand' over the outgoing E92 rather than the chunkier supplement demanded for that over the E46. So expect something like £57,000 for the M4 and about £1500 less than that for the M3. An M4 Convertible will follow in 2015, and an M4 version of the forthcoming 4-series Gran Coupe is a near-certainty.

Whichever badge it's wearing, the big question is whether the new M3 (and M4) can match the driving experience of their seminal predecessors. Watch this space. **x**

M3s through the ages



E30

Years produced 1986-1990
Power 220bhp @ 6750rpm
Weight (kerb) 1257kg
Power-to-weight 178bhp/ton
0-62mph 6.7sec
Top speed 144mph (claimed)



E36

Years produced 1993-1998
Power 321bhp @ 7400rpm
Weight (kerb) 1515kg
Power-to-weight 215bhp/ton
0-62mph 5.4sec
Top speed 157mph (claimed)



E46

Years produced 2000-2007
Power 338bhp @ 7900rpm
Weight (kerb) 1570kg
Power-to-weight 219bhp/ton
0-62mph 5.1sec
Top speed 155mph (limited)



E92

Years produced 2007-2013
Power 414bhp @ 8300rpm
Weight (kerb) 1655kg
Power-to-weight 254bhp/ton
0-62mph 4.8sec (claimed)
Top speed 155mph (limited)

First impressions



AH YES, THE PASSENGER RIDE – a long-established twist to these technical previews, when you get strapped into a prototype next to a professional driver, who tries to either scare you, tell you how great the car is, or both.

Today's hired gun is Andy Priaulx, Guernsey's most famous racer, three-time World Touring Car champion and now one of BMW's factory DTM aces. The test location is a closed airbase near Munich, with nothing to hit other than cones (or conceivably one

'The chassis finds impressive rear-end grip before the inevitable oversteer'

of the other prototypes being driven by Priaulx's team-mates), so the scare factor is sadly lacking. And with just two laps in the passenger seat, impressions are obviously fleeting. The M3 sounds good: with a meaty six-cylinder snarl (presumably being digitally enhanced), the engine is clearly keen to rev (we see an indicated 7500rpm and don't find the limiter) and the chassis finds impressive amounts of rear-end grip before the inevitable smoky oversteer.

'It's brilliant,' reports Priaulx from the driver's seat. 'But then I would say that, wouldn't I?' Yes Andy, you would.



Quattro plan gathers pace

Latest Audi concept makes 690bhp thanks to twin-turbo V8 and electric motor

Words: Mike Duff



PRODUCTION deadlines meant that we weren't able to bring you pictures of the Audi Sport Quattro concept in the last issue. So here it is – the chance to have a gawp at what could well be the shape of Audi's next range-topper.

Although officially just a show car, this Quattro concept is obviously far closer to production feasibility than the one that appeared at the Paris show in 2010. Audi insiders say there's a real chance of something very similar going into production, and being pitched above the R8 V10 Plus that currently sits atop the Audi range.

The Sport Quattro is bigger than the previous concept, and has swapped that car's transverse five-cylinder turbo engine for the longitudinal 4-litre twin-turbocharged V8 of the RS6 and RS7. This produces 552bhp, and works in conjunction with a 110kW electric motor to give a combined total output of 690bhp.

It's a bigger and heavier car than the previous Quattro concept. Indeed, any production version would almost certainly be spun off VW Group's MLB platform, the next size up from the MQB that underpinned the earlier concept. The new engine and the electric

side of the powertrain also adds a fair amount of mass. The last Quattro concept was claimed to weigh 1300kg, but Audi admits that despite numerous carbonfibre panels, this one has a 1850kg kerb weight. That perhaps explains why its claimed 3.7sec 0–62mph time is 0.2sec slower than the R8 V10. It makes you wonder why Audi didn't just claim it had 900bhp and would reach 100mph in 3sec...

The answer, presumably, is that we might find ourselves comparing the concept's spec to a future production version – probably one built around a development of the same hybrid drivetrain. Audi's previous R&D boss, Wolfgang Dürheimer, left his job earlier this year after a bust-up at the top of

the company over the development of electric vehicles. And with the pure-electric R8-based e-tron having been cancelled just before his departure, it could well be that Audi is in the mood to commission a part-electric performance model to burnish its green credentials.

The economy claims are impressive, if as unfeasible as those of other plug-in hybrids. Audi reckons the Sport Quattro can achieve 113mpg and 59g/km on the official EU test, and it also boasts a 31-mile electric-only range.

Of course, the unanswered question is how much demand Audi would find for a part-electric model that's both slower and more expensive than the pure-blooded R8 sports car... ❌



We asked...

...the bosses of the big three German manufacturers' performance arms to assess the current state of the marketplace, and what they expect to see in the future

Words: Mike Duff and Stephen Dobie



Frank van Meel (FvM)

Managing director,
quattro GmbH

How's business?

FvM: 'Business is booming, I'd say. Last year we sold 12,000 cars, this year will be 15,000 – an increase of almost 30 per cent. We don't give an exact number for the R8 [as a proportion of RS sales], but I can say that we're still selling a five-figure number of the RS models.'



FN: 'Very well. I am very satisfied with the business of M. Last year we sold more than 26,000 units, both M and M Performance models. And I'm absolutely sure that this year we will reach those figures despite the end of production of the [E92] M3.'

OK: 'Excellent. We are coming off the back of 2012 as our strongest year ever – we were just shy of 25,000 units. We're looking at double-digit growth again in 2013.'

Should we see Nürburgring lap times as being more important than outright acceleration?

FvM: 'I think that a lap is always critical for us, because we're developing and defining our cars on the track there every day. On the Nordschleife it doesn't matter what technology is on your car, it matters only "Am I below eight minutes?" or "Am I below seven minutes?" It's where we see the hierarchy of fast cars.'



FN: 'Our most important test track is the Nordschleife, and I don't think that will ever change. The lap time is very important for us because it shows how the M-cars are developed – the braking system, the suspension, the steering. Everything has to work together to get faster at the Nordschleife – what we call "concept harmony".'

OK: 'I think it's an important focus. The fact you can take an E63 below eight minutes on the Nordschleife is certainly a selling argument, even though most customers won't do it. It's hard to say which is more important. I think they complement each other.'

Have we seen a peak in power outputs?

FvM: 'I think it's more important to have the best car. In the past that used to be defined by who had the most horsepower, but now that's not the only measure that counts.'

SR: 'The new RS6 has less power than the previous model, but it's lighter, quicker and 20 per cent more efficient. There's your answer.'

FN: 'I think it depends. If you bring additional features like all-wheel drive to a car then the weight will increase. And then you need to find more horsepower and more torque. But if you don't do this – you don't use all-wheel drive and you reduce weight by using carbonfibre and other materials – then in my opinion the peak of horsepower has probably been reached, and instead we try to have a better driving experience.'

OK: 'I think doing a performance car is like the decathlon – it's not just one discipline. We try to focus on the overall driving experience. Technological development will keep pushing the performance element, but we need to make sure the driving experience as a whole improves. [Power] is not our main focus, but it will be impossible to hold back the engineers – they will always come up with something.'





Stephan Reil (SR)

Head of development,
quattro GmbH



Friedrich Nietzsche (FN)

President, BMW M GmbH



Ola Källenius (OK)

Chairman, Mercedes-AMG



Will all performance cars switch to turbocharged engines?

SR:

'No. Of course, the trend is going more towards turbocharged engines – and that's good for us because we have the know-how of decades. But a naturally aspirated engine is still a very compelling thing in the right environment. I think there's a future for it, definitely.'

FN:

'I think that with the new materials in the turbocharger you have a new freedom to reduce fuel consumption alongside fantastic performance. In the long-term I'm sure the new generation of turbocharged engines will knock out the naturally aspirated engines in the market. But it will be in five or ten years.'

OK:

'Obviously we love the 63 naturally aspirated engine, but the trend is towards turbos and downsizing. Enjoy it for as long as it's there, but the future will be turbocharging.'

What do you think your competitors are doing well?

FvM:

'My communication people always tell me not to talk about the competition. But I want to say one thing – I like that AMG has switched to four-wheel drive, because they've found there's no way to beat us without it...'

SR:

'There's no more excuse that they're not equal weapons. Now we both [Audi and AMG] have four-wheel drive, the question is who has the better system.'

FN:

'I think they are doing extremely well, and I think the competition between M, AMG and RS models is very important for all three brands. This competition drives us forward – I'm absolutely sure that M wouldn't be so successful if we did not have such strong competitors.'

OK:

'We usually don't speak about them and try to focus on AMG. I think there's a technology race going on all the time and our aim is always to be at the technical forefront of the segment.'

And what do you see as your biggest strategic advantage?

FvM:

'Tech-wise: quattro, Ultra [lightweight construction], the five-cylinder turbo, the new V8 turbo, and the high-revving engines, especially the V10.'

SR:

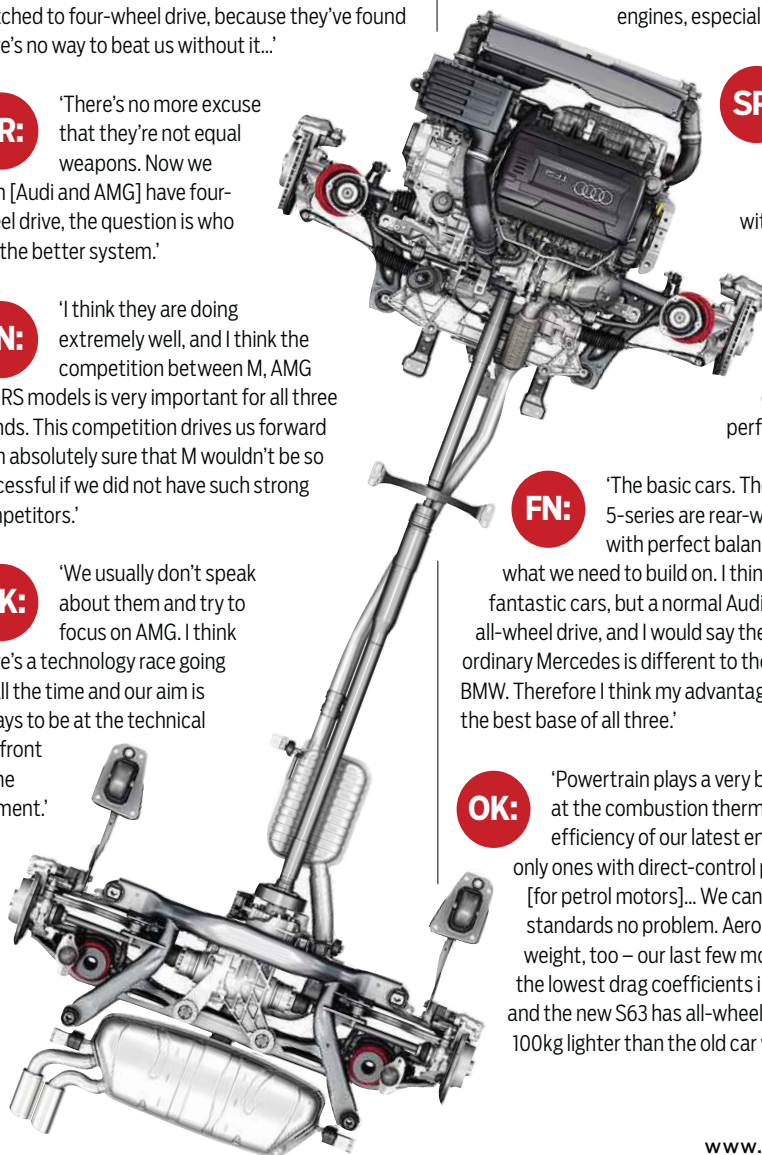
'I think the five-cylinder is a truly remarkable powerhouse, with nothing comparable. And the RS Q3 is, without competition, the first compact ultra-performance SUV.'

FN:

'The basic cars. The 3-series and 5-series are rear-wheel-drive cars with perfect balance, and that's what we need to build on. I think that Audi has fantastic cars, but a normal Audi is front- or all-wheel drive, and I would say the concept of an ordinary Mercedes is different to the concept of a BMW. Therefore I think my advantage is that I have the best base of all three.'

OK:

'Powertrain plays a very big role. Look at the combustion thermodynamic efficiency of our latest engines – we're the only ones with direct-control piezo injectors [for petrol motors]... We can do Euro 6 standards no problem. Aerodynamics and weight, too – our last few models have all had the lowest drag coefficients in their classes, and the new S63 has all-wheel drive and is 100kg lighter than the old car with rear-drive.'



S-class Coupe breaks cover

Mercedes prepares premium two-door version of top-end saloon. V12 and AMG variants planned

Words: Mike Duff

ONE OF THE BEST-looking cars at Frankfurt was found on the Mercedes stand. Not in the form of the car the company was keenest to talk about – the GLA mini-SUV left our trousers completely unsung. Rather this, the handsome S-class Coupe concept: elegant proof that Merc still knows how to turn a limo into a luxurious two-door barge.

Although officially just a styling exercise, Merc boss Dieter Zetsche told journalists on the show stand that we can expect a very similar production version to follow. And it's a great-looking thing: sleeker and sportier than the S-class saloon, with a lower bonnet-line and a handsome mesh-covered grille in place of the four-door's vast slatted item. At five metres, the Coupe is only fractionally shorter than the saloon and pretty much exactly the same size as the outgoing CL Coupe. Yet the new car looks far sleeker and better proportioned than its slabby predecessor.

We can safely predict that the coupe will share the saloon's brawnier



powerplants. The concept was fitted with the same 449bhp twin-turbocharged V8 as the S500. On top of that, you can bet on a V12-powered S600, plus both V8 '63' and V12 '65' AMG versions. The concept's frameless

doors are a Mercedes coupe trademark rather than proof of a future cabriolet, but it's still possible that an open-topped version will find its way into the clan. Mercedes has already confirmed the S-class saloon will spawn both

an extra-long-wheelbase version and a full-on 'Pullman' to serve as replacement for the unloved Maybach.

Anticipate the S-class Coupe being priced from the high £90,000s for the S500 version. **x**

i8 design finalised

BMW shows off production version of its innovative hybrid supercar

Words: Mike Duff

WE'VE already driven the prototype (evo 188), but the Frankfurt show gave us our first look at the production version of the BMW i8. And the electric-hybrid supercar looks impressively technical in the flesh, with sculpted carbonfibre bodywork that's clearly been designed around aerodynamic function as much as design.

The i8's progress towards production has been a disjointed one. The original

concept car – shown at Frankfurt six years ago – was a pure motor-show car, intended to prove that BMW was taking electric power seriously. But it got such a positive response that the company decided to put it into production alongside the i3. Unlike the smaller hatchback, which will be offered in pure electric and hybrid forms, the i8 will only be available with a petrol-electric drivetrain, using the combination of a 228bhp three-cylinder turbo engine

driving the rear wheels and a 129bhp electric motor powering the front.

The production i8 will stick with a variation of this two-colour paint scheme, which is designed to show off the way air flows over the 'layered' bodywork. We're also told the shape is extremely aerodynamically efficient, and doesn't need a moving wing for high-speed stability.

The i8 will be going on sale late next year, priced around the £100,000 mark. **x**





Porsche recommends Mobil  and  MICHELIN

Please visit www.porsche.co.uk/mission2014 for further information.

**Every time we build a new race car,
we question every single part.
Except for one.**

Mission 2014. Our Return.

After more than a decade Porsche is returning to top-level racing in 2014 – to the FIA World Endurance Championship and its highlight, the 24 Hours of Le Mans.

Our strategy? The same that we follow when developing every Porsche – starting from the ground up and questioning every detail. We take nothing for granted. Except for the principle behind everything we've built for more than 60 years: Intelligent Performance.

Come along on our mission at porsche.co.uk/mission2014 and watch us develop our prototype first-hand.



PORSCHE



Beautiful curves. A stunning figure.

The All-New Volvo V40 D2 R-Design
Fully maintained from **£299** a month*



Safest car ever tested

VOLVOCARS.CO.UK

The beautiful curves of the All-New Volvo V40 D2 R-Design 5-door hatchback can now be yours for a stunning figure of just £299 per month including VAT*. And with 3 years free servicing, maintenance and Volvo Assistance you don't have to worry about a thing. Volvo-trained expert technicians will take care of all your servicing and maintenance needs. Even your replacement wiper blades are covered. Get to know this striking Swedish model by booking a test drive today.

Official fuel consumption for the All-New Volvo V40 R-Design in MPG (l/100km): Urban 25.0 (11.3) – 74.3 (3.8), Extra Urban 47.1 (6.0) – 91.1 (3.1), Combined 35.8 (7.9) – 83.1 (3.4). CO₂ Emissions 185 – 88g/km. MPG figures are obtained from laboratory testing intended for comparisons between vehicles and may not reflect real driving results.

*Volvo Personal Contract Hire. Subject to status. Guarantees and indemnities may be required. Initial payment of £1,794, followed by 35 monthly rentals. Based on 8,000 miles per annum. Vehicles returned at contract end must be within contracted mileage and in good condition to avoid further charges. All scheduled servicing and maintenance included, in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations and warranty requirements. Subject to availability at participating dealers for vehicles registered between 16th September 2013 and 31st December 2013, or while stocks last. Not available with other promotions. T&Cs apply. Volvo Car Leasing.

News in brief



918 'could have gone quicker'

Porsche managed to steal the headlines at Frankfurt with the announcement that the 918 Spyder had posted a 6:57 lap of the Nordschleife. But, according to company head of R&D Wolfgang Hatz, the car could have gone even quicker. 'We could have done a better lap but I told the drivers I wanted no accidents,' he told us.



Aston SP10

A limited edition of the V8 Vantage S was shown at Frankfurt, named to mark the company's two SP10 class wins at the Nürburgring 24 Hours. The 430bhp engine is the same as in the regular V8 S, but the SP10 adds the six-speed manual 'box normally denied to 'S' buyers. There's also a subtle body kit and a unique Ceramic Grey paintjob. It will cost £91,995 in the UK.



Bentley GT3 racer is go

Bentley has confirmed that its new Continental GT3 racer will make its competitive debut in December, racing in the 2013 Gulf 12 Hours at Abu Dhabi. We've already brought you the story of the racer's early development (evo 180), but the finished car seems a fine-looking thing – albeit wearing a wing that would put many light aircraft to shame. Here's hoping it's as quick as it looks.

Jaguar unveils C-X17

Upmarket SUV concept development paves the way for new 3-series rival saloon

Words: Mike Duff



ONE OF THE BIGGEST draws at Frankfurt was the Jaguar C-X17 – a clear indication that we've got to prepare for the idea of a production Jag off-roader in the future.

The concept itself was inoffensive enough, with athletic styling clearly intended to distinguish the C-X17 from

the work of Jaguar's SUV-focused sister brand, Range Rover. We'll leave the question of whether this is a justifiable direction for Jaguar to head in up to you, although the growing global demand for posh off-roaders leaves the company with little choice but to enter this highly lucrative market segment.

Of more relevance to our world is that the production C-X17 will be built on the same 'iQ' all-aluminium platform that will underpin Jaguar's forthcoming 3-series-sized sports saloon, a car that we'll be considerably more interested in. Maybe we should see the idea of a Jag-badged SUV as a 'necessary evil'. ❌

Porsche 911 Turbo Cabrio

'S' version of drop-top manages 0-62mph in 3.2sec

Words: Mike Duff

THERE'S something reassuringly familiar about Porsche's model cycle. You can pretty much set your watch by it: Carrera 2, Carrera 4, Cabriolet, GT3, Turbo and then... the Turbo Cabriolet, of course. Indeed, its arrival signifies that apart from the inevitable GT2, we've now seen almost the whole 991 clan.

As you'd expect, it's pretty much a straight combination of the Turbo drivetrain and the Cabriolet's folding roof. That means a twin-turbocharged 3.8-litre flat-six offering either 513bhp or, in the uprated Turbo S, 552bhp. Four-wheel drive and a PDK transmission come as standard. We're promised a 3.2sec 0-62mph time for the S and a top speed of 197mph. Based on previous experience, both those numbers are likely to prove pessimistic.

All the rest of the regular Turbo's

dynamic tech is here too, including active rear steering and aerodynamics, with the active rear spoiler and pneumatically extending front splitter combining to produce up to 132kg of

downforce at 186mph.

Sales start in December with the Turbo Cabriolet set to cost £126,766. The Turbo S Cabriolet is yours for £149,511. ❌



Ferrari pulls back from hybrids

CEO says LaFerrari tech investment is no indicator of application to future models **Words:** Harry Metcalfe

FERRARI'S CEO Amedeo Felisa has admitted to **evo** that the cost and complexity of hybrid technology means we won't see it in the company's cheaper models for several years. This is despite the enormous amount of money and engineering effort spent on creating the LaFerrari's petrol-electric powertrain.

'Our conclusion is that hybrid technology is OK. It gives you the possibility to increase performance and acceleration,' Felisa exclusively

told us at the Frankfurt motor show. 'But the cost and weight of it doesn't fit in with the category of our cars, by which I mean sports cars.'

Considering the investment that Ferrari has already made in hybrid technology, Felisa's view is surprising and seems to signify a rethink of the company's strategy, at least in the short-term. 'Our cars have to have low weight if they are to recoup the weight of the hybrid system,' he said. 'You have to spend a lot of money to find a solution. At the end you can have the performance, but at a cost that's

not really good. The LaFerrari is a very special car, and the feeling is unique, but then the cost is unbelievable.'

The complexity of the technology is borne out by the dramatic rise in the price of the LaFerrari (pictured), which has increased by a staggering €300,000 since it was first announced, to €1.3m (c£1.1m) plus local taxes. At least the wait is almost over for those who have put down deposits – prototypes are driving around Maranello and we're told that work has started on the first customer cars for delivery before the end of 2013.

'In my opinion we have to wait three to five years for the hybrid technology, chiefly the battery technology, to reduce in weight and cost enough before it's feasible for Ferrari road cars,' said Felisa. So if hybrids aren't the answer right now, what about turbocharging? 'I think we do the best naturally aspirated engines in the world at the moment, but they are not efficient on the EU cycle,' he said. 'Turbos are a good solution because the engine revs and capacity are lower, but they are for the future, not now.' ❌



Lambo production continues apace

Aventador production to hit 1000 units a year, while four-wheel drive comes under question

Words: Harry Metcalfe

THE FRANKFURT SHOW also gave us a chance to catch up with Lamborghini's CEO, Stephan Winkelmann. In an exclusive interview, he reported that business is booming as the company moves towards producing 1000 Aventadors a year – an unprecedented figure for a V12 Lamborghini.

While the ageing Gallardo is nearing retirement, we can expect to see its replacement unveiled at the Geneva motor show next March. In the meantime, the company is

being kept busy with the Aventador, which still has a 12-month waiting list, and with producing limited runs of its 'specials'. Twenty examples of the first of these specials, the carbon-bodied Sesto Elemento (pictured), are being built at the moment, and will be followed by three Veneno coupes, then nine Veneno roadsters.

But why didn't we see the Veneno roadster at Frankfurt? 'We don't want to continually display cars like the Sesto and the Veneno,' says Winkelmann. 'We need to show the world that we are very busy

producing real super sports cars and not just these very special projects.'

Winkelmann has also admitted that Lamborghini is considering whether or not all its future models will stick with four-wheel drive as standard. 'We are discussing these "holy cows" and whether four-wheel drive has to be part of the DNA of Lamborghini, or whether we can move away from it to help give us

the weight saving we need in future models,' he said. Remember, you heard it here first. ❌





A STRONGER BODY FOR GREATER CONTROL



Designed to perform. From the firmer chassis that creates stability and a precise steering response, to our unique combination of 223DIN hp and emissions from just 99g/km CO₂. Agility meets luxury in the new IS.

lexus.co.uk

The new IS

 **LEXUS**
AMAZING IN MOTION

New IS prices start from £26,495 OTR. Model shown is IS 300h F SPORT costing £34,105 including optional metallic paint at £610. The mpg figures quoted are sourced from official EU-regulated test results. These are provided for comparability purposes and may not reflect your actual driving experience. IS 300h F SPORT fuel consumption figures: urban 57.6 mpg (4.9L/100km), extra urban 57.6 mpg (4.9L/100km), combined 60.1 mpg (4.7L/100km). IS CO₂ emissions start from 99g/km, IS F SPORT CO₂ emissions 109g/km.

Volvo's four-cylinder future

Swedish carmaker adopts a single-engine strategy for all of its future large models

Words: Andrew English

VOLVO IS SET to move all of its future large models to a common four-cylinder engine that can be built in both spark- and compression-ignition forms, and which can produce a wide range of power outputs, from 120bhp to over 300bhp.

Starting with next year's XC90 replacement, all future big Volvos will be built around the new SPA (Scaleable Platform Architecture) package and powered by a version of this 'Drive-E' engine. Using a common block reduces costs and, in some cases, weight and complexity – and can lead to economy benefits of up to 30 per cent.

All Drive-E engines share the same 2 litres of swept capacity, and all are turbocharged. Diesel power outputs range from 120bhp to 230bhp, petrol from 140bhp to over 300bhp. The brawniest 'T6' petrol – that name no longer referring to the cylinder count – features a supercharger as well as a turbo. Volvo will also introduce plug-in hybrids and four-wheel-drive models with electric traction at the rear, and there are even plans to further boost the engine with an F1-style Kinetic Energy Recovery System. The engines are Volvo's own design and built at its Skövde plant in Sweden, which has a capacity to build 500,000 engines a year.

Technically it's a nice little unit, all aluminium-alloy with a common bottom end and steel piston liners (the diesel's are thicker). There are twin belt-driven overhead camshafts running in low-friction roller bearings, an electric water pump, overhead direct fuel injectors for the petrol units and 2500bar common-rail fuel injectors – each with its own pressure sensor – for the diesels.

But switching to an entirely four-cylinder range is a controversial move, particularly in the US – a vital territory for Volvo's future.

'It is a risk,' admits Lex Kerssemakers, vice president of product strategy. 'Potentially we will lose customers who wanted a V8 or a six-cylinder, but our plug-in hybrid can fill that gap. I must admit, when I see developments in the market and the trends, I feel more confident about it all.'

'IT CAN PRODUCE A WIDE RANGE OF POWER OUTPUTS, FROM 120BHP TO OVER 300BHP'

Above: new engine will be found in all large Volvos. **Top and below:** V60 will be offered with a 302bhp 'T6' version



Driving the new T6

evo got a chance to sample the new 'T6' version of Volvo's Drive-E engine, the range-topping turbo- and supercharged petrol unit that will replace the current 3-litre turbocharged straight-six.

The new four-cylinder T6 produces 302bhp and 295lb ft, both figures marginally down on the six-pot's. But in the V60 we tried, it now boasts an official economy figure of 42.2mpg with CO2 emissions of 157g/km – dramatic improvements on the 27.7mpg and 237g/km achieved with the current engine.

The new engine's turbo works all the time, but at

speeds below 3500rpm the supercharger is clutched in and pushes air, via a separate induction circuit, into the turbocharger. This helps to build inlet manifold pressure quickly, and to improve throttle response.

While the power delivery is immediate and strong, it is also noisy and harsh. The supercharger lends a loud metallic induction roar and at low revs the engine's vibrations are at a diesel level of intensity. Volvo claims its new V60 T6 will numerically better the economy and power of a BMW 335i, but it's a country mile away in desirability.

DRIVEN BY SUCCESS.



Cooper are acclaimed for designing and manufacturing some of the best off road tyres in the world. Tyres driven to success in World 4x4 rallies such as the punishing Dakar rally and centre stage in this years forthcoming European rallycross championships. The same successful chemistry and technology can also be found in our superb range of passenger car tyres. Tyres made for people who recognise performance, safety and quality, vital for maximising the total driving experience. Cooper tyres are the fitting choice for every car.

Discover a world of opportunity,
visit www.coopertire.co.uk


COOPERTIRES
DRIVING ON

Every new *evo* car that matters, rated
This month

**LOTUS ELISE S
CLUB RACER**

Supercharged Elise
gets stripped back



p26

ROLLS-ROYCE WRAITH

'Bad boy' Roller joins
upmarket coupe class



p30

BMW 328i GT

Roomier five-door coupe
alternative to 3-series Touring



p34

**VAUXHALL INSIGNIA
VXR SUPERSPORT**

170mph estate gets updated



p36

AUDI S5 v BMW 435i

300bhp+ coupes go
head-to-head



p38

MERCEDES S63 AMG

Hot limo gets 577bhp and
option of four-wheel drive



p42

BMW X5

Popular SUV loses weight
and gains power



p45

The test team

This month, the road-test team recall the cars they've driven that left such an indelible impression they ended up buying one with their own money...



HARRY METCALFE
Editorial director

'My Renault Clio Trophy, although I've bought countless other cars after seeing them at motor shows.'



NICK TROTT
Editor

'Clio V6. Went on the launch in 2001 as a skint junior writer and promised myself I'd own one. I did, ten years later.'



MIKE DUFF
Motoring editor

'Never done it. All the cars I've lusted after predate my career. Nearly bought a mk5 Golf GTI after launch, though.'



HENRY CATCHPOLE
Features editor

'More in hope than expectation, I enquired how much Renault wanted for my old Mégane R26.R long-term.'



JETHRO BOVINGDON
Contributing editor

'The MR2 I picked up recently. Previously I was too busy trying to get an old M3 around the Ring inside eight minutes.'



RICHARD MEADEN
Contributing editor

'A Caterham Fireblade built after it won *evo* Track Car of the Year in 2001. It had carbon everything and weighed 369kg!'



DAVID VIVIAN
Contributing road tester

'A tired but temptingly priced Citroën BX GTI 16V from a hard-working snapper. Should have known better.'

R135
44
246
Driven



Lotus
Elise S Club Racer

Supercharged version of Hethel's entry-level sports car
gets the full weight-saving treatment

📍 **Test location:** B660, Cambridgeshire, UK **GPS:** 52.40183, -0.37266



I **IF YOU'RE A PURIST, THE** Lotus Elise S Club Racer is one of those cars that pushes all the right buttons. For starters, it's an Elise, so is therefore one of the most finely honed sports cars money can buy. Being an S means it's also supercharged, so there's more than enough power and a generous spread of readily accessed in-gear torque for added overtaking ability. Add a

sprinkling of Club Racer magic that allows you to indulge in the noble pursuit of paring back weight in an already lightweight car, and you have a car blessed with a truly righteous blend of ingredients.

In many ways it's the car we've all been waiting for, as the original naturally aspirated Club Racer promises much but falls short of delivering as much as we'd hoped. Its mild-mannered 1.6-litre engine is sweet, but isn't

man enough to pull an overly tall set of gears with any conviction. Applying the Club Racer ethos to the significantly more potent Elise S should finally make good on the promise.

Straight out of the box, the £35,600 S Club Racer weighs just over 15kg less than the 924kg standard S. Those weight savings come by not having the stereo (a 4kg saving), sound deadening/carpets (4.5kg) or a roof (5.9kg) as standard. Delete the airbag option and the total



'Performance is just about perfect, not least because you get a

saving jumps to 19kg, and also saves you £600. Further weight trimmings come from spending extra on things like forged alloys (1.5kg off), a lightweight battery, a carbon airbox and a supposedly track-only sports exhaust. You can also save 0.06kg with a lightweight badge. Apply all the aforementioned and you'll save a little over 28kg.

Laser Blue paintwork and satin black forged wheels really bring out the best in the Elise's intrinsically pretty shape, ensuring you're smiling before you even sit in the car. A pair of blue plastic seats with very little padding signal a car that takes the job of saving weight seriously. Climb in and it's more comfortable than it looks. Okay, so it looks bloody uncomfortable, but truth be told, once you've wriggled down into the seat and are tucked in next to the sill of the bonded aluminium tub, you feel nicely connected to the car.

That bond with the machine is accentuated by the role you play in making the Elise go quickly.



For starters, there's the deeply unfashionable presence of a clutch pedal and gearlever, which (pay attention, kids) you are required to work by moving your left leg and arm in unison in order to change up and down through the gears. Those with withered left legs and over-developed paddle-flapping forefingers need

not apply. The unassisted steering – always the epicentre of any Lotus driving experience – requires a bit of muscle at low speed. Once above walking pace, the steering effort reduces usefully so that most inputs require a mere flick of the wrists, but there's a residual weight that means there's always a satisfying level of physicality.

The name and obsession with weight suggests the Club Racer is a track-biased car, but as its underpinnings are standard Elise S, it makes for a fine road-going sports car. With 217bhp and 184lb ft of torque to propel a smidge over 900kg, the performance is ample. In fact, it's just about perfect, not least because you get a huge amount from the car at less than prison-sentence velocities. The supercharged 1.8-litre Toyota engine delivers a brilliant blend of low- and mid-range torque and a voracious appetite for revs. It sounds good too, with just enough supercharger whine to sound like it means business, but not so much that it sounds



Left: minimalist cabin and absence of a roof as standard emphasise weight savings.

Below: seats are more comfortable than they look

Specification

Engine	In-line 4-cyl, 1798cc, supercharger
CO2	175g/km
Power	217bhp @ 6800rpm
Torque	184lb ft @ 4600rpm
0-62mph	4.6sec (claimed)
Top speed	145mph (claimed)
Basic price	£35,600



huge amount from the car at less than prison-sentence velocities'

like a bench saw. You even get some crackles and pops from the exhaust.

As the Elise has evolved, the suspension has got firmer while the tyres have got fractionally wider (at the rear, at least). In the S this makes for a more aggressive feel, with serious grip and fist-tight body control. There's still the trademark pliancy for which Lotus is rightly lauded, while the steering is constantly chattering away, informing you of the most subtle surface changes and cambers but stopping short of bombarding you with unwanted kickback. Grip levels are high, so you really need to push hard before you feel either end begin to relinquish its hold of the road, but because there's so much feel, the car doesn't exclude you from the work it's doing.

You don't need the traction control in the dry, though it does give you something to lean on in the rain. Balance-wise, the S Club Racer is resolutely neutral up to and beyond any sane speed you're likely to carry into a corner on the

road. It's a remarkable sensation to explore its abilities, working closer and closer to where you think the limit lies, only to find it has more in reserve. The brakes inspire real confidence, with less of the initial dead travel that used to blight the feel and hamper clean heel-and-toe downshifts in early S2 models. With the roof removed, you know you're working the Elise hard when the unmistakable aroma of hot tyres permeates the cockpit. This really is a car that engages all your senses.

The six million dollar question is: do you notice the Club Racer weight savings? It's hard to say. I'm sure if you stepped out of a regular Elise S and into a Club Racer with all the weight saving (and delete) options, you probably would. Our test car is by no means totally stripped out, having a roof, stereo and regular exhaust and airbox. That sounds like a bit of a cop-out but choosing the spec of a Club Racer is all about balance: you could delete everything and end up with a very light, but overly compromised

and rather unpleasant road car.

Does this make a nonsense of what the Club Racer stands for? I don't believe so, for as is so often the case with cars like this, it's the fact you have the choice that counts for so much. We all know that reducing weight is a purist approach to improving performance, with each saved kilo hard-won. Highlighting this fact somehow gives a car a special aura, and the S Club Racer is no exception. As it stands, this is a very enjoyable, capable and desirable car. It also reaffirms what the Lotus brand is all about; no bad thing after the madness of the last few years. We like. ✖

Richard Meaden (@DickieMeaden)

Verdict

- ✚ Purist approach intensifies ability
- ✚ Lightest spec requires commitment

evo rating: ★★★★★

📍 **Test location:** Mariazell, Austria **GPS:** 47.77024, 15.31487

Rolls-Royce Wraith

With 624bhp, the quickest Roller ever put into production will undoubtedly eat motorway miles for breakfast. But how will its sizeable mass fare on more winding routes?

ROLLS-ROYCE LIKES TO describe the new 624bhp Wraith as its evil Rolls-Royce. Think of it as its bad-boy entry into the posh coupe class – hardly the most crowded sector of today's car market. An obvious Wraith rival would appear to be Bentley's 616bhp Continental GT Speed, but with a starting price of a 'mere' £151,100, the Conti operates at a far less rarefied level to the elitist £237,111 Wraith.

Based on the underpinnings of the Ghost, the Wraith basically uses the same running gear but has been usefully enhanced in almost all areas. The direct-injection 6.6-litre twin-turbo V12 gets a significant power increase for starters, thanks to extra boost and revised mapping. Power now peaks at 624bhp at 5600rpm (up 59bhp on the Ghost) and there's a monstrous 590lb ft of torque available from a mere 1500rpm (up 15lb ft). Rolls-Royce engineers told **evo** that the engine is capable of producing even bigger outputs but is limited by the maximum torque capability of ZF's brilliant new eight-speed automatic gearbox. Going any further than 590lb ft would require a bespoke 'box – something not worth contemplating on such a limited-volume car.

Other changes on the Wraith include a marginally quicker steering rack (now three turns lock-to-lock rather than the 3.2 of the Ghost), increased roll control thanks to tweaked anti-roll technology, revised spring and damper settings for the air suspension, a 24mm wider rear track for greater cornering stability, and extra strengthening for the underbody to compensate for the lack of a B-pillar. The result of all this fettling is that the Wraith is easily the quickest Rolls-Royce ever put into production, with a claimed 0-60mph time of

Specification

Engine	V12, 6592cc, twin-turbo
CO2	327g/km
Power	624bhp @ 5600rpm
Torque	590lb ft @ 1500-5500rpm
0-62mph	4.6sec (claimed)
Top speed	155mph (limited)
Basic price	£237,111

4.4sec and a top speed electronically limited to 155mph. But is a Rolls-Royce with this level of performance still a Rolls-Royce? That's what I'm keen to find out...

The Wraith is a mightily impressive-looking machine. The classic Rolls-Royce grille has been subtly honed, being slightly shrunk and swept back to give the nose a more aerodynamic demeanour. The distance from the Spirit of Ecstasy's pert backside to the base of the windscreen is so vast that it's best measured in yards rather than feet, but from then on the Wraith's dimensions are actually more compact than the Ghost's and it sits on a wheelbase shortened by 163mm. With an outlandishly tapering roofline that blends neatly into a near-horizontal rear window, there's no doubt the Wraith possesses rakish good looks, particularly when viewed from the front three-quarter angle. But to my eyes, it looks slightly odd from the rear thanks to the pinched bootlid sitting well proud of the rear wings. At 5.27 metres long and 1.95 metres wide, this is very much a visually imposing car, which I guess is what the Wraith is all about.

Pulling on the vast chrome door handle reveals one of the most lavish interiors in the business. Those rear-hinged, almost barn-like doors are enormous and open so wide that



'As the Wraith relentlessly gathers speed, a hard-edged snarl fills the cabin: hardly a familiar sound to previous Rolls owners...'





climbing inside the car is a doddle. Now press the button hidden at the base of the A-pillar and watch in awe as the door silently glides into place, leaving you cocooned in luxury and in almost eerie silence.

New on the Wraith is what Rolls calls Canadel panelling: huge areas of lightly oiled wood lining the interior of the doors and rear panels. The effect is brilliant, and together with the lashings of soft leather, chrome vents and classy glass buttons on the dash, makes the Wraith a very special place in which to spend time.

Starting the sleeping V12 up front is done via a starter button on the dash, but even after you fire the engine into life the silence is barely broken, because the special double-skinned bulkhead almost completely muffles the sound of 12 pistons pounding up and down. Pull the wand to the right of the steering wheel down to select 'D' on the gearbox and only then do you really detect the engine running as you effortlessly pull away.

As you do, you can't help but notice that the ride is pillowy-soft. Speed bumps and hollows in the road simply disappear beneath the standard-fit 20-inch wheels (21s are optional), and such is the effortlessness with which the Wraith negotiates the urban streets of Vienna (our base for this test) and so silent is it inside the cabin, it would be easy to mistake the Wraith for being electrically, rather than conventionally powered.

Our route takes us along about 50 miles of motorway and then off onto some of the more testing roads Austria has to offer. As we coast along the initial motorway route, I pin the throttle and watch as the nose lifts and the Wraith does its party trick of dropping several gears in one go and flinging 2360kg of wooden and leathery goodness at the horizon. As the Wraith relentlessly gathers speed, a hard-edged snarl fills the cabin: hardly a familiar sound to previous Rolls owners, but then no other Rolls has ever offered its owners well in excess of



Above, from top: inside of huge doors are adorned in Canadel panelling; 6.6 litres of super-smooth V12; 'power reserve' indicator sits to the left of the speedometer



600bhp. It's a distinctive sound rather than an addictive one, but it suits the laid-back nature of the Wraith perfectly. Ease off the throttle and decorum returns almost immediately; this really is an astonishingly quiet car when cruising.

Turning off the motorway and onto the sinuous side roads reveals another neat trick: how that pillowy-soft ride doesn't translate into wallow if you decide you want to press on. Body roll is brilliantly suppressed by the active anti-roll technology, allowing the electronically controlled dampers to remain as soft as possible to keep the ride quality in check. The odd thud and shudder does come through into the cabin, but then those giant wheels equipped with run-flat tyres can't be helping the ride quality one iota. Nonetheless, the Wraith has excellent chassis control overall. The wider rear track also seems to add an extra layer of decorum through sweeping corners, and the steering offers a lot more feel through its (marginally

thicker) rim than you'll find in the Ghost.

The real issue is that, even with everything turned off, the Wraith isn't a car I feel happy to properly hustle. It just isn't that sort of car. There's very little engine braking for starters, leaving you heavily reliant on the overservoed stoppers. And although the Satellite Aided Transmission (SAT) does a brilliant job of ensuring the Wraith is in the right gear at the right time, not having any manual control over the gearchanges really interferes with how you connect with the Wraith – as does the lack of a rev-counter to tell you when you're in the peachy part of the rev range.

The Wraith is a brilliant car in so many other ways, but what it isn't is an engaging drivers' car. It's more of an effortless GT designed to teach the odd boy-racer a basic lesson in physics by demonstrating the effect 624bhp has on accelerating a large object along any given stretch of tarmac.

Should Rolls-Royce have created it? Yes.

Absolutely. Not everyone wants to hit every apex and power out the other side with a dab of opposite lock applied. Wafting is what the Wraith does best and it's as good at wafting as a Porsche GT3 is at attacking the Nürburgring. That it has 624bhp under its bonnet adds to the Wraith's appeal too. But what impresses me most is that if you never pressed the throttle deep into the lamb's wool, you could drive this car for years and never even realise all that power was available. Not only is that cool, it also means the Wraith is without doubt a proper Rolls-Royce. Thank goodness for that. ✕

Harry Metcalfe (@harrym_evo)

Verdict

👍 Brilliant at wafting, quicker than you'd expect

👎 Not the most engaging drivers' car

evo rating: ★★★★★



BMW 328i GT

Test location: B660, Cambridgeshire, UK GPS: 52.34484, -0.40537

Coupe-like five-door GT with sporting intentions? Eh?
Photography: Stuart Collins

FEW AROUND THESE parts have anything positive to say about the 3-series Gran Turismo's styling. 'Like a honey ant carrying a reluctant load,' said one wag. Of course, it's the quality of the driving experience that matters to us, but many customers will favour kerbside appeal over speed and practical considerations – if that wasn't the case then BMW itself wouldn't have made such a success of the Mini.

So where does that leave the roomier-than-the-Touring, but less-pretty, 3-series GT? Well, the Gran Turismo is indeed bigger than the Touring – 20cm longer, 8cm taller and with a wheelbase extended by 11cm (it's nigh-on as long as an X5). This translates to 7cm of extra legroom in the rear and a boot that's 25 litres larger. So, it's a rear-wheel-drive, five-door, coupe-cum-GT that's a bit roomier but heavier than the equivalent estate. With me?

The silky in-line six-cylinder engine that used to reside in 328s of yore has sadly gone, replaced by a 242bhp 1997cc four-cylinder turbo unit. This is a strong engine – punchy, smooth and torquey – and while it gets this GT to 62mph from rest nearly two seconds quicker than the 320d version, buyers will undoubtedly favour the lower fuel consumption and higher torque of the oil-burner. Our test car is fitted with the optional eight-speed automatic gearbox, which is a fine transmission, combining rapid shifts with smooth low-speed progress.

On the road the celebrated 3-series dynamics are blunted by the GT's increase in weight. This

Specification

Engine	In-line 4-cyl, 1997cc, turbo
CO2	156g/km
Power	242bhp @ 5000-6500rpm
Torque	258lb ft @ 1250-4800rpm
0-62mph	6.1sec (claimed)
Top speed	155mph (limited)
Basic price	£32,035

model is 140kg heavier than the equivalent saloon and 60kg heavier than the Touring, making it more recalcitrant and unwilling to respond to the driver's wishes. You can switch to sportier settings via the Driving Experience Control, but this offers no increase in enjoyment – the controls get heavier and sharper but an underlying flatness in the chassis remains. The electric power steering, however, is a strong point, being direct and precise, but the ride feels less composed than the saloon's and struggles to absorb rapid undulations.

Overall then, the GT's driving experience is one to accept for what it is rather than to exploit for enjoyment – once you've attempted to up the pace and drive in a more sporty fashion, the GT's reluctance to reveal an entertaining side means you never attempt it again. Curiously, in Luxury trim the GT isn't particularly engaging as a, er, GT either. You sit too high, the seats are too flat and do not cosset, and the aforementioned ride never truly settles into a GT-like waft.

Which bring us neatly on to the point of this car – one we're struggling with. The 3-series



saloon and Touring are the benchmarks in their classes, default choices for those who covet style, practicality and driving enjoyment. While the GT is a tiny bit more practical, its looks win few admirers and it is less enjoyable to drive.

In many ways we hoped the GT would eschew sporting intent completely, and make a greater virtue of its eccentricities, luxury and space – a modern take on a Citroën DS in other words. Sadly it feels like a rather charmless and confused chimera – marginally more practical, but uglier, less enjoyable to drive and more expensive than the Touring. The traditional BMW 3-series wagon gets our vote, over the GT and every other car in its class. ❌

Nick Trott (@evoNickTrott)

Verdict

⚡ Acceleration, space, auto 'box

❌ Not as desirable or enjoyable as the Touring

evo rating: ★★★★★

INFINITI QX70. THE ORIGINAL.

The Infiniti QX70 is part sports car and part utility vehicle. This blend of agility and muscle is not only alluring, but since it's the first of its kind, is totally original.



 **INFINITI**
INSPIRED PERFORMANCE

Come and discover more at www.infiniti.co.uk

Official fuel economy figures for the Infiniti QX70S 5.0 AWD Premium in mpg (l/100 km): urban 15.0 (18.9), extra urban 28.8 (9.8), combined 21.6 (13.1). CO₂ emission: 307 g/km.



📍 **Test location:** Kreidach, Germany **GPS:** 49.56445, 8.80049

Vauxhall Insignia VXR SuperSport

321bhp, 170mph Griffin gets new look and revised suspension



V A U X H A L L ' S
performance-badged Insignia has yet to deliver the entertainment value of the best VXR products, namely the Astra

and the Corsa Nürburgring. Run an eye over the spec and it ticks at least as many of the right boxes as Audi's four-wheel-drive, supercharged V6-engined S4. Yet the turbo V6-engined, also all-wheel-drive Insignia somehow contrives to tick too many wrong boxes when you leave the motorway for a road that should be engaging and fun.

The S4 is no scream, but it feels nicely purposeful when you're on it, whereas the Vauxhall, while rapid across the ground, seems slightly detached and never quite snaps into the groove. Maybe it has something to do with the benign, refined and comfortable nature of the Insignia itself. Competent and effective as it is for much of the time, it just isn't a 'down and dirty' kind of car.

Well, things could be about to get interesting, as the mildly facelifted, kit-booster and chassis-tweaked Insignia VXR SuperSport appears to be a more persuasive package. As before, its 321bhp 2.8-litre turbocharged V6 doesn't have the 155mph electronic limitation of more prestigious German rivals and is now wrapped in a shape both slightly prettier than before and very slippery. It runs through to a claimed 170mph, allowing Vauxhall to boast (a little disingenuously for those who don't frequent Autobahns) that it's the fastest car you can buy

Specification

Engine	V6, 2792cc, turbo
CO2	255g/km
Power	321bhp @ 5250rpm
Torque	321lb ft @ 5250rpm
0-62mph	6.1sec (claimed)
Top speed	170mph (claimed)
Basic price	£31,049 (Sports Tourer)

in the UK for under £30k.

That may be so if top speed is the criterion and you choose the £29,749 five-door hatch. The arguably more appealing Sports Tourer estate we drove at the launch costs £31,049 – nearly £10k less than an S4 Avant. And if you prefer to measure performance by acceleration, the load-lugging VXR wouldn't see which way the Audi went (6.1sec to 62mph plays 5.1sec).

As before, the adaptive all-wheel drive has a nominal front/rear split that, in normal running, sends 90 per cent of the torque to the front wheels, though this switches to a more balanced 60/40 if you press the 'VXR' button. This button also stiffens the dampers, adds weight to the steering and hugely tilts the throttle map towards top-of-the-travel sensitivity. Vauxhall says it has replaced or revised around 60 per cent of the components in the rear suspension, though the HiPerStruts up front, which are claimed to prevent geometry changes during hard cornering, are unchanged from the previous model. But the ESP and

adaptive damping software have been treated to some tweaking to reduce understeer.

In many ways, the SuperSport is a likeable thing – fast, refined, comfortable and a pretty superb high-speed motorway cruiser. As a car to bond with on (what should be) a wicked stretch of road, however, it still falls short. Revealingly, the hill climb-spec stretch used was wet and greasy, conditions that should have played to the 4wd VXR's strengths. But it was its undoing, its nose washing out on so many of the tighter turns at far from breakneck pace that there was no choice but to back right off. Engaging the 60/40 torque split gave a slightly more neutral balance under power post (missed) apex, but it all felt scrappy, a feeling not helped by the synthetic-feeling helm that refused to signal the initial front-end break-away in any way.

The six-speed manual shift is punchy and slick, but long intermediate gearing blunts the 321lb ft of torque, making the turbo V6 feel less muscular than it is. The muted engine note favours refinement over excitement, too. The SuperSport may do 170mph, it's just a pity it couldn't be a bit more playful on the way. ❌

David Vivian

Verdict

- 📦 Fast, refined, well equipped
 - 📦 Should be a more engaging steer
- evo rating:** ★★★★★

New Ford Fiesta. The 24-hour car.



➤ **Ford SYNC with Voice Control**

The new Fiesta is always on, 24 hours a day. With SYNC technology you're always connected to your music and phone.
ford.co.uk/newfiesta

Official fuel consumption figures in mpg (l/100km) for the Ford Fiesta range: urban 33.6-74.3 (8.4-3.8), extra urban 62.8-91.1 (4.5-3.1), combined 47.9-85.6 (5.9-3.3). Official CO₂ emissions 138-87g/km.

The mpg figures quoted are sourced from official EU-regulated test results, are provided for comparability purposes and may not reflect your actual driving experience. Vehicle shown is the Ford Fiesta Titanium X with optional Candy Blue pearlescent paint and 17" 8-spoke alloy wheels. Ford SYNC with Voice Control works with compatible connected mobile phones only. See ford.co.uk. SYNC standard on Zetec S, Titanium and Titanium X. Optional extra on Style and Zetec. Not available on Studio.



Go Further

Driven special: Audi S5 v BMW 435i M Sport

BMW's new three-door coupe goes head-to-head
with its more powerful four-ringed rival

I WAS AT THE Frankfurt motor show recently and came away thinking that the motoring world is going mad. Over the course of a couple of days, I drove a Range Rover Evoque with a *nine-speed* automatic gearbox and a Range Rover hybrid that costs around £20,000 more than the V6 diesel on which it's based and which can manage roughly *one mile* driven on electric power alone. Meanwhile, Porsche announced that its 918 Spyder gets around the Ring inside seven minutes and yet scores 94mpg on the EU cycle.

The motoring landscape is changing fast, and in sometimes baffling ways. With electric cars gliding between the vast show halls and endless press conferences talking about innovation, sustainability and driving thrills (it seems every new car is wedded to these principles, even facelifts of mid-sized saloons you never knew or cared about), I felt completely lost and mildly depressed.

But today is a new day and one with a comforting sense of familiarity. Here we have the BMW 435i M Sport (OK, the name isn't familiar, but the concept is) and the Audi S5. Both are powered by evil internal-combustion engines and run on villainous sweet-smelling petrol. As is traditional, the BMW is front-engined and rear-wheel drive while the Audi sends drive to all four wheels. As is also traditional, we're going to some quiet, bumpy, challenging roads to see which one unravels and which one comes good. Pre-match favourite? Has to be the BMW. It's traditional.

The S5 is a pretty formidable car, though. Its sharp, howling, supercharged 3-litre V6 engine with 328bhp and 325lb ft of torque and the latest, slightly rear-biased four-wheel-drive system are both shared with the excellent S4 saloon. Our test car is also equipped with the optional torque-vectoring Sport Differential. That's real torque vectoring too, so it can actively send more power to the outside rear wheel to reduce understeer rather than just brake the inside wheel like most so-called

'torque vectoring' systems. Other than that, our S5 is pretty modestly specced, even doing without electronically adjustable dampers and the Dynamic Steering variable rack system. From past experience, particularly of the inconsistent and artificial Dynamic Steering, that can only be a very good thing. Even so, this S5 comes in at £48,670, up from a base price of £43,395.

The BMW's 3-litre turbocharged straight-six is down a little on power and torque at 302bhp and 295lb ft, but the 4-series is carrying 1525kg to the Audi's chubby 1675kg, so the power-to-weight figures are just two points apart: 201bhp/ton for the BMW, 199 for the Audi. Despite the obvious traction disadvantage and the BMW's (optional) eight-speed automatic gearbox doing without the launch control system of the seven-speed dual-clutcher in the Audi, the 0 to 62mph times are within a hair's breadth too: 5.1sec for the 435i versus 4.9sec for the S5. In terms of pricing, the BMW is a sliver cheaper at £41,435 basic, but this car, fitted with Adaptive M suspension, 19in wheels, the M Sport braking system and the full BMW Professional media package, is £48,160. Rivals come no closer.

Yet on the road, they couldn't be more different. Despite similar performance and absolute speed across the ground, there is a yawning chasm between these two coupes in terms of dynamic quality. One of these cars is far and away better than the saloon on which it's based and the other somehow loses all the tension, response and adjustability along with two doors.

Things start well for the Audi. Despite A5 TDIs seeming to run in unbroken lines on the outside lanes of Britain's motorways in a blur of xenons, Costa coffee fumes and aggression, it's still a handsome thing. The interior hasn't aged so well, however. Audi seems to have been fitting the same Recaros for a decade or so now and although they're excellent, in combination with the mildly evolving dash design they feel all too familiar. By way of comparison, the BMW's sculpted interior mixes materials



with more daring and delicacy, and just feels a couple of generations ahead.

But the S5's secret weapon is that engine. It's got an almost V8 bassiness to it at low revs but with real sharpness at the top, and it feels just like a really great naturally aspirated engine. Snap through second and third, dual-clutch 'box giving a nice ignition-cut crack, and the S5 feels and sounds special. The 435i, meanwhile, for all its polish and honey-smooth engine, can feel underwhelming, like it's been buffed until any trace of character has been erased.

Sadly those first few moments are as good as it gets for the Audi. In fact, within a few hundred yards on a decent road the S5's appeal deflates quite alarmingly. That's a bit of a shock as I've



Specifications

	AUDI S5	BMW 435i M SPORT
Engine	V6, 2995cc, supercharger	In-line 6-cyl, 2979cc, turbo
CO2	190g/km	169g/km
Power	328bhp @ 5500-7000rpm	302bhp @ 5800-6000rpm
Torque	325lb ft @ 2900-5300rpm	295lb ft @ 1200-5000rpm
0-62mph	4.9sec (claimed)	5.1sec (claimed, auto)
Top speed	155mph (limited)	155mph (limited)
Basic price	£43,395	£41,435

Above: the 435i weighs 150kg less than the S5, but the Audi has a 26bhp advantage. **Left:** oversteer in the BMW is easily controlled



always been a big advocate of the S4, but this S5 isn't even close. Aside from the engine, it's a very muddled car indeed. This S5 might not be hobbled with Dynamic Steering but it still has variable levels of assistance, from the spookily light Comfort through to the gloopy Dynamic. None of the settings provide any feel at all and you're constantly thinking about the steering. Why is it so light/heavy/sticky? And how can a system with so little feedback get so ragged over lumpy tarmac? It really gets in the way of the simple act of driving.

If the steering is bad, then the body control is almost shocking as the car heaves, rolls and crashes down on its springs. The steering, wheels and body seem to have no dialogue at all and very quickly you just slow your pace and contemplate why a supposed sporting version of any car seems so reluctant to be driven with enthusiasm. It seems that if you're after an S5, adaptive dampers are a must. Without them, that 1675kg just goes where it likes. And the Sport diff is almost imperceptible in this car, whereas in the S4 you can always feel it creating a bit of yaw on corner exit. Confusing.

The 435i M Sport is in another galaxy, frankly, but it takes a while to reveal itself.

Verdict

BMW 435i M SPORT

- ⊕ Better balance than saloon; quality interior
- ⊖ Can feel characterless at lower speeds

evo rating: ★★★★★

You'll immediately notice the sweet damping, the crispness of the gearshifts from the auto 'box and the accurate, intuitive steering that seems positively alive with feedback after the Audi's. But for all its honed smoothness and refinement, it does feel very grown-up indeed. It certainly doesn't have the live-wire feel of the

Below: S5's seven-speed dual-clutch 'box is a highlight. **Bottom:** 435i test car fitted with eight-speed auto; six-speed manual is standard



smaller, narrower M135i.

Yet go looking for the edge, for the thrills that should be central to any BMW coupe, and they reveal themselves. The 435i's various chassis and drivetrain settings are well judged and spread over a narrow enough range that you're not so much changing the character of the car as you toggle from Comfort through to Sport Plus, but tightening its focus. Even in Sport Plus the 435i remains fluid and poised, and its balance is so much more exciting and adjustable than the slightly understeery 3-series saloon. In fact it barely understeers at all, moving gently on all four tyres when you start to drive quickly and occasionally serving up oversteer so creamily that you could call it languid if it didn't feel so accurate and precise.

The engine just gets better and better the more you rev it, too. It doesn't quite have the shock of torque of the S5's but it's so clean and – that word again – precise. The whole car feels low and wide with a lovely mix of stability and agility. For me, it's a more satisfying car than the more frantic, scrappier M135i and it humbles the Audi S5 completely. Maybe the world isn't changing as fast as I thought. ☒

Jethro Bovingdon (@JethroBovingdon)

Verdict

AUDI S5

- ⊕ Engine, traction, resistance to understeer
- ⊖ Poor body control, steering

evo rating: ★★★★★



**Innovation
that excites**



OFFICIAL PARTNER



Nissan Juke n-tec. Turn every drive into a ride with Google™ Send-to-Car technology.

Get connected with Google™ Send-to-Car and Google™ Places – two thrilling features that enable you to plan a journey on Google™ Maps, send it to your Nissan Juke remotely and once you arrive, search for the coolest places to go using NissanConnect. Combine that with a Torque Vectoring system* on selected models for enhanced stability when cornering, and the Nissan Juke n-tec comes fully equipped to turn every drive into a ride. Available from £12,995 to £22,600. Search 'Nissan Juke' for more information.

NissanConnect | DIG-T engine | Torque Vectoring System



Fuel consumption figures for Juke range are: URBAN 28.8-58.9mpg (9.8-4.8L/100km), EXTRA URBAN 47.1-72.4mpg (6.0-3.9L/100km), COMBINED 38.2-67.3mpg (7.4-4.2L/100km), CO₂ emissions 169-109g/km.

MPG figures are obtained from laboratory testing, in accordance with 2004/3/EC and intended for comparisons between vehicles and may not reflect real driving results. (Optional equipment, maintenance, driving behaviour, road and weather conditions may affect the official results). *Only available on models equipped with 4WD 1.6 DIG-T. Model shown is a Juke n-tec 1.6 petrol priced at £16,295 On The Road with optional metallic paint at £500. Models subject to availability. Google™ Send-to-Car and Google™ Places require subscription, compatible phone or device (not included with vehicle), and Wi-Fi or 3G connection, and rely on services provided by third parties outside Nissan's control. Cellular networks not available in all areas. Voice minutes, roaming charges and/or data usage may apply. Nissan is not responsible for any equipment replacement or upgrades, or associated costs that may be required for continued operation due to service changes. Google™ wordmark and logos are registered trademarks owned by Google Inc. Information correct at the time of going to print. Nissan Motor (GB) Limited, The Rivers Office Park, Denham Way, Maple Cross, Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire WD3 9YS.

301580/A2

📍 Test location: Kitzbühel, Austria GPS: 47.44596, 12.39100

Mercedes-Benz S63 AMG

Range-topping S-class returns with more power, more tech and the option of four-wheel drive



PICTURE THE SCENE: A wet, slowish corner with rain lashing down, a 577bhp Mercedes S63 AMG with its stability control isolated and – with its nose pointing towards the apex – an over-generous dose of throttle applied. What term do you think will best describe the amount of corrective lock required? A dab? A dose? A couple of flailing armfuls?

None of the above. The S63 squats on its wide haunches as the twin-turbocharged V8 comes on boost, and starts to tighten its line as a fair percentage of the engine's monstrous 664lb ft reaches the rear axle. But the anticipated slide never arrives. Instead the big saloon finds seemingly impossible traction in the sodden conditions and exits the corner with the unmistakable sensation of being both pushed and pulled.

It is. The German-spec S63 that I'm driving on this launch is fitted with the optional 4matic four-wheel-drive system. But this won't be

Specification

Engine	V8, 5461cc, twin-turbo
C02	237g/km
Power	577bhp @ 5500rpm
Torque	664lb ft @ 2250–3750rpm
0-62mph	4.4sec (claimed)
Top speed	155mph (186mph optional)
Basic price	£119,565

offered in the UK, or any other right-hand-drive market, because the power transfer shaft for the front axle runs through the space needed for the right-hand-drive steering box. It's a shame, because the system is effectively invisible in everyday use, and – thanks to the 4matic car getting a lighter rear axle – the total weight penalty is just 25kg.

And it is a loss, because the S63 is definitely a high-speed express rather than one of AMG's tyre-smoking hooligans. It's also a car that's competing in a part of the market where buyers

increasingly expect their cars to send drive to all four corners. A brief blast in the rear-drive version confirms that it loses nothing to the 4matic at everyday speeds, but then, other than the slightly improbable ability to switch everything off and engage in power oversteer, it doesn't really gain anything either.

The rest of the S63 is a predictable combination of S-class and AMG. The engine is the familiar 'M157' 5.5-litre twin-turbocharged V8, as seen in all of AMG's senior models other than the SLS. We're told the S63 will be the motor's last application before a cleaner and greener replacement comes out. Here the motor has the brawnier state of tune found in the recently launched E63 S, translating into a claimed 4.4sec 0-62mph time for the rear-drive version (and just 4 seconds dead for the 4matic). Like AMG's other models it also gets Merc's clever MCT wet-clutch automatic gearbox, giving it punchier reactions than the slushier torque-converter 7G-tronic transmission in the basic S-class.

The V8 is as mighty as ever – with almost as



Below: entire outer skin of the S-class is aluminium.
Left: infamous 'scary face' steering wheel gets sportier trim for the AMG



much charisma as power. It really does pull from the basement upwards; peak torque is present from just 2250rpm and throttle response is clean and lag-free even this low down. It's not the revviest of powerplants – the red line is set at 6200rpm, and it's easy to inadvertently brush the limiter if you've opted to change your own gears. Leave the transmission to its own devices and it keeps everything flowing nicely, though – changes are rapid and intelligently dosed, if not as outright quick as those of something like BMW's twin-clutch DCT. On derestricted Autobahns, the S cruises at 125mph with barely 3000rpm showing in top. And the V8 sounds great, too, thanks to active exhaust flaps – burbling when used gently and snarling nicely when you put the hammer down.

When it comes to refinement and comfort, the AMG feels very close to the regular S-class. Apart from the exhaust's pleasing harmonics it's pretty much as quiet as the standard car, sharing the same full-length acoustic undershield that pretty much eliminates road noise altogether.

With the chassis left in Comfort mode it's every bit as wafty too, the standard air springs pillowing away imperfections and keeping the S-class tracking arrow straight at speed.

One benefit of rear-drive is that UK cars will get Merc's 'Magic Body Control' system as standard (it can't be specified with 4motion). This uses forward-looking cameras to 'read' the approaching road surface at speeds of up to 80mph, adjusting the dampers according to what the wheels are about to encounter. Predicting, rather than reacting in other words. On some surfaces it works extremely well, although the sodden conditions we encounter during our time with the car reveal a strange flaw – being a visual system, it can't see through puddles, meaning it doesn't work when there's too much standing water.

Unfortunately, despite all the power – 41bhp more than the old car – the S63 doesn't feel particularly exciting. Considering its size and mass, it handles impressively well when asked to tackle narrower and twistier tarmac.

It certainly feels a measure more wieldy than the stolid Audi S8, although slightly over-light steering limits ultimate confidence. We don't suppose many buyers are going to be put off by how civilised the S63 is, but it does seem to have strayed very close to the territory of the V12-powered S600 that we'll be seeing next year.

And it also means that, beyond extra speed, the S63 doesn't offer a significantly better driving experience over that provided by the S500. That's far softer-edged, but also boasts a charismatic twin-turbocharged V8 and costs nearly £40,000 less. Even for a potential S-class buyer, that's an attractive saving. ✕

Mike Duff

Verdict

- ⚡ Storming V8, effortless performance
 - ❌ Price, lack of four-wheel drive in the UK
- evo rating:** ★★★★★

DEFY CONVENTION



AND THE WINNER IS...



**THE NEW MAZDA6
FROM £209 PER MONTH***

***Business users only**

Introducing the award-winning new Mazda6. A thrilling drivers' car with 150ps that still delivers 67.3mpg and CO₂ emissions of just 108g/km. The secret to this award-winning meeting of performance and efficiency? Mazda's SKYACTIV Technology.



MAZDA.CO.UK

The official fuel consumption figures in mpg (l/100km) for the new Mazda6 range: Urban 36.2 (7.8) - 55.4 (5.1), Extra Urban 57.6 (4.9) - 78.5 (3.6), Combined 47.9 (5.9) - 67.3 (4.2). CO₂ emissions (g/km) 136 - 108.

The mpg figures quoted are sourced from official EU-regulated test results obtained through laboratory testing. These are provided for comparability purposes only and may not reflect your actual driving results. *Offer available to business users for orders received between 01.10.2013 - 31.12.2013. All figures exclude VAT. £209 per month figure is based on a new Mazda6 Saloon 150ps SE Diesel, without metallic paint, on a non-maintenance contract hire package over 36 months, 10,000 contract miles per year. Advance payment equal to 6 monthly payments is payable followed by 35 monthly payments. Excess mileage charge applies if contract mileage is exceeded. For full terms and conditions and specification please refer to the Mazda Contract Hire Master Agreement and your local dealer. All quotations are subject to availability, status and agreement. Free metallic paint is only available in conjunction with Mazda Contract Hire offer and applies to selected models only. Guarantees may be required. Terms are unavailable to existing customers under specific end-user terms with Mazda Motors UK Ltd. Details correct at time of publication and may vary, eg. if list price changes. Mazda Contract Hire Limited does not offer tax advice to individuals: company car drivers should consult their accountant on their tax position. Contract hire by ALD Automotive Ltd., trading as Mazda Contract Hire, Oakwood Park, Lodge Causeway, Fishponds, Bristol BS16 3JA. Models shown with monthly payment: New Mazda6 Saloon 150ps SE Diesel. OTR £21,995. Model shown features optional Soul Red Metallic paint (£660). On the road prices include 20% VAT, number plates and 3 years' European Roadside Assistance.



BMW X5

German SUV is made lighter and more powerful to combat strong rivals

Test location: Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada GPS: 49.26122, -123.11392

HAVE YOU EVER SEEN A private registration plate with an 'X5' prefix stuck onto a different make of car? Maybe I'm a geek, but I seem to see them about once a week. And although it's hardly the most scientific test of the appeal of BMW's big SUV, it does suggest a fair number of former keepers have moved on to pastures new.

The X5 could well be a victim of its own success, having pretty much invented its segment. The original X5 was the first decent-to-drive SUV, the car that proved buyers didn't really care about off-road prowess, and led to a plethora of similarly focused rivals. Perhaps this explains why the new car looks so much like the model it replaces, albeit with the uncomfortable presence of BMW's odd 'air breather' vent.

Underneath, the new X5 keeps much of the old car's structure, but high-strength steel, an aluminium bonnet and plastic wings have made the body lighter. The claimed kerb weight of the 3-litre diesel version is 2070kg, just 30kg more than the new, all-alloy Range Rover Sport in 3-litre diesel V6 guise. British buyers will have a choice of five engines in the new X5 from launch – one petrol, four diesel – starting with a four-cylinder '25d' with 215bhp and rear-wheel drive as standard (xDrive 4wd is a £3070 option). Above that, BMW's familiar 3-litre straight-six diesel comes in 30d (254bhp), 40d (309bhp) and triple-turbo M50d (376bhp) states of tune. The only powerplant with spark

Specification

Engine	In-line 6-cyl, 2993cc, turbodiesel
C02	164g/km
Power	254bhp @ 4000rpm
Torque	413lb ft @ 1500-3000rpm
0-62mph	6.9sec (claimed)
Top speed	143mph (claimed)
Basic price	£47,895 (30d SE)

plugs is a twin-turbo 4.4-litre V8 with 444bhp, although BMW admits UK sales of this will be 'minimal'. Expect at least one hybrid to follow.

Improbably, BMW flew us to Canada to test the car, where we got to drive the 30d and 50i on some of British Columbia's heavily policed roads. First impressions are that this X5 drives very much like its predecessor – comfortable and composed in everyday use, but showing its size and bulk when you try too hard. The diesel engine is more refined than before and pulls with slightly more vigour when worked hard (power is up 12bhp in the 30d), but it's happiest burbling along in the lower reaches of its fat torque curve. By contrast, the petrol V8 likes to rev, with lag-free responses and a 7000rpm red line. It makes compellingly snarly noises when extended, too, although BMW's low sales projections for it are almost certainly correct, as the basic V8 model is £60,000 before options.

For those with more money than sense, BMW is offering the X5 with four optional adaptive



suspension systems. The most expensive, the £3990 'Professional Adaptive', adds active anti-roll bars, but it seems there's little obvious advantage in switching any of the active set-ups from their default 'Comfort' modes, with the firmer options putting an uncomfortable edge on the ride without really sharpening responses. At the limit, the X5's mass and high centre of gravity are obvious, and unlike the X6 (and Range Rover Sport), it doesn't get a full-on torque-vectoring system to combat the inevitable understeer. Whatever else it might be, the X5 is no longer the best-driving SUV. ❌

Mike Duff

Verdict

- ✅ Sensible, comfortable, punchy V8
 - ❌ Dull diesel, lacks handling agility against rivals
- evo rating:** ★★★★★



TOGETHER IN ELECTRIC DREAMS

LUC Marchetti is a driven man. The founder of Exagon first discovered a passion for motorsport while watching rallies as a child, then launched his own engineering company in 2004. He began working on high-powered electric cars in 2007, and created the world's first race series for electric sports cars – the Andros Electric Trophy – in 2010. Now he's about to launch Europe's first all-electric sports GT, the Furtive eGT. And as with so many pioneering ventures, it's all about a shared vision...

Marchetti has chosen his partners well. Under the handsome, largely carbon-fibre bodywork of the eGT, there are twin electric motors designed by Siemens – compact, liquid-cooled, centrally mounted to promote agile handling, and mated to an advanced ZTI (Zero Torque Interruption) three-speed gearbox. The battery is made by Saft, a world leader in lithium-ion technology, and based on the technology used in satellites. It gives exceptional range for an electric car – up to 310km (193 miles) in mixed driving.

And then there's Michelin. "We needed bespoke tyres, because there's none on the market that met our specifications," says

French company Exagon needed a tyre supplier for its electric supercar project, but it also wanted a partner who shared its vision. Michelin was the perfect fit, and together they're creating a new breed of performance car

Marchetti. "Michelin provided us with a dedicated team of engineers, technicians and drivers, and let us use their fully equipped test centre." For Michelin, it was a case of understanding and sharing Marchetti's dream. Pierre Cohard, who co-ordinates Michelin's involvement in the project, explains: "When the Furtive eGT was first presented to us back in 2009, it was just a plastic model with no moving parts – but with a clear vision of how it would come together.



"A lot of people come to us with ideas, some of them pretty crazy, and we have to decide whether to go with them. I was particularly impressed with the way Exagon worked. I observed the way they ran the cars in the Andros Trophy, how they responded to feedback from the drivers. I liked their professionalism and their attention to detail."

And so the partners went to work. For Michelin, the project presented a unique set of challenges. First and foremost, the tyre had to



The partnership hasn't ended with tyres. Michelin expertise is now being put to use fine-tuning the eGT's suspension



give exceptional grip and traction. The two electric motors produce a combined 402bhp power peak between 5000 and 10,000rpm, but perhaps more tellingly, 380lb ft of torque all the way from zero to 5000rpm. Acceleration would be brutal.

So the tyres needed a unique blend of attributes – grip and turn-in bite to enhance the eGT's agility, a decent ride to back up its GT credentials, low rolling resistance to enhance the range of the battery, and plenty of traction to cope with the prodigious torque of those twin electric motors.

The starting point was the recently introduced Pilot Super Sport range, which hit all the key targets – no other manufacturer could offer the PSS's low rolling resistance.

Then the work began on optimising the

interaction between car and tyre. And in this case, that meant different sizes front and rear. "We started with a 275 tyre on the rear," says Pierre Cohard. "But after extensive testing, we found that a 305 gave the handling characteristics that we were looking for."

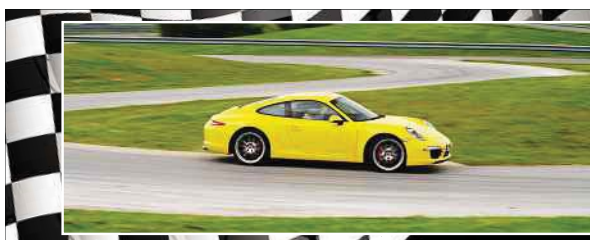
It's a partnership between car maker and tyre manufacturer, working together to mutually extract the best from the eGT and the Pilot Super Sport. After exhaustive testing – the Michelin Technology Centre near Clermont-Ferrand in central France has 400 simulation tools, and no fewer than 19 test tracks – the technicians eventually decided on 305/30 ZR20s at the rear, and narrower 245/35 ZR20s at the front.

But the partnership hasn't ended there. The expertise of the Michelin technicians is now being

put to use fine-tuning the suspension, making sure that tyres and dampers work in perfect mechanical harmony to provide that sports car/GT car blend that Luc Marchetti wanted from his baby.

Pierre Cohard is delighted with the results so far. "The car is fantastic to drive, and so fast – 0-100km/h [62mph] in just 3.5 seconds. It has been a great project to work on, and of course something completely new for Michelin. It's exactly the sort of challenge we like."

Marchetti himself is effusive about the eGT, which goes on sale next year in a limited run of 150, each one hand-built to the customer's specification. "Lots of people inside and outside the company have worked on this project with a passion," he says. "The eGT is the car of our dreams."



WIN A PORSCHE DRIVING EXPERIENCE AND AN IPAD MINI!

Visit <http://michelin.evo.co.uk> to enter this brilliant competition – and read and watch the best road stories and videos happening now!

Watches

This month, a Jag-inspired limited-edition, a retro chronograph, and a watch that talks to your car

Words: Simon de Burton

1 Oris Raid 2013

Price: £62500 From: oris.ch

As the official timekeeper of the annual 600-mile Suisse-Paris 'Raid' classic rally since 2009, Oris produces a special-edition watch each year to commemorate the event. In keeping with the tradition of each new model being inspired by the instruments of the previous year's winning car, the 2013 edition is loosely based on the Smith's speedo from the 1967 Jaguar 420G which took the laurels in 2012. Limited to 500 examples, the watch features a 44mm steel case and an automatic movement fitted with the brand's celebrated red-coloured winding rotor. The three sub dials can record elapsed times of up to 60 seconds, 30 minutes and 12 hours respectively.

2 Autodromo Prototipo

Price: \$625 From: autodromo.com or pageandcooper.co.uk

New York designer Bradley Price (see 'Me & My Car', *evo* 175) is doing great things with his small, independent watch brand Autodromo. The latest model in the range is the Prototipo, which was inspired by the barrel-cased driving watches of the 1960s and '70s (think Heuer and Omega). It features an excellent-quality 'mecha-quartz' Seiko movement, which is battery powered but incorporates a mechanical reset for the chronograph. Standard models have black or white dials with red detailing, but there's also a funky, \$750 special edition of 224 examples dedicated to Vic Elford's epic win in the 1968 Targa Florio. The dial features a yellow, white and red livery inspired by Elford's Porsche 910, which wore the number 224, and each watch will be delivered with a booklet signed by 'Quick Vic' himself.

3 Nissan Nismo

Price: TBA From: Nissan dealerships

Nissan used the Frankfurt motor show to unveil this ground-breaking 'smartwatch' specifically designed for drivers of Nismo cars. It will enable the monitoring of average speed and fuel consumption, provide on-track telemetry information and even capture the wearer's biometric data via a heart-rate monitor. It will also collate the user's 'social performance' across Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest and Instagram. Developed in conjunction with the recently launched 'Nismo Lab', it's the first watch to connect car and driver, and spearheads an anticipated flood of similar examples of 'wearable technology'. Available in black, white or signature Nismo black and red, the watch is a snap fit to the wrist and will be supplied in packaging made from scrap race tyres.

Watch tech

Lubrication

Horologists have spent centuries trying to perfect a system of efficient and prolonged lubrication for watch mechanisms. As in a car engine, the parts of a movement which act against one another need a barrier of oil to ensure they run smoothly – but, because those parts are so tiny, the oil has to be exceptionally fine. Even relatively minimal contamination by substances such as dust and moisture can cause it to clog up sufficiently to interfere with the running of the watch, leading to loss of accuracy and, ultimately, the movement seizing up.

In 1976, the late horologist and automotive engineer Dr George Daniels made what was then the greatest advance in tackling the problem by inventing his Co-Axial escapement, which proved to make the mechanism impervious to the condition of its lubricant. Although he patented the invention in 1980, Daniels spent years convincing the horological world of its benefits before the Co-Axial was officially adopted by Omega in 1999. It is now used in all of the brand's best products.

Lately, however, watch makers have been striving to do away with lubricants altogether by using ultra-slippery, strong and lightweight silicone for the manufacture of components such as escape wheels, oscillators, bearings and even hairsprings. As well as making the parts from silicone, brands such as Chopard have successfully experimented in using the material to coat components made from conventional steel.

Cartier's most advanced concept watch, the iD 2, takes things a step further with the use of Amorphous Diamond Like Carbon (ADLC) for many movement components – it doesn't wear out and is highly shock resistant, yet needs no lubrication at all.

Now & Then



NOW Audemars Piguet Royal Oak Offshore

Worn by: Rubens Barrichello

Rubens Barrichello's F1 days may be over, but he's still mixing it in the major Stock Car V8 series in his native Brazil. One of his favourite watches is the Royal Oak Offshore – unsurprising given that, in 2006 and 2009, AP produced two Rubens Barrichello limited editions of the watch.



THEN Rolex Datejust Worn by: James Hunt

James Hunt's life is currently a hot topic following the release of *Rush*, so we thought it only right to try to discover what sort of watch he favoured. He didn't endorse a particular brand, but it appears that, at the height of his career, he occasionally sported a gold Rolex Datejust. Well, it was the '70s...



ADVAN

Love Driving.



New
ADVAN
Sport V105



YOKOHAMA

Yokohama HPT Ltd
Dawson Road, Mount Farm, Milton Keynes, Bucks, MK1 1QY Sales: 01908 625601 / 01908 625603

info@yokohama.co.uk
www.yokohama.co.uk

Pace Ward Ltd

Established 1977

★ ★ ★

PERFORMANCE INSURANCE

Specialists



PRESTIGE & PERFORMANCE • TRACK DAY • FAMILY FLEET • BUSINESS & PROPERTY



For more information call us now on: **01782 286311**

Or visit our website at: **www.paceward.com**

Scan the QR code to view more information.



E: motor@paceward.com T: 01782 286311 F: 01782 204707 Like Us: facebook.com/paceward

pace ward

Insider

by HARRY METCALFE



Harry reckons that ogling engines will soon become a thing of the past

A

AS I WENT AROUND THE FRANKFURT motor show last month, it struck me that we're about to enter a new age where we will no longer pore over the mechanical specification of a car in great detail. Instead we'll be deciding whether it

looks cool or not and leaving it at that.

Now, I love knowing the minutiae of what makes a particular car function; I'm sad enough to want to discover whether an engine is under- or over-square (i.e. whether its cylinder stroke is greater than its bore, or vice versa) because that tells me whether it'll be a screamer with little low-down torque or a lugger that'll be good out of corners. So at Frankfurt I thought I would relish knowing all the details behind the latest hybrid systems about to hit the market. But the more I sat through endless presentations, the more I realised the mechanical layout of the next generation of cars is so complicated that it's actually incredibly dull.

Nobody is going to get excited by staring at an electric motor under the bonnet, because all of them look like identical lumps of metal shaped like biscuit barrels. Trying to spot whether it's an 80kW or 160kW motor is next to impossible too, because it depends on the number of windings inside the motor casing, so attempting to judge the power output by the size of the biscuit barrel doesn't work.

And it isn't just the bland exterior of the electric motor that's the problem, either. Sprouting out of one end of each biscuit barrel is a multitude of bright orange cables, snaking their way between the electric motor and a big box of clever electronics called the inverter, before disappearing off to wherever the battery is hiding. Not only are these orange cables huge (each one is about the diameter of a garden hose), but they make the place incredibly messy. Not even Ferrari can make a hybrid powertrain beautiful: lift the engine lid on the LaFerrari and you're presented with quite possibly the ugliest engine bay I've ever seen in a Ferrari. It's so sad.

The reason these cables are so big and orange is because the safety police insists that all high-voltage DC cables on a hybrid car are clearly visible. This is to stop the local garage mechanic taking a Stanley knife to one in the mistaken belief it's a regular hose, and then barbecuing himself as soon as his blade hits the metal cabling hiding inside.

Manufacturers have, however, realised how unsightly this all looks, so many of these hybrids are being designed with the mechanical systems hidden away. Take the BMW i8 as a case in point. Its front clamshell can only be opened by a fully trained

BMW mechanic, and the same goes for the engine compartment at the rear. The trick three-pot motor hides under a soundproof layer and all regular engine check-ups are done electronically.

We're moving to a time where great styling and CO2 outputs are the things that sell cars and we're leaving a time where having a tasty drivetrain was important for success. I think the rot started when BMW stopped naming its cars to reference what was under the bonnet – buying a 335i today no longer means you're getting a 3-series with a 3.5-litre engine. The same applies with Mini, where you buy a One or Cooper S rather than a 1.6 or 1.6 Turbo. Now we've all got used to the idea, BMW can sell us an i8 without ever mentioning the engine size. All we have to decide is whether we want a white one or a blue one. I predict that in a few years' time, everyone will move towards a system of giving a

'We're moving to a time where great styling and CO2 outputs are the things that sell cars and we're leaving a time where having a tasty drivetrain was important for success'

car a single name. Manufacturers have increased the complexity of cars to the point where no bootlid is big enough to display the engine size/cylinder count/hybridisation system/driven wheels any more.

So where does that leave the car enthusiast? For the generation that loves beautiful engine bays, I'm afraid we're stuffed, because a well-laid-out engine bay is history. But what will increasingly come to the fore is car design, as nothing sells a new car more than seductive looks. As for the driving experience, there are still enough real enthusiasts left in the motor industry to make sure certain cars will remain exciting to drive. It's just that we won't fully understand what's happening under the skin to deliver the driving experience at the wheel. Whether this is a good thing or not, I'm not really sure, but that's progress for you. ☒



@harrym_evo

Harry is **evo's** editorial director and a serial supercar buyer

NAUTISCHE INSTRUMENTE
MÜHLE
GLASHÜTTE/SA.



Teutonia II Chronograph

The Teutonia II Chronograph is ticking evidence of how an elegant watch can be given a sporty touch. This is, of course, first and foremost due to the timekeeping function, as the totalizers of the hour and minute counters give the face its own special dynamics. The diagonal displays for the date and the weekday also contribute to this effect.

Petrolhead

by RICHARD PORTER



Porter fears the current trend for downsizing could exterminate the V8 engine

IF THE MAIN THING YOU'RE LOOKING for in your next car is a V8 engine, you're not short of choice. You could have a McLaren 12C, for example. Or a Bentley Mulsanne. Or, if you wanted something a little more unusual, you might remember that the new Corvette is going on sale in the UK soon. Obviously, driving a 'Vette in Britain makes you look like a monumental bellend, but if it's a V8 you want, it's got one.

If, however, you want a more mainstream V8, things aren't so rosy. The next BMW M3, and its crappy-motorway-referencing sister the M4, ditch the V8 for a turbocharged straight-six. Likewise, Audi's mid-level S cars are moving to blown V6s. The Merc E-class coupe has just received a facelift during which they removed the 5.5-litre V8 from the top model and replaced it with a twin-turbo 3-litre V6. Jaguar Land Rover are quietly ushering in more supercharged V6s to do the heavy lifting that used to be the exclusive preserve of petrol V8s. It's the same story in North America, where the most popular variants of the mega-selling Ford F-150 pick-up now have six cylinders. And don't forget that next season F1 ditches its 2.4-litre V8s for 1.6-litre turbocharged V6s. It's hard not to conclude, therefore, that outside of super high-end and rare-groove road cars, the V8 is dying.

And that's a shame, because there's nothing quite like a V8. For one thing, there's the noise: that irregular, bass-heavy gurgle and rumble like a dinosaur farting underwater. And then there's the fat, meaty torque curve, making the V8 a smooth and relaxing engine to drive behind. Fours and sixes just can't match either of these things. With a turbo or two they can try to get close, but it's never quite the same as the always-on grunt of an old eight-cylinder warhorse.

On the downside, there's also little outside a V12 to rival the gluttonous thirst of an old-skool V8 being used in anger, and this, sadly, is one good reason why the everyday eight is falling from favour. But on the plus side, a widespread fear of fuel-based bankruptcy is making tasty V8-powered cars something of a bargain.

Remember the E39-shape BMW M5 with the manual gearbox bolted to a grunty 4.9-litre V8? I've just found one for sale at a snadge under five grand. Yes, I know, for that sort of cash the mileage is longer than a Tokyo phone number and there's almost certainly something wrong, or about to go wrong. But come on: you're slightly interested, aren't you? And this got me thinking. If you could score a proper eight-potted M-car for around the £5k mark, what else is available for around this budget with an entirely civilised number of cylinders?

The answer, as it turns out, is a Porsche 928. Again, I know that at this price disastrous failure is almost certainly close by, quickly followed by a bill so long that it has to be printed on loo roll. But even so, a 928. Come on, it's a bit of a secret bucket-list car.

Or perhaps sir would prefer his V8 thrills in a slightly smoother flavour? In which case, I can heartily recommend the Jaguar XKR or the Mercedes S55 AMG, both of which are available for around the five grand mark, as it turns out. You might even squeak an old-shape E55 for the same money, and that was a tremendous car. That E was from an era when Mercedes had forgotten the German for 'build quality', but let's not get bogged down in that now. It's £5000 for a supercharged V8 and, who knows, you might get a good one.

Or you could embrace the vigorous thrill of never knowing when and how you might break down by getting a Triumph TR7

'If you could score a proper eight-potted M-car for around the £5k mark, what else is available for around this budget with an entirely civilised number of cylinders?'

convertible, retro-fitted with a Rover V8. I found one of those within my mythical budget and I'd be lying if I said I wasn't tempted. Except that, shortly afterwards, I found a tidy Rover P6 for sale with the correct engine, the spare screwed authentically to the bootlid and the paint in a period shade of brown, and frankly I found that even more appealing. Just pause for a moment and imagine the noise it would make. Yes. You could make room for that in your life.

Old Camaros, P38-shape Range Rovers, Rolls-Royce Silver Spirits – they're all out there promising noisy, thunderous or silky V8 treats for not very much money at all. And although they might go wonky and ruin you, by God it'd be a good way to go, wouldn't it? My decidedly shaky advice would be to get yourself a V8 now and enjoy it for all it's worth. We'll miss them when they're gone. ☒

@sniffpetrol

Richard is *evo*'s longest-serving columnist and the keyboard behind sniffpetrol.com

THE ULTIMATE IN PERFORMANCE UPGRADES.

AT DMS AUTOMOTIVE
WE'VE BEEN UNLEASHING
AUTOMOTIVE PERFORMANCE
FOR OVER 18 YEARS.



DMS 1M (EVO MARCH '12)

"THERE'S A REAL RIP TO THE WAY THE REVS PILE ON ABOVE 4000RPM"

DMS SL65 BLACK SERIES (EVO OCTOBER '10)

"IT FEELS LIKE THE LOVE CHILD OF AN SL65 AND A PORSCHE GT2"

DMS 135i (BMW CAR MAY '09)

"THE STANDARD CAR IS GREAT BUT DMS HAVE SOMEHOW
MANAGED TO TAKE IT TO THE NEXT LEVEL"

DMS 997 TURBO 3.6 (EVO SEPTEMBER '08)

"IT'S EPIC, HILARIOUS AND ADDICTIVE IN EVERY GEAR,
YET DOCILE WHEN CRUISING"

DMS 997 TURBO 3.8 PDK (EVO JUNE '11)

"DELIVERY IS ALMOST UNCOMFORTABLY FORCEFUL"



BELOW IS A SMALL SELECTION OF OUR MORE POPULAR MODELS TO
UPGRADE. WE ARE ABLE TO UNLEASH PERFORMANCE FROM SMALL
FOUR CYLINDER DIESEL ENGINES UP TO V12 SUPERCARS:

PORSCHE

997 TURBO S 3.8 INC PDK » 611 BHP
997 TURBO 3.6 » 625+ BHP
997 GT2 RS » 670+ BHP
996 TURBO/GT2 » 600+ BHP
997 CARRERA S PDK » 400+ BHP
997 CARRERA S » 376+ BHP
997 CARRERA PDK » 368 BHP
997 CARRERA GTS » 435 BHP
997 GT3 UP » 436 BHP
BOXSTER 3.4S » 336+ BHP
CAYMAN S » 342 BHP
CAYENNE GTS » 440 BHP
CAYENNE TURBO 4.5 » 565+ BHP
CAYENNE TURBO 4.8 » 578+ BHP
CAYENNE TURBO S 4.8 » 600+ BHP
CAYENNE 4.2 DIESEL » 450+ BHP
CAYENNE DIESEL » 300+ BHP
PANAMERA TURBO » 600+ BHP
PANAMERA DIESEL » 305+ BHP

MERCEDES-BENZ

'63' 5.5 Bi-TURBO ALL MODELS » 600+ BHP
'500' 4.7 Bi-TURBO ALL MODELS » 498+ BHP
SL65 BLACK » 720+ BHP (+DELIMIT)
SL65 AMG » 690 BHP (+DE-LIMIT)
'55' AMG KOMPRESSOR » 580+ BHP
C63 AMG » 530+ BHP (+DE-LIMIT)
SL63 AMG » 560+ BHP (+DE-LIMIT,
RE-MAP & LOWER ABC SUSPENSION)
CL600 Bi-TURBO » 580+ BHP
SLK55 AMG » 389 BHP (+DELIMIT)
SLK 350 » 328 BHP
220 CDi ALL MODELS » 210+ BHP
250 CDi ALL MODELS » 259+ BHP
320 CDi V6 » 274 BHP
350 CDi V6 » 312 BHP
420 /450 CDi V8 » 358 BHP

BMW

M5/M6 F10 » 620+ BHP
M5 V10 » 548+ BHP (205 MPH)
X5M / X6M » 618 BHP
1M » 411+ BHP
M3 E90/92 » 445 BHP (+DE-LIMIT)
M3 E46 » 370 BHP (+DE-LIMIT)
F10 520D » 221 BHP
F10 530D » 296 BHP
F10 535D » 358 BHP
335i/135i/X6 » 370+ BHP (+DE-LIMIT)
123D » 252 BHP
330D E90 » 296+ BHP
320D E90 » 215 BHP
730D » 290+ BHP
X5 4.0D / 740D » 370 BHP
X5 3.0D » 296 BHP
X6 X50i 4.4 » 500+ BHP
535D / 335D / X5 SD » 355+ BHP
M135i Please call

EXOTIC / MISC

FERRARI CALIFORNIA » 487 BHP
FERRARI 599 » 647 BHP
FERRARI 430 » 525 BHP
GALLARDO » 546 BHP
LP560 » 600+ BHP
LP640 » 707 BHP
MURCIELAGO LP640 » 707 BHP
MASERATI GT/QPORT » 438 BHP
MASERATI GT S / MC » 479+ BHP
ALL 2014 MASERATI'S Please call
AUDI RS6 4.0 T V8 Please call
AUDI RS6 V10 » 680+ BHP +DE-LIMIT
AUDI R8 V1 » 592+ BHP
AUDI RS4/R8 B7 » 439 BHP + DE-LIMIT
AUDI RS3 » 420+ BHP
AUDI Q7/A8 4.2 TDi » 400+ BHP
AUDI 3.0TDi (ALL MODELS) » 300+ BHP
AUDI S3 / GOLF R » 317+ BHP
ALL 2014 RANGE ROVERS AVAILABLE
RANGE ROVER 4.4 TDV8 » 395 BHP
R ROVER SPORT 3.0D » 305 BHP
EVOQUE 2.2 DIESEL » 240 BHP
BENTLEY 4.0 T V8 » 600+ BHP
BENTLEY CGT / F-SPUR (INC 2013) » 660 BHP
GT SPEED / SUPERSPORT » 680+ BHP

**FOR ALL OTHER MAKES AND MODELS,
PLEASE CALL US.**



WWW.DMSAUTOMOTIVE.COM

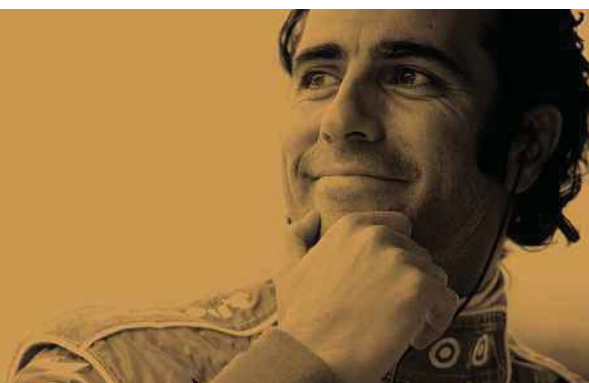
UK: 0845 850 1845 INT: +44 845 850 1845

E: SALES@DMSAUTOMOTIVE.COM

f /DMSAUTOMOTIVE FOLLOW US FOR OUR LATEST NEWS!

Champ

by DARIO FRANCHITTI



Dario recalls some of his best road trips and what made them such great adventures

ONE NIGHT SOME YEARS AGO, MY brother Marino and I were at Celtic watching a football match. On a whim, I turned to him and I said: 'Do you want to go and visit [Allan] McNish in Monaco?' So we went back to the house, loaded the bags up and took off. There's just nothing like a good road trip.

For me, a big journey across a country or continent triggers that whole romantic notion of the way things were 40 or 50 years ago. In the '60s, Jimmy Clark would drive to a lot of the F1 races in his Lotus Elan and that's something that's always really resonated with me, probably because big journeys in cars have always been a part of my life. First there were the family trips out to Italy when I was really young when all of us piled into mum's Merc, and then I remember my dad summarily sending me all the way down to London two days after I passed my driving test to pick my sister up from university. That was a bit daunting, but I loved the sense of adventure. Ever since, I've loved reading about the journeys and drive stories in magazines, because it sets me off thinking and daydreaming about where I can go next...

There are two different types of road trip, obviously. First there are the ones where you've got an itinerary of, say, 500 or 1000 miles and X amount of time to get there. For me, it's usually because I'm going to an IndyCar race or test and I've thought, 'Oh sod it. I'll drive rather than fly.' In that situation, I tend to just get on the motorway, and I find there's a curious mindset where you only want to stop for fuel, and you eat crap from a petrol station purely because you don't want to waste time. But even when there's a schedule to stick to and it's a dull, straight road, I'm happy because it's a chance to relax and there's a freedom and independence to it that you don't get when you fly.

Then there are the proper adventures: the ones where you've got no itinerary, you're just driving for the fun of it, seeing where your imagination takes you – hopefully for three or four days, or more. Like anyone else, I'll stay off the motorway as much as possible and head up into the mountains, down by the ocean or along a loch. Funnily enough, I also really love driving through forests, even though trees don't exactly help with sight lines. Up in Scotland, one of my favourite things in the world is taking a day and doing a road trip towards Oban or even further north. It's a fantastic feeling of liberation to get in, switch the mobile off and not worry for a day – to just get away from everything, with nothing to think about but the car and a great road.

The choice of car is in some ways critical, but in other ways doesn't matter a jot. I had a great drive down to Monaco last winter in my old Merc estate loaded up with bicycles. Sometimes even a

cheap hire car is all you need. Of course, if I was driving straight out the door in Scotland or I could pick up a car in Monaco or northern Italy, I'd go for something crazy like the F40 or even a Stratos. Something like that's probably too aggressive on a long-haul trip, though, so if I was driving from the UK to, say, the Alps or Croatia, it would have to be something a fraction more sensible. Perhaps an F12 (I did say a fraction!) or the new GT3.

I did a lot of miles when I had a 2007 GT3 and it was such a great dual-purpose car, covering motorway miles with ease but then ripping up a snaking mountain pass when you reached it. A Carrera GT would actually be a wonderful road-trip car too, if only there was a place to put luggage – as soon as you take the roof panels off and load them in the front, there's no room for a bag. That's assuming you've got a passenger with you, of course, but I think you want someone with you for the ideal long road

'It's a fantastic feeling of liberation to get in, switch the mobile off and not worry for a day'

trip. As long as they don't scare too easily...

A white Testarossa sweeping along the *autostrade* from Monaco to Monza was special, a 930 down to Le Mans was wonderful, my Speedster along the Pacific Coast Highway was glorious... but that impulsive road trip to see McNish in Monaco still remains my favourite. By the time we got as far as Manchester, Marino and I were ready to kill each other. We had decided to take my F355 Spider and I'd had straight-through Challenge pipes put on it, so the sheer level of noise from the exhaust was almost unbearable. It's a stonking noise (so much better than the 430 and 458, which have lost that spine-tingling high-pitched scream that the 355 emits) but it is ridiculously loud when you take the silencers off.

We ended up putting newspaper in our ears until we could find some earplugs. We still went all the way to Monaco, obviously. Then we went up to the Stelvio, on over the Alps and down the Autobahns before returning home a few days later. Great roads, great car (even if it did need pretty much a full rebuild afterwards!), great company with my wee brother... it makes me want to go to another Celtic game. ❏

@dariofranchitti

Dario is a three-time Indy 500 winner and four-time IndyCar champ

The Ultimate for G63!



**+76 hp / +44 lb-ft
to 620 hp / 605 lb-ft for G63**



**BRABUS Widestar
widebody version,
Ride Control comfort suspension
and 23" forged alloy wheels**



**BRABUS PowerXtra B63-620
for G63
+76 hp / +44 lb-ft
to 620 hp / 605 lb-ft**



**BRABUS valve-controlled exhaust,
loud/quiet by push-button,
listen to sound here:
www.youtube.com/user/BRABUSgermany**

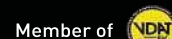


Model-specific restrictions may apply,
for further details please contact:

Infoline: **+49 20 41 777-514**
nils.jacoby@brabus.com
www.brabus.com



Official technology-partners



Inbox

Who's hitched a ride on your Ferrari this month?



Letter of the Month

Name of the game

I am an unashamed petrolhead but I'm becoming confused and irritated by recent automotive marketing trends.

For many years, carmakers with sporting pedigree followed a strategy that was easy for consumers to follow. They had their 'normal' cars with different trim levels and then their sporting variants, e.g. Ford with RS, Renault with Renaultsport, and BMW with M.

Now, however, we have to decipher 'normal', Sport, M Sport, M Performance and M in the case of BMW. Or 'normal', S-line, S and RS from Audi. And Mercedes has 'normal', Sport, 'Engineered by AMG', AMG and Black Series!

I understand marketing is important, but doesn't this confusion suggest that some intermediate models are just regular models with varying degrees of compromise, whilst makers try to bleed their brands dry? And doesn't it also suggest that they think that we haven't noticed?

Jonathan Canning

The star letter wins a Road Angel Gem safety camera & blackspot alert device worth £129.99



The Road Angel Gem automatically updates its safety camera database as you drive and allows users to share the locations of 'live' camera vans and changed speed limits.

ROAD ANGEL™



Above: the GT-R isn't the giant-slayer its Ring times suggest, says Derrin Auerswald

Invest in fun

Having read Ed Speak in *evo* 188, I wonder if people really do ask 'Will it look after me financially?' when they ask for buying advice on drivers' cars?

I've owned a lot of cars and that thought has never crossed my mind. The cars I've bought with my head and not my heart have been huge disappointments that left me desperate to offload them as quickly as possible. I know you aren't suggesting we all buy sensible cars, but once any commodity turns into an investment, the fun factor is immediately limited because the money aspect creeps in and hangs over you like a dark shadow.

I would say that if you can afford it, buy it. You only live once, so make the most of it and stuff the investment. If you can't afford it, then buy something else.

Peter Garforth

Pain in the GT-Rs

I find the outrage expressed by GT-R owners (*Inbox*, *evo* 188) after the GT3 v GT-R comparative test amusing. They seem so eager to quote their car's claimed Ring lap time, yet my trackday experiences so often involve a GT-R holding up a train of theoretically slower cars.

Drivers of real sports cars seem to find 'murdering' these overweight blobs on the brakes considerably easier than bragging about our car's published Ring time in the pub or in the press.

Derrin Auerswald

Four-star Focus

I was pleased to see the mk1 Ford Focus RS make it into your Future Icons feature (*evo* 188). I was even more pleased to see that you have now given the car the extra star it deserves, taking it up from three



Above: our re-rating the mk1 Focus RS at four stars got the support of Wayne Roper

stars to four.

Eleven years since Ford rolled out the first examples in 2002, the mk1 RS still looks modern and sharp, and still holds its own in decent company – unlike other hot hatches of its era.

I have owned my mk1 RS for the last eight years. Car 1195 was purchased as a standard 212bhp car and now boasts 420bhp – with the added bonus of no torque-steer!

If you've never driven a modified one, find one and compare. It is a shame, though, that a limited-edition model like this is suffering such poor residual values.

Wayne Roper

The Focus had been marked down to three stars because of its torque-steer, but in the context of the current hot hatch climate, that torque-steer no longer feels as unacceptable as it once did. Hence the extra star – Ed

Remember MG

Having read the Future Icons feature, I was wondering what gems you may have missed. One name that comes to mind is the MG XPower SV-R!

As one of the few lucky owners of one, I'm always amazed how this car is completely under everyone's radar (although when I recently attended supercar days at Wilton House and Beaulieu, the interest from the public for my car was far greater than for the supercars!). I know it was a complete folly from MG Rover and received mixed reviews, but perhaps it's time to look again at the tremendous driving experience of this race-bred car?

With around 80 built and probably 75 still in existence, it's a very practical 'supercar' with low maintenance costs thanks to the bulletproof Mustang engine.

Originally priced in the £75-90,000 range, they come in nearer £30,000



1983-2013
30 YEARS
OF MILLTEK EXCELLENCE



MAKE EVERY JOURNEY EPIC

More than 30 years of continuous exhaust development and technical expertise are drawn upon to develop the ultimate Milltek Sport range of performance exhaust products. It's little wonder that Milltek Sport remains the 'must-have' brand for tuners around the World.

MILLTEK

SPORT



Discover more at millteksport.com

Find us online   

today. I'm convinced that the SV-R will become a cult car in the DeLorean mould, and will prove to be a great investment. It's just a matter of time.

Colin Withers

Diab-no

I enjoyed the Future Icons piece, but I have to take issue with the Diablo SV being put forward as a golden investment opportunity. This would be my take...

Fifteen- to twenty-year-old highly strung supercar with pre-VAG build, potentially ruinous maintenance (an epic wallet-molester if anything big goes pop) and vast petrol and insurance costs. Still costs significantly more than half of its original price. Oh, and it isn't all it could be to drive, based on the article that follows.

So would you spend £80-90k on such a thing even if you had the money? No, neither would I...

Simon Bartlett

One in the M135i

Four months after I bought a brand-new BMW M135i with adaptive suspension and a flappy-paddle gearbox, I took it back to the dealer. It was like driving on a PlayStation: the electric steering had no feel, the balance was slightly odd, Comfort mode was too soft, Sport was too synthetic and the paddles left me emotionless even while hoofing it!

Your Future Icons article was timely as I have just bought a 1M and it's much more like it. There's feel through the hydraulic steering, just the one suspension setting, terrific balance and a manual gearbox, and that's before you even get to rarity, residuals, looks and so on.

New cars with all this electric stuff might be good for the environment, but it's not good news for the future of keen drivers' needs. I believe the 1M and the like could be the last of their kind – get them while you can still get a good one!

Hamish Tait

S3 for me

As a long-time subscriber and Audi S3 owner, I must comment on Mike Duff's excellent Golf GTI v rivals test (*evo* 188). I think a trick is being missed...

I am on my second 8P-model S3 and am happy to confess to it! Where else can you buy such build quality,

speed, comfort and practicality, plus four-wheel drive, for that kind of money? They're easily tuned if you want more power and fly under the radar by being almost un-noticeable compared to more 'look at me!' rivals.

When I bought my first S3 I also looked at the then-new BMW M135i as an alternative. The dealer showed no interest at all in sorting a car for me to look at, or a test drive or even a brochure, and I was never contacted again. Audi was the complete opposite and made the buying experience a pleasure: nothing was too much trouble and the car was excellent, as is my current 2012 S-tronic Black Edition.

As a 52-year-old enthusiast, I've never considered myself a fashionista (in Mike Duff's words), but if you feel I need counselling, please forward appropriate details.

Allan Lock

Seven heaven

So much of Nick Trott's Ed Speak in *evo* 187 rang true: 'If there is one car that represents all we love about driving, the GT3 would be high on the list. Well, that and the Caterham 7.'

I regularly undertake road trips in my Superlight R, so Nick's comments referring to the lack of roof and windscreen made me smile. The ritual of preparing for a trip, be it a quick early morning blat in the Peak District or a long weekend driving and camping with friends, all adds to the anticipation of the driving purity to come. Assuming Nick's trip took place during our great summer, there would have been little need for all-weather gear, and yet even in less clement conditions, the ritual merely requires a helmet and motorbike waterproofs.

Nick concludes by comparing his experiences in the Seven with a 1982 Porsche. He is right in stating that newer cars lull their drivers into a false sense of security. Each time I give a friend a lift in the Seven, I'm asked: 'Has it got airbags?' 'Has it got Bluetooth?' 'What about ABS?' No one needs these gizmos: they just dilute the experience. My last trip required only two things: concentration and an appreciation of the driving experience and scenery.

So thanks, Nick, for an editorial that hit home and made me grateful for the fact that I can enjoy a car that exemplifies The Thrill of Driving.

Roger Needham



Above: Allan Lock didn't hesitate to buy an Audi S3 instead of a BMW M135i



Above: Roger Needham gets lots of fun out of his Seven, whatever the weather



From the forums: community.evo.co.uk

Thread of the Month

BUNTA

918 Ring Lap: 6:57

Normal questions apply: How fast is too fast?
Do Ring laps matter now?

MIKERT4

Would love to have seen the full lap. Even in the short video, he [driver Marc Lieb] looked like he really had to work hard for that time.

ERIC PISCH

Honestly do not care.

PUGRALLYE2

Very impressive, but utterly irrelevant.

PILOUIL

So the 918 may be faster than the P1 or the LaFerrari – but will it be faster than whatever GT-R?

CENUJMU1

This is where I have the big issue. Porsche claims [the 918 can do] 94mpg, but that is using EV mode only. Given that, they should have used only EV mode for the total range of the car on the Nürburgring, then swapped to race hybrid mode and done a combined lap time. It would have been about nine minutes. It shows how stupid the mpg

mode is for this car, and therefore by default how stupid the batteries are. Especially when you have the engineers obviously so pleased that it has gone so fast.

EVONIK

Those who don't care clearly have nothing to do with cars at all. Keep enjoying your diesel wagons. It doesn't matter much in real life but shows what a car can do at full potential.

DAVID_YU

I found watching it utterly terrifying, and it reinforced yet again how pointless it is for me to bother doing timed laps there.

I'm expecting the LaFerrari to go marginally quicker, and the P1 to beat them both by 15-20sec.

MARKCOOPERS

Wow, it felt fast and was exhausting watching it. Go on Porsche, tell us what mpg you got on that lap.



Thread of the Month wins a Jorg Gray chronograph

The originator of the best **evo** forum thread wins a fabulous Jorg Gray chronograph. Jorg Gray has quickly become one of the world's most sought-after brands and is found in fine jewellery stores throughout the UK.

www.jorggray.co.uk

JORG GRAY
JG



Car Insurance

Be Wiser...
Save Money

- The best policy at the best price
- We search over 30 insurance companies
- FREE Breakdown Cover
- FREE legal protection
- Instant cover and instalments
- Good credit rating?
Save up to 40%!



Freephone:

0800 298 9649

Online quotes at: www.bewiser44.co.uk

Be Wiser Insurance



For all your insurance needs -
car, motorbike, van, multi-vehicle, home & travel

← CASCINA
Vittorio Veneto



by RICHARD MEADEN

PHOTOGRAPHY by
GUS GREGORY

*One of the most eagerly
awaited cars of 2013 is
set to get pulses racing
about Alfa Romeo again.
We drive the new 4C in
its Italian heartland*

BRINGING SEXY BACK



**‘FROM THE SCULPTED TIP OF ITS AQUILINE
BEAK TO THE FULSOME CURVES OF ITS
TAPERED RUMP, THE 4C IS EVERY INCH THE
MID-ENGINE EXOTIC’**





I **IS THERE A MORE** infuriating, wonderful, confusing or charismatic brand than Alfa Romeo? It's one of the Laws of Car Geekery that you have to love Alfa, yet so far as I or anyone else I've consulted can remember, nothing truly world-beating has emerged from the Milanese company since the Alfasud of the '70s. And if we're talking specialist high-performance metal you have to look to the exquisite GTA from the mid-'60s for evidence of Alfa Romeo at the top of its game.

Of course there have been stylish, quirky, intriguing and desirable cars since then. But time and nostalgia have a habit of glossing over the inadequacies and changing the way in which we view models that, in their day, were flawed or idiosyncratic to the point where only a dedicated band of Alfisti could love them. Reliance on charm, individuality and past glories is all well and good, but in a changing world where emerging markets are oblivious to illustrious heritage and established markets are driven by buying decisions based on quality, value, performance and image, only the clearest and most appealing propositions will survive.

This, then, is Year Zero for Alfa Romeo, the moment the dice is rolled on a gamble of reinvention with a low-volume, high-visibility sports car to create a halo around the brand, and to provide a springboard from which to launch a new range of fresh mainstream models. The 4C concept of 2011 was a brilliant decision and a clear indication of how seriously Alfa was taking the challenge. Small, super-

sexy, quick and affordable, yet built from materials more commonly associated with supercars four times its price, the 4C had the Alfisti in raptures and grabbed those who had never previously considered an Alfa by the lapels.

Fast-forward to 2013 and, along with the 991 GT3, it's the most exciting new car of the year. The transition from concept to production reality required Alfa's in-house styling studio to make changes to almost every panel, but the essence of the 4C has been preserved. The changes you'll notice are the headlights – hard to miss! – and the door mirrors. Don't get hung up on the headlights. The 4C is beautiful. And I mean *really* beautiful. From the sculpted tip of its aquiline beak to the fulsome curves of its tapered rump, Alfa Romeo's all-new sports car is every inch the mid-engined exotic. The proportions, size and stance all combine to create the perfect pocket-sized supercar. There's not a bad angle anywhere, and when you see a 4C on the road, it renders every other car invisible.

OPEN THE DOOR AND YOU'RE confronted by a chunky sill that reveals the fat carbon weave of the composite tub. It's an easier car to climb into than an Exige (or an Elise with the roof fitted), but you still need to be relatively limber to twist and lower yourself in. The interior strikes a fine balance between style and simplicity; there's a lot of plastic, but careful texturing ensures it isn't offensive and the honesty of it suits the stripped-back nature of the car. It's more plush than a Lotus, with greater concessions made to trimming the interior and creating a more welcoming, less hardcore cockpit environment. The seats look good

Alfa Romeo 4C

Right: cool details help offset less-than-premium plastics. **Far right:** communication on turn-in is lacking. **Below:** shallow-raked rear screen impacts rearward visibility. **Bottom:** Race Pack-spec test car came on 18in front and 19in rear wheels, an inch bigger than standard



and offer decent lateral support, but they are slightly too upright for my liking, something I'll be reminded of the morning after this test by a twinge in my lower back.

The steering wheel is hefty, with a fat rim, lots of stitching and a flat bottom. I'm not a fan of odd-shaped steering wheels, but as Alfa promises you can tackle 90 per cent of corners without moving your hands from the wheel, the flat bottom may not prove to be an issue. Hold the wheel and stretch out your fingers and they fall upon the gearshift paddles. Small and made from plastic, they have minimal travel and a switch-like feel, much like those of the myriad DSG-equipped cars from the VW Group. There's no selector lever: controls for Neutral, Auto/Manual, Drive and Reverse are instead a cluster of round switches on the tunnel directly beneath the centre console.

Twist the ignition key and the snazzy instrument display illuminates. It's impressive and more than a little reminiscent of that in the Lamborghini Aventador, but it's also fussy and it's rather hard to decipher all the information

it's displaying. Work your way through the DNA modes (God, how I hate that acronym for what is essentially a multi-stage sport mode) and areas of the display change, adding a turbo boost gauge and, eventually that most pointless of infographics, the G-meter. Better to admire the view through the windscreen, which is framed by the cresting tops of the front wheelarches and the beautiful sweep of that pinched line that runs from the base of the A-pillars.

Glance in the door mirrors – sadly not the delicately constructed items seen on the original concept – and you get a great view down the sculpted flanks to the road behind. Look in the central rear-view mirror and you know immediately why the small door mirrors had to go: the view through the dark, shadowy engine compartment is almost non-existent, so you're almost totally reliant on the door mirrors for rearward visibility.

All the test cars on this launch are equipped with the optional Race Pack, which consists of larger wheels (18in front, 19in rear), stickier Pirelli P Zero tyres, a sports exhaust, a thicker





front anti-roll bar, another at the rear (as standard it comes without a rear anti-roll bar) and re-rated springs and dampers. The Race Pack seems good value at £3000 and will surely prove popular, but it would be nice to have a standard car to try as well, so that we have context by which to judge the upgrades.

The first five minutes of any test drive are always revealing. Not in terms of outright ability, but in terms of getting a pretty clear idea of whether the basics are right. First impressions of the 4C are more than encouraging. The structure, famously made from carbonfibre, feels supremely rigid, which in turn allows the suspension the freedom to work unimpeded by unwanted flex. Consequently the damping – stiffer on this car, don't forget – has a wonderful feeling of control, pliancy and depth that rounds things off beautifully yet maintains a feeling of tautness that's essential in a car with such lofty sporting aspirations. Lumpy cobbled streets don't wrong-foot it at low speeds, and as the pace increases, that polish and suppleness ensures bumps, crests and compressions are

dealt with admirably. If it's this good on bigger wheels and firmer suspension, I can't wait to experience the standard set-up.

The engine, Alfa's familiar turbocharged, direct-injection 1742cc four-cylinder petrol motor, is some 22kg lighter than that found in the Giulietta thanks to a new cast-aluminium block in place of the regular cast-iron item. Tuned to deliver a peak of 237bhp at 6000rpm and a fat 258lb ft of torque between 2200 and 4250rpm, it trades top-end effervescence for low- and mid-range accessibility. With the Race Pack's exhaust fitted it's surprisingly noisy, emitting a fruity *fwaarp* that's two parts Fiat 500 Abarth Esseeesse and one part Ferrari 458 at less than stratospheric revs. If you're over 30, I suspect you'll find it a bit 'McDonald's Drive-Thru' but I'll admit there's a certain drama to it, at least from outside.

Inside the car, it's actually more intrusive, with a succession of boomy, resonant phases that are fun for about five minutes before becoming increasingly tiresome. The motor itself is characterful, with all manner of

**'ONCE COMMITTED
TO A CORNER YOU
FIND THE BALANCE
IS RESOLUTELY
NEUTRAL'**



Above: twin exhausts help produce rasping engine note. **Right:** DNA switch offers three levels of sportiness. **Far right:** distinctive headlights remain an acquired taste. **Top right:** Alfa badge etched into filler cap is a nice touch



gurgles, snorts, chuffs and wastegate sneezes percolating into the cockpit. Alfa claims it has applied all sorts of trick lag-reducing tech to improve throttle response, but there's still a noticeable pause while the boost builds. On the one hand it does affect the immediacy of the 4C's responsiveness, but on the other it adds a welcome sense of forced induction, trading linearity for a good old-fashioned shove in the back. If you're a fan of Alfa's free-spinning, rev-hungry naturally aspirated engines of yore, however, this blown motor, with a red line at 6500rpm, will be a disappointment. It's undeniably characterful and effective, but in a rather hot hatchy manner that's at odds with the 4C's baby exotic brief and obvious class.

That engine is mated to Alfa's six-speed TCT dual-clutch transmission, which is much better than I'd feared, but not class-leading. It doesn't have the precision or the keen, quick wits of the VW DSG found in a Golf GTI, nor does it have the outright shift speed (a claimed 0.12sec) to emulate the synaptic fizz of a Ferrari's up- and downshifts. The paddles



‘THE DAMPING HAS A WONDERFUL FEELING OF CONTROL, PLIANCY AND DEPTH THAT ROUNDS THINGS OFF BEAUTIFULLY’



don't help, for they are small, apologetic and as feelsome as a light-switch. That's forgivable in a Golf, but not in a sports car that trades on emotion and tactility. Nevertheless, although it works well in automatic, it bodes well that I find myself always switching the transmission to manual throughout this test so I can change gear myself. The ratios are well spaced, finding a satisfying compromise between low-gear urgency and sixth-gear serenity. With the aid of launch control, the 4C will punch from 0 to 62mph in just 4.5sec and touch 160mph all-out. That's serious performance from a sub-2-litre, sub-£50k sports car.

I'm sure the fact that the 4C does without power-assisted steering may come as a shock to some of you. It certainly has to me, especially given the size of the tyres and the fact that this car will (hopefully) attract customers new to the sports car sector. It needs a bit of muscle at parking speeds, but the steering is very manageable once rolling. In fact it's too light if anything, especially around the straight-ahead. There's a strange, wandery, slightly dislocated

on-centre feel, so the car seems to follow cambers and generally sniffs around. You're not conscious of all the corrections you're making, but you when think about it you find you're making small inputs most of the time, which makes it hard to relax, even when driving in a straight line.

This lack of on-centre feel is the 4C's main area of weakness. There's a bit more weight and a bit more feel once you've applied some steering lock, but it's that critical moment, where you're feeling for whether the car is hooked up and whether the front-end has found some bite, that dictates your level of confidence and preparedness to carry speed and commit to the corner. At this moment the 4C leaves you hanging. You know it has the grip and stability, but you can't feel it, so instead of entering the corner with reassurance, you feel your guts tighten in the split-second between turning the wheel and feeling the build-up of lateral G confirm that the car is hooked up. Through long corners, you find yourself making secondary nudges of steering input to try and get some

feedback. It's a bit like driving a car with downforce: you know the grip is there, but you just can't feel it until it's there beneath you.

Once committed to a corner you find the balance is resolutely neutral, with an eventual fade into the mildest settling understeer. It's safe, and asks little of you once that initial lock is applied, but I'm not sure why the 4C has been tuned to be so inert, as you can tell from the damping alone that the chassis development team clearly knows its craft. An Elise or Exige is far more explicitly communicative and connected, managing to feel more alive while tempering any edginess with transparent limits. Similarly, a Cayman manages to tell you what each corner is doing despite much higher levels of refinement and isolation, and is a more expressive car as you approach and eventually exceed its limits. The 4C is more race car-like in its focus on grip, stability and neutrality. This doubtless makes for good marketing copy and would be more exploitable were there more steering feel to rely upon. Frustratingly, it doesn't quite translate into on-road dynamics

'SEX APPEAL AND CARBON CONSTRUCTION SET THE 4C APART, BUT THERE HAVE BEEN COMPROMISES'

that are as engaging or entertaining as they could be given a little more connection and freedom of expression.

The 4C launch is centred upon Alfa Romeo's Balocco test facility. Unfortunately the demands of shooting a cover story mean we have no time to drive on the test track, but a passenger ride the previous night was a vivid demonstration of the 4C's outright cornering, braking and acceleration. The way the test driver threw the car into corners provided evidence of its balance and lack of mid-corner, throttle-off malice, but never once did he get the 4C out of shape. Oversteer is far from the be all and end all – especially in a lightweight, mid-engined sports car – but it's highly unusual for an Italian chassis engineer not to slide a car around given both the opportunity to do so and a captive journalist to impress.

Out on the roads that criss-cross the flat, fertile rice fields of the region, the 4C is swift and sure-footed, its lusty little engine punching us down the straights and snarling with every upshift. The healthy reserves of mid-range torque coupled to the TCT transmission make for near-seamless surges of acceleration that soon have you travelling at three-figure speeds between the corners. The Brembo brakes – 305mm front and 292mm rear – are extremely powerful, with a lovely firm pedal and impressive, progressive response from the moment your foot covers the pedal.

If there's a gripe, it's that they are deceptively effective. By that I mean they always feel like they have so much in reserve that you only ever feel like you're using 80 per cent of their capability. But when you push for what you believe to be the last 20 per cent you almost immediately hear the front tyres chirruping on the point of triggering the ABS. It's not a problem – more, I suspect, an issue of unfamiliarity – but it's a shame the immaculate linearity that characterises the bulk of the available stopping power doesn't extend to the final few millimetres of travel.

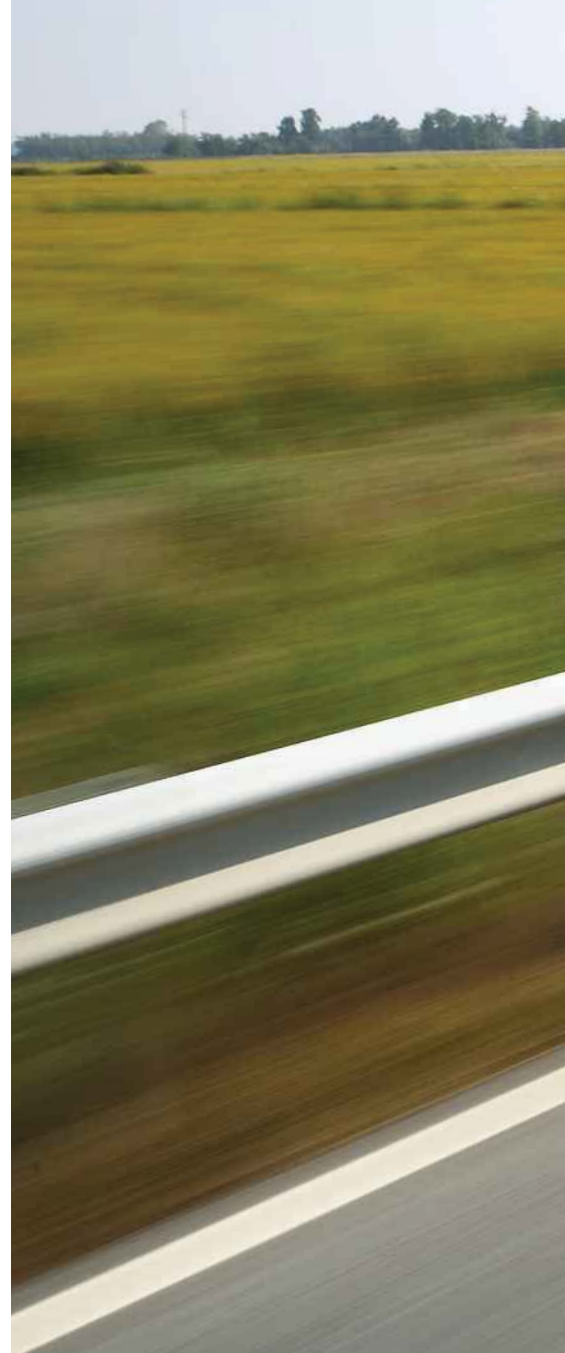
IT'S IMPORTANT TO DISSECT THESE individual elements of the 4C's performance, but it's how they come together to shape the driving experience that's vital. When judged as a whole there's no doubt the 4C is a quality item.

Beautiful, and beautifully put together, it feels worth every penny of its £45,000 asking price. You'd write the cheque (or sign the finance agreement) on looks alone. Indeed I suspect Alfa Romeo will sell all 3500 4Cs it hopes to build annually based solely on its styling. Sex appeal and the kudos of carbon construction set the 4C apart from its rivals, but there have been compromises along the way.

For some the main issue is Alfa having to make the best of a powertrain donated by a less-than-exceptional hot hatch. It does the numbers and does have a character and delivery that will appeal to some, but it simply can't compete with the Cayman's superb flat-six for class or maturity. Nor can it match the urgency and aggression of the Exige S and its howling supercharged V6, or the razor-sharp response of the cheaper Elise S. For others it'll be the lack of feel from the steering and the rather prescriptive nature of the handling. It certainly charges down the road like a car with over 250bhp/ton, but it doesn't have the intuitive, immersive feel that defines its toughest and most capable rivals.

That doesn't make the 4C a bad car. Far from it, in fact. I'm certain there are Porsche Cayman owners who would love the Alfa's brio, just as I'm sure there are Elise and Exige owners who are ready for a change, not to mention those who, until the 4C came on the scene, had never wanted to own a two-seater sports car. However, this is **evo**, where the thrill of driving is our central tenet. We appreciate styling, understand the value of technology and acknowledge outright performance, but to us it's feel and how a car makes us feel that's key. And as a package, the 4C is hugely desirable. It's by far the best new Alfa in (many) decades and it will deservedly do wonders for the brand.

Nothing would have given us more pleasure than to pronounce the 4C inspirational, but those few areas in which it falls short are what, for us at least, separate the good, even the very good, from the truly great drivers' cars. The frustrating thing is it doesn't feel like it would take much to add some spice to the handling and a pinch of feel to the steering. Do that and it would make all the difference. As it stands, the 4C doesn't deliver Alfa Romeo straight to the top of the class, but it's a damned good start. ❏





Left: air intakes behind the doors feed mid-mounted 1.7-litre turbo engine. **Right:** digital dash can display boost level and G-reading. **Far right:** upright seats left Meaden with a sore back



Specification

ALFA ROMEO 4C

Engine In-line 4-cyl, 1742cc, turbo

CO2 157g/km

Power 237bhp @ 6000rpm

Torque 258lb ft @ 2200-4250rpm

Transmission Six-speed TCT,
rear-wheel drive, limited-slip differential

Front suspension Double wishbones,
coil springs, dampers, anti-roll bar

Rear suspension MacPherson struts, coil
springs, dampers

Brakes Ventilated drilled discs, 305mm front,
292mm rear, ABS

Wheels 7 x 17in front, 8 x 18in rear
(18in front with 19in rears optional)

Tyres 205/45 R17 front, 235/40 R18 rear

Weight (dry) 895kg

Power-to-weight (dry) 269bhp/ton

0-62mph 4.5sec (claimed)

Top speed 160mph (claimed)

Basic price £45,000

On sale Now

evo rating: ★★★★★





Swiss movement, English heart



C70 DBR1 CHRONOMETER
HISTORIC 100 PIECE LIMITED EDITION

Made in Switzerland / Back-plate incorporates metal from historic 1959 Le Mans winning Aston Martin DBR1/2 / Worldwide limited edition of only 100 pieces / Thermo-compensated ETA 251.272 Chronometer / 1/10ths second split-timing / 316L marine-grade stainless steel case / Anti-reflective sapphire crystal / Signed provenance certification / Vintage leather strap with Bader deployment / Deluxe presentation case and Special Edition owner's handbook

EXCLUSIVELY AVAILABLE AT christopherward.co.uk

CHR. WARD
LONDON

Lamborghini Gallardo Squadra Corse





by DAVID VIVIAN

PHOTOGRAPHY by DEAN SMITH

L'ULTIMO

*After ten years and 25 different iterations, the
Lamborghini Gallardo has reached the end of the line.
This last version, the Squadra Corse, could be the best.
We check it out in deepest Lambo country*

Lamborghini Gallardo Squadra Corse



M

'MAMMA MIA!' COMES THE exclamation, at first gasped but repeated twice more as reverential whispers, delivered with a disbelieving shake of the head and, I assume, a mock buckling of the knees. I've parked up in

wilder-looking supercars than this that have created less of a social stir. But the shaven-headed biker with the Vin Diesel physique and conspicuous white leathers seems to be experiencing a serious loss of restraint, even by Italian standards. So I'm not sure about the knees.

He slowly circles the silver Squadra Corse mumbling 'bella... bella', while gently easing back the similarly mesmerised and seemingly perma-present crowd of superbike riders that congregate at the iconic Chalet Raticosa cafe, at the top of the fabulously twisted Raticosa pass. He's right, of course. The Gallardo is, and always has been, a good-looking supercar. But it's as if he knows, without actually knowing, that this one is something special. It's hard to be certain as, apart from counting to 21 and swearing (I used to play table tennis with English language students from Italy in my youth), I don't speak Italian. His smaller friend, in contrasting black leathers and spectacles, speaks only a smattering of English.

Apart from its large, race-developed carbonfibre rear wing, tricolore trim stripes and glossy black alloys fronting enormous carbon-ceramic discs, the exterior isn't much help in his quest to identify the car. But when I open the door to point out the 'Squadra Corse' script on the sill kick-plate and the side of the Alcantara-upholstered lightweight racing seat, he fixes me with a look reminiscent of Colin Farrell at his most plaintively suicidal in the film *In Bruges*, grabs an imaginary steering wheel and waggles it from side to side. I'm doing my best

to resist the thought that he wants to kill himself in 'the last Gallardo' when his smaller friend summons enough vocabulary to explain that he would merely like to sit in it.

'Not a problem,' I say, sweeping a palm towards the compact, carbon-clad cabin while forgetting that I've jammed my aluminium briefcase between the back of the seat and the bulkhead to stop it rattling around, compromising my own driving position by an inch or two. My new best friend is easily four inches taller than me and wearing those bulky leathers. Watching him try to get in is at first amusing, but soon seems a little cruel, so desperate is he to force his torso into the tight embrace of the seat for the first round of photo opportunities. Eventually he manages it and sits there for five minutes looking very happy. Once he's had his fill, he has to be tugged out by his smaller friend and another biker so he can be photographed in a succession of increasingly macho poses next to the car. And allow me, at some stage, to get back in.

Before that, there's a brief but intense mime session with subtitles in which, as a magazine journalist rather than a minted owner, I try to impart some salient facts about the Squadra Corse. These mainly concern it being an LP570-4 Superleggera with the rear wing and lightweight fast-release engine cover from the Super Trofeo race car, having 562bhp, doing 0-62mph in 3.4sec and 199mph, and in all probability being the final version of the Gallardo before its replacement, the Cabrera, is launched next year. But I'm pretty sure, despite the best efforts of the smaller friend, much if not all of this is lost in translation. So I fire up the throaty, naturally aspirated 5.2-litre V10 and give it a couple of big, valley-vibrating, 8500rpm, limiter-stuttering whoops, just to confirm that when it comes to making a proper noise, no two-



'BIG REAR WINGS ARE ALWAYS CONTROVERSIAL, BUT THIS ONE IS AN ELEGANTLY PROPORTIONED THING OF BEAUTY'



wheeled track warrior can compete. It seems to bridge the language gap. And blow the froth off nearby cappuccinos.

The encounter supports a hunch: Lamborghini still connects with the speed-loving Italian psyche like a sledgehammer. That the company's overlords are German simply isn't an issue. All-Italian Ferrari has its F1 tifosi, but its recent road cars don't seem to cut as deep. For example, at our first coffee break a few hours earlier, three undeniably gorgeous 599 GTOs and two even sharper-looking F12s were parked side-by-side on the road next to the cafe. Admittedly, they were all painted in dark metallic hues and registered in Switzerland. Photographer Dean Smith and I had a nose around and there were a few glances from some older gents who'd just dismounted from pannier-festooned BMW touring bikes, but no one else seemed to care.

We pitched up there in the Squadra Corse somewhat raucously, as the final bend leading up to the cafe is fast enough to snag fourth. And because letting the single-clutch robotised

six-speed transmission do its gratuitous yet perfectly judged throttle-blipping thing on the downshifts under braking is seriously addictive. Immediately we were welcomed into the middle of the MotoGP-worshipping throng as a kindred spirit: exciting, explicit, vital, a road-going racer with no excess baggage (despite a prodigious collection of camera gear).

The Gallardo has been in production for ten years and it's easy to underestimate its significance. Over half the Lamborghinis ever made have been Gallardos. Constantly evolving through two model generations, there have been a remarkable 25 iterations and special editions (some, admittedly, rather obscure and intended for Far East markets), not to mention the GT3, Super GT and Le Mans racers. They've been pressed into service as the world's coolest police cars and pumped to over 1500bhp by turbo-loving tuning houses to keep nuke-spec Nissan GT-Rs honest on YouTube.

As the first Lambo completed with Audi money and technical input, it was perhaps

no great surprise that the brand's traditional snorting swagger was merged with a degree of Teutonic sensibility and platform/powertrain engineering that would later reappear in Audi's own R8. Then-VW Group boss Ferdinand Piëch, a noted fan of Lamborghini and the man who acquired it for Audi, knew, however, that the Gallardo would always be the first son and, at the very least, the R8's harder, angrier brother.

So while it's tempting to think of the Gallardo as a marketing-led entry-level 'baby Lambo' with the inevitable job of facing off the Porsche 911 and the Ferrari 360 Modena, it fundamentally outgunned its rivals in 2003 with weapons that would stand it in good stead for a decade. In truth, there was nothing like it. The Gallardo took up no more road than a Ford Focus yet combined full-on supercar presence with the feral sonic signature of a high-revving mid-mounted 5-litre V10, delivering 493bhp to all four wheels via Lamborghini's Viscous Traction system. It was unique. It was a sensation.

There have been a few facelifts over its



Lamborghini Gallardo Squadra Corse



Left: Gallardo's compact size makes it easy to guide along narrow streets. **Below:** Squadra Corse even turns bikers' heads on the Raticosa. **Bottom:** new wing generates huge rear grip at speed



production life, but I don't think any Gallardo has looked quite as perfectly balanced or as purposeful as the Squadra Corse. Big rear wings are always controversial, but this one is an elegantly proportioned thing of beauty, lifted essentially unchanged from the rump of the Trofeo racer. It's claimed to provide three times the downforce of the much more discreet item on the LP570-4 Superleggera coupe.

The Squadra Corse, which benefits from the same carbonfibre weight loss regime originally instigated by engineer Maurizio Reggiani and his team on the first-generation Superleggera 'to reach more deeply into the power-to-weight potential of the car', is possibly a few grams lighter. But, whichever way you cut it, 1340kg (dry) is pretty trim and gives the Squadra Corse a power-to-weight ratio of 426bhp/ton. A 458 Italia checks in at 414bhp/ton dry.

The Squadra Corse has no radio or satnav, but Dean's TomTom works well enough with the annoying Stephen Fry commentary switched off. Besides, even when it's not trying,


the V10's lead vocal makes an instrumental accompaniment redundant.

OUR MORNING HAD STARTED IN THE basement car park of Bologna's Royal Carlton hotel. People having breakfast up above must have wondered if someone had parked a Formula 1 car in there overnight, because when this Lambo's V10 ignites from cold in an echoey concrete bunker, exhaust valves wide open, it could wake the dead. I'm not sure even an Aventador would deliver such a violently raw and visceral wake-up call. After a few minutes, the valves close and the idle settles to a more decorous but still suggestively menacing beat. It's never a good idea to be feeling dozy when you're about to drive a supercar and, if the bedside alarm hasn't done the trick, the Squadra Corse simply stuns you into a state of alertness.

The lightweight doors with their carbon inner panels require a decent tug to latch properly but, once the carbon-shelled bucket seats have clamped you into position behind the thick-

rimmed Alcantara-trimmed wheel, the Squadra Corse's cabin feels intimate and special. The basic architecture and layout haven't changed much over the years. You sit low, seemingly just inches off the ground, with the windscreen and thick A-pillars sloping away at an impossible angle to meet up with the stubby nose. Peripheral visibility isn't a strong point. Those sturdy pillars compromise sight lines, rear vision is via a letterbox aperture a postman would struggle to push a modestly sized Jiffy bag through, and there's an over-the-shoulder blind spot to stay mindful of, too.

But then the Gallardo is the product of an older paradigm. Its driving environment doesn't have the almost airy ambience of a 458, nor its show-off instrumentation or switchgear sophistication. That might be a deal-breaker for some, but personally I still find the Lambo's straight-ahead simplicity appealing. The bubble-shaped instrument pod houses large, white dials with red graphics that are easy to read through the arc of the steering wheel, supplemented by

A high-angle, wide shot of a white sports car, likely a Ferrari Gallardo, driving on a two-lane asphalt road that curves through a rugged, mountainous landscape. The road is bordered by a metal guardrail on the left. The surrounding terrain is a mix of green fields, dense forests, and rocky slopes under a bright blue sky with scattered white clouds. The car is positioned in the lower-left quadrant of the frame, moving towards the right.

'IF YOUR MISSION WAS TO DRIVE THE FINAL GALLARDO BRIMMED WITH
THE LAST TANKFUL OF SUPER UNLEADED ON EARTH, THE RATICOSA IS
THE ONLY PLACE YOU'D WANT TO GO'



Lamborghini Gallardo Squadra Corse

a blister of three auxiliary gauges set into the top of the dash. And the row of knurled metal switches on the broad centre console, while wilfully counter-intuitive (the ones for the windows have to be pressed up for open and down for close), look great and feel even better. It's a proper old-school Lambo interior, nicely trimmed in Alcantara and carbonfibre, from which Audi has eradicated the flakiness rather than imposing its own design mores – just as it should be.

Lower down is the horizontal part of the console where a glinting, chrome-topped gearlever resting in a metal exposed gate would once have been back in the days when the Gallardo came as standard with a manual gearbox. Instead, here sit the three black buttons that come with the now-standard e-gear paddle-shift transmission and which modulate the car's personality to suit conditions and mood. 'A' switches in and out of auto, 'Sport' quickens the shift and slackens the ESC, while 'Corsa' releases the Kraken: fastest shift, full noise all the time and the most ESC freedom short of switching it off completely.

It sounds a bit crude and arbitrary in an era of algorithmically telepathic double-clutchers, and I'm anticipating a rather fraught and clunky drive through rush-hour Bologna to the motorway and the mountains beyond. But with the 'A' button engaged, the Squadra Corse breezes the urban crawl, slurring silkily through the lower ratios on part-throttle, pulling cleanly away at junctions and trickling along at tickover. It doesn't quite match the smoothness of a good slush-'box auto or double-clutch marvel, but it's close enough, and an unexpected boost given the ancient hydraulically actuated tech's previous shortcomings in these areas. Lamborghini says nothing's changed. I don't believe it.

There are a few more surprises, too. Brake pedal feel, a perennial bugbear for Gallardos equipped with carbon-ceramic discs, is still too soggy at the top of the travel, but once past that, it's far more progressive than I remember even from the Superleggera I took to Wales a few months back, making it possible to roll to a standstill in a linear fashion rather than a series of jerks. And although the surface of Bologna's streets can be as untidy as the graffiti that now seems to cover every inch of its piazza's once-pristine columns, the Squadra Corse's stiffly bushed and sprung chassis has a surprisingly supple leading edge that desensitises sharp ridges and sudden dips. In short, and working round its old-fashioned visibility hang-ups, it displays an easy-going grace and useability around town that sets up a sense of calm before the inevitable storm.

An hour on the motorways peels back a few more layers and gets us closer to the Squadra Corse's savage heart, not least when travelling through the numerous tunnels where, cliché that it is, dropping a couple of cogs and letting the fully lit V10's howl flood the space is de rigueur. Difference is, in the Squadra Corse, the sound isn't just supercar central but absolutely bloody awesome, even with the windows shut. Resistance really is futile. Find a clear straight, press the Corsa button, select second, flatten the

Lamborghini Gallardo Squadra Corse

Below and below right: engine cover and rear wing are taken from the Super Trofeo racer. **Bottom:** no gearstick here – Squadra Corse has the e-gear automated manual 'box as standard. **Bottom right:** 5.2-litre V10 produces the same 562bhp as in the LP570-4 Superleggera



throttle and ride out the shattering mechanical scream with its blaring slipstream to the red line. Repeat with vicious millisecond interruptions in third and fourth as the timbre of the note deepens and hardens with each thumping shift. Relentless rush. Aural Armageddon. Epic.

IF YOUR MISSION WAS TO DRIVE THE final Gallardo brimmed with the last tankful of super unleaded on Earth, the Passo Raticosa is the only road you'd want to go to in this part of Italy. That's what Dean and I decided over pizza and beer the previous evening at a restaurant in old-town Bologna. Situated at 968 metres above sea level, it isn't the most technical or challenging stretch of tarmac on the planet, but it is one of the most open and free-flowing. It's a

natural playground for supercars and superbikes alike, a place where their performance and powers of adhesion and retardation can be exploited and enjoyed to the full. Lamborghini's test drivers use it, as do we. It mixes a few curve balls with the curves, though. Thanks to the occasionally shifting local topology, the tarmac has deteriorated over the years, introducing new cambers, subsidence hollows and ridges that form complex puzzles for the suspension and damping to solve.

Dean is keen that I should get a good feel for the bewinged Gallardo before he starts the action photography, perhaps believing that nailing a decent drift round one particularly tasty bend (that countless Lambos have skidded round before – he has the photographic evidence) will

require an extra helping of commitment given the factory's impressive downforce claims. I'm beginning to get a little concerned myself as we ply the hallowed road at speeds that already feel decidedly brisk, not because the Squadra Corse seems in any danger of fizzing off into the scenery, but because its nose seems resolutely riveted to the road and the rear end seems, er, resolutely riveted to the road.

But then again, perhaps this is just the usual Superleggera schtick. It just isn't a darty, fly-away sort of car. When you punt a Superleggera into a bend at what frankly seems an optimistic lick, it has the ability to make you feel like a bit of a wimp, as if it's thinking: 'Is that all you've got? Try again.' So you do and the result is much the same: more grip, more

'IT'S AN EXTRAORDINARY DISPLAY THAT
TRANSLATES INTO AN INVINCIBILITY I'VE NEVER
ENCOUNTERED IN A ROAD CAR BEFORE'



lateral G, more traction, but nothing much more required in the way of positive steering lock or correction at the helm. It's a hugely secure way to deploy 562bhp that, when harnessed to the Gallardo's shrink-wrapped dimensions, results in devastating pace across the ground, with all the supercar sensations a small boy could dream of but demanding a modest input of car control. Ultimately, the Superleggera can be provoked, but you have to be brutal.

The Squadra Corse cannot, at least not with me at the wheel. I try in Corsa, I try with the ESC switched off. But on the bend that in times past has served up balletically drifting Aventadors and Ferrari F12s for the viewfinder of Dean's Nikon, the Squadra Corse simply bullets through the curve at an absurd speed. No understeer,

no oversteer. Only on the final few banzai runs is there a gradual, neutral, all-of-a-piece relinquishing of the chosen line as the Pirelli P Zero Corsas finally start to let go.

Is it due to the rear wing? Possibly. But it is an extraordinary display that translates into an aura of invincibility I don't think I've ever encountered in a road car before. Nothing that tries to live with the Squadra Corse on the way back to Sant'Agata has a hope. Even the local pumped hot hatches, ideally suited to the terrain, are dropped in a heartbeat. I don't think I've driven a faster car between two points than the Squadra Corse, certainly not one that distils and intensifies the supercar experience so potently. Lamborghini has a good track record of saving the best until last. Old habits die hard. **S**

Gallardo: a decade of development

2003

First Gallardo is launched with 5-litre V10 producing 493bhp



2006

Spyder is unleashed, with boost to 513bhp and fully retractable roof



2007

Superleggera breaks cover, with 522bhp along with 100kg weight saving on coupe



2008

LP560-4 introduces 552bhp 5.2-litre engine; pushes Gallardo into 200mph club



2009

Balboni special edition has 542bhp and rear-wheel drive



2009

LP560-4 Spyder created, with same 552bhp as coupe



2010

562bhp LP570-4 Superleggera manages 62mph from standing in 3.5sec



2012

Super Trofeo Stradale is racer-inspired version of LP570-4



Specification

LAMBORGHINI GALLARDO LP570-4 SQUADRA CORSE

Engine V10, 5204cc

CO2 319g/km

Power 562bhp @ 8000rpm

Torque 398lb ft @ 6500rpm

Transmission Six-speed automated manual, four-wheel drive, LSD

Front suspension Double wishbones, coil springs, anti-roll bar

Rear suspension Double wishbones, coil springs, anti-roll bar

Brakes Ventilated carbon-ceramic discs, 380mm front,
356mm rear, ABS

Wheels 8.5 x 19in front, 11 x 19in rear

Tyres 235/35 ZR19 front, 295/30 ZR19 rear

Weight (dry) 1340kg

Power-to-weight 426bhp/ton

0-62mph 3.4sec (claimed)

Top speed 199mph (claimed)

Basic price £200,407

On sale Now

evo rating: ★★★★★





**GET
28 DAYS
FREE
ACCESS**

NEW **evo** APP Out Now!

- Now available on **iPhone, iPad, Android** and **Kindle** devices
- **New content** delivered throughout the month
- New **search function** finds and organises content fast
- **Archive content** available at the touch of a button

The new evo app is a revolution.

The best performance car content delivered as it happens, on whatever smart device you want, with complete and searchable access to **evo's** content. Why not see for yourself?

Download the evo app now



by HARRY METCALFE

WHEN HARRY MET TONY

*Having invested in air travel, energy drinks, Formula 1 and football, Tony Fernandes is now setting about revolutionising Caterham. Here he tells **evo's** Harry Metcalfe about how one of Britain's best niche carmakers is about to go global*



Right: Fernandes chats with Alain Prost at the AeroSeven unveiling at the Singapore Grand Prix. **Main image:** our man Metcalfe is guided around the AeroSeven. **Bottom:** Caterham F1 racer Giedo van der Garde (right) and test driver Heikki Kovalainen (left) unveil the concept. **Far right:** how the coupe being jointly developed with Alpine could look in Caterham form



'IT'S CLEAR FERNANDES WANTS CATERHAM TO

THE CATERHAM AeroSeven concept car is just about to get its world reveal ahead of the start of practice for the Singapore Grand Prix, and as I wait for the launch to start, I hear a sudden media buzz behind me. Caterham Group chairman Tony Fernandes has just arrived. He's dead easy to spot because he's the one wearing the corporate shirt and the biggest smile, bear-hugging his Formula 1 drivers as he spots them sitting in the front row.

As proceedings quickly get underway, Fernandes bounds up onto the stage and launches into a presentation about his experiences at Caterham Cars since buying the

company in March 2011. I'm surprised there's no classy video or slideshow of the AeroSeven projected onto the giant screen behind him, but I later discover he always does this sort of thing on the hoof, making matching images to what he might say an impossibility. The Malaysian's boyish enthusiasm for the Caterham business is impressive, especially for someone who already owns a successful energy drink company (EQ8), a football team (Queens Park Rangers), an F1 team and a highly regarded airline (AirAsia). So when we meet up afterwards, I ask him why he wanted to buy Caterham when he has plenty of other businesses to keep him busy.

'My life is about brand-building,' he says. 'I wanted to build cars and saw an opportunity with Caterham, particularly in Asia. Since I was

a kid, I've loved racing. I used to go to Brands for three days to see the JPS and Williams cars, but I didn't have enough money to get into the circuit, so I'd camp outside.

'I always wanted to do cars but it would be bloody stupid to try and build a brand from scratch. Fernandes Cars would make no financial sense at all! I've always loved Lotus, though, and thought Colin Chapman was a bloody genius, the king who never became a king. So when someone came up to me and asked if I wanted to start a Lotus F1 team, I thought yes, but really I wanted to buy Lotus Cars. That never happened, so I started looking around at other brands including TVR, Morgan and Jensen, and then [Caterham CEO at the time] Ansar Ali made a surprise phone call to



Will expansion work?

It's impossible not to compare Fernandes's expansion plans for Caterham to those of Lotus when Dany Bahar was at the helm, but the two approaches to potential success couldn't be more different.

Expanding the Caterham range using the joint-venture route is clever. A joint venture allows you to piggyback someone else's development budget and receive an all-new model in return. You can even play one potential partner off another and choose the one that offers the best deal and the best end product. Interestingly, we understand that in the aftermath of the announcement of the Alpine/Caterham joint venture, Caterham was inundated with other potential joint-venture options.

As for funding, Fernandes is reported to have a personal fortune of over \$600million (£375million) but is not planning on financing Caterham himself. Instead he will be using the same formula as with AirAsia, namely raising private equity to begin with and then listing the Caterham Group on the stock exchange.

Perhaps Caterham's biggest challenge will not be the development of its new range, but signing up dealers to sell the cars. After the Lotus fiasco, many may be reluctant to enter into agreements with another specialist manufacturer from the UK. Watch this space. **HM**

BUILD A RANGE OF COMPLETELY NEW CARS'

my offices in 2011. While Caterham had been on my mind, I didn't have a clue where to start. After I got his call, I got super-excited. He came over to my house and the rest is history.'

I'm intrigued to discover that Fernandes looked at other UK car brands before buying Caterham, but as he explains: 'I wanted a British brand, it's what I'm most comfortable with. I grew up in the UK and British engineering is the greatest. You may not be the greatest marketers but your technology is fantastic. Caterham had real expertise and also had Colin Chapman ancestry.'

'I would never have bought Porsche or Ferrari, even if I could have afforded to. People have approached me since, offering high-end supercar companies, but it's not my scene at

all. Even McLaren aren't having a walk in the park and the 12C is a good car. If you can afford a Ferrari, why would you buy anything else? I wanted something more accessible, which had fun and style.'

Fernandes wants Caterham to build a range of completely new cars over the next few years because, as he points out, there's little point running a Caterham F1 team to build brand awareness without having a range of cars behind it. 'The AeroSeven creates another new line of Sevens and we will bring this car to Asia,' he explains. 'The regular Seven looks too much like a toy to them because of its exposed wheels, hence why we introduced the AeroSeven here in Singapore. Asia is an untapped market, everyone here is a boy racer. We just need to get

them on track and this car is perfect for that.'

'The only problem is the AeroSeven has no roof and it pours with rain here, so we need another solution and that's where our joint venture with Alpine comes in. That's an enclosed car priced somewhere around £35,000 and it looks fantastic. I really want to show it to you...' I wish he would, but that car has to remain under wraps until late next year.

Fernandes envisages more joint ventures in the future, possibly with (Alpine's parent company) Renault and its partner Nissan, who remain first-choice partners for Caterham but not necessarily exclusive partners. 'Caterham can't survive with just a sports car model line-up,' explains Fernandes. 'We have to do a lightweight, fun hatchback car and a crossover

'FERNANDES KEEPS MENTIONING LOTUS, AS IF THE NORFOLK COMPANY IS CONSTANTLY ON HIS MIND'



of some description. How we make these true to Caterham values is what we're grappling with right now. Equally, what is a Caterham to 95 per cent of the world's population? It's a brand that has no real awareness, so this gives us options. Look at Porsche and the Cayenne – I'm sure lots of enthusiasts said, "That's not Porsche." But it's their biggest seller. We have to keep the essence of Caterham and give people what they want.'

While I can understand the need to expand the model range, I'm surprised at Fernandes's desire to go into such radically different sectors of the car market. I also sense that while these new models will be designed and conceived in the UK, they may not necessarily be built here.

'They will have their DNA in the UK but they could be assembled elsewhere,' Fernandes confirms. 'For instance, there are very good tax reasons to assemble here [in Singapore, where heavy taxes are imposed on imported cars] and if we get our numbers right, that's what we intend to do. There are 600million people around here, including 300million in the Philippines and 100million in Malaysia. People want to be different, and a great British sports car correctly marketed will do really well here.'

Fernandes is a firm believer that the DNA of a Caterham is a lightweight, fun car to drive, with a good power-to-weight ratio. It is this DNA that all future models will have to live up to.

'Everyone wants a piece of the dream but sometimes that dream is a little too far away,' says Fernandes. 'Anyone who reads *evo* would love to own a Porsche or a Ferrari and that's why people buy your magazine. It's escapism, so if I can make this escapism reality and give them as good a car as a Ferrari for a much more affordable price, then we can make some of those dreams come true. That's where I see the sweet spot today and I see no one else looking at this area.'

'Lotus was the answer and everything I'm doing is heading down that same line. Colin Chapman did everything, including Lotus Cortinas – Chapman made all kinds of cars. Lotus was the poor man's answer to not being able to afford a supercar and that's where I'm pitching Caterham. We could never do a direct 911 rival because I'd get my arse kicked. I don't even want to go there. If anyone thinks they can take on Porsche they're lunatics!'

Fernandes keeps mentioning Lotus, as if the

Norfolk company is constantly on his mind, even though he's been obsessively focused on Caterham for two years now. I ask him if he would buy Lotus, were it ever to become available again. 'Never say never...' he begins. As he does, the Caterham PR guys in the room start twitching, but I can sense Fernandes would love to make such a thing happen.

It would make sense too, because part of Caterham's expansion plan involves creating a new dealer network and a new manufacturing base, most likely at the Caterham Technology Centre at Hingham, just ten miles from Lotus's underutilised production facility at Hethel. It's a fascinating prospect, and don't underestimate the entrepreneurial powers of Fernandes (who launched an airline three days before 9/11 and built it into one of the most profitable in the world) in making it happen.

I'll leave the last word to the man himself: 'It's getting harder and harder to see how to incorporate it [Lotus] as we move Caterham forward, but wouldn't it be great if we ended up with Lotus-Caterham?' ✕

Turn the page for more on the AeroSeven concept.

GET YOUR EVO MERCHANDISE HERE!

View the full range at www.shotdeadinthehead.com/evo.html

ON
SALE
NOW!



COMPETITION TIME!

DO YOU HAVE A GREAT IDEA FOR A T-SHIRT?

Our evo merchandise is ever expanding and we want you to help! We are looking for new designs from our evo readers for our online shop. Anything car or evo-related goes.

All we need is either a written idea or complete design. Email it to us at: eds@evo.co.uk with the subject title **evo merch**.

We want to hear from you!



WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

Winners will be chosen by the evo team and ideas will be transformed into finished designs.

Each winner will get a goody bag including a t-shirt, hoodie AND mug with their design on!

AERO DYNAMIC

The carbonfibre-clad closed-wheel AeroSeven marks the beginning of Tony Fernandes's Caterham transformation

by STEPHEN DOBIE



THE DIFFICULT SECOND album. It's a phrase that's a little worn out, transcending music writing to describe all manner of things, not least the attempts of carmakers to replace or supplement star models. But it's apt here. How does Caterham move forwards from the Seven, a model celebrated primarily for how simple it is? Normal rules don't apply. Throwing power and technology at a car revered for modest levels of both won't cut it.

Previous attempts are conspicuous by their failure. Remember the Caterham 21? The Lotus Elise, launched shortly after, means there's a good chance you don't, while Caterham Group chairman Tony Fernandes appears to deny its very existence. And you score full points if you're familiar with Project Splitwheel, an online scheme launched in 2008 to garner the designs and ideas of fans. 'Creating a worthy stablemate for the iconic Caterham Seven is one of the greatest challenges in the automotive world,' said then-Caterham boss Ansar Ali. The project's lack of fruition only hammered that home.

Things seem different this time around, though. The covers were whipped off the AeroSeven concept ahead of the Singapore Grand Prix with a fair slice of swagger. And while there is talk of brand expansion and – blasphemy! – an SUV, the fantasist air of Bahar's Lotus relaunch is missing. As is Naomi Campbell.

What you see here isn't all-new, and the AeroSeven name hints as much. The car's styling is bold but its proportions are unmistakably Seven, with good reason. The AeroSeven sits on the Seven's wider CSR chassis, which allows greater flexibility, especially as the car now wears 'proper' bodywork. The name

also points to the concept's biggest development over the classic Seven, whose drag coefficient of around Cd 0.7 is, if we're being polite, rubbish. Getting a more precise figure than that out of Caterham is impossible, such is the probable lack of wind tunnel time the Seven has had. Covering the front wheels and properly crafting bodywork will do a lot to bring the Seven much closer to the rest of the sports car pack, yielding big performance benefits before other componentry has even been touched.

'It's something of a technology tester,' Caterham Technology COO Luke Bennett told us. 'The body is obviously the main act. What we wanted to do is follow a reasonably well-trodden path in small-bodied track cars – Lotus 340R and 2-Eleven, Radical, Ginetta – where you've got more sense of a body around you. That opens up a whole world of aerodynamic trickery that we can't do with a Seven.'

'What it allows us to do is use the assets of our group: fantastic aerodynamic facilities with our Formula 1 team and our own skills and abilities at Caterham Technology. Combine that with a platform the guys at Dartford have loved for years and we've been able to do this. You wouldn't believe the time we've done it all in – the planning took around a year but the execution has taken less than three months.'

While the Lotus 340R lived a short life, it spun a new approach from existing Elise running gear, and it's a car that clearly inspires Bennett, who built them during his long stint working at Lotus. The AeroSeven's extra bodywork brings benefits besides increased slipperiness: it makes packaging taller, CO2-focused engines much easier, while Middle Eastern markets are much more open to cars with traditional bodywork. So the AeroSeven is set to be the first Caterham to enter emerging markets with



Above: AeroSeven is based on CSR underpinnings; bodywork is all-carbonfibre on this concept. **Below:** lights are only part of concept that would not be road-legal



Caterham AeroSeven



Above, from left: steering wheel features dial for adjustable traction control; windscreen will be an option on production model; display has potential to show track mapping

intent. A production AeroSeven will arrive in autumn 2014, and the design you see here isn't final (by the way, a windscreen will be available for those who want one).

The AeroSeven's technology extends beyond the bold new look, of course. The downforce and increased grip call for new springs and dampers, which are fitted to inboard pushrod front and fully independent rear suspension from the CSR. Driving the concept's rear wheels is a 237bhp, 152lb ft 2-litre Ford Duratec engine mated to a six-speed manual gearbox. The car's 0-60mph time is quoted as sub-4sec.

The AeroSeven is set to sit alongside the Seven as a more high-tech choice for those willing to pay a premium. Shared engine and gearbox options mean both manual and sequential transmissions will be available. Production powertrains aren't yet decided, but it's a safe bet only the most potent will make the leap.

The AeroSeven also explores the use of carbonfibre, the material going some way to offset the addition of fuller bodywork to the Seven's lightweight, pared-back mantra (the carbon-bodied concept weighs around 600kg, up only slightly on a comparative Seven). However, due to the expense of its production,

only the most pivotal, highest-centre-of-gravity components will be made of the stuff, with customers likely to be able to choose between carbon and fibreglass to reflect their budget. And while there's clearly enthusiasm for a 311bhp, 620R-powered, carbon-clad car, the cost of one could approach £60,000, well above the £35k entry point for Caterham's new mid-engined model being developed with Alpine.

The concept also brings stability control and ABS to the Seven for the first time, with adjustable systems – set via dials on the steering wheel – that range from overarching control to the most delicate touch. Launch control is also included. The level you've chosen for each appears on Caterham's new graphical display unit (GDU), which shows a speedometer as well as the likes of satnav and track mapping.

The production AeroSeven will hit the market over a year before the new mid-engined car, which itself is likely to get the traction control and GDU demonstrated here. But what about the 40-year-old Seven? 'We tread really carefully around that question because customers know and love the Seven for the purity and simplicity that it offers, and at no time do we want to cause any doubt that that's here to stay,' said Bennett. 'We have to

be really careful that we don't start offering GT-R-style wizardry on a car that just isn't made in that character. By the same token, what can we do to offer something a little different that shows we're moving forward?'

Protection of Caterham's hit first album – the good-old Seven – is a topic never far from conversation. A bigger sports car, an SUV and a city car all lie on the horizon, but the AeroSeven unsubtly riffs off Caterham's hallmark and will need to be marketed carefully alongside it.

'We'll see them as two models in the same way as the Cayman and the Boxster – the same platform but carefully positioned for different types of customer', Bennett told us, hinting at younger buyers, who are likely to be most receptive to driver aids. 'AeroSeven is obviously the technical side of this project, the other side being to create something a bit interesting that girds the loins of people that would have otherwise said, "It's not for me."'

What Bennett can't stress enough is that this isn't an attempt to replace the Seven: 'Not in a million years. We never see the Seven not being in our range. We know it's very precious and defines the standard of the simplest and purest driving experience you can get. We never want that to go away.' ❌



Caterham hits...



Above: the 250bhp JPE was the ultimate '90s Seven



Above: Superlight series reached its peak with the R500



Above: Academy car has trained hundreds of racers

...and misses



Above: the stillborn Levante. **Below:** the ho-hum 21



DRIVING THE 21

The Caterham 21 was a bit of a strange one from what I can recall. It looked very pretty and sounded good, but felt softer and less intense than a Seven. It just didn't have the precision, or the crazy sense of speed. I seem to remember it wasn't that much more practical either, which seemed a bit odd. Ultimately I think it was too conventional and not bold enough in looks or execution, so the basic charm and livewire character of the Seven always overshadowed it.

Richard Meaden

Aston Martin V12 Vantage S





by HENRY CATCHPOLE

PHOTOGRAPHY by DREW PHILLIPS

VANTAGE POINT

The V12 Vantage S takes Aston's smallest coupe to 565bhp, 205mph extremes. We put it to the test on some baking-hot Californian tarmac

Aston Martin V12 Vantage S

W

‘WELCOME TO PARADISE!’

says the barkeep. He’s certainly got a lot of beer on offer and if you crave a bit of peace and quiet then you’ll probably find it here, but nonetheless I fear the proprietor of the Paradise Valley Cafe is being

just a trifle optimistic. As we walk outside with our Cokes a few minutes later, Pamela bustles out from the small adjoining realtors and promptly tries to sell us our own slice of Paradise. We could have a charming mountain getaway for \$168,000 (£105,000) or, as her eyes rest hopefully upon the Aston Martin that’s gracing the otherwise empty car park, how about Frank Sinatra’s old house nearby? A snip at just under \$4million (£2.5million). We politely take the proffered printed details and say we’ll think about it...

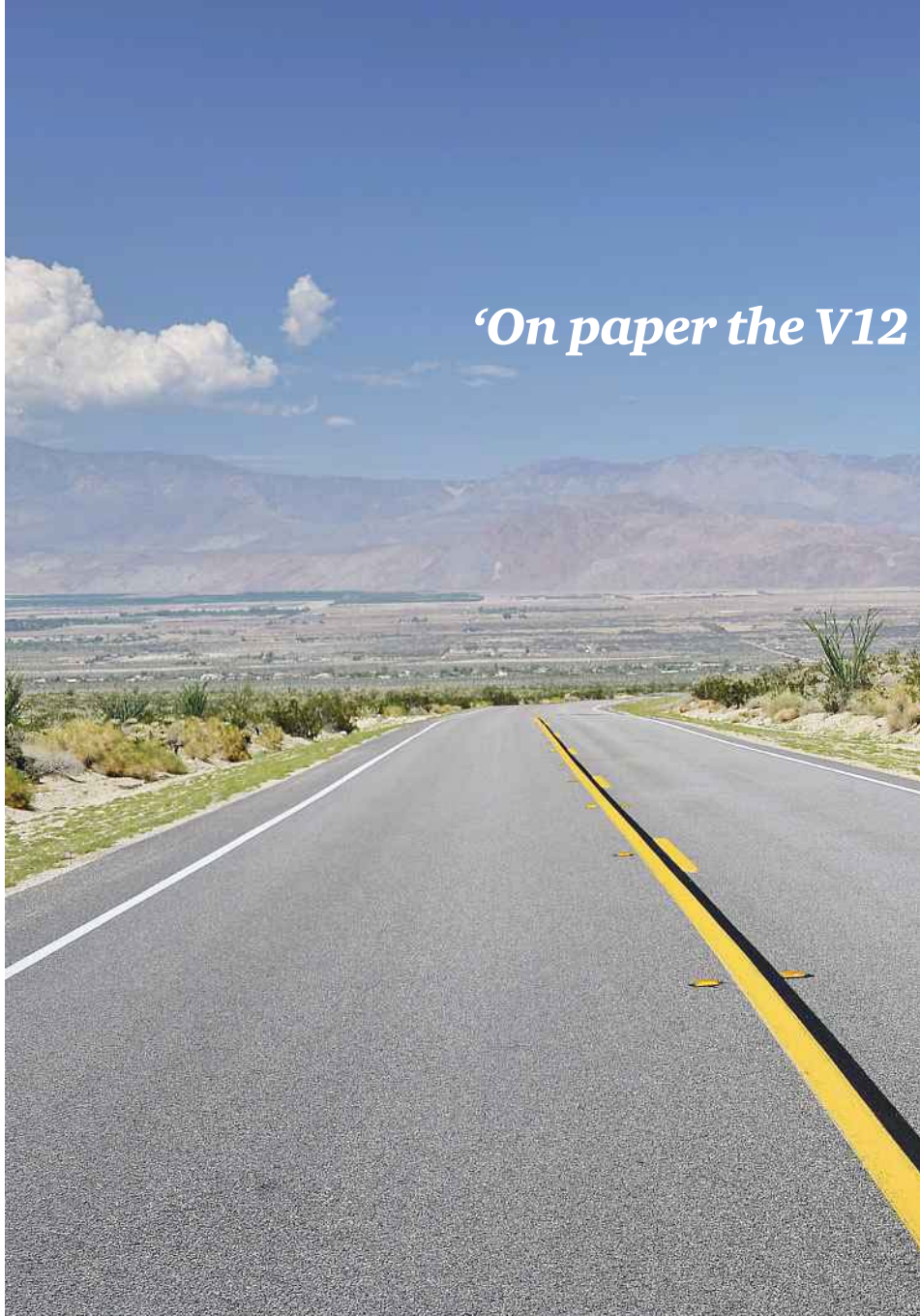
Paradise, then, is not entirely accurately named. But there is perhaps one thing up here that wouldn’t look out of place in a genuine Elysium (apart from the Aston, which I’ll get to in just a minute) and that’s the road that leads to the remote cafe and realtors. This is a surprise, because every time I’ve been to the USA in the past I’ve found the roads rather underwhelming. There are some impressive stretches surrounded by a scale of scenery unlikely to be bettered anywhere else in the world, but as driving prospects they just seem to lack something compared to the best that Europe has to offer. California State Route 74, however, is different. The 74 is a real winner.

This is good news, because on paper the V12 Vantage S is a car deserving of a decent drop of tarmac. A quick glance at the spec sheet, or indeed in the cabin, reveals that the biggest change over the (now discontinued) non-S is the switch from a manual to Aston’s seven-speed single-clutch paddle-shift gearbox. This is the first time that Aston has managed to hook the Sportshift ‘box up to its 5.9-litre V12 and it has required a switch from a single- to a twin-plate clutch robust enough to handle all the V12’s torque. Talking of which, the torque figure for the S has improved 37lb ft on the regular V12 Vantage to 457lb ft at 5750rpm, while power is up 55bhp to 565bhp at 6750rpm.

Perhaps just as impressively, low-revs torque (measured at 1000rpm) has risen by 52lb ft from an already hearty 324lb ft to a thumping 376. However, there’s an argument that this increase in basement shove could be counterproductive. One of the reasons why the standard V12 Vantage’s claimed 0-60mph time was a slightly disappointing 4.1 seconds (and why we could only manage 4.4sec when we tested it) was that it was simply too tricky to translate the torque to the tarmac without a lot of wasteful wheelspin. But the chaps at Aston must have managed to significantly improve rear grip because the claimed 0-60mph time has dropped by more than you’d expect from the power gains and gearbox change alone. The V12 Vantage S will apparently hit 60 from a standstill in 3.7sec (and 62mph in 3.9), and it will go on to reach 205mph. The only Aston road car that bests these figures is the One-77.

Precisely none of this, I suspect, was important to the residents of Palm Springs this morning as we drove along the avenues of palm trees and then out through the suburbs, stopping only briefly to gawp at a giant and slightly disturbing statue of Marilyn Monroe in classic billowing-

‘On paper the V12



Vantage S is a car deserving of a decent drop of tarmac'



Above: forest fires have blighted inland California.
Left, from far left: yellow Aston stands out in sun-worn landscape; Paradise Valley Cafe is a picturesque pit stop; speeding rules remain tight in the US



Above: Catchpole gets to grips with the new, quicker steering rack. **Below:** slim pickings at the pump for Astons. **Right:** road surfaces are decidedly mixed, but the views are spectacular

‘The yellow paint of the small British GT gleams like an Oscar in a coal pit’

white-dress pose. No, what mattered to the onlookers in the other cars (there’s nothing as pedestrian as pedestrians in Palm Springs) was the way the Aston looks. Amongst the pick-ups and gargantuan saloons, the yellow paint of the small British GT gleamed like an Oscar in a coal pit. The optional black lipstick surrounding the new carbon grille gives the S a distinctive appearance when matched up with the dark, diamond-cut wheels (new ten-spoke forged items, since you ask), the carbon door mirrors, the carbon bonnet vents and the black roof. Overall, I think it’s the best shape in the Aston range, although if it were mine I’d ditch the clear ‘Lexus’ rear lights.

The temperature was already soaring into the mid-90s Fahrenheit, even though most householders were only just pouring themselves a bowl of Lucky Charms or cramming a Pop Tart into the toaster. It meant the traffic was sparse as we turned off the main artery and headed down a long, broad, straight road that pointed directly at the rusty-coloured mountains that border Palm Springs to the south and west. And then, as the last private estates and expensively irrigated green suburban pads gave way to the dusty, dry foothills, the SR74 seamlessly morphed into the Robert Wilson Memorial Highway. Now, to me, a highway doesn’t sound very appealing in terms of driving, but in this instance it’s simply a more accurate description

of a road that is the opposite of a low-way.

The RWMH is every bit as writhing and wriggling as a good Alpine pass, but this being America, it’s also just that little bit wider too. It probably only has 15 to 20 per cent more breadth than a two-lane road in, say, Austria, but that provides you with just a little more elbow room to really lean on the car through corners and let the tyres slip a little, all the while keeping to your side of the double yellow lines that run like a continuous zip down the centre of the asphalt.

The road is initially laid like a new racetrack, with pristine blacktop twist Armco and rock face, but then suddenly, about a third of the way up, it regresses to a more typically American rough, sandy-coloured surface. Clearly the money ran out at that point, not that it really matters (if anything it actually provides slightly better feedback). It just means you have to wind the Aston’s new three-stage adaptive dampers back from their firmest Track setting (which you would never use on the road in the UK) to the nicely judged and still-firm Sport.

We pulled into the viewing point near the top of the climb and photographer Drew Phillips jumped out to risk his neck scrambling down amongst the rocks and rattlers to get a good view of the almost Martian-looking landscape. This gave me the chance to have another drive up and down the RWMH, and if anything it only got better upon further acquaintance. The



Route

BANNING



PALM SPRINGS

10

IDYLLWILD

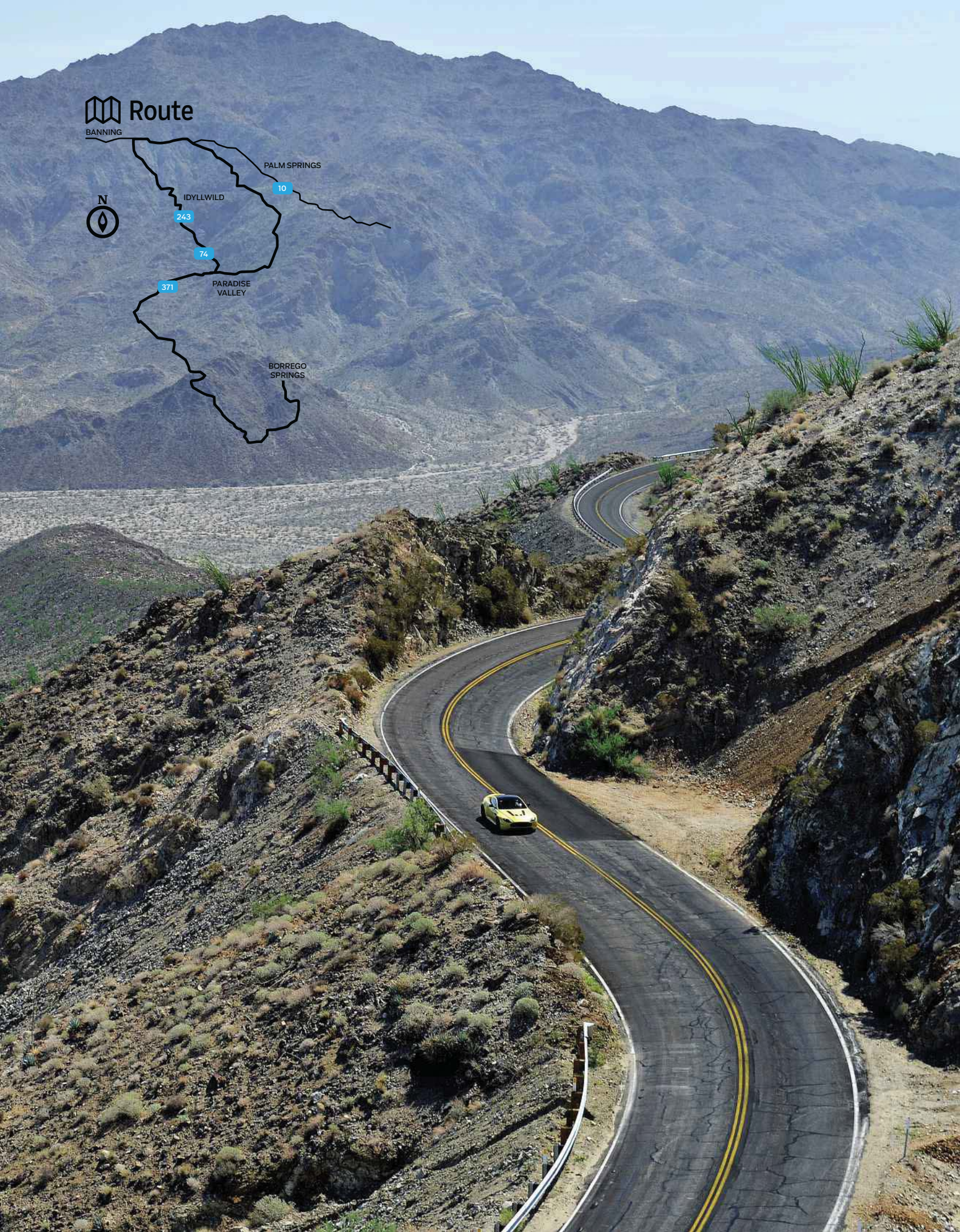
243

74

PARADISE VALLEY

371

BORREGO SPRINGS



Aston Martin V12 Vantage S



Above: seven-speed 'box shines when paddling down through the gears, but struggles going up. **Right:** storm was narrowly avoided. **Below:** carbon side strakes and forged 19in alloys are options. **Bottom:** front-end grip vastly improved



'You have more accuracy when it slides, as the



cambers are positive and there's wonderful theatre to diving between the rock faces, which provide perfect sounding boards off which to rebound and amplify the car's new exhaust system. Derived from the pipework in the One-77, the exhaust is now smaller and lighter, resulting in a noticeably different sound compared to the original V12 Vantage: the harder edge that was always present at the top of the V12's rev range extends further down to the lower-spinning depths of its growl. Combined with the shorter gearing of the automated 'box, the V12 now seems to have much more aural purpose to the way it reacts to the throttle pedal as it lunges between corners.

After picking up Drew and continuing on our way, the gradient noticeably mellowed as we reached 4000ft, although there were still some interesting undulations. A camper van held up proceedings for a while – the authorities in the USA don't trust you to overtake on anything less than a potential runway and paint the aforementioned unbroken double yellows down the middle of the road for miles at a time.



front tyres feel absolutely hooked onto line'

Eventually, however, the road found the room to stretch itself into a long straight, which in turn led us here, to Paradise Valley.

At this juncture we could simply finish our drinks from the cafe and continue on the 74, looping back round to Palm Springs, but we've got the whole day with the Vantage so there's no rush. So we turn left and head for the intriguingly named Borrego Springs (I love the way they name things in America – during the day we pass all sorts of signs, including 'Devils Ladder Road', 'Sunshine Summit', and my personal favourite, 'Foolish Pleasure Road').

Having been spoilt so far, however, the tarmac now settles into a much more mundane, monotonous rhythm as we head through scrubby, scattered outposts of civilisation with only the odd gentle curve requiring any input to the Alcantara-clad steering wheel. The Aston is happy to relax into a seventh-gear stroll towards the horizon, but even if you press the glass button to set the dampers to Normal, things are still firmly sprung enough that you never forget this Vantage has a far more sporting set-up than

anything else in the Aston range.

Traffic is hardly abundant but the possibility of cops hiding at the roadside (or even just driving past with their permanently live speed guns) seems like much more of a possibility out here, with dusty, bush-strewn plains butting up against the tarmac to replace the drops and rocks. I'd quite like a *Smokey and the Bandit*-style chase because I'd fancy my chances in the V12 S. However, the sign at the side of the road warning that speed limits are 'Enforced by Aircraft' suddenly makes me feel like a rabbit being circled by a buzzard. I can't actually see any light aircraft (perhaps they employ high-altitude drones...) but even so, I stick closer to the paltry 55mph limit than I'd like.

Eventually we reach a junction. We turn left and quickly discover that the Montezuma Valley Road, our way across the mountains to Borrego Springs, is closed. No bother: we'll go the long way round. This alternative road is quieter and more remote again and we enter a section that is scenically unspectacular but fast and flowing. With short straights and a few undulations, it's a

real test of the car's high-speed balance. It's hard on the brakes too, with the car piling on speed and gears then wiping them off again seconds later. We've said it before, but it bears repeating: you really won't find carbon brakes that feel better than the Vantage's. No matter how hard or how little you've been working the pads and discs, there's never that cold, limp feeling underfoot when you hit the pedal. Instead there's just lovely progression and reassurance as the calipers chomp on the monster rotors. At 1665kg (a shade lighter than the old car thanks to the lighter gearbox) the Vantage has a decent amount of weight to slow, but because of what happens when you hit the left pedal, you have real confidence leaning the V12 onto its front tyres and peeling into corners smoothly.

After another half an hour or so, we turn left again and descend into a fantastic canyon road with rock faces that rise imposingly overhead to wall you in at the bottom. With the heat now a crispy 105 degrees Fahrenheit (40deg C), it's no wonder that the riverbed that matches the meanders of the road is dry. We've seen



'I was a big fan of the original, but the S is more

the odd road-runner (smaller than I thought) scampering across the tarmac on our journey so far and driving along the bottom of this canyon I'm half-expecting Wile E Coyote to descend from a cliff-top above, attached to an anvil.

There's no plummeting wildlife, however, just another fantastic stretch of road, with a particularly memorable second-gear corner that's tight on the way in and then opens out, letting you get on the power early and hold the car in a lovely, long measured slide. The plate-type limited-slip diff isn't particularly fancy, but it is predictable and trustworthy, which is what you want when the DSC is all the way off. It locks and stays locked to let you happily steer the car on the throttle and tattoo a pair of black lines onto the tar in your wake. You can almost imagine the relinquished rubber baking into the sizzling, sun-scorched surface of the road as the Aston's yowl fades into the distance and the canyon descends into silence once more.

The car goes light and so does my stomach as we sweep over a crest. You could probably rack up quite a few air miles if you knew this

next section well. At the last minute we spot the sign for Borrego and dive off left onto the Yaqui Pass. Now the road is surprisingly narrow, constricted and climbing steeply. It feels like a minor mountain road in Spain and serves to highlight the big improvements to the V12 Vantage's front end. The old non-S car always felt slightly 911-like in the way you had to be patient with the (in this case) heavy nose that would incline towards understeer. It was quite a nice feeling once you learnt to work with the car's balance, but the S's new-found alacrity through quick direction changes is breathtaking by comparison. Now the nose chops left-right on its Pirelli P Zero Corsas as fast as you can move the wheel. With the nose nailed, it also means you pick up the throttle earlier in corners and have more accuracy when it slides, as the front tyres feel absolutely hooked onto line, giving you real control over the arc of the out-of-shape short wheelbase.

With a scene change as abrupt as anything you'd find in a theatre, we emerge from the rapid-fire corners of the pass onto a monumental

straight stretching for miles, down onto a plain where Borrego Springs cowers in the shimmering distance. The petrol gauge in the Aston's dash is glowing orange and if I had a fuel light then it would be equally radiant, so it's with some relief that we pull into a slightly dilapidated petrol station 20 minutes later. The options for fuel, both automotive and human, don't inspire much glee. Super-unleaded is 91-octane (although that's a US measurement – it'd be 95 back home), and I'm not quite sure how to approach KC Masterpiece Beef Jerky other than with considerable caution...

For some reason we have to pay for the fuel before filling, but just as we're about to hand over the dollars there's an ominous clunk. The lights go out on the till and in the fridge full of beer and Mountain Dew. The owner disappears to make a phone call, so we wander outside. To our right is the unblemished blue sky that has been above us all day, but to our left a huge storm front is rolling menacingly across the mountains. It's obviously the reason for the power failure and it's obviously not the first



Left: Vantage S gets some wet running in the aftermath of huge hailstorm (see stones, above right). **Below:** black rear panel can be specced in lighter colours. **Bottom:** new exhaust system has helped harden V12's sound



nailed down in the corners and revs more freely'

time it's happened, either, because in the five minutes we're standing there, two battered pick-ups drive in and both times the drivers lean out and ask 'power out?' as if they live in a third-world country and it's a perfectly normal, acceptable occurrence. Weird.

As we haven't got enough juice to reach the next town, there's nothing to do except wait it out and eat beef jerky, but after about half an hour someone somewhere flicks a big old trip switch or replaces some sort of industrial fuse, and so we fill up and get going again. With the Montezuma Valley Road closed from this direction as well, we have no option but to turn round and head back on the roads we drove out on, which isn't really a chore. We head back up the long straight away from Borrego as the storm sweeps inexorably across the scenery behind us like a heavy curtain slowly being drawn. It's really quite hard to describe the sheer scale of it, as there's simply nothing comparable in the UK or anywhere in Europe.

An hour or so later, we pull up at the junction next to the Paradise Valley Cafe and turn left





‘There’s no doubt that the V12 Vantage S is the



to continue on the 74. We’ve skirted round the storm but immediately we start to see signs of where it’s been. As we go through the pine trees that now about the road, it’s clear we’ve probably only missed it by minutes. The temperature has dropped to 62 degrees (17deg C) and steam is pouring up off the wet tarmac as if it’s a jacuzzi.

We stop at the side of the road and pick up melting hailstones that are still the size of marbles and would have made a nasty mess of the Aston’s beautiful bodywork. Even more bizarrely, all around us we can still see the signs of a huge forest fire that ripped through the area just a couple of weeks ago. The most curious scene is where the road has acted as a fire break, leaving distinctly different landscapes on either side of the tarmac: one blackened and charred, the other a little brown-singed at the edges but otherwise evergreen.

We turn right onto the tighter 243 (the Esperanza Firefighters Memorial Highway) and head towards the high-altitude settlement of Idyllwild, which turns out to be a hippy, bohemian place. You can tell it’s been hit hard



Aston Martin V12 Vantage S

Specification

ASTON MARTIN V12 VANTAGE S

Engine V12, 5935cc **CO2** TBC **Power** 565bhp @ 6750rpm **Torque** 457lb ft @ 5750rpm

Transmission Seven-speed Sportshift III automated manual, rear-wheel drive, LSD **Front suspension** Double wishbones, coil springs, adaptive dampers, anti-roll bar **Rear suspension** Double wishbones, coil springs, adaptive dampers, anti-roll bar **Brakes** Ventilated carbon-ceramic discs, 398mm front, 360mm rear, ABS, EBD, EBA **Wheels** 9 x 19in front, 11 x 19in rear

Tyres 255/35 ZR19 front, 295/30 ZR19 rear **Weight (kerb)** 1665kg (estimated) **Power-to-weight** 345bhp/ton

0-62mph 3.9sec (claimed) **Top speed** 205mph (claimed) **Basic price** £138,000 **On sale** Late 2013

evo rating: ★★★★★



best car that Aston Martin currently makes'

by the monumental storm that's just raged, because side streets have mudslides blocking them and debris from the trees is strewn across the road, the bigger bits acting as temporary chicanes. Despite the carnage and, according to a furry yellow sign, the threat of yetis, one of its cafes still does a delicious salted caramel cake, which thankfully does a lot more to stave off hunger than rubberised cow.

Fuller and with the early evening sky turning orange and then pink like some unbelievable Instagram filter, we head down the precipitous stretch towards Interstate 10 (the Christopher Columbus Transcontinental Highway). What a final piece of road this is: it's arguably the best of the day and one I'm almost gutted we didn't get to earlier, as the light is now fading fast. It's the perfect final test for this Aston.

I've really come to love the V12 Vantage S during today's drive. I was a big fan of the original, but the S is much more nailed down in the corners and revs more freely whilst still retaining that big-hearted character of the earlier car. On paper there were two potential

flies in the Castrol: the new steering and the new gearbox. The ZF Servotronic steering has a quicker rack (15:1 down from 17:1) but also has variable assistance. Thankfully you don't notice the variable assistance and there's always a pleasing weight to it.

The seven-speed Oerlikon Graziano gearbox is trickier to get used to. We obviously miss having three pedals and the added interaction that gave in the old V12 – I'd happily forfeit the 25kg weight saving the paddle-shift 'box provides to have it back. The paddle-shift is not the swiftest or most modern-feeling system, either. Curiously, the downshifts are brilliant – the 'box never once refused a request and always delivered smoothly with a pleasingly dramatic flare of revs. It's the upshifts that are the problem. When you're going for it and changing up at high revs, the shifts bang through quickly, but if you short-shift or want to drive at less than nine-tenths, the response is awkward and the torque interruption too long compared to most current systems. Having said that, I did get used to it through the day, as I'm

sure you would if you owned one. If you don't want to drive flat-out, you can work with it by lifting off the throttle as you pull the right-hand paddle, or better still just not changing gear as much and instead leaning more heavily on the huge well of torque provided by the engine.

There's no doubt that the V12 Vantage S is the best car Aston currently makes. In spite of the gearbox, or ironically perhaps partly because of it, the S has quite an old-school analogue flavour, certainly more so than something like a Ferrari F12. And despite tech like adaptive dampers, a Sport mode and Servotronic steering, there's an unfussy mechanical honesty that shines through in the way the short-wheelbase, front-engined (big-engined), rear-wheel-drive layout engages and encourages you to attack the road.

And what roads they've been. The lights of the Morongo Casino twinkle in the distance and I know we're heading back to the brash America of McDonald's, gigantic Marilyn Monroes and straight roads. But the USA feels somehow more attractive this evening knowing that Paradise Valley is hidden in the hills. ☒



by JETHRO BOVINGDON | PHOTOGRAPHY by DEAN SMITH

*Eight supremely focused machines do battle at Blyton Park as we decide just which of 2013's uncompromised breed deserves the title of **evo** Track Car of the Year*



W

WE TALK A LOT ABOUT PURITY HERE AT EVO. WE SEEK

out and celebrate cars that focus on chassis dynamics and excitement above all else, and if that means the ride is a little bit lumpy on the school run, then so be it. Sticky tyres that can be a bit dicey in the wet? Love 'em. Squeaky ceramic brakes? No problem. Roll-cages, clonky diffs, an old-fashioned dose of NVH? Gives a car character and puts hairs on your chest. But there's only one test in our calendar that is truly pure, and demands nothing but speed, agility and absolute driver involvement. This is **evo's** Track Car of the Year, held over two days at the fabulously noise-tolerant Blyton Park circuit.

In association with



The contenders

AS THE CARS EMERGE FROM TRAILERS or slowly file into Blyton, we realise that this is a very special bunch. In the one-car-fits-all category are the manic Mini John Cooper Works GP, the sublime Porsche Cayman S and a car that on paper should turn the Subaru BRZ into the hero car we all expected. Created by tuner Litchfield, this BRZ Spec S benefits from a supercharger to realise 280bhp and 210lb ft.

Then we have the intriguing Radical RXC. It looks like a Le Mans prototype but the sensible ride height and the Mustang-sourced 350bhp 3.7-litre V6 hint that this is Radical's take on a viable road car that happens to be terrific on circuit. It also sounds thunderous and has niceties such as air con and adjustable assistance for the power steering. We can't wait to try it.

It wouldn't be Track Car of the Year without the inevitable Ariel v Caterham showdown. We've got the latest Atom 3.5 310, which benefits from the much stiffer chassis from the crazy V8 model, plus

revised dampers and geometry, not to mention a screaming 2-litre Honda i-VTEC engine complete with supercharger and 310bhp. The Caterham 620R also uses a supercharger for its 2-litre Duratec engine and just shades the Atom with an astonishing 311bhp. While the Ariel sticks with a conventional H-pattern six-speed manual gearbox, the 620R has a sequential 'box operated by a lever in the traditional place.

There's nothing traditional about the BAC Mono. Part-race car, part-art installation, this single-seater is an engineering masterpiece executed with jaw-dropping skill and attention to detail. Finally, and I still can't quite believe I'm writing this, we have the McLaren 12C Can-Am Edition. Just 30 of these £375,000 machines will be built as 'the ultimate track car'. The Can-Am is essentially a 12C GT3 freed from racing restrictions, and so benefits from greater downforce and a 3.8-litre twin-turbo V6 producing 621bhp instead of the GT3's c500bhp.

Right: the high kerb of The Ump chicane will test the low ride heights of the assembled octet



**CATERHAM
SEVEN 620R**

Engine In-line 4-cyl, 1999cc, supercharger
Power 311bhp @ 7700rpm
Torque 219lb ft @ 7350rpm
Weight 545kg (claimed, kerb), 580kg (as tested)
Power-to-weight 580bhp/ton (claimed)
0-62mph 2.8sec (claimed)
Top speed 155mph (claimed)
Basic price £49,995



**McLAREN
12C GT CAN-AM EDITION**

Engine V8, 3799cc, twin-turbo
Power 621bhp @ 6500rpm
Torque 517lb ft @ 5500rpm
Weight 1271kg (claimed, dry), 1334kg (as tested)
Power-to-weight 496bhp/ton (claimed)
0-62mph sub-3.0sec (estimated)
Top speed 174mph (claimed)
Basic price £375,000



**RADICAL
RXC**

Engine V6, 3700cc
Power 380bhp @ 6750rpm (350bhp as tested)
Torque 320lb ft @ 4250rpm
Weight 900kg (claimed, dry), 1014kg (as tested)
Power-to-weight 429bhp/ton (claimed)
0-62mph 2.8sec (claimed)
Top speed 175mph (claimed)
Basic price £107,500



**BAC
MONO**

Engine In-line 4-cyl, 2261cc
Power 280bhp @ 7700rpm
Torque 206lb ft @ 6000rpm
Weight 540kg (claimed, dry), 645kg (as tested)
Power-to-weight 527bhp/ton (claimed)
0-62mph 2.8sec (claimed)
Top speed 170mph (claimed)
Basic price £89,940



**LITCHFIELD SUBARU
BRZ SPEC S**

Engine Flat-four, 1998cc, supercharger
Power 280bhp @ 7300rpm
Torque 210lb ft @ 6700rpm
Weight 1249kg (claimed, kerb), 1261kg (as tested)
Power-to-weight 228bhp/ton (claimed)
0-62mph 4.9sec (claimed)
Top speed 155mph (claimed)
Basic price £29,477



**MINI
JCW GP**

Engine In-line 4-cyl, 1598cc, turbo
Power 215bhp @ 6000rpm
Torque 206lb ft @ 2000-5100rpm
Weight 1140kg (claimed, kerb), 1178kg (as tested)
Power-to-weight 192bhp/ton (claimed)
0-62mph 6.3sec (claimed)
Top speed 150mph (claimed)
Basic price £28,790



**ARIEL
ATOM 3.5 SUPERCHARGED 310**

Engine In-line 4-cyl, 1998cc, supercharger
Power 310bhp @ 8400rpm
Torque 169lb ft @ 7200rpm
Weight 550kg (claimed, dry), 608kg (as tested)
Power-to-weight 573bhp/ton (claimed)
0-62mph 2.7sec (claimed 0-60)
Top speed 155mph (claimed)
Basic price £38,000



**PORSCHE
CAYMAN S**

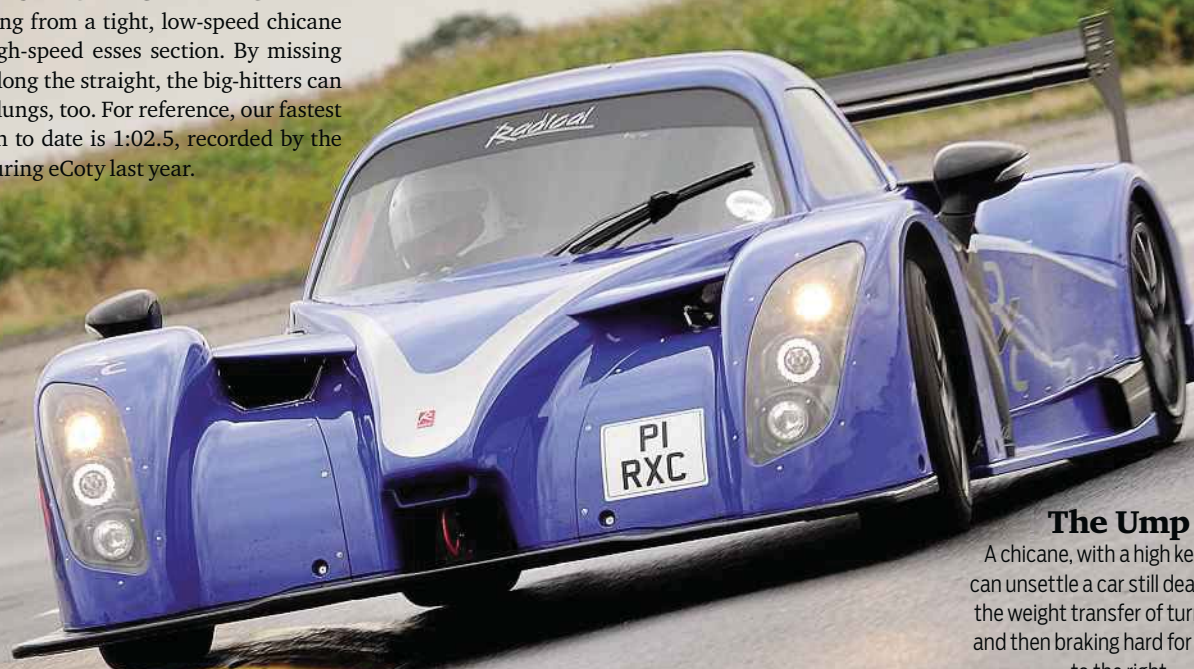
Engine Flat-six, 3436cc
Power 321bhp @ 7400rpm
Torque 273lb ft @ 4500-5800rpm
Weight 1320kg (claimed, kerb), 1371kg (as tested)
Power-to-weight 247bhp/ton (claimed)
0-62mph 5.0sec (claimed)
Top speed 176mph (claimed)
Basic price £48,783

The track: Blyton Park

📏 **Distance:** 1.5 miles

📍 **Location:** Blyton, Lincolnshire, UK **GPS:** 53.45799, -0.69179

BLYTON PARK IS A REAL CHALLENGE AND features everything from a tight, low-speed chicane to a fearsome high-speed esses section. By missing out the chicane along the straight, the big-hitters can really open their lungs, too. For reference, our fastest lap time at Blyton to date is 1:02.5, recorded by the Pagani Huayra during eCoty last year.



Bishops

A tight left with a narrow exit, Bishops is all about getting the braking right after the long straight. Brake just a metre or two late and you'll get turn-in oversteer and lose momentum

The Ump

A chicane, with a high kerb that can unsettle a car still dealing with the weight transfer of turning left and then braking hard for the flick to the right

Lancaster

The long left that leads on to the straight is a real test of traction and stability as you have to change-up mid-corner in a hard acceleration zone

Jochen

Usually approached in third gear, Jochen requires good front-end grip to turn and shed lots of speed simultaneously for the following chicane. ABS is a real boon here

Ushers

Another big braking zone, into a tight right-hander. Most cars can brake right to the apex before a short squirt of acceleration to the final corner

Twickers

An innocuous-looking left that can spoil a good lap if you get greedy and carry in too much speed. The key is to slow the car down early and straighten it out for the best run to the line

Port Froid

The most exciting part of the circuit, and a great test of high-speed stability as you turn right then left in fourth or fifth gear

Bunga-Bunga

Tricky double-apex left. Too much speed in and you'll understeer wide. Get on the throttle too early for the run into the next fast section and scrappy oversteer tends to follow



MICHELIN

A better way forward



Mini John Cooper Works GP

The Works GP won't be troubling the top of the lap-time chart, but then TCoty isn't about the raw numbers. It's about fun, excitement and interaction. The winner might post a very quick lap time but the key to its success will be that the driver is central to that time. We're looking for enjoyment, to be challenged and rewarded, to be totally immersed in the experience.

Any sense that the GP is a nice way to ease myself into the challenges of Blyton Park disappears the very first time I turn the wheel and the cold, trackday-spec tyres send the tail skittering sideways across the tarmac. This car is so sharp that it's actually a bit alarming at first. It torque-steers like crazy, darts into corners with real immediacy and the chassis balance takes no prisoners. Sure, it will understeer if you're clumsy, but the preferred stance is just beyond neutral, front wheels driving hard and the rear of the car pointing them into the apex. As hot hatches get ever more refined and more rounded, the two-seat, stripped-back, rock-hard GP is an absolute treat.

There was some disappointment when the

GP was launched that the JCW engine had only been boosted from 208bhp to 215bhp, but the GP feels plenty quick enough around here and the power is well judged to the extent that you rarely miss that most glaring omission – a mechanical limited-slip differential. The six-piston calipers with 330mm discs at the front are also superb. The pedal feel is so much better than a standard Mini's, which sometimes feels like the pedal itself might snap under your foot.

Overall, the impression is one of controlled mania: it's so pointy that it shouldn't work through quick corners yet it finds real stability when required (and when the tyres are warm), while the torque-steer should be distracting but simply adds a layer of involvement and excitement. Some people find the idea of a front-wheel-drive track car ridiculous. They should try the Works GP. It's a hoot.

Lap time: 1:09.0

Litchfield BRZ Spec S

So this is it: a BRZ with enough firepower to do the chassis justice and with tyres that put a premium on response and progressive breakaway behaviour instead of rolling



‘The Mini is so pointy that it shouldn’t work through quick corners yet it finds real stability when required’



Top right: Litchfield supercharger kit has boosted Subaru to 280bhp. **Above right:** some practice laps were held in the wet, but lap times were all set in the dry. **Above:** BRZ’s uprated Alcon brakes. **Far left:** Mini’s carbonfibre rear wing

resistance and low grip. Litchfield has developed this Spec S with very clear goals in mind and ultimate lap time wasn’t really in the script. Instead the idea was to significantly improve the performance without altering the car’s inherent balance or character and to broaden its operating window. As Iain Litchfield says, it’s all very well falling into oversteer in third gear but if the engine can’t then manage the slide effectively, it can all get a bit messy.

The package is appealingly simple and relatively affordable. The Rotrex supercharger kit costs £3500 plus fitting and the handling kit – consisting of Eibach springs and new anti-roll bars – is just £530 plus fitting. Power is up to 280bhp at 7300rpm (from 197bhp) and torque to 210lb ft at 6700rpm (from 151lb ft). This car also benefits from 18-inch wheels with sportier 225/40 tyres (up from 215s) and an Alcon brake kit for both axles. And you could buy a car like this from under £35,000.

On the track it lives up to the promise that drips from its spec sheet. Body control is significantly ramped up, an effect magnified by the stiff sidewalls and general responsiveness of the new tyres. However, the biggest change is in power delivery. A standard BRZ needs to be

absolutely wrung out to really deliver on road or track, but the Spec S has really useable torque while retaining the rewards at the very top end. The engine still sounds rather strained and the whine of the supercharger adds to the racket, but it’s finally providing you with the power to work the chassis hard just at the time when you want to.

The result is that the Spec S oversteers everywhere: either a little bit when you’re on a timed lap or a lot when you’re just driving for fun. With the predictable torque curve and the excellent turn-in response, the BRZ enters into a slide with real progression. You need to be quick to catch it comfortably, but once you’re on top of the car everything happens in slow-motion. To use a cliché, you genuinely steer the car on the throttle more often than not. Perhaps it lacks the edge of the Mini but it’s equally engaging because you’re always working the balance of the car. The Alcon brakes are also absolutely superb.

This is the BRZ as we always imagined it would be, and the all-round improvement shows, as it knocks a cool 5.3sec from our best lap in a standard GT86.

Lap time: 1:07.5



'In the Radical you can attack braking zones with astonishing accuracy'

Porsche Cayman S

We're expecting big things from the Cayman S. It was terrific on launch at the Portimão circuit in Portugal and this car is in our optimum Cayman S spec: six-speed manual, carbon-ceramic brakes, mechanical rear limited-slip diff with torque vectoring, PASM adjustable suspension and the crackling sports exhaust. We've tested the Boxster S in similar specification around here and it posted a 1:05.5, while a poverty-spec (our favourite) 911 Carrera managed a 1:05.1.

On the warm-up lap, the Cayman S feels like a huge jump up in quality compared to the Works GP and BRZ. The damping is so smooth and controlled and the drivetrain so deliciously creamy that it just feels more accurate and honed to perfection. However, this is a box-fresh example with fewer than 1000 miles showing and within a lap or two the ceramic brakes feel like they're being asked to work for the very first time. The pedal goes a little long and the usual total belief in Porsche braking evaporates. The brakes come back but by the time they do the tyres feel past their best, making the Cayman tricky to get turned in through the longer corners without inducing understeer. Interestingly, the Boxster S we drove here seemed to find more grip and tolerate trail-braking much better: crucial for Jochen and the last two corners.

Ease off a little and the Cayman S comes good, showing the traits that made the Boxster so much fun: a touch of turn-in oversteer, incredible composure beyond the limit and that simply gorgeous flat-six, just 10bhp up on the Boxster S but with more of the basic 911's ferocity and revviness. Through Ushers it feels incredibly agile and the stability through Port Froid is exceptional, but even so, it only matches the Boxster S on the stopwatch.

Lap time: 1:05.5

Radical RXC

This is where things get serious. Pull up the gullwing door, sit on the wide side pod and then slide down into the Corbeau seat. Above your head there's the criss-cross of roll-cage, ahead a tiny suede-covered steering wheel



Above: Radical delivers real downforce through fast corners. **Right:** Cayman came with manual 'box and PCCB brakes. **Far right, middle:** clutch in BAC only used to pull away



complete with controls for indicators, lights and windscreen wipers. Poking out from behind the wheel you can just make out the two copper-coloured paddles that operate the seven-speed Quaife gearbox. To the left is a big central display that lights up with a sweep of rev-counter across the top, a prominent gear selection read-out just below it and a digital speed reading closest to you. This is a prototype car in its barest trackday trim, but it's obvious that the RXC will never share the raw beauty of something like the BAC Mono. However, the view out through the visor-like windscreen and over the Le Mans-inspired bodywork feels very special indeed.

I'd expected the RXC to be rabidly fast, darty and seriously hard work, but my expectations are confounded within a lap. It's a quick car, but 350bhp (production cars will have 380bhp) in around about a ton will never match the insanity of something like the Caterham 620R, so the brakes, the quality of the drivetrain and the sheer grip and balance take centre stage instead. There's no ABS here but I love the six-piston brakes – the pedal is solid but there's just enough travel to feed back intimate information about the available grip. It means you can attack braking zones with astonishing accuracy, helped by the lovely downshift quality and the RXC's wonderful stability. Furthermore, the aerodynamic grip through Port Froid is

mind-bending: you can turn in flat, just waver on the throttle, then pick it up again and carry tremendous speed through to the exit.

It's not just the cornering grip that's impressive. The limit isn't a sharp ledge like you might expect and the RXC can be driven with plenty of slip angle without biting. Perhaps there's a shade too much understeer around the slower corners but that can be dialled out with the adjustable roll bars and dampers. It's a real trackday weapon, this.

It's deeply impressive and the gutsy V6 feels unburstable, giving the car a really appealing character. The lap time is pretty amazing, too – 1:02.9 is just 0.4sec off a Huayra, yet the RXC has less than half the power and only a few hundred kilos less to carry around. It feels like you could match that time all day long, too.

Lap time: 1:02.9

Ariel Atom 3.5 310

I love this Atom. Over the last few years I've enjoyed every Atom I've driven, but this one has the perfect set-up and is improved in every area. It exhibits little or none of the understeer often present in slow corners or in wet conditions, the transition into oversteer is smooth and precise, and the brakes – which have been so easy to lock up in the past – work brilliantly. The more rigid chassis and improved damping have really





brought the appeal of this mad, manic little car into sharp focus, and given the perfect platform to an engine with astonishing torque and top-end fury that can leave you deaf and more than a little befuddled. It's probably the first of these cars in which I wasn't concerned about the lap time at all because I just wanted to stay out and enjoy every element of it.

Dickie Meaden is a little less of an Atom fan than myself and after an initial drive feels it was just more of the same: 'In the Atom you're often driving in a style to avoid its flaws. That's fun for a while but it can feel like you're being forced down that path, not really able to fully attack,' he says rather glumly. However, a longer drive on day two changes his mind: 'Wow, it's actually the best Atom I've driven by some margin. There's less of that understeer and the pendulum effect at the rear actually works in your favour rather than slowing you down. It's a really mega thing, isn't it?'

What really strikes you about the Atom is how immersive it is. The performance is physical, the shriek of the supercharger drills into your skull, you can see the wheels hopping over kerbs, and you can feel the vibrations of the engine and fizzing rear wheels through the fixed plastic seat (the only thing I'd change as

it's hellishly uncomfortable for me). And now you can really impose yourself on the chassis with little need to manage understeer. It's superb through Lancaster, always feeling on the cusp of oversteer, and even more exciting through Port Froid, where it'll slide in fifth gear at over 100mph. The time? It hardly seems to matter but a 1:03.4 is plenty fast enough, while 134.01mph down the straight feels sensational.

Lap time: 1:03.4

Caterham Seven 620R

It's hard to imagine anything feeling much quicker than the Atom in a straight line, but the 620R, despite its similar power and weight, manages it. Performance aside, these two cars couldn't be more different. The Atom is very obviously rear-engined and its controls are light, almost effortless. The 620R, however, practically defines how a front-engined rear-driver should behave and it demands more brute force to get the best from it.

In fact this is more physical than any other Seven I've driven. There's real heft to the steering, the sequential gearbox responds to fast, positive inputs, and the sheer grip generated by the barely treaded tyres seems to



Top: Mono is sublime in the corners. **Above:** 620R switchgear is kept light and basic.

Top right: front-engined Caterham and rear-engined Atom are like chalk and cheese

strain your neck muscles much harder than the Atom. It's a real workout.

The first few laps in the 620R tend to make you feel rather clumsy and well behind the potential of the car. Partly this is the sheer weight of the controls, but it's also the intimidation of the noise and acceleration, its keenness to oversteer *everywhere*, and the brakes, which I find tricky to modulate cleanly. You sort of wrestle it around: revs flaring clumsily on downshifts, wheels locking, corners negotiated in a series of half-spins and swearing. My God, it's fast, though. And loud. Crazy, frighteningly, gloriously loud. You don't hear the supercharger, just the angry, hard-edged howl of a highly tuned four-cylinder engine tearing up the air.

But with time, it all starts to make sense and the innate brilliance of the Seven shines through. You wonder when the chassis will cry enough and wilt under the ever more unlikely power outputs we've seen over the years, but 311bhp in a Caterham feels like the most natural thing in the world once you're dialled in. More power just gives more opportunity to feel the chassis' spectacular balance and adds even more excitement to the experience. The physicality never fades but when you get the car sliding with all four tyres the steering weight eases off, and when you're committed to the up- and downshifts they seem to select more decisively. It's never short of intense and with no windscreen, you get battered around along the straight so much that you can't really see your braking point... but that's all part of it.

There really is no substitute for a well set-up Seven. Oh, and despite me never feeling comfortable with the brake/throttle pedal relationship, the 620R laps 0.4sec quicker than a Huayra with plenty more to come.

Lap time: 1:02.1

BAC Mono

After the familiarity of the Seven architecture comes an entirely new flavour. The Mono looks beautiful and modern but there's also something quite uncomfortable about leaning over to remove its odd, almost-square steering wheel, standing on the seat and then sliding down until your feet reach the pedal assembly. The driving position is proper single-seater stuff, laid back so far that you want to sit up so that your head peeps out just a little higher. Then you reconnect the wheel and buckle up the harness tight enough so that you really are locked down into the seat.

The view is incredible, framed by the sharp edges of the front wings and unencumbered by anything like an aeroscreen. It focuses the mind



'The BAC Mono is as stunning to drive around here as it is just to look at'

like nothing else. The Cosworth-developed 2.3-litre Duratec engine produces 280bhp and it buzzes and vibrates through the chassis and seat. It doesn't make a nice noise, but it's muffled by a crash helmet so you never so much as think about that more than once. Press the green 'neutral' button on the steering wheel and flip the right-hand paddle to select first gear with a clunk. The wheel has a screen that acts as a dashboard so you see and feel that you've got a gear. The Mono has three pedals but the clutch is just for pulling away: after that it's flat shifts up and blip-assisted clutchless shifts down.

The steering is weighty and demands calm inputs, but immediately the chassis feels stable, precise and not at all darty. The brakes have terrific feel and progression, just like the Radical's. The engine might sound a bit workmanlike but it really delivers the goods and it takes no time to start piling on the speed.

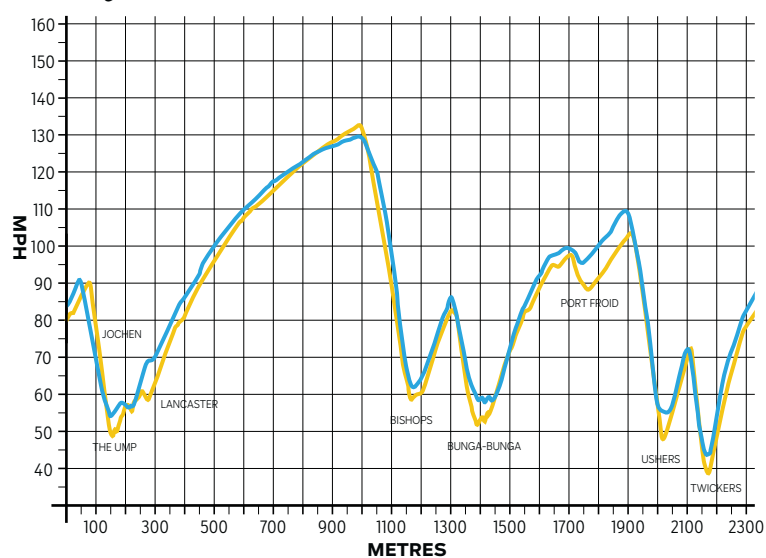
The BAC is as stunning to drive around here as it is just to look at, dissecting the circuit with real precision and yet encouraging the driver to really attack and even overdrive it without punishing mistakes. In fact, when the rear does slide, the steering wheel just falls onto the perfect corrective lock and you can gather it up with complete confidence. More often though,



'I'd love to say the 12C was an animal and that I tamed it, but it's just so easy to drive hard'

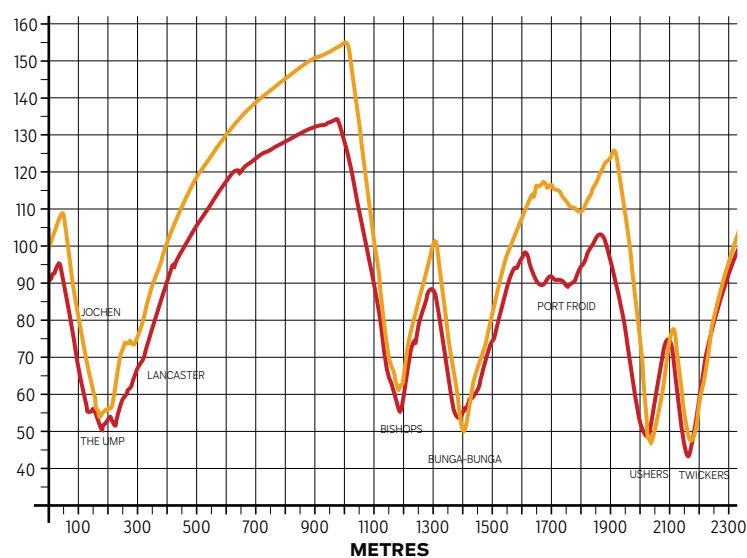


Cayman S ● Radical RXC ●



The Radical is only marginally quicker than the Cayman S in a straight line, but it carries so much more speed through the corners that its lap time is 2.6sec faster. Through the second part of Port Froid it carries over 10mph more corner speed and cornering G peaks at 1.33 through Bung-a-Bunga.

12C Can-Am ● Atom ●



The smoothness of the 12C's trace shows how confidently you can brake and then get out of corners. It reaches much higher speeds than the insanely fast Atom but still brakes later for every corner. Despite the downforce it gets to 155mph on the straight and presses home its advantage through the fearsome Port Froid esses.



you'll dance around just beyond the grip of the tyres, barely seeming to steer at all, and you'll find yourself braking later and later with every corner. It's predictable but absorbing, and its high-speed balance is superb, too. It bags an incredible 1:01.4 and leaves us all grinning from ear to ear.

Lap time: 1:01.4 (recorded with no passenger due to, um, obvious reasons. All other times are two-up.)

McLaren 12C GT Can-Am Edition

You know you're about to drive something serious when a man in an immaculate McLaren-branded shirt has to brief you on what all the buttons on the steering wheel actually do. There are traction control and ABS settings, various engine maps, a pit limiter... It all washes over me, to be honest. I'm more concerned that the 'wheel' doesn't have a top or bottom. Those of us of a certain age would call it *Knight Rider*-spec. Our video ace Sam Riley dresses like Michael Knight but even he shrugs when I ask him what it's like to drive with half a steering wheel. This could be embarrassing.

It really could, especially as the Can-Am is running the hard-compound race tyres from the Blancpain Endurance Series that take an age to get up to operating temperature and are usually slipped out of tyre-warmers. Today they've been sitting on cold concrete in an old hangar for four hours. So it's with much relief that McLaren factory GT ace Rob Bell is on hand to shake the car down and get the tyres hot. It takes about 12 laps. Yikes. Then he jumps out, says the traction and ABS settings are perfect (I wasn't going to touch them anyway) and offers just one piece of advice: 'Brake really hard into the corners, otherwise it'll just understeer.' Then the flimsy door slams down and it's just me and the Can-Am. Oh, and poor Stephen Dobie in the passenger seat.

The clutch is a bit of a pig to judge and I judder onto the track with revs flaring and waning, but never quite dying completely. Then I decide to

give it the full beans along the short straight to Jochen. I'm not sure why, but as it turns out the tyres take the torque and the 12C fires through second and deep into third in a blink. The brakes require massive pressure but the ABS is so reassuring that I can jump on them with no fear of locking up. Then I feel pathetically cowardly as the Can-Am eases through Jochen and The Ump at about 20 per cent of its potential.

Incredibly, that's the last time the Can-Am feels too much for me. I'd love to say it was an animal and that I tamed it... but it's just so easy to drive hard. You need to get your mind around the braking capability and the forces required to maximise it, but once you do, the Can-Am just sucks you in, encouraging you to really lean on the front end, to take risks on the throttle and to let the traction control help. Pretty soon you find yourself driving absolutely at your limits and catching glimpses of the car's limits, too.

Like the 12C road car, the front inside wheel hops through Bunga-Bunga and the engine's sheer reach blows your mind, but the Can-Am can turn and brake like no road car and that ability defines its lap. It's quite astounding to be part of a car that can obliterate a circuit with such force and precision, and to feel the less-loaded rear end slide into corners and hold its angle as you feed in the power. To say that the Can-Am makes you feel heroic is an understatement. Ferocious, predictable, composed, agile, mind-scrambling and just joyously exciting, it's everything you hope it will be and then a little bit more. It rips around Blyton in 55.1sec of flame-splitting madness.

Lap time: 0:55.1

Below: Bovingdon gets comfortable in the Mono's single seat.

Bottom: Can-Am steering 'wheel' has no top or bottom. **Bottom left:** traces reveal how cars from different classes compare



The conclusion



I CAN'T REMEMBER the last big test we featured with such a high-quality field as this. With eight wildly different contenders, you'd expect at least one or two to disappoint, but all were deeply impressive and huge fun.

The Cayman is a wonderful car but didn't quite have the front-end bite we'd hoped for, and for track work the PASM dampers could do with a further setting beyond their firmest Sport mode. The BRZ Spec S is hilariously sideways but we doubt you'd get away with that driving style on an open trackday. Even so it's a well-judged package of upgrades and delivers on the promise of a chassis that's been crying out for more power. We love it.

Of the road cars it's the Mini Works GP that shines the brightest. It has the hyper-agility and frantic nature of a Caterham or an Atom but in a very different package. Purists may think we're mad, but the loss of those lovely moments of power oversteer is more than made up for by the way you have to constantly cajole the GP to get the best from it. It's enthralling, challenging and hugely entertaining.

The Radical could have found itself in no

man's land here, between the conventional road cars and the nutty trackday machines. But every time anybody emerged from it, they were almost shocked by how good it was. Dickie Meaden loved it: 'It delivers a unique combination of a proper paddle-shift, a big-capacity multi-cylinder soundtrack and very exploitable handling. It's a very well-sorted car.'

For editor Trott it was a 'highlight: 'Astonishing. It doesn't feel manic like the 620R but it's just as rewarding when you get it right. In the wet it was awesome.' It doesn't quite make our top three, but the RXC is a triumph and we can't wait to take it on a proper road trip.

It's no surprise that the McLaren Can-Am left the most indelible impression. 'Magnificent in looks, sound, feel and performance,' says Meaden. 'No other car here tests your commitment so completely, or forces you to reassess where you think the limit lies.'


I'll never forget my laps in the Can-Am: the intensity of the acceleration, the astonishing braking and the sheer approachability of it once the initial intimidation fades. Not only that, but it also challenges you to reappraise what's dynamically possible and leaves you physically exhausted – and that's a whole new type of fun. If money really is no object then you'll find few greater thrills.

The Caterham, Ariel Atom 3.5 and BAC Mono also offer something unique and thrilling, and

each would make a very worthy winner.

It's by far the sweetest Atom I've ever driven,' says Dickie of the 3.5 310. 'The suspension has more pliancy and depth, the steering more feel and the brakes are much better than I recall. The balance is neutral too, but still has that rear-engined feel to tame and exploit.' Nick only drove the Atom in the wet but it was enough for him to see its qualities: 'A real buzz – I stepped from the car feeling completely wired.'

The BAC is less expressive but no less remarkable. 'Exquisite like a Pagani or Singer 911, but with a stronger motorsport vibe,' says Dickie. 'Go with it and it soon becomes the most immersive car here. Precise, feelsome and friendly.' It's fair to say we've all made room in our fantasy garage for a Mono. 'From now on any car collection is incomplete without a Mono,' says Trott. 'Why wouldn't you?'

In the end, the howling, head-spinning 620R takes TCoty by a whisker. It's the most exciting, adjustable and mind-blowing at full cry of all the cars here. As Nick says, it is a 'total distillation of everything that *evo* celebrates. The sheer transparency of the controls is incredible. Berserk and brilliant.' A 311bhp Caterham shouldn't really work, but the 620R makes you wonder how you'd cope with any less. All the Seven's qualities are not only retained, but magnified until it becomes an irresistible package. The 620R is our TCoty 2013 champ. 



BMW M ENGINEER

MICHELIN ENGINEER

1/100TH OF A SECOND MAKES ALL THE DIFFERENCE. WHEN A TYRE REVOLUTIONISED STEERING PRECISION.

In 40 years of working together to develop each M series car, the joint experience of Michelin and BMW M teams has produced countless breakthroughs. The latest? A tyre and technology interplay on the new BMW M6 that delivers a shorter reaction time, to within 1/100th of a second. You steer, it obeys. **Precisely.**



MICHELIN TAKES YOU INSIDE
THE ACTION. GET ACCESS AT:

ROAD-TO-PERFORMANCE.
MICHELIN.CO.UK



Experience the joys of ultimate steering precision, with **MICHELIN Pilot Super Sport** tyres on your car. With MICHELIN Total Performance you can enjoy high performance and optimal safety together in total confidence.





Ford Sierra RS500 Cosworth

SIERRA NIRVANA

*It once dominated Touring Car racing across the globe,
while its road-going homologation version was revered on
the road. We revisit the Ford Sierra RS500 Cosworth*

WORDS by
RICHARD MEADEN

PHOTOGRAPHY by
DEAN SMITH

**C****COSSIE. EVEN NOW, ALMOST 30 YEARS**

after this legendary Ford made its mark – usually two neat black lines – on the world's race tracks and rally stages, the nickname still resonates. Especially if, like me, you were a teenager when these things regularly romped to race victories in the British, European, Australian and World Touring Car Championships.

Indeed, for men of a certain age, the Cossie lives on in a special part of our brain that is dedicated to fluttering wastegates, rampant wheelspin, big licks of flame and genuinely unforgettable racing.

To say I'm excited about spending some quality time with an RS500 is an understatement, yet the trouble with sustained hero-worship is that it often creates a level of expectation the car can't hope to match, at least when it's in regular showroom tune and not the full race-spec car of your dreams. It doesn't help that my only previous exposure to an RS500 was in the late 1980s, when I had a frankly terrifying passenger ride in a car owned by an acquaintance of my father. Allow me to digress for a moment.

Ford Sierra RS500 Cosworth

Outwardly standard, that particular Sierra concealed a BTCC-spec motor and clutch good for generating and transmitting a nice round 500bhp to the tarmac. Or rather attempting to transmit, as the tyres were standard size and, this being the 1980s, not very good. I'll never forget the noise of the heavily boosted engine, the smell of tortured clutch and rubber, or the sheer explosive violence of the power delivery. Or, it has to be said, the wild-eyed look of the driver. The frequency with which he wiped his profusely sweating palms on his thighs before we'd even got going should have been all the warning I needed to politely bail.

Instead I stayed put and witnessed a man who was at least two inputs behind the car and who was clearly engaged in the fight of his life every time the Cossie came on boost. It remains one of the most intense – and intensely scary – ten minutes I've ever spent in a car, and only served to enhance my already strong belief that these cars possessed something beyond the performance of even the most highly strung Italian exotic. This, then, was Britain's Skyline GT-R: the car that simply begged to be tuned to within a horsepower of total destruction and became virtually undriveable when you did so.





RS500s in motorsport



YOU MAY THINK IT impossible for a car to remain unbeaten in a race series for three years and only win one overall title. But that's exactly what happened to the Sierra RS500 Cosworth in the British Touring Car Championship.

Despite carrying a 2-litre engine, the presence of a turbo meant the RS500 was placed into the premier Class A, the fastest of four classes divided by engine capacity. But at the time, it was the driver who claimed the most points in his own class that took the outright title, meaning drivers in smaller classes could trump the vastly more powerful brutes at the front.

RS500s took 40 consecutive outright wins in the BTCC, from the penultimate race of 1987 through to the car's restriction by new Super Touring regulations at the end of 1990. Robb Gravett's title win in 1990 was its only outright success, while Andy Rouse won nine of 12 races in 1988 and yet only finished third as Frank Sytner (BMW M3) and Phil Dowsett (Toyota Corolla) dominated smaller classes.

Abroad, an RS500 would have won the inaugural World Touring Car title in 1987 had it not been for a contentious disqualification at the Bathurst 1000 for wheelarches that had been illegally modified. The model did, however, win two Australian titles in the hands of Dick Johnson, as well as one DTM crown with Klaus Ludwig.

With Group B rally cars banned, the RS500 also proved a strong force in tarmac rallying (though its lack of 4wd stifled its progress on loose surfaces). Didier Auriol took one to an outright win in Corsica in 1988, beating the otherwise-dominant works Lancias.

Dan McCalla



But what of the standard RS500? A true homologation special, it was built to make the most of Group A regulations that allowed manufacturers to enhance cars for motorsport as long as 500 road cars were built. The job of converting the 500 regular Cosworths was entrusted to Aston Martin Tickford in Milton Keynes, which set about making the long list of detail changes that would ultimately make the Sierra all-but unbeatable in Touring Car racing.

As you'd expect, the upgrades centred upon the engine, chassis and aerodynamics. The revised Cosworth motor had a thicker-walled cylinder block to cope with the increased boost capabilities of the larger Garrett T31/T04 turbocharger. An uprated fuel pump was fitted to ensure it could feed the extra set of fuel injectors once they were connected (the road car used four rather than eight), while a larger air-to-air intercooler kept things chilled. Chassis-wise, there were extra (but unused) mounting points for the rear suspension's semi-trailing arms. But the most visible changes from standard spec were the redesigned front bumper fitted with extra cooling vents, and a more effective version of the famous rear wing, which now featured a more pronounced lip on the top plane and an extra spoiler on the bootlid itself.

It's funny how all these cleverly considered tweaks give the RS500 an aura around it, even after all this time. If I'd had any doubts about the Cossie's power to impress at first sight, they're dispelled when I collect the car. It has an unmistakable air of purpose, a kind of visual swagger, that marks it out as something special. The Blue Oval might not have the kudos of the BMW propeller, but if you lived through the Group A era, this Ford is royalty.

I honestly can't remember the last time I saw one on the road, but then it's probably fair to assume those that haven't been written off in lurid accidents are languishing in de-humidified storage, accruing value as the years pass. This is therefore a rare opportunity to get to know a fast-appreciating modern classic.

AS THE WORKSHOP DOORS OPEN AND the black Sierra glints into view, it's quite a shock to see how small and slender it is. And how comically tiny the 15in wheels look. Inside, the interior is a typical '80s fast Ford mix of truly terrible plastics, boxy design and a pair of comfortable and supportive velour Recaros. The steering wheel looks huge and laughably cheap, but it feels brilliant. Likewise the tall gearlever, which looks like a refugee from a Transit van,

but which moves round the five-speed H-pattern gate of the Borg-Warner T5 gearbox with surprising precision.

Twist the ignition key and the 16-valve 2-litre Cosworth YBD motor chunters momentarily then catches with a fruity *bwaarrp* before settling into a solid, burbling idle. By today's standards, 224bhp (up 20bhp on the original Sierra Cosworth) sounds pretty feeble, but as the Cossie only weighs a little over 1200kg, there's not a lot for it to lug around. The clutch has a sharp bite that initially feels a bit tricky to master at low speed, but the steering and brakes both give you plenty of confidence-inspiring feel.

The first few miles serve as a reminder of just how far cars have come in terms of basic refinement, quality, noise, vibration, harshness, the control and quality of damping, and in the feeling of integrity you get from today's super-rigid body structures. Yes, the Cossie feels its age. It's also hilariously laggy. At first, when you're just pootling along in that initial getting-to-know-you phase, the engine hides its lack of boost well as you're just using small throttle openings. Only when that first good piece of road opens out do you squeeze your foot down, then down a bit more, and a bit more before the



'ALL THESE CLEVERLY CONSIDERED TWEAKS GIVE THE RS500 AN AURA AROUND IT, EVEN AFTER ALL THIS TIME'



Top: 2-litre turbo engine produced 224bhp in road trim, but up to 500bhp on the track. **Left:** all 500 examples built were RHD, 392 of them in black; gearlever is comically tall for a performance car



'DYNAMICALLY, THE RS500 IS OLD-SCHOOL: MODEST GRIP LEVELS, BUT PLENTY OF FEEL AND TRANSPARENT HANDLING TRAITS'

Garrett finally begins to spool and force some life into the power delivery.

We're heading to North Yorkshire, to spend some proper time in the Sierra, to find some roads on which to stretch its legs and to give Dean Smith a fighting chance of capturing some great shots. Sadly the great British summer of 2013 has now fizzled out, and we're 'treated' to wet tarmac and leaden skies. Still, the Cossie has devoured the long trek north up the A1, raising more thumbs-up and waves than I've seen in a long time. Clearly I'm not the only one who still sees the magic in this rare old Ford.

By the time we reach Hutton-le-Hole and the fabulously gnarly, wide-open roads that climb up onto the majestic North York Moors, I'm desperate to push the RS500 hard. Only then will I discover if it backs up the nostalgia with an enduringly impressive driving experience that still stacks up. Thankfully, I don't have to wait long to find out.

With space and the opportunity to open the Cosworth up, it truly comes alive. Yes, it needs the space in which to let the boost build, but once charging, the RS500 still has the power and character to impress. The Cosworth engine

isn't smooth – in fact, it's pretty coarse – but once above 4000rpm the note hardens as boost builds and you get a great rush of power to compensate for the laggy low-rev torpor. It sounds good too, a cammy howl overlaid with the distant hiss of spooling turbo. The gearing is usefully tall, so you can use the on-boost torque to impressive effect, winding through third or fourth gear in one long, lusty surge. That said, overtaking needs perfect timing if you want to use the turbo to slingshot by rather than sit becalmed, waiting for the boost to arrive. It's not quite all or nothing, but there's a narrow operating window in which the Cosworth gives its best.

Dynamically, the RS500 is old-school: modest grip levels, but plenty of feel and transparent handling traits. The steering is power-assisted, but there's decent weight to it and the rate of response strikes a sweet balance between agility and stability. You always know exactly how much grip the front end has to lean on, which allows you to carry plenty of speed on turn-in. Once loaded with lateral G, the chassis remains neutral through both fast and slow corners, only oversteering with deliberate provocation.

As you'd hope, though, the Sierra loves to



slide. There's plenty of steering lock to play with, which is just as well, for the transition from grip to slip can be swift on wet roads. Balancing the slide requires delicate throttle work, as you need to tread a fine line between maintaining the boost and asking for too much. Likewise, if your right foot's too timid, the boost will fade and with it the oversteer. It's a particular challenge but one with rewards, as the Cossie is enormously entertaining when mastered.

It pays not to get too complacent, though, for the spiky power delivery can easily overwhelm the rear tyres in the rain, even in a straight line in third gear (perhaps even in fourth if you throw a crest into the equation). You learn to be especially sensitive to the point at which



Above left: wheelspin is a major hazard over wet crests. **Above:** controls look and feel dated. **Left:** rear spoiler and bootlid both received extra race-inspired aero tweaks



the boost spikes, and more specifically to the engine note, as this gives you a fighting chance of predicting the moment at which the revs and boost will rise and induce wheelspin. It sounds hairy, and it can be, but it certainly guarantees you give the Cossie your full attention. Which, let's face it, is a big part of its appeal.

If the low-speed damping is a bit brittle, things settle at speed. It takes brows and compressions with confidence and scribes clean, neat lines through long, fast corners. The brakes are impressive, with plenty of outright power and progression to match. The pedal is nice and firm too, so you can attack roads with the confidence of knowing the RS500 will stop.

How fast is it in the context of 2013? Well, Dean Smith is leading the way in his new Focus ST Estate and as we splash through some of the twistier parts of Yorkshire's road network, it's fascinating to compare the relative performance of the two fast Fords. The Focus has a massive advantage in terms of power delivery, opening a gap while the Sierra's engine fills its lungs, but the ST visibly squirms and tugs from left to right as the front wheels struggle to find traction. Up and boosting, the RS500 hits harder and finds

better purchase. It appears to be able to brake just as effectively, too. Once back on the power, the ST wriggles and writhes where the Sierra slips and slides. I'm working harder, and I'm sure Dean could go faster, but I know for certain I'm having an awful lot more fun.

And that's the key to the RS500's appeal. Yes, it feels a bit rough around the edges and it has a ropery interior. The turbo lag is comical and the way it can lose traction in the blink of an eye means it sometimes feels as though it's trying to send you through the nearest hedge. But for all this, the heart of the driving experience – those moments when you're feeling for grip, pushing for boost and balancing the car through a series of corners – is tremendous. That this road car also enabled Ford to dominate one of the most exciting eras of motorsport in living memory makes it truly special, and though it lacks the exotic flair of that other fabled Group A icon, the Lancia Delta Integrale, I'd venture to suggest the Sierra RS500 is a more exciting modern classic. I'm pleased to report that when it comes to the crunch, the Cossie is still king. ☒

With thanks to Raceworks Motorsport.

Specification

FORD SIERRA RS500 COSWORTH

Engine In-line 4-cyl, 1993cc, turbo

Power 224bhp @ 6000rpm

Torque 204lb ft @ 4500rpm

Transmission Five-speed manual, rear-wheel drive, limited-slip differential

Front suspension MacPherson struts, coil springs, dampers, anti-roll bar

Rear suspension Semi-trailing arms, coil springs, dampers, anti-roll bar

Brakes Ventilated 283mm discs front, solid 273mm discs rear, ABS

Wheels 7 x 15in front and rear

Tyres 205/50 YR15 front and rear

Weight (kerb) 1207kg

Power-to-weight 189bhp/ton

0-60mph 6.1sec (claimed)

Top speed 154mph (claimed)

Basic price £19,950 (1987)

Value today £30-45,000

evo rating: ★★★★★

Fast Fleet

Living with evo's
long-term
test cars

From Giulietta to XJR-15, evo's Fast Fleet is the biggest and most comprehensive long-term section in the business. This month...

RS CLIO 200 TURBO

by Richard Meaden
Contributing editor



This month: Meaden welcomes the controversial new Renaultsport Clio to the evo fleet.
Ever been pulled over in a long-term? 'No'



HYUNDAI VELOSTER TURBO

by Stephen Dobie
Staff writer



This month: The Lobster's off.
Ever been pulled over in a long-term? 'No, but the exhaust din on my Fiesta Zetec S Mountune probably made me a backwards baseball cap away from it'



AUDI RS6 AVANT

by Mike Duff
Motoring editor

This month: The 1935kg estate turns track car.
Ever been pulled over in a long-term? 'No. No, I haven't been. I'm a good boy'



MINI JCW GP

by Ian Eveleigh
Production editor

This month: Driving impressions.
Ever been pulled over in a long-term? 'No, but a soldier shouted at me for taking a photo of an Evo X near a US airbase. Probably thought the camera was a rocket launcher...'



PORSCHE 996 CARRERA

by Jethro Bovingdon
Contributing editor

This month: Bovingdon puts forward the case for his new 996.
Ever been pulled over in a long-term? 'As a responsible citizen I've never been pulled over in the UK. Ever. True story'



BMW M135i

by Henry Catchpole
Features editor

This month: Catchpole heads to an evo track evening in the M135i.
Ever been pulled over in a long-term? 'London, the dodgy bit, 3am, black 645i. A routine check, but still scared a 23-year-old me!'



FORD FOCUS ST

by Dean Smith
Staff photographer

This month: Smith gets better acquainted with the ST's handling.
Ever been pulled over in a long-term? 'No - I leave the stupidity to the track...'



JAGUAR XJR-15

by Secret Supercar Owner
Contributor

This month: It's MOT time.
Ever been pulled over in a long-term? 'Came close in the XJR-15 driving to Goodwood last year. Fortunately the officer decided to look at the car, not his radar gun'



TOYOTA GT86

by Jethro Bovingdon
Contributing editor

This month: The Toyota gets fitted with some sportier rubber.
Ever been pulled over in a long-term? See above right



RENAULT CLIO WILLIAMS

by Stephen Dobie
Staff writer

This month: It's an expensive month for Willy-owner Dobie.
Ever been pulled over in a long-term? See Veloster, above left



ALFA ROMEO GIULIETTA

by Rob Gould
Art director

This month: A new windscreen.
Ever been pulled over in a long-term? 'Yes, on a clear, straight road when trying to put distance between me and the Volvo behind that wouldn't get off my tail...'



MCLAREN 12C

by Nick Trott
Editor

This month: A new, better IRIS.
Ever been pulled over in a long-term? 'Not a long term, but I was stopped in an Enzo in France after driving very, very quickly. But they just wanted to look at the car'



SKODA SUPERB OUTDOOR

by Sam Riley
Film-maker

This month: Superb bests 12C.
Ever been pulled over in a long-term? 'I was once pulled in the Yeti whilst driving through Milton Keynes. They were curious as to why I was in such a new car. That was it'



FERRARI 308 GTB

by Harry Metcalfe
Editorial director

This month: The 308 enters the Salon Privé concours.
Ever been pulled over in a long-term? 'I'm yet to be pulled over or get points. I started driving 37 years ago. What am I doing wrong?!'



MAZDA MX-5 MK2

by Peter Tomalin
Contributor

This month: The inside of the MR2 is wet, but the roof isn't leaking...
Ever been pulled over in a long-term? 'No'



Also on the evo fleet: Porsche 911 SC, Ferrari 458 Italia, Ford Escort RS2000, Peugeot 106 Rallye, Mercedes 190E 2.5-16, Ferrari F50, Lancia Delta Integrale, Ferrari 430 Scuderia, BMW 2002, Ferrari F40, Renaultsport Clio Trophy, Lamborghini Murciélago. **Coming soon:** BMW M6 Gran Coupe, Jaguar F-type V8 S, Peugeot 208 GTI, Vauxhall VXR8 Tourer

@ fastfleet@evo.co.uk @evomagazine www.facebook.com/evomagazine Got a model featured in Fast Fleet? Share your experiences with us

NEW ARRIVAL

Renaultsport Clio 200 Turbo

Meaden has been reserving full judgement on the new hot Clio until trying one in the UK long-term. Now he gets a chance to learn to love it

I I WON'T LIE, I struggled with this car on the international launch (*evo* 182). With a carefully choreographed drive that mated the regular 200 Turbo to a decent road route, and limited time in the more aggressive Cup-chassis car on the less-than-inspiring Guadix circuit in Spain, our first experience raised as many questions as it offered answers. We awarded the car a qualified 4.5-star rating, but knew that only with mileage in the UK, preferably over an extended

period, would we truly get to know the all-new RS Clio.

And here it is, smothered in Liquid Yellow and sporting the gloss black 18in rims and Dunlop SportMaxx tyres that signify take-up of the £450 Cup chassis option. What do you think of it? To my eye, the oversize styling cues only seem to emphasise how much bigger the new Clio looks, especially the enormous headlights that lend it the appearance of an *Achtung Baby*-era Bono. Strangely, while it tends to look awkward when stationary, on the few occasions I've seen another RS on the move I think it looks great. Go figure.

Much like the exterior, the 200 Turbo's interior tries hard to impress. Perhaps too hard, if the slivers and slashes of Irn-Bru orange detailing are anything to go by. On the upside there's decent space front and rear, the driver's seat is comfortable and supportive, and the overall feeling of quality is an advance on the old model. But then it should be, given the price premium over the Ford Fiesta ST and Peugeot 208 GTI.

Of course the heart of the

matter is the driving experience. In the unrealistic bubble of a press launch – i.e. deserted Spanish roads and a race track – the performance stacked up but the delivery felt a bit cold-hearted. Back in the UK the new Clio has a warmer, more engaging character. It's also happy to munch through motorway miles as well as mooch around town in a manner that eluded its spiky, rabid predecessor. Its performance is accessible and freely given, but the engine and transmission lack the addictive urgency and steely edge of the previous manual, naturally aspirated 2-litre car.

More competent and capable then, but so far there have been few glimpses of the magic that made the old car harder to live with, but easier to love. ✕

Richard Meaden
(@DickieMeaden)

Driver's log

Date acquired	August 2013
Total mileage	2222
Mileage this month	1690
Costs this month	£0
mpg this month	31.6





Audi RS6 Avant

The 552bhp estate has an expensive track outing

IT'S FAIR TO say the track isn't the RS6's natural environment. So, naturally, that's the first place I took it – to one of *evo*'s events at the Bedford Autodrome – so I could see how it deals with life in the deep end.

It was certainly a welcome opportunity to stretch the Audi's legs – full throttle is something you only ever experience in short doses on road. The RS6 still felt mega-quick on track: massive, seamless urge from the twin-turbocharged V8 demolishing the straights in spectacular fashion. The automatic gearbox struggled in its manual mode at full chat, with the slight delay between pulling one of the steering-wheel paddles and the transmission reacting making it too easy to run into the limiter. I soon learned that, counter-instinctively – it's actually quicker if just left in the Sport automatic mode. And I reckon it would be a very long time before the novelty of going so fast in something so big and sensible-looking wore off.

Bedford's corners delivered a big physics lesson, though. Firstly in terms of the sheer energy involved in slowing down an RS6, with the massive brakes starting to struggle after a few flying laps. I used to think the idea of a ceramic brake option on a car like this was daft, but after my first stint on track I was regretting

not picking them. But it was the tyres that were really suffering, the ContiSportContact 5 Ps generating massive heat alongside their towering grip. I clearly didn't treat them with enough respect – the following day editor Trott pointed out that the front-right had partially delaminated. Replacing it was a £375 lesson in the importance of keeping an eye on temperatures, but also gave a chance to inspect the inside of these unique 'ContiSilent' tyres, which have a layer of foam inside to reduce road noise.

The Bedford Autodrome also proved the V8's potential thirst. On the evening it managed – sit down for this – 3.7mpg. Or, in other words, every lap around the 2.8-mile South West Circuit was costing me almost £5 in fuel alone. Ouch.

Yet the next trip it was mustered for revealed the duality of the RS6's nature. A return trip to see family in Scotland saw it transformed into an effortless cruiser: 400 miles each way and an 80-ish mph motorway speed saw it report an average of 26.5mpg. Truly a car of two halves. ☒

Mike Duff

Driver's log

Date acquired	July 2013
Total mileage	4679
Mileage this month	1511
Costs this month	£375
mpg this month	19.1

END OF TERM



Hyundai Veloster Turbo

Dobie bids a fond farewell to the quirky Korean coupe

THE HYUNDAI Veloster is a bit like Dave. You know Dave – the one who can balance a full pint of Fosters on his head while reciting every word of 'Rapper's Delight' by The Sugarhill Gang. No one realises he's an accomplished astrophysicist; he's defined by his predominantly pointless party trick.

And so it went with the Lobster, as it became affectionately nicknamed in the office. It had the pace to match most brisk hatchbacks and a really quite stellar dynamic character, yet upon first acquaintance the vast majority of people just yelled: 'Show us the doors!' The Veloster's infamous asymmetric door layout – two on the nearside, one on the offside, with a hatchback at the rear – was flawed

and, over a six-month period, proved vexing in everyday scenarios. Such as working around its huge blind spots, or avoiding inadvertent passenger decapitation with the hatch if anyone over 5ft 10in was sat in the back.

But the doors didn't half make people interested in what is, at its core, a very conventional car. Its front wheels are driven by a 184bhp 1.6-litre turbo petrol engine with only average mpg and CO2 claims, there's no stop/start at junctions or the whirring of an electronic handbrake when you park. Its main concession to today's gadget-obsessed car market is a crystal-clear reversing camera, the best I've yet used, in fact. And that includes those on cars costing five times the Veloster Turbo SE's £22,120.

That basic list price also brought satnav, heated leather seats, climate





control and 18in alloys (which perhaps contributed to the harsh low-speed ride). Our long-termers had an optional panoramic sunroof too, which let in lots of light but didn't open far enough to justify its steep £950 price.

But while the Veloster was an easy car to like, it was much harder to love. I could spend a week in it, revelling in its well-weighted pedals, slick gearchange and quality stereo, only to swap into something I was reviewing one night and not return to the Hyundai until the test car had been taken away. Previous long-termers

have dug deep under my skin and had me turning down faster, flasher cars for a weekend of familiarity. That didn't happen with A13 OHY initially.

But then I had The Drive. If I feel so inclined, I can commute via the B660, which twists and dips its way through Cambridgeshire. And one summer's evening, the road completely shorn of traffic, I switched off the Veloster's ESP and scratched way beyond its smooth, refined surface. What I found was a car with modest but transparently communicated grip levels, its light steering doing a much

better job of keeping me in the loop than many modern set-ups (despite the Veloster's being electrically assisted, too), while there was an inherent balance that was intuitive to play with.

The brakes wilted under hard use, while the engine offered its power with pleasing linearity but an utterly soulless soundtrack. But these points reflect that the Veloster isn't designed to be a hot hatch or a hardcore budget sports car; it's a sensible-shoes coupe cloaked in quirky looks that, when goaded, will reveal some surprisingly

honed dynamics. This only applies to the Turbo, mind, which operates on a different plain to the tepid base car...

After that scintillating commute, I sought the most interesting route on nearly every journey, including a couple of lengthy North York Moors detours when returning from seeing family in Sunderland.

The Lobster returned to Hyundai with its tyres mildly worn, not a drop of oil requested and pothole-induced wheel and tyre damage its only major issue (£500). After several months of indifference, I felt more than a tinge of sadness as it departed Evo Towers. And not because of those blooming doors... ❌

Stephen Dobie

(@evoStephenDobie)



Driver's log

Date acquired	February 2013
Duration of test	6 months
Total test mileage	8761 miles
Overall mpg	32.2
Costs	£500
Purchase price	£22,945
Trade-in value	£17,750
Depreciation	£5195

Porsche 996 Carrera

Jethro lives out a boyhood dream after buying his first 911



Top: 996 asking price barely broke five figures. **Above:** Alcantara-swathed seats; OZ wheels are Jethro's first mod

IN CASE YOU missed it a couple of issues ago, I've finally bought a 911. And not just any 911, but

an early 996. Which is The Worst 911 Ever according to, well, everybody.

Funnily enough, that's not how I remember it. Looking back, the 996 won three eCotys in various forms (Carrera, GT3, Turbo) and only missed out on a fourth because of the sublime NSX-R in 2002. Not so bad, after all. A simple 996 Carrera in silver was the very first Porsche I ever drove and I've wanted one ever since. By happy coincidence, they're the cheapest way into a 911 these days and when I saw this example fitted with a few trick bits, resistance was futile.

It's a 1998 996 Carrera 3.4 in Arena Red (911 geeks will know that was the 993 Turbo launch colour) with Aerokit, GT3 carbon-shelled seats, Bilstein PSS10 adjustable suspension, a full Cargraphic exhaust including tubular manifolds and 200-cell cats, and quite a few miles. Over 140,000 miles, in fact. However, it had an engine rebuild around the 110,000 mark with respected

specialist Autofarm's lovely Silsleeve liners and the updated IMS bearing.

If you are thinking of buying a 996, you need to know about things like bore scoring and intermediate-shaft bearing failures and may lose days of your life reading all manner of horror stories, contradictions and muddled conclusions. You will, at some point, want to cry. But eventually the thought of owning a 175mph 911 for not much more than £10,000 might just cheer you up again.

There's no escaping that fact that my 911 is cosmetically shabby. The front bumper is peppered in chips and scuffs and has a large split on the lower offside, the bonnet is pebble-dashed and the rear bumper has some flaking paint, too. However, the recently refurbished Bilsteins, cool seats, expensive exhaust and engine rebuild were more important to me, and I can sort the bodywork (including removing the horrid rear spats) relatively cheaply.

Of course, I didn't buy the 996 just to look at it. Once I'm locked into those lovely Alcantara seats and the engine is warmed through, the scratches melt out of my mind. It is terrific fun: fast, light, free-revving

and with steering feel that would make a 991 owner weep. The ride is knobbly at low speed but sweetly damped once you're at a decent pace, and my 996 also has another desirable option... an LSD. Legend has it that these lockers don't do much locking past 20,000 miles but mine seems pretty good, yet plans are already being hatched to rebuild the diff with plates from a GT3 Cup...

That's the beauty of this car. Because it's already been mucked around with, I'm happy to make tweaks and changes where necessary to create the best 996 that I can afford. The very first upgrade was to lose the 997-vintage 19-inch wheels it came with. In their place are gorgeous, crazily light OZ Racing Allegieritas. More of which next time... **x**

Jethro Bovington
(@JethroBovington)

Driver's log

Date acquired	May 2013
Total mileage	140,100
Mileage this month	620
Costs this month	£0
mpg this month	22.8

Mini John Cooper Works GP

The wild nature of Ev's new hot hatch is keeping him busy (and excited) at the wheel

S SO, LAST MONTH I mentioned that driving our new GP is 'full-on'. We concluded as much in our extreme hatches group test in *evo* 181. On an average B-road you're kept incredibly busy behind the wheel – not just in the corners, where the super-sticky trackday-spec Kumho tyres test your nerve, but along the straights too. The car's front end will react to any and every imperfection in the road surface with a tug of torque-steer or some tramlining in one direction or the other, each movement being magnified by the super-quick Mini steering rack.

See a car coming the other way and you instinctively tighten your grip on the wheel to make extra sure you stay on your side of the

road. Maybe I'm imagining it, but I'd swear that the drivers of oncoming vehicles sometimes edge closer to the verge, as if making more room for the lunatic weaving up the road towards them...

Ultimately, it's this waywardness that limits your pace along a B-road, closely followed by the firm ride delivered by the GP's adjustable coilover suspension. I recently spent an evening in the new Fiesta ST Mountune, which is similarly powerful (212bhp versus the GP's 215) and highly entertaining, and it covered the same roads at what felt like a near-identical pace while making much less of a meal of it.

And yet... while the GP can feel somewhat unruly, that also means there's never a dull moment. Which



probably explains why it has had my pulse racing more than any other front-wheel-drive car I've experienced, Renaultsport Mégane R26.R included. As compliments go, that's a big one. ✕

Ian Eveleigh

Driver's log

Date acquired	July 2013
Total mileage	6541
Mileage this month	1012
Costs this month	£0
mpg this month	31.3

BMW M135i

An *evo* trackday outing at Bedford allows Henry to push the limits of his baby Beemer's handling



Above: Henry discovers that when it comes to controllable slides, bigger is better

EVO'S FINAL 2013 track evening, held at the end of August, was warm and dry, and I miraculously managed to finish proof-reading pages in the office just in time to get down to Bedford Autodrome for the last hour of lappery.

Stilo on, DSC off, flash the luminous wristband at the marshal... and get stopped for not having the towing eye in. It's in the left-rear cubbyhole of the boot along with the first-aid kit, warning triangle and locking wheel nut key. Eventually I get on track, where I'm immediately reminded of just how fast the little BMW is: over 140mph down the back straight before leaning hard on the brakes is seriously impressive.

Through the corners it feels like a relatively tall, narrow car and the tail wants to play as soon as you get on the power, which makes it feel like a fun handful. However, although it's wonderfully interactive and adjustable, the lack of LSD means it's a hard car to hold stable in what should be the chassis-balance sweet spot of marginal oversteer that's fast without being showy. Ironically it's a chassis that's actually much



happier doing big-angled skids with the boot out in the breeze like a jack-knifed lorry, but sadly that's frowned upon at trackdays! The brakes lasted well, though, and the eight-speed gearbox was brilliant, keeping the engine right in the heart of the revs. I also think it's sounding better with more miles in its exhaust. ✕

Henry Catchpole
(@HenryCatchpole)

Driver's log

Date acquired	January 2013
Total mileage	13,892
Mileage this month	1705
Costs this month	£17 (oil)
mpg this month	28.8



Toyota GT86

In search of some extra precision, Bovingdon switches to Dunlop rubber

THE TYRE FITTERS looked baffled as the Michelin Primacys were removed from the GT86. They had plenty of tread depth left and would have provided thousands more miles of service... but they had to go. The GT86's light, stiff chassis with that low centre of gravity deserves better, and the Dunlop Sport Maxx RTs, in the same narrow 215/45 R17 size, are more performance-orientated. My hope is for improved response without sacrificing the 86's exuberant balance.

The new Dunlops have only been on for a couple of days as I write this and a dose of man-flu has meant that I've covered hardly any miles on them. First impressions? Well, for just trundling around town there's little difference – nothing like the transformation we found with the



GT86 TRD on 18-inch wheels, which ramped up precision notably but with a deterioration in ride quality.

However, start to throw the Toyota into corners and things are definitely improved. Grip levels are increased, but more importantly the front tyres don't feel like they're folding under due to the cornering forces. With stiffer sidewalls there's greater precision, less understeer

and a sense that the tyre is a more stable platform on which the GT86 can express itself. And pleasingly, the car's keenness for oversteer is undiminished.

We'll learn more about the tyre upgrade in the coming months, but I'm pretty sure it was the right decision and I look forward to trying the car in the wet and on track again.

So the GT86 and I continue to get along fine. It returns over 30mpg no matter how hard I try and just seems to get better with miles. Good car.

Jethro Bovingdon
(@JethroBovingdon)

Driver's log

Date acquired	May 2013
Total mileage	5726
Mileage this month	1018
Costs this month	£0
mpg this month	31.1

Jaguar XJR-15

The SSO reflects on another year with the rare Jaguar supercar

AS I WRITE, the Jaguar XJR-15 has just disappeared into the hold of a Carrs transporter and been whisked off to Exeter for its annual service and MOT. On my last drive in it, the XJR-15 was running beautifully, so hopefully this service will involve nothing more than a routine check-over and fluid change.

The service is also a signal that this car and I have just completed another year together. It's now probably one of the highest-mileage XJR-15s around (even though it's still got under 2000 miles on the clock), but that's a crown it's unlikely to hold for long. In the very small world of XJR-15s, 2013 has been a banner year and I know of at least seven other cars that are now back on the road getting regular use. In fact, one friend liked his road version so much he went out and bought an even rarer XJR-15 LM to keep it company in the garage.

The increase in interest in the XJR-15 has seen prices harden and then shoot up significantly over the past few years. The couple of cheap cars that were on the market disappeared long ago and their new

Ford Focus ST Estate

Smith takes to the track to find the limits of the ST's oversteer

WITH MY HECTIC schedule as *evo's* staff photographer taking me up and down the country on a near-daily basis, it was never going to take long to get our new Focus ST Estate run in. And usefully it was all taken care of in time for me to attend our last *evo* track evening of the year.

I was keen to get the Ford on track for more reasons than just simple

owners are discovering how the maths works on putting one back together if it has a basket of 'needs'.

evo 186 featured a terrific article on the greatest analogue supercars. It was very interesting to see the different attributes highlighted as key to making a particular supercar great. Reflecting on my past year with the XJR-15, I have been trying



to understand my continued bond and fondness for this car. The obvious conclusion is that it is simply impossible to get more analogue than the XJR-15, and I quite like that.

The Jag really requires skill to be driven well, and over the past three years I've reached a point where I am now comfortable driving it in a wide range of conditions and situations – together we have moved from intimidation and terror to familiarity and respect. This comfort level looks to be genetic, as my teenage son even took a nap in it during a recent drive towards Silverstone!

The driving experience in this road-legal Group C racer is unique

and nothing else comes close. Great gearshifts were mentioned several times in the aforementioned feature, and the shift in the XJR-15 is a beautifully crafted work of engineering art. The lever sits to the right of the driver, between your right knee and the door, and rises about four inches out of a long, dark metal tube. To change gears, you simply pivot your wrist and slide the bolt into the next gear with a distinctive metallic thump.

The movements are slight but require incredible precision. Get it wrong and it quickly turns messy. Get it right and it rewards hugely. The flyweight three-plate carbon clutch poses an extra challenge as you need to be quick and hit the precise bite point to keep progress swift and smooth. The skill needed, coupled with the potential reward, has been critical to our continued bond.

The symphony of sounds that the XJR-15 makes is special, too. The 6-litre V12 is very loud and there is exactly zero sound deadening between the engine and cabin. I try to avoid early morning drives as I would like to remain on speaking terms with my neighbours, but it isn't the number of decibels it produces that makes the XJR-15 special – it's the range of sounds that spring forth from the engine bay. Just cruising down the road you can clearly hear the

mechanical clinking of all 24 valves, the whirl of the chains, the spinning of the driveshaft, the engagement of each gear and the hum of the fuel pumps. The net impact is a feeling of being fully involved with everything the car is doing, as if you were directly connected to the engine.

An email has just arrived stating that the big Jaguar had passed its MOT with flying colours again. I wasn't surprised, but as always was slightly relieved. The XJR-15 has been incredibly reliable: other than a dead battery once, it has been completely free of trouble and has never left me stranded. Looking back over the invoices, it is clear it is also quite low-maintenance by supercar standards. The carbonfibre tub always helps in this area as there are therefore no rust concerns. As a completely analogue car, there isn't that much to go wrong and the 450bhp V12 is hardly stressed in normal road use. In fact, other than fuel, the Jag hasn't incurred any further costs whatsoever since its last service. ✕

Secret Supercar Owner

Driver's log

Date acquired	July 2010
Total mileage	1500
Mileage this month	2
Costs this month	£360 (service)
mpg this month	2 (probably!)

hooning, though. You see, while getting to know the ST on the road I was caught somewhat unawares by a lift-off oversteer 'moment'. Thankfully my reactions and the stability control (OK, mostly the latter) were on the ball and prevented things getting messy, but it left me wondering if this incident was just a freak one-off, perhaps caused by a greasy road surface, or if the ST was particularly tail-happy. The relative safety of the Bedford Autodrome was the perfect place to find out.

With 247bhp and 265lb ft of torque, the ST is no slouch on track. On the road, putting all that torque through the front wheels inevitably results in some torque-steer (sadly, the ST doesn't have the fancy torque-steer-reducing RevKnuckle front hubs of

the previous-gen Focus RS), but I was surprised to discover that there's still noticeable torque-steer on a smooth track, too. There's probably a bit more body roll than is fashionable for a hot hatch as well, but the ST still feels well controlled.

Then came the moment of truth: brake hard, turn in, clip the apex, back on the accelerator then lift off to tighten the line and... yep, oversteer. Turns out the ST loves it. But get back on the gas and it'll pull straight and



you'll be on your way again. And the best thing? You can experience all this with the stability control in its intermediate Sport mode, so you can look like a hero, safe in the knowledge

that if things get a little too far out of shape, you should still be saved. Just don't tell anyone, yeah? ✕

Dean Smith

(@evoDeanSmith)

Driver's log

Date acquired	August 2013
Total mileage	3011
Mileage this month	2107
Costs this month	£0
mpg this month	27.1



Renault Clio Williams
Dobie assumes sole ownership of the Willy and instigates some improvements

WHAT A SCARY number that is in the 'costs this month' line, eh? Especially given the whole car was bought for £3000 back in 2010.

Well, I am now L97 JUD's sole owner. Co-buyer Adam Shorrock recently departed his role as *evo*'s senior designer to go it alone as a freelancer, and that meant he had to chop in his half of the Willy for something more dependable. If you ever see Adam, do ask him about his new Honda Accord Type-R...

Despite not really having the money to hand, I didn't once consider surrendering my half of the Clio too, so buying out my mate explains the first £1500 of this month's costs. Then I needed a new insurance policy, having previously been a named driver on Shorrock's thanks to his four extra years of age and wisdom. I spent what felt like a week on the phone and comparison sites, only to stick with Adrian Flux as its quote of £545 – including European and breakdown cover – remained far and away the best.

Another £493 was spent on some mild tickling at 519 Automotive, a Renaultsport specialist in Bedfordshire. The Williams hadn't been starting, and I was befuddled by mixed symptoms suggesting



Above: trackday fun at Rockingham was ended by snapped clutch cable

both starter motor and battery ailments. I also wanted assurances of the Clio's mechanical welfare before taking it on its first trackday in two years. The resulting diagnosis called for a new battery (£70) and some light exhaust welding (£27), and while I only needed one new damper for the front (£70), I replaced all four as a special treat for my 'new' car. With that, it was off to Rockingham for a trackday among other motoring journalists and a chance for the car to shine – or otherwise – after the fresh attention it had received.

Patchy rain highlighted just how little life remained in its front tyres, but a quick swap with the rears turned terminal understeer into

occasional oversteer, making things infinitely more fun. Once I'd learned my lines (I always spend 20 minutes with an instructor when I'm new to a circuit), it was an absolute riot, the new Brembo brakes fitted to pass last year's MOT proving seriously impressive in both endurance and confidence-inspiring bite.

One slightly erratic spin aside, everything was going swimmingly, until I pulled into the pits in the afternoon and the clutch pedal sank to the floor. Such impeccable timing was the silver lining on an unfortunate cloud, as was the feverish help of a couple of friends, one of whom had endured that spin from the passenger seat. A snapped clutch cable – the result of an acknowledged Williams weak spot – was the relatively minor diagnosis, making the £95 bill from Stamford-based Tecmotive easy to swallow. A new set of tyres should ensure the next report's cost line is still a plump one, though...

Stephen Dobie
(@evoStephenDobie)

Driver's log

Date acquired	August 2010
Total mileage	94,520
Mileage this month	281
Costs this month	£2633
mpg this month	26.6

Alfa Romeo Giulietta Cloverleaf

Gould's been noticing the growing popularity of the Giulietta

SO THE ALFA'S windscreen, which suffered a terminal collision with a stone last month, has been replaced at a cost of £75 for the windscreen insurance excess. Unfortunately the intermittent automatic wipe now takes ages to register when the windscreen is wet. It's just another of those 'issues' you get with modern cars as they rely more and more on complicated electronics. Give me a '70s Alfetta GTV with manual everything...

In fact the Alfetta is possibly the only Alfa that's on my buying radar at the moment that isn't stupid money. It's a great design classic. Maybe in time the Giulietta will be too. I keep noticing more and more of them on the road. And more often than not there'll be a nod of acknowledgement from the driver, too.

The Giulietta's popularity can't be all down to looks, can it? Perhaps not... There's a corner just outside my village that I tempt myself to take faster (within reason) each day. In doing so I've found that it's quite easy to adjust the Giulietta's attitude with the throttle. Any other Giulietta owners notice the same thing?

Robert Gould (@rob Gould72)



Driver's log

Date acquired	December 2012
Total mileage	15,859
Mileage this month	1409
Costs this month	£75
mpg this month	29.6

CATERHAM CARS

"If ever there's a car that
defines evo's mantra of the
Thrill of Driving, this is it."

EVO Magazine ★★★★★



THE SUPERCHARGED CATERHAM SEVEN 620 R IS HERE.

BE ONE
OF THE
FIRST TO

DRIVE IT.

You've read the reviews. You've seen the performance figures. Now it's time to experience the Seven 620 R for yourself. Call your nearest showroom to reserve a place on one of our exclusive test drive events.

Donington – 22nd October & 3rd November • Brands Hatch – 30th October

Caterham South – 01883 333700 • Caterham Midlands – 01455 841616

WWW.CATERHAMCARS.COM



TWISTED™ THINK THE UNTHINKABLE

Power, speed, durability and, above all, style. Twisted takes the most distinctive vehicles in the world and transforms them into machines that pull, in every sense of the word. With many years' experience of tuning and styling Land Rovers, Twisted has the expertise, ability and commitment to ensure that yours performs, looks and feels far better than you ever thought possible. Drive the improbable. Think the unthinkable.



McLaren 12C

A new version of McLaren's 'IRIS' infotainment system has finally arrived. And it's good news...

F

FLICKERING AND unresponsive screen, poor radio reception, unintuitive satnav, unreliable Bluetooth

and USB... the list goes on. Much has been said about the McLaren 12C's IRIS (or DORIS as one wag nicknamed it) infotainment system, most of it bad. Suffice to say, the system was rubbish and owners weren't happy. Having experienced it for five months, I can only agree with them. Fortunately, McLaren now has a fix – and 'my' car is the first to be fitted with the new system.

What's new? Almost everything. The touchscreen stays in portrait format and the circular home button remains, but the top two buttons now act as return/back and start voice control respectively (they were up and down scroll buttons on the original system), while the bottom two activate settings and engage mute.

The home screen layout is similar, but from there on it's all good news. The satnav is now intuitive, with bigger keypad digits and Find functions that are easy to use, as are



the History and Favourites options. And it hasn't crashed once.

The radio still lacks DAB, but the FM reception is improved. A TuneIn Radio app is pre-installed, although a data connection is required. At the time of writing I haven't had chance to try it.

Voice control works well, despite the sometimes high levels of tyre noise in the cabin, while the media link works fine via either Bluetooth or USB, although I did manage to confuse the media function once, when it was looking for both the USB

Above: updated nav is much improved. **Below:** bigger keypad buttons make it easier to enter addresses

and Bluetooth link to my phone.

Overall then, it's good news. The revised system will be fitted to all new 12Cs, but previous customers will need to cough up £1369. Whether owners will feel like they should pay for the upgrade is another thing entirely, but it's nice to be able to report a positive story on the 12C's IRIS. ✕

Nick Trott (@evoNickTrott)



Driver's log

Date acquired	March 2013
Total mileage	17,211
Mileage this month	1229
Costs this month	£1369
mpg this month	17.1

Skoda Superb Outdoor

Supercars are great, says Riley, but sometimes a Superb is better



I IT'S PROBABLY APPARENT from my last few reports that I've warned to the Superb over the course of my time with it – certainly much more so than I expected to when I was first handed the keys.

The Skoda was borrowed for a holiday again this month, as editor Nick dangled the carrot of two weeks in his 12C in front of me as compensation. As fun as driving a 616bhp British supercar was, bizarrely there was a part of me that was left longing for the Superb's practicality. Going to the supermarket and having fruit and veg rolling around in the passenger footwell due to the lack of proper luggage space does take a little shine off living with a supercar.

The Superb's time with me is almost over, so hopefully I'll get a weekend with it to myself to give it one last thrash. Then again, Trott might be so happy with the Skoda that he doesn't want the McLaren back... ✕

Sam Riley (@samgriley)

Driver's log

Date acquired	March 2013
Total mileage	10,925
Mileage this month	1311
Costs this month	£0
mpg this month	42.2



Ferrari 308 GTB

Harry's Pininfarina-styled classic gets spruced up for a concours

E ENTERING A POSH concours event like Salon Privé isn't as straightforward as it may seem. It generally begins with a request from the organisers for details and photos of your car for appraisal, and should it be deemed suitable for admission, it goes forward to a selection committee. If accepted, you then get an invitation to attend, together with an invoice for £990. As my 1976 308 GTB Vetroresina is such an original example, I thought I'd give it a bash.

Having been a judge at Salon Privé last year, I knew how important it was to gather as much of the early history of the car as possible to impress this year's judges with. Luckily, the car came with plenty of history when I bought it, including the original order and invoice, but I didn't have any early pictures, even though the first two owners used to compete fairly regularly in the car at Shelsley Walsh hill climb. But then I struck gold when

I made contact with the widow of the car's second owner, who had kept a Shelsley programme from June 1977 featuring a shot of the 308 (pictured) and a listing in the 'GT and modified sports cars over 1600cc' class.

I also had to get the 308 properly detailed, for which I booked in Richard Tipper of Perfection Valet for a full-on two-man all-day session (£650). The wheels had to be removed so that everything, including the inner arches and suspension, could be polished. This was followed by a rejuvenating machining programme for the (original) paintwork and topped off by the application of Perfection Valet's new wax. The end result was spectacular, with even the well-used handbook case getting a sprucing!

Judgement day turned out bright and sunny but, to my eyes, the quality of the other cars in my class was off the scale. My 308 had been selected for the 'Pininfarina' class and amongst my 11 competitors were the winning Ferrari 250 Pininfarina Spider from this year's Ferrari Owners' Club Concours, plus a perfect-looking Daytona that never gets driven and a beautiful, unmolested 288 GTO. Yikes.

To my relief, the judges that day were looking for originality along with the touch of magic that all great Pininfarina designs seem to have. It was no surprise to see first place go to a very pretty silver Ferrari Dino and

Enjoy the hill climb season
with Fairley and their Ferrari
... a quality combination



Driver Reg Phillips
Specialist steels for the oil and engineering industries
JAMES FAIRLEY STEELS
Mill Street,
Aston,
Birmingham B6 4BH.
Tel: 021 359 4575 Telex: 338909

second to an unusual 1963 Lancia Coupe one-off that Sergio Pininfarina used to use as his personal car. But I was chuffed to see my 308 snatch third, and equally relieved to know you don't have to spend millions (or not drive your car) to win a concours prize.

Now it's over, I'm keen to organise a proper European blast in the 308 before winter arrives. I understand Sicily is nice at this time of year... ☒

Harry Metcalfe (@harrym_evo)

Driver's log

Date acquired	March 2013
Total mileage	37,500
Mileage this month	900
Costs this month	£1640
mpg this month	19.1

Mazda MX-5 1.8i

Tomalin's roadster fun finally falls foul of the fickle British weather

P PULLING BACK THE curtains the other morning, I observed sleepily that it had rained overnight. Large puddles on the road suggested a downpour. Large puddles on the carpet behind the MX-5's seats confirmed it.

What had happened to the preceding balmy summer's evening? I've owned a fair few convertibles over the years but this was the first time I'd ever left one out overnight with the top down. Mr Sod and his famous Law did the rest.

So I've spent the last couple of weeks drying the MX-5 out, which has meant throwing back the hood at every opportunity and driving around with a towel under my backside. Then, a few days ago, I stepped out of the house and the Mazda suddenly wasn't completely steamed up inside any more.

On the bright side, a colleague observed that the interior has at least been treated to a sort of 'deep clean'. I suspect there are easier methods, and ones that afford less mirth to the neighbours. ☒

Peter Tomalin



Driver's log

Date acquired	April 2012
Total mileage	114,907
Mileage this month	301
Costs this month	£0
mpg this month	32.6



EXPERIENCE THE POWER

Akrapovič exhaust systems



911 Carrera / S / 4 / 4S (991)

Porsche Hard facts: +18 HP, +35 Nm, -9 Kg

Enhance your car's performance with an Akrapovič exhaust system. More horsepower, more torque, reduced weight. And that unmistakable Akrapovič sound. Akrapovič exhaust systems are also available for performance models from the following brands - Abarth, Audi, BMW, Chevrolet, Ferrari, Ford, Lamborghini, Mercedes-Benz AMG, MINI, Mitsubishi, Nissan, Porsche, Renault and VW.

Akrapovič systems are available in titanium and stainless steel with exquisite carbon fibre or titanium tailpipes. On many models, you can add a Wireless Kit for adjustable sound.

PERON
ENGINEERING PERFECTION

T: 0845 68 09 342 | info@peron-automotive.co.uk | www.peron-automotive.co.uk



AKRAPOVIČ

www.akrapovic.com

FREE SCUDERIA FERRARI EAU DE TOILETTE

*when you subscribe to **evo** today*

Great reasons to subscribe

- FREE Scuderia Ferrari Eau de Toilette
- Receive your issue before it hits the shelves
- Get exclusive collectors' edition covers
- Save up to 12% on the shop price
- PLUS only 50p more per issue if you add the iPad edition to your print subscription



*iPad
edition
ONLY 50p
more per
issue*

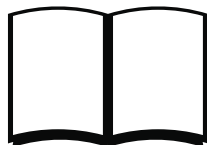
AVAILABLE IN...

PRINT

Quote offer code **D1312P**

when you call or order online

Subscribe for just £23.75 every 6 issues by Direct Debit

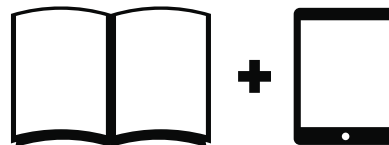


BUNDLE

Quote offer code **D1312B**

when you call or order online

Subscribe for just £26.75 every 6 issues by Direct Debit



For credit card payment options, visit www.dennismags.co.uk/evo

Gifts limited to the first 150 subscriptions. Please allow 28 days for delivery. Gift available to UK only. Alternative may be supplied. All subscriptions are for a 12 month period.

YOUR FREE GIFT

**Scuderia Ferrari
Eau de Toilette**
Worth £39.00



**OFFICIAL
FERRARI
PRODUCT**
Made in Italy

DEBENHAMS
www.ferrarifragrances.com

SUBSCRIBE NOW

Call 0844 844 0039

Order online at **www.dennismags.co.uk/evo**

USA Call 1-866-622-5138 or visit **www.imsnews.com/evo**

Rest of the World Call +44 1795 592 908 or visit **www.dennismags.co.uk/evo**

Quoting **D1312P** for print only edition or quoting **D1312B** for Print+iPad edition

Brand New VW T2 Campers from Danbury



FROM
£33,849



Spacious 4 seat layout - full length kitchen, with a 3/4 width rock a roll bed!



Spacious 5 seat layout with a full width bed!

Production ending this year!

For more information visit our website, or call us today to arrange a visit to our Bristol showroom.

DanburyMotorcaravans.com Tel: 01454 310000



ISO 9001
REGISTERED COMPANY



BUY WITH CONFIDENCE: WE ARE
TRADING STANDARDS APPROVED



danburymotorcaravans



**Danbury
MotorCaravans**

Showroom visits by appointment Mon to Fri 9am-5pm and Saturdays 9am-1pm. Danbury Motorcaravans, Armstrong Way, Yate, Bristol BS37 5NG. All factory visits by appointment only please.

Foskers FERRARI SPECIALISTS



Ferrari F430 Spider 2006 £74,995

Rosso Corsa with Nero Daytona hide, stitched red with Bordeaux carpets, 6 speed manual transmission, Black electric hood, Scuderia wing shields, black Callipers, Alloy wheels, Power steering, electric windows, electric door mirrors, HiFi upgrade with Subwoofer, Carbon driving zone, Manettino steering wheel control with Start button, adjustable suspension, auto skid reduction, remote alarm/locking.

This 430 Spider has full service history, and has only covered 10,000 miles from new, absolutely pristine!

www.foskers.com • T: +(44) 1474 874777 • M: +(44) 7921 430 430 • E: sales@Foskers.com

Foskers Engineering Llp, 5 Brands Hatch Park, Scratchers Lane, Kent, Da3 8Pu

Market Watch

Knowledge

Insights into the used-car market. Edited by Harry Metcalfe

Market watch



911 PRICE CRASH

New 991-spec Porsches are suffering huge depreciation

SELLING A NEW Porsche 911 right now is proving tough going for the marque's well-trained sales staff, with plenty of availability at most main dealers. Trying to discover the exact size of the discounts on offer on new or nearly new 911s is always tricky, but from the rumours I've been hearing, they could be approaching £10,000 in certain cases.

You only have to look at what's on offer in the used section to see how quickly prices of 991-generation 911s are dropping. The official Porsche dealers I've checked out this month are advertising well-specced second-hand 3.4 Carreras from around £64,000, but September's *Glass's* guide has 2012 models at just £54,000. What you have to take into account with the 991, though, is that once you've added a few of the more essential options, the list price soon jumps up from £73k (for the 3.4) to close to £90k. Porsche Centre Newcastle has been advertising a 2500-mile, 3.4 with PDK for £64,990, but that car would have cost its first owner close to £86,000 once its options, such as black 20in wheels and a sunroof, had been added.

It's the same story with the 2012 3.8 Carrera S up for sale at Porsche Centre Portsmouth for £69,990. In Pearlescent Blue and with 20in wheels, PCM touchscreen, Bose hi-fi upgrade and full leather interior, it listed new at £92,503, which represents a drop of £22,513 in less than a year. As the car has only covered 3100 miles, that works out at a frightening £7.26 per mile – and that's before any haggling on the price (which is approximately £8000 above 'book' value).

There's no sign of these prices bottoming out either, and they're not helped by new 911s costing less in the UK than they do in mainland Europe – the 991 GT3 lists at around €20,000 (c£17,000) more on the Continent than it does here in the UK. It makes you wonder how the new-generation 911 Turbo S is going to get on once it arrives in UK showrooms later this year, as its list price of £140,852 (before extras) looks distinctly high to me in today's market. What a Turbo is going to be worth in 12 months' time is anyone's guess.

Harry Metcalfe
Editorial director



Auction watch

Classic performance bargains among the Bentleys and Rollers at Duxford sale

THE H&H CLASSICS sale on October 16 at the Imperial War Museum, Duxford, will feature a large collection of Rolls-Royces and Bentleys, which sets the overall tone for the event. But there are a couple of turbocharged treats on offer that got our *evo* radar twitching...

The first is a Maserati that bears the same name as a 1960s supercar and a modern-day 5-series rival: Ghibli. This particular Ghibli is from 1994 and features a 2.8-litre turbocharged V6. It's a development of the 1980s Biturbo, but this car looks stunning with its metallic dark blue paint and bulging wheelarches. You can expect some rather large servicing bills with a Maserati of this age, but if you're feeling brave and want to stand out from the crowd, this Ghibli II currently has an estimate of £6000-7000.

Next up is something a bit sportier from those clever chaps at Hethel. The Lotus Esprit Turbo is a 1980s icon and this 1987 example has hints of *For Your Eyes Only* about it with its gold-centred BBS alloy wheels. This is apparently a special-edition model built to commemorate 21 years of Lotus production at the former RAF base in Norfolk, and as such it comes in an unusual colour combo and is equipped with every single optional extra you could buy at the time. It's also the desirable HC (high-compression) model, and has covered just 49,000 miles from new. The current estimate stands at £18-21,000.

If these offerings are too conventional for you, there is a Morgan three-wheeler estimated at £28-30k. It sounds like a lot when you consider a new one costs about the same, but this Super Sports model was built in 1933, and is not only tax and MOT exempt, but a piece of pre-war history.

Matthew Hayward (@octaneMatthew)



Above: this Maserati Ghibli II could be yours for £6k – but you'll need extra to cover the likely repair bills



Above: made famous by James Bond, this fully specced Lotus Esprit Turbo is expected to fetch around £20,000

Market Watch

Knowledge

Insights into the used-car market. Edited by Harry Metcalfe

Ask the expert



Q We are currently running a wheelchair-adapted Caravelle (for our son) as our family car and we would quite like our second car to be a cabrio. It would need four seats to accommodate our four-year-old twin boys, but crucially it needs to be a good enough drive to get me out of my mk5 Golf GTI. Our budget is around £15k.

Mark Yardley

A The main issue with four-seater convertibles is that the backrests on the rear seats are often very upright, to free up space for the roof to fold into. So while the rear seats are OK for short journeys, they can be uncomfortable on longer trips.

With that in mind, a top choice for fun

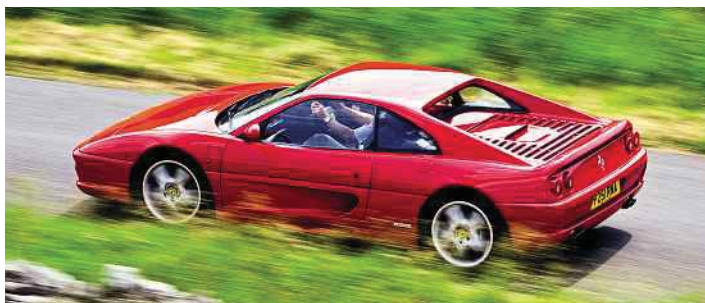
has to be a 911 Cabriolet, as a 911's rear seats are great for kids up to 8-10 years old and a 2000-2002 996 C2 Cabrio (315bhp) just squeaks into your price range. Next on the list would be an '05-'06 E46 M3 convertible (338bhp). Also worth trying is an '05-'06 CLK55 AMG (380bhp) – really cheap these days.

Other four-seater convertibles worth considering are the BMW 6-series (pictured) or a late BMW 320 or 325i. Beyond that, you'll be looking at classics. A '90s Mercedes E320 convertible is an interesting option, but these are starting to get very collectable and are more like cruisers anyway. A Porsche 968 cabrio is another alternative worth checking out, but finding a good one would be a struggle now. Happy hunting! **HM**

Trader chat

Simon Lenton, Dove House Motor Company

www.dovehousecars.com



'August proved to be pretty dead for us, but September was great, with plenty of buying going on. We had a 2006 Aston V8 Vantage in recently, which had done 46,000 miles, and we had loads of buyers after it for £32,995. Porsche 997s priced around the £25-30,000 mark sell really easily too, as do 996 Turbos in general. They represent excellent value for money for the performance they offer.

'Air-cooled 993s continue to climb in value. We've got a really nice '96 Carrera 2S up for £39,995 and that's around 30 per cent more than it would have been this time last year. Having said that, I'm surprised how cheap the Ferrari 355 is at the moment. It's an iconic Ferrari and we've got an excellent late example available currently for £47,995. I can see that will look cheap in a few years' time.

'The '08 Porsche Cayenne GTS we had in recently flew out the door at £25,000. The real bargain, though, is the Cayman. We had an '06 3.4 S in for £16,995 and it sold really quickly. It's hardly surprising as it's nicer to drive and much rarer than the 911. I'd love to have more of them in, but it's so hard to find them.'

Just looking

The pick of the classifieds this month



Nissan GT-R Track Pack

£59,990

GC Motors, North Yorkshire

www.gcmotors.co.uk

01423 500017

It's the forgotten GT-R: the Track Pack. With the standard car so bloody fast and capable on road and track, and its eminent tuning scene throwing up multitudinous modifying options if you're particularly tricky to impress, the need for Nissan to harden up the car itself was minimal.

Key changes comprise a pair of sports seats up front, the ditching of the rear pews, new track-biased suspension and lighter

alloy wheels. But, conversely, we found the 14kg-lighter TP more supple than its base car when we tested it in *evo* 171.

At £84,450, the Track Pack was £10k more than a regular GT-R new, yet just 7500 miles later, this example at GC Motors costs just £59,990. It's in a nice stealthy grey, too, the flashes of blue extravagance being saved for the driver's quarters.

Stephen Dobie (@evoStephenDobie)



Bugatti EB110 SS Brabus

£475,000

Oakfields, Hampshire

www.oakfields.com

01256 760256

Like the GT-R Track Pack, here's another forgotten multi-turbo, 4wd behemoth that hustles a chunky kerb weight with brain-scrambling haste. But unlike its Veyron successor, its mystique hasn't been diluted by endless special editions.

There were two types of EB110: the 552bhp 'regular' model, and the SuperSport (also known as the SS), which tops 600bhp. It's claimed just 31 SuperSports were built,

but rarer still is an SS fettled by Brabus. Oakfields reckons this is the only one in existence, with a blue custom interior and a new four-pipe stainless steel exhaust system (around £6500 alone in 1993).

Brabus didn't touch the performance or dynamics, but with a 216mph top speed, it didn't need to. EB110 prices are set to rise with Bugatti's climbing reputation, and this is a very unique example indeed. **SD**

Fantasy garage: £15,000 challenge

This month, we challenged our production editor, Ian Eveleigh, to find three cars for no more than £5000 each amongst the ads at forsale.evo.co.uk



VW Golf GTI Mk2 £3495

Having been stored for nearly a decade, this unmodified Tornado Red GTI has covered a mere 70,000 miles. A proper hot hatch classic.



Renault Clio 182 £3495

Another hot hatch, this one a bit more modern. With just 49,000 miles on the clock, this 182 should be reliable and a hoot as my everyday car.



BMW 735i (E23) £4495

Good for 0-60mph in 8.5sec and complete with period Securicor phone, this 80,000-mile 7-series from 1986 would be a stylish cruiser.

SPECIALISTS
IN THE SALE OF IMPORTANT
MOTOR CARS



BRAMLEY
THE BEST EXPERIENCE



2012/61 Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG

Imola Grey/Designo Black & Red Hide Interior, Bang & Olufsen Hi Fi System, Rear Camera, Keyless Go.
7,900 Miles **£115,850**



2012/12 Mercedes-Benz G55 AMG

Calcite White/Designo
Black Hide, Heated Steering
Wheel, Privacy Glass,
Heated Windscreen, Designo
Anthracite Veneer.
6,300 Miles **£89,850**



2011/11 Porsche 911 Turbo S Cabriolet PDK

Basalt Black/Full Black Hide
Interior, PCCB, PCM TV and
Telephone Modules.
8,100 Miles **£89,850**



2010/10 Bentley GTC Speed

Midnight Emerald/Magnolia
Hide Seating/Black Hood,
Naim Hi Fi, Diamond Turned
Facia, TV Function,
Rear Camera.
Only 800 Miles..... **£99,850**



2011/61 Audi R8 V10 Coupe R Tronic

Phantom Black/Extended
Black Hide, Carbon Sigma
Inlays, Advanced Parking
System, Alcantara
Head lining. 1 Owner,
4,137 Miles **£79,850**



2010/10 Audi RS6 Plus Avant

Lava Grey/Audi Exclusive
Classic Red Seating, 742 BHP
MTM Upgrade, Carbon Front
Spoiler/Carbon Rear Valance,
Huge Spec.
22,000 Miles **£59,850**



2011/11 Bentley GT W12 Mulliner Specification

Silver Tempest/Beluga Hide,
Massage & Ventilated Front
Seats, 21" Split Rim Alloy
Wheels, Piano Black Veneer.
4,985 Miles **£96,850**



2013/13 Audi A8 6.3 Litre W12 L

Phantom Black/Black Hide,
Bang & Olufsen Hi Fi,
Comfort Massage Seating,
VAT Qualifying.
1,000 Miles **£82,850**



2009/09 Ferrari 612 Scaglietti 1 to 1

Grigio Silverstone/Black
Hide, Panoramic Glass Roof,
Parking Sensors.
22,600 Miles **£94,850**

This represents a small selection of our vast and ever changing stock which can be viewed at

www.bramley.com

Telephone **01483 898159**

Out of Hours **07919 578278**

Open 7 days

Similar and Important Motor Cars Purchased or Taken on Consignment



Lamborghini Diablo
Magnesium Wheels Jota Edition Unique Limited
Edition 21,875 miles 1996 **£300,000**



Lamborghini Murcielago LP640 Roadster
Full spec inc, Ceramic brakes
2,000 miles 2009 **£144,990**



Lamborghini Gallardo LP560
Cordelia Alloys Qcuitura Stitching Lifting Gear
5,000 miles 2011 **£114,990**



Lamborghini Gallardo LP560 Bicolore
Skorpius Alloys Clear Engine Bay Cover
Lifting Gear 7,000 miles 2011 **£114,990**



Lamborghini Murcielago
Egear Clear Engine Bay Cover GT-R Rear Wing
24,000 miles 2005 **£99,990**



Lamborghini Murcielago
Hercules Alloys Egear Lifting Gear
15,000 miles 2005 **£96,990**



Lamborghini Murcielago
Hercules Alloys SV Spec Bicolour interior
62,000 miles 2004 **£89,990**



Lamborghini Gallardo LP560
Colour SatNav Calisto Alloys Electric Seats
29,000 miles 2010 **£84,990+ VAT**



Lamborghini Gallardo
Lifting Gear Reverse Camera Egear
21,000 miles 2008 **£79,990**



Lamborghini Gallardo
Lifting Gear Calisto Alloys Reverse Camera
29,000 miles 2008 **£77,990**



Lamborghini Gallardo
Branding Pack Matt Black Cassiopea Alloys
Sportivo Interior 11,000 miles 2007 **£74,990**



Lamborghini Gallardo
Calisto Alloys, Branding Pack, Reverse Camera
16,000 miles 2007 **£74,990**



Lamborghini Gallardo
Lifting Gear Reverse Camera Egear
15,000 miles 2007 **£74,990**



Lamborghini Gallardo
LHD Reverse Camera Calisto Alloys
8,000 miles 2009 **£74,990**



Lamborghini Gallardo
Calisto Alloys Special Edition Colour SatNav
59,000 miles 2005 **£59,990**

BUYING OR SELLING LAMBORGHINI AUTOMOBILE'S

TEL: +44 7782 220784

(Viewing by appointment only) **Address: VVS UK Ltd Verralls Garage Cranbrook Common Kent TN17 2AF**

www.lamborghinibuyer.com Websites: www.justlamborghini.com

WE WANT TO FINANCE YOUR NEXT CAR.. AND WE'VE GOT THE RATES TO PROVE IT.

EXCEPTIONAL FUNDING FOR ANY NEW OR USED VEHICLE SUPPLIED THROUGH ANY UK DEALER.



- UK'S NO1 FUNDER FOR SPECIALIST CARS
- RANGE OF EXCLUSIVE AND FLEXIBLE FINANCE OPTIONS AVAILABLE
- OUTSTANDING LEVELS OF SERVICE
- EXPERTS IN CAR FINANCE, UNDERWRITING IN EXCESS OF £250 MILLION ANNUALLY
- DEDICATED ACCOUNT MANAGER

CALL US TODAY FOR A FREE QUOTATION

08450 944 997

WWW.ORACLEFINANCE.CO.UK

Proud to be a Patron of
The Prince's Trust



ORACLE[®]
F I N A N C E

Buying Guide

Knowledge

Your indispensable resource when buying used

Volkswagen Golf GTI (mk6) 2009-2012

Overview



It's not the fastest or the lairiest, but if you like your hot hatches to feel grown up, the mk6 GTI could be right up your street

Words: Peter Tomalin

THE GOLF GTI had rediscovered its zest for life with the mk5 of 2004, a punchy turbo engine combining with a thoroughly well-sorted chassis to produce the most engaging GTI since the mk2. Not wishing to lose the magic again, the mk6 – launched in the spring of 2009 – was very much a case of evolution.

It stayed in production until 2012, in both three- and five-door body-styles. The 1984cc turbo four, codenamed EA888, had an extra 10bhp on the mk5's unit, taking peak power to 207bhp. A new electronic limited-slip diff, christened XDS, was standard, while the optional Adaptive Chassis Control added adjustable pneumatic dampers with three settings. Looks-wise the new car was leaner and sharper than the mk5, and on the inside the design and materials were a noticeable notch up. Touchscreen satnav was an option, as was a DSG gearbox (£1200 extra when new).

evo wasn't alone in wishing the new GTI had more power (see 'What we said'). Many owners have gone for an aftermarket remap: not in itself a worry, though check it's been done by a reputable company (240-250bhp is easily attainable, and a well-tested remap will cost around £350). With a newer car you may also want to investigate the warranty implications.

The other variant worth considering is the GTD, which arrived in the UK in mid-2009. This had virtually all of the GTI's visual attitude, mostly the same chassis (minus XDS), optional DSG, and the pokiest version of VW's ubiquitous 2-litre common-rail turbodiesel. With 168bhp and 258lb ft of torque, it couldn't match the GTI's acceleration (0-62mph in 8.1sec versus the GTI's 7.2) but in give-and-take driving it was a close-run thing. With 50mpg-plus potential, it's worth a look if you cover high mileages.

But if you've set your heart on the feistier, petrol-engined Golf, go for it. There are plenty to choose from, depreciation is sure to be light, and very few cars combine refinement and performance in such an appealing package. It truly is one of the great all-rounders.

Checkpoints

Engine and transmission

Variable service intervals allow up to 20,000 miles between oil changes, but experts recommend an annual or 10,000-mile service. The engine is basically sound, but a failure of the timing chain tensioner can have costly consequences, so listen carefully for any untoward rattles, and if it sounds like a diesel, walk away. While you're under the bonnet, check for leaks from the crank case ventilation system and the turbo high-pressure line. If you hear what sounds like a loose heat shield, it's probably a rattling wastegate – fortunately a fairly easy and cheap fix.

Transmission

If the car has DSG, it's crucial that the oil and filter are changed by 40,000 miles at the very latest, and preferably sooner. Degraded and dirty oil can not only affect gearchange quality but can cause the gearbox to overheat or the clutches to burn out. If components need replacing, the cost could run into thousands at main dealer prices, though independents charge a lot less. On the test drive, carefully check both automatic and manual gearshifts for speed and smoothness.

Suspension, steering, brakes

The 18in alloys look great and add value, but the 17s ride noticeably better, so decide your priorities. Check the 18s in particular for kerbing and also for signs of corrosion on early cars, a good negotiating point. Check the tyres for uneven wear and listen out for excessive road noise – it could be that the alignment needs adjusting. On high-mileage cars, check for worn suspension bushes and CV boots.

Body, interior, electrics

Interior materials were of a noticeably higher quality than on the mk5 and they wear well, so expect the cabin to be pristine and be suspicious if it isn't. Leather trim tends to wear particularly well; the last few months of production had leather as standard. A common gripe you hear from owners is rattling bits of trim, and these can sometimes be hard to trace, so turn the radio and the fan off and drive over some uneven surfaces with this in mind. Check the air conditioning works as it should – the air con pump has been known to fail.



1: EA888 engine rarely suffers from significant problems. 2: 18in wheels look great but are kerbed more easily than the 17s. 3: tailpipe either side was new for the mk6

What we said September 2009



Above: our first drive was in Germany

'Instantly the new engine feels more eager at lower revs, but it then reverts to its predecessor's almost un-turbo-like linearity, only betraying its forced induction reliance by a relatively low useful rev-celling of 6500rpm, after which it starts to labour. Compared with a Mégane R26 or a Focus RS, the GTI feels brisk rather than fast. Likewise the sound is mildly interesting but never troubles the hairs on the back of your neck.

'Then we reach The Corner. It's a right-hander, third gear, perfectly sighted with a slight dip just after you turn in, eventually opening onto an uphill straight. It's on a more technical corner like this that the GTI shows you that it's easy to underestimate its abilities. Suddenly the predictability becomes reassurance and the precision is exactly what you crave so that you can attack with confidence. You can throw the car into the corner really, really hard and still hit the apex.

'When it slides, it does so neutrally rather than extravagantly, which makes the fact you can't turn ESP off less of an issue. The fun comes in carrying speed and taking a road apart with the chassis.' (evo 130)



Above: Golf stars through corners, although suspension bushes can wear after a while



Above: interior was much improved for mk6; later models came with standard leather

'I bought one' Mark Vaughan

'We've had our GTI for 12 months now. It's a June 2012 three-door in white, bought as an ex-demo from a local dealer. It replaced a much-loved 2007 mk5 GTI. The mk6 joins a 911 C2S and a Fiat 595 Abarth on the drive, and we've done just over 12,000 miles in it.

'It had to be a three-door as we preferred the looks, had to have a decent spec – this one has a sunroof and navigation with Bluetooth – and had to

be DSG. After enjoying the delights of the PDK 'box on my old 911 C2S, I managed to persuade my wife of the merits a DSG brings. She now wishes she'd specced it on the mk5!

'The only modification on it is a remap by Mike Hodder from Motech in Northampton. It hasn't been dyed, but is estimated at 250bhp with an associated increase in torque. Running costs are very

reasonable, and it has required no further work outside of scheduled servicing, and neither would I expect it too after the pretty much faultless mk5 we owned.

'I always described our mk5 as the "complete car", and the mk6 builds on that. It handles all the family duties, cruises well, is comfortable, economical – mid- to high-30s mpg on a longer run – and has its playful side when you want some fun.'

In the classifieds



2010 5dr manual

- 20,000 miles
- Reflex Silver metallic
- Jacara cloth
- iPod/MP3 connection
- auto headlights
- nvc.uk.com

£14,985



2010 3dr DSG

- 31,000 miles
- Diamond Black
- Jacara cloth
- glass sunroof
- one owner
- 18in Monza alloys
- drivingrango.co.uk

£16,995



2010 5dr manual

- 19,000 miles
- Adidas edition
- 18in Serron alloys
- ACC
- LED lights
- one owner
- touchscreen satnav
- wrcarsales.co.uk

£17,995

The rivals

Ford Focus RS mk2

Second-gen Focus RS easily outguns Golf with 300bhp but extrovert looks aren't for everyone. Pricey, too, with cheapest c£18k.

Audi S3

Cousin to the Golf, the S3 wrings 261bhp and 0-60 in 5.6sec from its 2-litre turbo engine. Plenty of early cars from £15k.

RS Mégane 250 Cup

Another 2-litre turbo four, this one offering 247bhp, 0-60 in 6.1sec, and an excellent chassis. £15k buys the best.

Specification VW Golf GTI (mk6)

- Engine In-line 4-cyl, 1984cc, turbo
- Max power 207bhp @ 5300-6200rpm
- Max torque 207lb ft @ 1700-5200rpm
- Transmission Six-speed manual, front-wheel drive
- Weight 1318kg
- Power-to-weight 160bhp/ton
- 0-62mph 7.2sec (claimed)
- Top speed 148mph (claimed)
- Price new £22,000 (2009)

Parts prices

(Prices supplied by vindisgroup.com. Tyre price from blackcircles.com. All prices include VAT but exclude fitting charges)

- Tyres (each) £100.58 (225/45 R17 Michelin Pilot Sport 3)
- Front pads (set) £66.12
- Front discs (pair) £132.12
- Damper (each) £82.62
- ACC damper (each) £180.59
- Catalytic converter £798.47 (exchange)
- Front exhaust section £208.16
- Rear exhaust section £349.90
- Clutch kit £352.34 (manual gearbox, exchange)
- DSG Mechatronic control unit £1800

Servicing

(Prices supplied by vindisgroup.com, including VAT)

Fixed service intervals, 12 months or 10,000 miles

- Minor service £149.00
- Major service £299.00
- DSG oil and filter change £179 (every 40,000 miles)

What to pay

Mk6 GTIs hold their value well. The cheapest we could find was a 2009 five-door manual with a decent spec, including the desirable 18in 'Monza Shadow' alloys, with 53,500 miles, for £13,995. £15-17k is where you'll find a wide choice of 2009 and 2010 cars, both manual and DSG. Options that add value include the aforementioned alloys, xenons, satnav, and iPod connectivity. Be aware that the Bluetooth on pre-2011 cars won't talk to iPhones and some Android smartphones.

Useful contacts

- GolfGTIforum.co.uk forums, advice, events
- clubgti.com forums, advice, events
- ecutesting.com DSG fault-finding and repairs
- pistonheads.com cars for sale, forums
- forsale.evo.co.uk cars for sale

CLUBGT
Performance & Supercar Club

Follow @CLUBGTsupercars



Supercar Hire For Road and Track

CLUBGT organises a range of trackdays throughout the year at some of the best circuits in Europe where you can experience driving our superb fleet of supercars with expert race tuition.

Membership also gives you access to other exclusive events throughout the year, bespoke race level driver training and use of our superbly maintained garage of supercars.

Membership is from £50 per year, instructed track sessions from £99



www.clubgt.co.uk | 020 7935 8485 | info@clubgt.co.uk

400+ APPLICATIONS

REARGUARDS
BUMPER TOP PAINT PROTECTORS

- Easy to fit • Hides old paint scratches
- Moulded in recyclable ABS in four colours: **Black, Silver, Carbon Look, Brushed Alloy Look**
- Looks like an original factory fitted accessory

"Every VW driver should have an RGM Rearguard to protect their painted bumper" Neil Birkitt, VW Driver

NEW SILLGUARDS
DOOR SILL PROTECTORS

- Large range of tailored fit front and rear Door Sill Guards - the ideal protection product to complement Rearguards
- Made from ABS • Easy to fit with 3M tape

For all the latest applications and to order online visit: www.rearguards.co.uk
Phone: 01525 853888 Email: sales@rgmouldings.com



Keep Your Car Interior In Showroom Condition



Garage Vac



Powerful - Compact - Easily Wall Mounted - Unique 40' (12m) Stretch Hose
Specialist Valet Tools - Aluminum Wand inc Wall Clip - 6 Year Motor Warranty

01244 409102 www.garagevac.co.uk Made in the USA

BEST OF BRITISH
100% UK MADE BRAKES



BRAKE PADS - Choose from grippy Greenstuff for spirited use on lighter hot hatches, Redstuff for fast street on medium weight cars, Yellowstuff for all out grip and track use on lighter cars or Bluestuff for the ultimate street and trackday pad that has set the Impreza and EVO community buzzing. Latest compound is the Orangestuff full race grade pads.



WANT A QUALITY DAILY DRIVER PAD?

Try the new Ultimax 2 premium replacement pad.

- ✓ The world's first and only true ECO friendly pad
- ✓ Great brake feel for everyday driving and
- ✓ A new lower price point

THREE SPORT DISC CHOICES

GD series slotted and dimpled (gold) for fast street, USR fine slotted (black) or new high carbon BSD series BLADE discs (silver) for fastest street and track day use. For daily driver cars the EBC premium OE replacement discs are a great choice with a superb price point and great value for money.

New BSD Series "Blade" rotor range now available

EBC BRAKES
www.ebcbrakes.com

Essentials

Knowledge

The best books, models, clothing, games, garage kit and tuning gear



2

1

3



4



Book

BMW M3

£30 www.haynes.co.uk

1 This 216-page hardback follows the development of the M3 from homologation special to 400bhp+ performance car. Despite heavy use of unglamorous press imagery, there's enough to keep enthusiasts happy (for instance, the bore and stroke figures for the 2.3 Si4 engine), while period driving impressions are enjoyable and stop the book feeling too geeky.

RC car

Zakspeed Ford Capri

From £110 www.hobbyco.net

2 This 1:10-scale Tamiya radio-control car remembers the Zakspeed Turbo Capri that once dominated German Touring Car racing. In this famous Würth livery, it claimed the 1981 DRM title (the forerunner to the modern DTM) in the hands of Klaus Ludwig. Unlike the rear-drive real thing, this RC version is four-wheel drive. It costs £110 for the car kit only, or £199 with radio, battery and charger.

Wheels

Wolf Design Entourage

From £181.95 www.wolfrace.com

3 Top UK wheel maker Wolfrace has added the Entourage to its range for performance 4x4s and executive cars. It comes in five sizes: 8.5 x 18in plus two widths in 19 and 20in, making it ideal for cars with a staggered set-up. There's a choice of Gloss Black and Satin Anthracite finishes, with polished details on the deep-dish spokes.

Model

Audi Quattro Pikes Peak

£199 www.otto-models.com

4 Audi dominated the Pikes Peak hill climb throughout most of the 1980s, almost as much as it's dominating Le Mans right now. In 1987, this ultimate incarnation of the Sport Quattro S1 E2, driven by Walter Röhrl, beat the rival Peugeot 205 T16 by over seven seconds. With a surprising amount of detail for a resin model of this price, this 1:12-scale Otto model does a good job of evoking fond memories of a screaming 600bhp five-cylinder engine.

evo Essentials Top 3: T-shirts

Pagani Huayra

£16.99 shotdeadinthehead.com



Featuring the joint winner of last year's eCoty, this **evo** tee celebrates the finer details that make the Huayra so stunning.

Eau Rouge

£25 t-lab.eu



It may be 'easy flat' in a Formula 1 car, but Eau Rouge still represents a stern challenge for us mere mortals.

Old German

£17.38 redbubble.com



It's only one letter, but anyone who shares your passion for brilliant BMWs will know exactly what it stands for.

GREAT CARS DESERVE A GREAT GARAGE!



**At last, your garage can look as good
as the rest of your home!**

Conquer your clutter and create a beautifully organised garage to be proud of! Dura's award-winning cabinets are designed and manufactured in the UK and are used by professional workshops worldwide, so you can be assured of exceptional quality and style.

Call now
for a **FREE
DESIGN
SURVEY**



Everything for the perfect garage make-over...

**MODULAR CABINETS • WALL MOUNTED STORAGE
FLOORING • CEILINGS • DESIGN & INSTALL**

**For a FREE brochure call 0845 371 0049
or visit www.duragarages.com**

DURA
Fitted Garages



Alternatively, return this slip in an envelope
(no stamp required) to: **Freepost RSLX-YXCA-GUTJ**
Dura Ltd, St James Road, Brackley, NN13 7XY

Name

Address

EVO
DECT 3

Telephone

Email



**CLASSIC
NOUVEAU**
REGISTRATIONS

01949 851000

www.CNReg.com

A+B	85 GS	£6,950	JSR 5	£POA	5 NAT	£19,800	10 PAS	£6,500
AAW 1	H 88	£28,000	333 JT	£6,500	NAT 7S	£9,500	PCG 7	£8,200
AC 7	H4 PPY	£3,295	JVG 49	£1,699	NAT 7Y	£12,500	PCM 300	£2,800
ADA 7	HLC 1	£21,500	K+L		1 NBR	£3,200	1 PF	£130,000
ADP 92	4 HM	£22,500	477 KM	£4,250	NCM 25	£3,200	PNH 42	£2,800
ADS 17	16 HM	£POA	KST 1	£24,500	7 NJ	£15,995	R+S	
K2 AJB	2 HN	£19,250	500 KW	£9,850	NJH 723	£3,450	911 R	£POA
ALM 52	I+J		LBF 3	£4,500	NMS 857	£1,499	RAJ 1E	£29,500
AMY 60	IEZ I	£10,500	LOV 3Y	£8,750	NO 1	£250,000	RAJ 1Y	£29,500
370 ANP	911 JA	£12,500	1 LV	£79,500	NO 4	£59,000	RB 17	£17,500
ATC 1	JAK 3S	£21,500	M+N		5 NPJ	£8,800	RD 222	£4,950
BEN 1F	31 JCG	£2,995	M 2	£165,000	3 NPS	£POA	REJ 3	£9,500
BET 80Y	7 JDR	£6,400	99 M	£32,500	17 NR	£6,800	RES 19	£5,450
BOI 7	6 JDS	£8,750	J44 MAX	£999	NSJ 5	£5,200	RJC 8	£13,500
Y35 BOS							7 RJF	£6,995
BOX 573R							9 RJT	£4,995
C+D	1 C	£POA	5 JEP	£7,800	MB 8	£52,500	OAB 534	£1,650
CAT 1	£150,000		76 JF	£7,495	92 MB	£9,999	1 OAC	£18,500
CAT 1R	£4,995		1 JGV	£12,500	MEE 5S	£2,995	1 OBH	£18,500
CAX 70N	£2,995		16 JH	£16,995	MEJ 2	£9,500	1 OGM	£18,500
CII LOC	£POA		JJ 8681	£2,995	MF 9	£34,500	1 OH	£POA
CHO IIE	£3,250		KJD 77	£5,600	2 MGE	£7,450	OI IO	£195,000
31 CJJ	£3,200		12 JLP	£6,495	MGM 1	£26,950	OO 6	£POA
1 CTE	£14,995		7 JM	£POA	2 MGN	£6,900		
DD 1	£175,000							
369 DFM	£1,650							
581 DFH	£1,550							
1234 DH	£6,995							
1 DHN	£15,950							
848 DMH	£2,499							
DMP 85	£4,995							
E+F	5 EF	£18,500	40 JM	£POA	88 MH	£12,000	800 OO	£13,950
E13 VEN	£2,450		5 JMW	£8,250	MJD 791	£2,995	000 1E	£6,995
1 EP	£110,000		JNW 854	£1,850	MOY 8	£5,750	1 ORF	£13,500
911 ER	£9,750		12 JON	£18,500	14 MP	£19,995	1 OSL	£POA
FAYIE	£11,500		JON 99	£22,500	MS 55	£26,500	OTW 425	£1,399
F4YES	£19,950		JPS 14	£POA	1 MT	£175,000	OUI 1	£16,500
FEB 1	£17,500		JS 4994	£4,499	3 MYX	£1,995	9 OW	£11,500
FM 111	£7,995							
FP 3	£23,500							
2 FT	£37,500							
1 FY	£75,000							
G+H	6 ERS	£POA						
GMA 71	£3,300							
155 GPB	£2,850							

INVEST IN THE BEST



AMY 60
4 HM
1 LV
99 M
NS 55

This is just a selection. Over 280,000 available at
www.CNReg.com
Free Valuation Service • We also Buy • Some + Vat

THE UK'S SPECIALIST BROKER OF TOP QUALITY REGISTRATIONS

WIN YOUR DREAM CAR GUARANTEED WINNER EVERY TWO WEEKS



"Live the life of a racing driver"
David Coulthard

TICKETS FROM **£2.50**
FREE £5 FOR NEW PLAYERS
AS SEEN AT UK AIRPORTS SINCE 1999

ENTER NOW AT **BOTB.COM/EVO**

bb best of the best
WIN YOUR DREAM CAR EST. 1999

TEL: 020 7371 8866
EMAIL: info@botb.com

Tried & Tested

Knowledge

The best motoring products, put through their paces by the *evo* team

Cooper Zeon CS Sport

Price TBC www.coopertire.co.uk

In the 16 years that American firm Cooper Tires has owned Avon, it has been content for the UK maker to be its car-tyre brand here, but now it aims to change that with the launch of the Zeon CS Sport. It's a move that's all the more surprising as Apollo, which owns Vredestein, is potentially about to buy out Cooper.

Judging by the few dry laps we

managed around the swooping Portimão circuit in Portugal, the CS Sport will give its in-house rivals a tough time. Compared to the outgoing 2XS it proved stable, with good turn-in tending towards progressive understeer at the limit. The 2XS lacked the same balance, with the rear much more likely to step out.

Perhaps the most remarkable aspect of the track test was wear, with the usual feathering, shredding and blueing absent even after a dozen hot laps with David Coulthard (pictured) at the wheel. The specification is also impressive, with all sizes in the initial range getting an A label rating for wet grip. Rolling resistance is an E, a typical mark for the 17-19in rims the CS Sport covers.

Nine sizes will be available from January with a further eight to follow. Prices have yet to be fixed, but expect them to be the same or a little higher than the 2XS (currently between £60-£85 per tyre).

Kim Adams (@cargadgetguru)

evo rating: ★★★★★



TomTom Start 60

From £129.99 www.tomtom.com

The first thing to say about this satnav is that it is simply enormous. But the 6-inch touchscreen makes this TomTom much easier to read than smaller devices, and the large on-screen keyboard makes it far easier to key in addresses.

The Start 60 covers practically all of Europe as standard, and it's refreshing to find a satnav with maps for more than just western Europe. I tried it out on our Jaguar F-type adventure in Romania (coming to *evo* soon) and it guided us around Transylvania flawlessly – impressive

stuff given how 'off the beaten track' we were. Back home, one great feature I'd never seen before was a measurement of average speed through areas with average speed cameras, allowing you to modulate your pace perfectly and spend as little time on the M1 as possible.

Although the huge screen has its uses, it's not always ideal. If you have a car with a shallow-raked windscreen, you may have to mount the TomTom very high up. You may even find yourself looking like a trucker who's parked up for the night and got his portable telly out!

Dean Smith (@evoDeanSmith)

evo rating: ★★★★★



OSO U Grip EX

£24.99 www.osomount.com

The poverty-spec Skoda Citigo I commute to the *evo* office in isn't exactly bursting with kit. No satnav, no DAB radio, not even a clock. Yes, really: a 12-plate car honestly can't tell me how late for work I am as I fling it through the roundabouts of Milton Keynes. Although my car doesn't possess these functions, my BlackBerry Q5 mobile does. Not that that's been of any use to me while driving... until OSO's U Grip EX smartphone mount came along.

After affixing the strongest suction cup known to man to the Citigo's dashboard, the EX's arm curved over the glovebox, a small spacing nubble on the underside preventing any annoying

bashing during journeys. The adjustable holder at the end of the arm then tightly gripped my BlackBerry, making it extremely easy to swipe between functions on its touchscreen. And after firing up *Test Match Special*, suddenly being able to drive home to the sound of Australian batting ineptitude was bliss. As was being able to tell the time.

The EX can hold virtually any smartphone with ease, so if your daily driver is an older (or cheaper) machine, it represents a cost-effective way to tech up your car 'by the back door'.

Dan McCalla

evo rating: ★★★★★



Meguiar's Headlight Restoration Kit

£19.99 www.meguiars.co.uk

Its paintwork may be spotless, but one thing will eventually make your car look its age: the headlights. Exposure to sunlight will turn outer lenses cloudy, which looks undesirable and affects bulb performance. This kit contains everything you need to restore them. We put it to the test on an 11-year-old Clio 172, a car with lights particularly prone to oxidation.

The first job is to mask off the bodywork surrounding the lights. For particularly bad cases like this, it's then necessary to rub the lenses down with a series of four sanding pads, starting with a relatively rough 1800 grit and working up to the fine 4000 grit, all while applying water for lubrication. With the yellowing and the worst of the defects gone, it's now just a matter of buffing the lens to a clear finish using the supplied Plast-RX gel and a wool pad that fits onto your drill.

Our Clio's headlights took a couple of hours' work in total. The restored lenses weren't perfect on close inspection, but the improvement was still vast and made the car look ten years younger.

Ian Eveleigh

evo rating: ★★★★★





Litchfield Car Collection Service

Fully insured from anywhere in Europe

Comprehensive 12 Month Nissan GT-R Warranty With
RAC Breakdown Cover £1200

New BMW Packages Now Available

Servicing
Upgrades
Bespoke Builds

Partnership with the best:



Follow us online  

evo
MAGAZINE
Tuned Car Of The Year 2010
+44 (0)1684 850999
www.litchfieldmotors.com



SECOND TIME ROUND

Specializing in Rolex for 20 years!

(020) 7499 7442

Grays, 58 Davies St. London W1K 5LP



Daytona



GMT Master II



Datejust



Date

Audemars Piguet * Bvlgari * Cartier * Franck Muller * Hublot * Jaeger LeCoultre * Patek Philippe
* Piaget * Rolex * Vacheron et Constantin and all fine wristwatches...

WWW.SECONDTIMEROUND.COM

Bought, Sold & Exchanged

Trips & Travel

Knowledge

The best destinations to visit in your car

Great drives: evo Triangle, Wales



Start point: 53.022218, -3.560085 (A5 at Cerrigydrudion, North Wales)

The roads: A5 west, A543 north-east, B4501 south

Great for: a Ferrari F50



I

IT STILL FEELS almost wrong to publish the details of the evo Triangle. Part of me wants its location to remain a closely guarded secret like the ingredients for Pimm's No.1 Cup.

However, realistically, if you Google 'evo Triangle' you get rather more revealing results than you do for 'Pimm's recipe', so it seems the feline has fled the rucksack.

Anyway, for the benefit of the two of you without internet access, the evo Triangle looks rather like an isosceles triangle pointing NNE. Its base is the A5 just to the east of Betws-y-Coed, and being a main road, its sole real purpose here is to link the other two 'sides' together. My preferred way round the Triangle is clockwise, so head along the A5 and just after the start of a 40mph limit turn right onto the A543, signposted Dinbych/Denbigh. This is the bumpier side of the Triangle and to begin with you head up a narrow road with unforgiving dry stone walls squeezing in on either side. Persevere, though, because after a couple of miles the walls disappear, as do the last vestiges of housing. You're out onto moorland and straight into some of the trickiest corners on the whole stretch. The road is fast, flowing and largely very well sighted. It is also a real test of a car's chassis, which is why we use it.

Turn right at the 'top' of the Triangle and you're on the B4501 – the smooth side. This final leg feels much less wild, with very few downchanges required for the first few miles, but then the corners come and prove to be more testing than they look. There is a tortuously twisting section just after you've plunged downhill which will catch you out if you don't heed the signs telling you to slow down on the approach.

In some ways, the evo Triangle is not an amazing set of roads. There are no hairpins or truly gobsmacking views, and yet as driving roads they are a brilliantly sustained and truly absorbing test of driver and car alike.

Henry Catchpole
Features editor



The route



Start **Finish**

Distance: 20.4 miles

Time: 33 minutes



Where to stay

The Groes Inn is evo's regular haunt: it's about 20 miles from the Triangle, but it's a good drive over there and worth the effort. If they're booked up, there are plenty of places in Betws-y-Coed – we've frequently stayed in the Royal Oak, which is helpfully attached to a pub that does good beer and food (try the mixed grill!).



Watch out for

The roads are very busy at weekends and frequently covered in snow during winter. Drive slowly through Cerrigydrudion and respect the farms and houses at the south end of the A543. We'd also advise that you drive the Triangle with the thought that your equivalent could be tackling it in the opposite direction. And watch out for errant sheep.

Reader road trip

Costa del Carrera 2S

The plan started off simply enough: a road trip to Spain with some mates. Somehow fate conspired against us and the usual group I go driving with all ended up busy, so there was only one option – do it alone. One man, four foreign countries, ten days. Mode of transport: Porsche 997.2 Carrera 2S.

I'd never been to Spain before, so decided to make a real go of it via France and the Pyrenees (where getting stuck in snow was a lowlight), dipping briefly into Andorra (where I got stuck in snow again). Then



it was into Spain and down the east and south coasts past Barcelona and Valencia, eventually reaching Gibraltar and the Europa Point lighthouse, where the picture you can see here was taken. Then I briefly crossed into Portugal before covering the northern Spanish coast and the Picos de Europa before heading home via Le Mans.

The N260 in northern Spain has now become one of my favourite driving roads: carving through the lower tips of the Pyrenees, which change from mountainous peaks to sweeping on-camber valleys within a few miles, the 911 was truly at home. All in, I managed 4424 miles in a smidge under 87 hours of pure driving in those ten days. And yes, I would do it all again!

Dan Morgan

Email your road trip story to
henryc@evo.co.uk

Events calendar

OCTOBER

October 12/13

BTCF Finals Day, Brands Hatch
www.btc.net

October 18/19

Rallye Sunseeker, Bournemouth
www.rallyesunseeker.org

October 21

Bedford Autodrome GT Circuit trackday
www.msvtrackdays.com

NOVEMBER

November 1-3

Abu Dhabi Grand Prix, Yas Marina
www.f1.com

Database

Key ★ = new entry this month. * = grey import. Entries in italics are for cars no longer on sale. **Issue no.** is for our most recent major test of the car (D = Driven, R = Road test or group test, F = Feature). You can order back issues where still available – call 0844 844 0039. **Price** is on-the-road including VAT and delivery charges. **Weight** is the car's kerb weight as quoted by the manufacturer. **bhp/ton** is the power-to-weight ratio based on manufacturer's kerb weight. **0-60mph** and **0-100mph** figures in bold are independently recorded, all other performance figures are manufacturers' claims. **CO2 g/km** is the official EC figure and **EC mpg** is the official 'Combined' figure or equivalent.

Knowledge

Superminis / Hot Hatches

	Issue no.	Price	Engine cyl/cc	bhp/rpm	lb ft/rpm	Weight	bhp/ton	0-60mph	0-100mph	Maxmph	CO2 g/km	EC mpg	EVO rating	
Abarth Punto Evo	149 R	£16,852	4/1368	161/5500	184/2250	1155kg	142	7.9	-	132	142	47.1	+ Attractive and fun - Needs the Esseesse power upgrade	★★★★☆
Abarth 500 Esseesse	129 R	£17,207	4/1368	158/5750	170/3000	1035kg	155	7.2	20.4	131	155	43.5	+ A properly fun, old-school hot hatch - Limited numbers being imported	★★★★★
Alfa Romeo Mito Cloverleaf	149 R	£18,755	4/1368	168/5500	184/2500	1145kg	149	7.5	-	136	139	47.1	+ Great MultiAir engine, impressive ride - Not as feisty as we hoped	★★★★★
Alfa Romeo Giulietta Cloverleaf	144 D	£25,510	4/1742	232/5500	251/1900	1320kg	179	6.8	-	150	177	37.2	+ Shows signs of deep talent... - ...but should be more exciting	★★★★★
Alfa Romeo 147 GTA	187 R	'03-'06	6/3179	247/6200	221/4800	1360kg	185	6.0	15.5	153	-	23.3	+ Mk1 Focus RS pace without the histrionics - Slightly nose-heavy	★★★★★
Audi A1 1.4 TFSI S Line		£21,270	4/1390	182/6200	184/2000	1190kg	155	6.9	-	141	139	47.9	+ Audi's Mini rival is an accomplished thing - But not a hugely fun one	★★★★★
Audi A1 quattro	181 R	£41,020	4/1984	253/6000	258/2500	1420kg	181	5.7	-	152	199	32.8	+ Polished 253bhp all-wheel-drive A1 - Just 19 for UK, Porsche Cayman price	★★★★★
Audi S3	188 R	£31,260	4/1984	296/5500	280/1800	1395kg	216	5.4	12.5	155	162	40.4	+ Lots of grip and one of the best-sounding four-pot turbos - Still a little too clinical	★★★★★
Audi S3	106 R	'06-'12	4/1984	261/6000	258/2500	1455kg	183	5.6	13.6	155	198	33.2	+ Very fast, very effective, very... err, quality - A little too clinical	★★★★★
Audi RS3 Sportback	156 R	'11-'12	5/2480	335/5400	332/1600	1575kg	216	4.5	-	155	212	31.0	+ Above, with added five-pot character - Again, see above...	★★★★★
BMW 125i M Sport	176 D	£26,070	4/1997	218/5000	228/1350	1420kg	156	6.4	-	155	154	42.8	+ Performance, price, running costs - Dull four-pot soundtrack	★★★★★
BMW M135i	186 R	£30,555	6/2979	316/5800	332/1300	1425kg	225	4.8	12.9	155	188	35.3	+ Powertrain, noise, chassis, price - Ordinary styling; a limited-slip diff would be nice	★★★★★
BMW 123d M Sport	122 R	'07-'11	4/1995	201/4400	295/2000	1420kg	144	6.5	17.4	148	138	54.3	+ Economical and no slouch - Doesn't feel special enough	★★★★★
BMW 130i M Sport	106 R	'05-'10	6/2996	261/6650	232/2750	1450kg	183	6.1	15.3	155	-	34.0	+ Fantastic engine - Suspension can still get a little boingy	★★★★★
Citroën C1/Peugeot 107/Toyota Aygo	126 R	£7995+	3/998	68/6000	68/3600	790kg	87	14.2	-	98	103	61.4	+ Full of character and insurance-friendly - Insurance friendly power	★★★★★
Citroën Saxo VTR	013 R	'97-'03	4/1587	100/5700	100/3500	920kg	110	9.3	-	116	-	36.7	+ VTS poise, half the insurance group - Cramped pedals	★★★★★
Citroën Saxo VTS	020 R	'97-'03	4/1587	120/6600	107/5200	935kg	130	7.6	22.6	127	-	34.9	+ Chunky, chuckable charger - Can catch out the unwary	★★★★★
Citroën DS3 1.6 THP	142 R	£16,800	4/1598	154/6000	177/1400	1240kg	126	7.2	-	133	155	42.2	+ A proper French hot hatch - Petrolheads might find it too 'designed'	★★★★★
Citroën DS3 Racing	153 D	'11-'12	4/1598	204/6000	203/2000	1240kg	167	6.5	-	146	149	-	+ Faster, feistier version of above - Not as hardcore as its 'Racing' tag suggests	★★★★★
Fiat Panda 100HP	132 R	'06-'11	4/1368	99/6000	97/4250	975kg	103	9.5	-	115	154	43.5	+ Most fun per pound on the market - Optional ESP can't be turned off	★★★★★
Fiat Punto Evo Sporting	141 D	£14,500	4/1368	133/5000	152/1750	1155kg	117	8.5	-	127	129	50.4	+ Great engine, smart styling - Dynamics don't live up to the Evo name	★★★★★
Ford Sportka SE	084 R	'03-'08	4/1597	94/5500	100/4250	934kg	102	9.5	-	108	-	37.2	+ Big fun in a little package - Could handle even more power	★★★★★
Ford Fiesta 1.0T EcoBoost 125PS	181 D	£15,445	3/999	123/6000	125/1400	1091kg	115	9.4	-	122	99	65.7	+ Three-pot engine is surprisingly feisty - Struggles to justify the premium price	★★★★★
Ford Fiesta ST	184 R	£16,995	4/1596	179/5700	214/1500	1088kg	167	7.4	18.4	137	138	47.9	+ Chassis, price, punchy performance - Not as powerful as key rivals	★★★★★
Ford Fiesta ST Mountune	188 D	£17,594	4/1596	212/6000	236/2750	1088kg	198	6.6	-	140	138	-	+ One of the best mid-sized hatches made even better - Badge snobbery	★★★★★
Ford Fiesta Zetec S	123 D	'08-'13	4/1596	118/6000	112/4050	1045kg	115	9.9	-	120	134	48.7	+ Genuinely entertaining supermini - Grown up compared to Wingo/Swift	★★★★★
Ford Fiesta Zetec S Mountune	132 R	'08-'13	4/1596	138/6750	125/4250	1080kg	130	7.9	-	120	134	48.7	+ As above, with a fantastically loud exhaust... - ...if you're 12 years old	★★★★★
Ford Fiesta ST	075 D	'05-'08	4/1999	148/6000	140/4500	1137kg	132	7.9	-	129	-	38.2	+ Great looks, decent brakes - Disappointing chassis, gutless engine	★★★★★
Ford Fiesta ST185 Mountune	115 R	'08	4/1999	185/6700	147/3500	1137kg	165	6.9	-	129	-	-	+ Fiesta ST gets the power it always needed - OTT exhaust note	★★★★★
Ford Fiesta Zetec S	020 R	'00-'02	4/1596	102/6000	107/4000	976kg	106	10.2	-	113	-	38.2	+ Better than you'd ever believe - No-one else will believe it	★★★★★
Ford Focus 1.6T Zetec S	165 D	£20,695	4/1596	179/5700	199/1900	1333kg	136	7.8	-	138	139	47.1	+ The fastest, keenest Mk3 Focus yet - The Mk1's sparkle is still absent, though	★★★★★
Ford Focus ST	188 R	£21,995	4/1999	247/5500	265/1750	1362kg	184	6.5	16.8	154	169	-	+ All-round cracking hot hatch. Good value, too - There's a bit of torque-steer	★★★★★
Ford Focus ST Mountune	187 D	£23,220	4/1999	271/5500	295/2750	1362kg	202	5.7	-	154+	169	-	+ Great value upgrade - Steering still not as feelsome as that of some rivals	★★★★★
Ford Focus ST	119 R	'05-'10	5/2522	222/6000	236/1600	1392kg	162	6.7	16.8	150	224	30.4	+ Value, performance, integrity - Big engine compromises handling	★★★★★
Ford Focus ST Mountune	137 R	'08-'11	5/2522	256/5500	295/2500	1392kg	187	5.8	14.3	155	224	-	+ ST takes extra power in its stride - You probably still want an RS	★★★★★
Ford Focus RS	188 R	'09-'11	5/2522	300/6500	324/2300	1467kg	208	5.9	14.2	163	225	30.5	+ Huge performance, highly capable fwd chassis - It could be the last RS...	★★★★★
Ford Focus RS500	181 R	'10-'11	5/2522	345/6000	339/2500	1467kg	239	5.6	12.7	165	225	-	+ More power and presence than regular RS - Pricey	★★★★★
Ford Focus RS	053 R	'02-'03	4/1998	212/5500	229/3500	1278kg	169	5.9	14.9	144	-	-	+ Some are great - Some are awful (so make sure you drive plenty)	★★★★★
Ford Escort RS Cosworth	157 R	'92-'96	4/1993	227/6250	224/3500	1304kg	176	5.8	-	143	-	24.5	+ The ultimate Essex hot hatch - Ultimate trophy for tea leaves	★★★★★
Ford Puma 1.7	095 R	'97-'02	4/1679	123/6300	116/4500	1041kg	120	8.6	27.6	122	-	38.2	+ Everything - Nothing. The 1.4 is worth a look too	★★★★★
Ford Racing Puma	128 R	'00-'01	4/1679	153/7000	119/4500	1174kg	132	7.8	23.2	137	-	34.7	+ Exclusivity - Expense. Standard Puma does it so well	★★★★★
Honda Civic Type-R	102 R	'07-'11	4/1998	198/7800	142/5600	1267kg	158	6.8	17.5	146	215	31.0	+ Looks great, VTEC more accessible - Steering lacks feel, inert balance	★★★★★
Honda Civic Type-R C'ship White	126 D	'09-'10	4/1998	198/7800	142/5600	1267kg	158	6.6	-	146	-	31.0	+ Limited-slip diff a welcome addition - It's not available on standard car...	★★★★★
Honda Civic Type-R Mugen	144 R	'09-'11	4/1998	237/8300	157/6250	1233kg	195	5.9	-	155	-	-	+ Fantastic on road and track - There'll only be 20, and it's a tad pricey...	★★★★★
Honda Civic Type-R	075 R	'01-'05	4/1998	197/7400	145/5900	1204kg	166	6.8	16.9	146	-	31.7	+ Potent and great value - Looks divide opinion, duff steering	★★★★★
Kia Proceed GT	186 D	£19,995	4/1591	201/6000	195/1750	1448kg	141	7.4	-	143	171	29.1	+ Good chassis, appealing price - Thrashy engine	★★★★★
Lancia Delta Integrale	011 R	'88-'93	4/1995	210/5750	220/3500	1350kg	158	5.7	-	137	-	23.9	+ One of the finest cars ever built - Demands love, LHD only	★★★★★
Mazda 2.1 S Sport	132 R	£13,495	4/1498	102/6000	101/4000	1030kg	107	10.4	-	117	135	48.7	+ Fun and funky - Feels tinny after a Mini	★★★★★
Mazda 3 MPS	137 R	£23,995	4/2261	256/5500	280/3000	1385kg	188	6.3	14.5	155	224	29.4	+ Quick, eager and very good value - The steering's iffy	★★★★★
Mercedes-Benz A250 'by AMG'	173 D	£29,025	4/1991	208/5500	258/1200	1370kg	154	6.5	-	149	148	46.3	+ Mercedes builds a proper hot hatch - But denies it a manual gearbox	★★★★★
Mercedes-Benz A45 AMG	188 R	£37,845	4/1991	355/6000	332/2250	1480kg	244	4.3	10.6	155	161	40.9	+ Blisteringly quick everywhere - Not as rewarding as some slower rivals	★★★★★
MG Metro 6R4 Clubman	181 R	'84-'87	6/2991	250/7000	225/6500	1000kg	254	4.5	-	140	-	-	+ The most extreme hot hatch ever - Engine noise, heat soak, five mpg	★★★★★
Mini One		£13,460	4/1598	97/6000	113/3000	1070kg	92	10.5	-	116	127	52.3	+ Perfect power-to-grip ratio - HUGE speed, slow car	★★★★★
Mini Cooper	185 F	£14,900	4/1598	120/6000	118/4250	1075kg	113	9.1	-	126	127	52.3	+ Brilliant ride and composure; could be all the Mini you need - You'll still buy the 'S'	★★★★★
Mini Cooper S	149 R	£18,180	4/1598	181/5500	177/1600	1140kg	161	7.0	-	142	136	48.7	+ New engine, Mini quality - Lacks old car's direct front end	★★★★★
Mini Cooper SD	158 D	£18,870	4/1995	141/4000	225/1750	1150kg	125	8.0	-	134	114	65.7	+ A quick diesel Mini with impressive mpg - But no Cooper S alternative	★★★★★
Mini John Cooper Works	184 R	£22,460	4/1598	208/6000	206/2000	1160kg	182	7.2	16.7	148	165	39.8	+ A seriously rapid Mini - Occasionally just a little unruly	★★★★★
Mini John Cooper Works Coupe	164 R	£23,800	4/1598	208/6000	206/2000	1175kg	180	6.3	-	149	165	39.8	+ The usual raucous Mini/JCW experience - But with a questionable 'helmet' roof...	★★★★★
Mini John Cooper Works GP	181 R	£28,790	4/1598	215/6000	206/2000	1160kg	188	6.3	-	150	165	39.8	+ Brazenly hyperactive - Too much for some roads and some tastes	★★★★★
Mini Cooper S Works (Mk2)	111 R	'07-'08	4/1598	189/6000	199/750	1130kg	170	7.6	18.0	145	-	-	+ Cracking hot Mini - Expensive with option packs included	★★★★★
Mini Cooper S Works GP	144 R	'06	4/1598	215/7100	184/4600	1090kg	200	6.5	-	149	-	32.8	+ Storming engine, agility - Tacky styling 'enhancements'	★★★★★
Mini Cooper S (Mk1)	077 R	'02-'06	4/1598	168/6000	155/4000	1140kg	143	7.8	19.9	135	-	33.6	+ Strong performance, quality feel - Over-long gearing	★★★★★
Mitsubishi Colt Ralliart	132 R	£14,229	4/1468	147/6000	155/3500	1060kg	141	7.4	-	131	161	40.9	+ Price, handling, performance - Its looks are a little odd	★★★★★



Ratings Thrill-free zone ★ Tepid ★★ Interesting ★★★ Seriously good ★★★★ A truly great car ★★★★★



Our Choice

Renaultsport Mégane 265 Cup. You'll struggle to find a front-drive chassis more sublime than the 265 Cup's. Poised, flattering and entertaining too, when combined with the 261bhp turbo engine it enables the Mégane to set a searing cross-country pace.



Best of the Rest

BMW's M135i feels like a bargain at £30k, and it's rear-wheel drive too, of course. At close to half the money, the mid-sized Fiesta ST (left) is an absolute riot, especially in Mountune form, while if it's a junior hatch you're after, the Suzuki Swift Sport is a belter.

Superminis / Hot Hatches

Car	Issue no.	Price	Engine cy/cc	bhp/rpm	lb ft/rpm	Weight	bhp/ton	0-60mph	0-100mph	Maxmph	CO2 g/km	EC mpg	EVO rating	
Nissan Juke Nismo	184 R	£20,395	4/1618	197/6000	184/2400	1306kg	153	7.7	19.5	134	159	40.9	+ More than the sum of its parts - Not enough to add up to a pukka hot hatch	★★★★★
Nissan Sunny GTi-R		'92-'93	4/1998	220/6400	197/4800	1269kg	176	6.1	-	134	-	25.1	+ Nissan's Escort Cossie - Make sure it's a good one	★★★★★
Peugeot 106 Rallye (Series 2)		'97-'98	4/1587	103/6200	97/3500	865kg	121	8.8	-	121	-	34.0	+ Bargain no-frills thrills - Not as much fizz as original 1.3	★★★★★
Peugeot 106 Rallye (Series 1)	095 R	'94-'96	4/1294	100/7200	80/5400	826kg	123	9.3	-	118	-	35.6	+ Frantic, thrashy fun - Needs caning to extract full potential	★★★★★
Peugeot 106 GTI 16v	034 R	'97-'04	4/1587	120/6600	107/5200	950kg	128	7.4	22.2	127	-	34.9	+ Fine handling supermini - Looks its age	★★★★★
Peugeot 208 GTI	184 R	£18,895	4/1598	197/5800	203/1700	1160kg	173	6.8	17.9	143	139	47.9	+ Agile chassis works well on tough roads - Could be more involving	★★★★★
Peugeot 205 GTI 1.9	095 R	'88-'91	4/1905	130/6000	119/4750	910kg	145	7.9	-	124	-	36.7	+ Still scintillating after all these years - Brittle build quality	★★★★★
Peugeot 306 GTI-6	020 R	'93-'01	4/1998	167/6500	142/5500	1215kg	139	7.2	20.1	140	-	30.1	+ One of the great GTIs - They don't make them like this any more	★★★★★
Peugeot 306 Rallye	095 R	'98-'99	4/1998	167/6500	142/5500	1199kg	141	6.9	19.2	137	-	30.1	+ Essentially a GTI-6 for less dosh - Limited choice of colours	★★★★★
Renaultsport Twingo 133	175 R	'08-'13	4/1598	131/6750	118/4400	1050kg	127	8.6	-	125	150	43.5	+ Renaultsport experience for pocket money - Optional Cup chassis gives bouncy ride	★★★★★
Renaultsport Clio 200 Turbo	184 R	£18,995	4/1618	197/6000	177/1750	1204kg	166	6.9	17.9	143	144	44.8	+ Faster, more refined, easier to drive - We miss the revvy nat-asp engine and manual 'box	★★★★★
Renaultsport Clio 200 Cup	154 R	'09-'13	4/1998	197/7100	159/5400	1204kg	166	6.6	17.7	141	190	34.5	+ The hot Clio at its best - Why the long face?	★★★★★
Renaultsport Clio 197 Cup	115 R	'07-'09	4/1998	194/7250	158/5550	1240kg	161	6.9	-	134	-	33.6	+ Quick, polished and capable - Not as much sheer fun as 182 Cup	★★★★★
Renaultsport Clio 182	066 R	'04-'06	4/1998	180/6500	148/5250	1110kg	165	6.6	17.5	139	-	34.9	+ Took hot hatches to a new level - Flawed driving position	★★★★★
Renaultsport Clio 182 Cup	187 R	'04-'06	4/1998	180/6500	148/5250	1090kg	168	6.5	-	139	-	34.9	+ Full of beans, fantastic value - Sunday-market upholstery	★★★★★
Renaultsport Clio Trophy	095 R	'05-'06	4/1998	180/6500	148/5250	1090kg	168	6.6	17.3	140	-	34.9	+ Most fun you can have on three wheels - Just 500 were built	★★★★★
Renaultsport Clio 172 Cup	048 R	'02-'04	4/1998	170/6250	147/5400	1011kg	171	6.5	17.7	138	-	-	+ Bargain old-school hot hatch - Nervous in the wet, no ABS	★★★★★
Renaultsport Clio V6 255	057 R	'03-'05	6/2946	255/7750	221/4650	1400kg	182	5.8	-	153	-	23.0	+ Supercar drama without the original's edgy handling - Uninspired interior	★★★★★
Renaultsport Clio V6	029 R	'99-'02	6/2946	230/6000	221/3750	1335kg	175	5.8	17.0	145	-	23.0	+ Pocket supercar - Mid-engined handling can be tricky	★★★★★
Renault Clio Williams	095 R	'93-'96	4/1988	148/6100	126/4500	981kg	153	7.6	20.8	121	-	26.0	+ One of the best hot hatches ever - Can be fragile like an Integrale	★★★★★
Renault 5GT Turbo	123 R	'87-'91	4/1397	120/5750	122/3750	831kg	146	7.8	-	120	-	28.4	+ Clio Williams' grand-daddy - Most have been thrashed	★★★★★
Renaultsport Mégane 265 Cup	188 R	£25,245	4/1998	261/5500	265/3000	1387kg	191	6.4	14.8	158	190	34.4	+ Same power as limited-edition Trophy; chassis still superb - Not a lot	★★★★★
Renaultsport Mégane 250 Cup	139 R	'09-'12	4/1998	247/5500	251/3000	1387kg	181	6.1	14.6	156	190	34.4	+ Fantastic chassis... - partially obscured by new-found maturity	★★★★★
Renaultsport Mégane dCi 175 Cup	119 R	'07-'09	4/1995	173/3750	265/2000	1470kg	119	8.3	23.5	137	-	43.5	+ A diesel with a genuinely sporty chassis - Could take more power	★★★★★
Renaultsport Mégane Trophy	087 R	'05	4/1998	222/5500	221/3000	1355kg	166	6.7	17.3	147	-	32.1	+ Mega grip and traction - Steering needs a touch more feel	★★★★★
Renaultsport Mégane 230 R26	102 R	'07-'09	4/1998	227/5500	229/3000	1345kg	171	6.2	16.0	147	-	-	+ Best hot Mégane... until the R26.R - FI Team stickers in dubious taste	★★★★★
Renaultsport Mégane R26.R	181 R	'08-'09	4/1998	227/5500	229/3000	1220kg	189	5.8	15.1	147	-	-	+ One of the true hot hatch heroes - Two seats, plastic rear windows	★★★★★
SEAT Ibiza FR 2.0 TDI	144 R	£16,715	4/1968	141/4200	236/1750	1245kg	115	8.2	-	131	123	60.1	+ More fun than the petrol FR, manual gearbox option - The Cupra's not much more	★★★★★
SEAT Ibiza Cupra	183 D	£18,575	4/1390	178/6200	184/2000	1259kg	144	6.9	-	142	139	47.9	+ Punchy engine, unflappable DSG - Lacks engagement	★★★★★
SEAT Leon FR TDI 184	184 D	£22,075	4/1968	181/4000	280/1750	1350kg	136	7.5	-	142	112	64.2	+ Performance, sweet chassis, economy, comfort - Boorish engine	★★★★★
SEAT Leon FR+	163 D	'11-'12	4/1984	208/5300	206/1700	1334kg	158	7.2	-	145	170	38.7	+ As quick as a Golf GTI 5dr but £4K cheaper - Misses the VW's completeness	★★★★★
SEAT Leon Cupra R	139 R	'10-'12	4/1984	261/6000	258/2500	1375kg	193	6.1	14.0	155	190	34.9	+ Bold car, blinding engine - Lacks the character of its rival mega-hatches	★★★★★
SEAT Leon Cupra	105 R	'07-'11	4/1984	237/5700	221/2200	1375kg	175	6.3	-	153	190	34.0	+ Great engine, composure - Doesn't have adjustability of old Cupra R	★★★★★
SEAT Leon Cupra 20v T	020 R	'00-'06	4/1781	178/5500	173/5000	1322kg	137	7.7	-	142	-	33.2	+ Terrific value - Lacks sparkle of very best hatches	★★★★★
SEAT Leon Cupra R 225	067 R	'03-'06	4/1781	222/5900	206/2200	1376kg	164	6.9	-	150	-	32.1	+ Cross-country pace, practicality, value - Not as thrilling as some	★★★★★
Skoda Fabia vRS (Mk2)	146 D	£16,915	4/1390	178/6200	184/2000	1218kg	148	7.3	-	139	148	45.6	+ Well priced, well made, with great engine and DSG 'box - Dull steering	★★★★★
Skoda Fabia vRS (Mk1)	077 R	'04-'07	4/1896	130/4000	229/1900	1315kg	100	9.6	-	127	-	55.4	+ Fascinatingly fun and frugal hot hatch - A little short on steering feel	★★★★★
Skoda Octavia vRS (Mk3)	187 D	£22,990	4/1984	217/4500	258/1500	1350kg	163	6.8	-	154	142	45.6	+ Quick, agile, roomier than a Golf - Ride is harsh for what could be a family car	★★★★★
Skoda Octavia vRS (Mk2)	163 R	'06-'13	4/1998	197/5100	206/1700	1395kg	143	7.3	-	149	175	37.7	+ Drives like a GTI but costs much less - Green brake callipers?	★★★★★
Smart Fortwo Brabus	110 D	£15,000	3/999	91/5500	104/3500	780kg	126	9.9	-	96	119	54.3	+ Telling people you drive a Brabus - Them realising it's not a 720bhp S-class	★★★★★
Subaru Impreza STi CS400	146 R	'10-'12	4/2457	395/5750	400/3950	1505kg	267	4.6	10.7	155	-	-	+ Cosworth kudos. One of the fastest hatches we've tested - Pricey. Lifeless steering	★★★★★
Subaru Impreza WRX	125 D	'08-'10	4/2457	251/5400	288/3000	1395kg	180	5.5	-	130	270	-	+ An improvement over the basic WRX - Still not the WRX we wanted	★★★★★
Subaru Impreza STi 330S	124 R	'08-'10	4/2457	325/5400	347/3400	1505kg	219	4.4	-	155	-	-	+ A bit quicker than the STi... - but not better	★★★★★
Suzuki Swift Sport (Mk2)	175 R	£13,499	4/1586	134/6900	118/4400	1045kg	130	8.7	-	121	147	44.1	+ The Swift's still a great pocket rocket - But it's lost a little adjustability	★★★★★
Suzuki Swift Sport	132 R	'05-'11	4/1586	123/6800	109/4800	1030kg	121	8.9	-	124	165	39.8	+ Entertaining handling, well built - Lacking in steering feedback	★★★★★
Vauxhall Corsa VXR	154 R	£18,900	4/1598	189/5850	192/1980	1166kg	165	6.8	-	140	172	38.7	+ Looks snazzy, punchy engine - Lacks feel, uncouth compared with rivals	★★★★★
Vauxhall Corsa VXR Nürburgring	164 R	£22,295	4/1598	202/5750	206/2250	1166kg	176	6.5	-	143	178	-	+ VXR gets more power and a limited-slip diff - But it's over £3K more expensive	★★★★★
Vauxhall Astra GTC 1.6T SRI	164 D	£20,215	4/1598	178/5500	169/2200	1393kg	130	7.8	-	137	168	39.2	+ Three-door Scirocco rival looks good, drives well - Non-VXR petrol engines lack zing	★★★★★
Vauxhall Astra VXR (Mk2)	173 R	£26,995	4/1998	276/5500	295/2500	1475kg	190	5.9	-	155	189	-	+ Better than the car it replaces. Loony turbo pace - Lacks RS Mégane's precision	★★★★★
Vauxhall Astra VXR (Mk1)	102 R	'06-'11	4/1998	237/5600	236/2400	1393kg	173	6.7	16.7	152	221	30.7	+ Fast and furious - Lacks a little composure and precision	★★★★★
VW Up/SEAT Mi/Skoda Citigo	171 R	£7630+	3/999	59/5000	70/3000	854kg	70	14.1	-	99	105	62.8	+ Accomplished city car is dynamically sound... - but predictably slow	★★★★★
VW Polo GTI	154 R	£18,935	4/1390	178/6200	184/2000	1184kg	153	6.8	-	142	139	47.9	+ Modern-day mk1 Golf GTI gets twin-clutch DSG - It's a little bit bland	★★★★★
VW Golf GTD (Mk7)	188 D	£25,285	4/1968	181/3500	280/1750	1377kg	134	7.5	-	143	109	67.3	+ Pace, fuel economy, sounds good for a diesel - Lacks the extra edge of the GTI	★★★★★
VW Golf GTI (Mk7)	188 R	£25,845	4/1984	217/4500	258/1500	1351kg	163	6.5	-	152	138	47.1	+ Brilliantly resolved - Mégane 265 beats it as a pure drivers' car	★★★★★
VW Golf GTI (Mk6)	172 R	'09-'13	4/1984	207/5300	207/1700	1318kg	160	6.4	16.5	148	170	38.7	+ Still a very accomplished hot hatch - 207bhp isn't a lot any more	★★★★★
VW Golf GTI Edition 35	168 R	'12-'13	4/1984	232/5500	221/2200	1318kg	179	6.5	-	154	189	34.9	+ Mk6 GTI gets the power it craves - Expensive compared to the standard car	★★★★★
VW Golf R (Mk6)	140 D	'10-'13	4/1984	266/6000	258/2500	1521kg	178	5.5	-	155	199	33.2	+ Great engine, tremendous pace and poise - High price, ACC only optional	★★★★★
VW Golf GTI (Mk5)	102 R	'05-'09	4/1984	197/5100	207/1800	1336kg	150	6.7	17.9	145	-	-	+ Character and ability: the original GTI is back - Lacking firepower?	★★★★★
VW Golf R32 (Mk5)	087 R	'06-'09	6/3189	246/6300	236/2500	1510kg	165	5.8	15.2	155	-	26.4	+ Traction's great and you'll love the soundtrack - We'd still have a GTI	★★★★★
VW Golf R32 (Mk4)	053 R	'02-'04	6/3189	237/6250	236/2800	1477kg	163	6.4	16.3	154	-	24.6	+ Charismatic - Boomy engine can be tiresome	★★★★★
VW Golf GTI 16v (Mk2)		'88-'92	4/1781	139/6100	124/4600	1111kg	127	8.0	-	124	-	28.8	+ Arguably the best all-round Golf GTI ever - We'd be splitting hairs	★★★★★
VW Golf GTI (Mk1)	095 R	'82-'84	4/1781	112/5800	109/3500	840kg	135	8.1	-	112	-	36.0	+ The car that started it all - Tricky to find an unmolested one	★★★★★
Volvo C30 T5 R-Design	122 R	'08-'12	5/2521	227/5000	236/1500	1347kg	165	6.6	16.9	149	203	32.5	+ Good-looking, desirable Volvo - Lacks edge of best hatches. Avoid auto	★★★★★

Beautiful curves. A stunning figure.



The All-New Volvo V40 D2 R-Design from **£299** per month with 3 years Servicing, Maintenance, Volvo Assistance and VAT included*

VOLVOCARS.CO.UK

Official fuel consumption for the All-New Volvo V40 R-Design in MPG (l/100km): Urban 25.0 (11.3) - 74.3 (3.8), Extra Urban 47.1 (6.0) - 91.1 (3.1), Combined 35.8 (7.9) - 83.1 (3.4). CO₂ Emissions 185 - 88g/km. MPG figures are obtained from laboratory testing intended for comparisons between vehicles and may not reflect real driving results.

*Volvo Personal Contract Hire. Subject to status. Guarantees and indemnities may be required. Initial payment of £1,794, followed by 35 monthly rentals. Based on 8,000 miles per annum. Vehicles returned at contract end must be within contracted mileage and in good condition to avoid further charges. All scheduled servicing and maintenance included, in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations and warranty requirements. Subject to availability at participating dealers for vehicles registered between 16th September 2013 and 31st December 2013, or while stocks last. Not available with other promotions. T&Cs apply. Volvo Car Leasing.

www.watches.co.uk
where time meets passion

SWISS WATCH
COMPANY



We specialise in the acquisition and sale of high quality Swiss watches both modern and vintage, un-worn and pre-owned.

**Free Watch Valuation On-line
INSTANT CASH PAID**

by appointment only:

+44 (0)20 8994 4567

474a Chiswick High Road, Chiswick, London, W4 5TT

Rolex ■ Panerai ■ Tag Heuer ■ Audemars Piguet ■ Omega ■ Breitling ■ Zenith ■ IWC ■ Jaeger Le Coultre



**exhausts to
smile about**

everything from full systems, to hi flow cats,
to manifolds from the worlds leading brands

SCORPION
RED POWER

REMUS
SPORT EXHAUST

MILLTEK
SPORT

JELETX

BLITZ

AKRAPOVIC

revolution247.com 0845 002 3007

FREE DELIVERY WITH CODE
EXHAUSTEVO



Free delivery applies to mainland UK only - Highlands & Islands extra, limited offer period*

@ReuMo247

/revolution247

revolution
performance motorstore



Our Choice

BMW M5. The turbocharging of BMW's M-cars met with scepticism, but the current M5's 4.4-litre twin-turbo V8 feels a perfect fit. It's a brutally fast car, and there are clever (and useable) adjustable driving modes. It looks cool, too. The best big saloon is now even better.



Best of the Rest

Mercedes' AMG department is on a roll right now: the 6.2-litre C63 is superb as either saloon or estate, likewise the E63, which is now in its second turbocharged iteration. Jaguar's showy XFR-S (left) has a particularly impressive chassis, while Lexus's tail-happy IS-F remains a wonderfully alternative choice.

Saloons / Estates / 4x4s

Car	Issue no.	Price	Engine cyl/cc	bhp/rpm	lb ft/rpm	Weight	bhp/ton	0-60mph	0-100mph	Max mph	CO2 g/km	EC mpg	evo rating	
Alfa Romeo 156 GTA	045 R	'02-'06	6/3179	247/6200	221/4800	1410kg	180	6.3	-	155	-	23.3	+ Noise, pace and individuality - Front-drive chassis can't keep up	★★★★☆
Alfa Romeo B3 Biturbo	188 D	£54,950	6/2979	404/5500	442/3000	1535kg	267	4.2	-	190	177	37.2	+ Understated appearance, monster performance - E90 M3 is better on the limit	★★★★★
Alpha D3 (E90)	120 R	'08-'12	4/1995	211/4000	332/2000	1495kg	143	6.9	-	152	-	52.3	+ Excellent chassis, turbodiesel oomph - Rather narrow powerband	★★★★★
Alpina B5 Biturbo	149 D	£75,150	8/4395	533/5200	538/2800	1845kg	293	4.5	-	198	244	26.9	+ Big performance and top-line luxury - Driver not really involved	★★★★★
Alpina B5 S	118 D	'07-'10	8/4398	523/5500	535/4750	1720kg	309	4.5	-	197	-	23.0	+ Quicker and more exclusive than the E60 M5 - Suspension has its limits	★★★★★
Alpina B7 Biturbo	134 D	£98,800	8/4395	533/5200	538/2800	1965kg	276	4.6	-	194	230	28.5	+ Massive performance and top-line luxury - Feels its weight when hustled	★★★★★
Aston Martin Rapide S	182 D	£149,995	12/5935	550/6000	457/5000	1990kg	281	4.9	-	190	332	19.9	+ Performance, soundtrack, looks - Small in the back, brakes lacking	★★★★★
Aston Martin Rapide	141 R	'10-'13	12/5935	470/6000	443/5000	1990kg	240	5.2	-	188	355	-	+ Better than its DB9 sibling - More a 2+2 than a proper four-seater	★★★★★
Audi A4 2.0 TFSI quattro		£31,220	4/1984	208/4300	258/1500	1535kg	138	6.4	-	153	159	41.5	+ A good match for its German foes - No longer any naturally aspirated options	★★★★★
Audi S4 (Mk3)	166 D	£39,020	6/2995	328/5500	324/2900	1685kg	198	4.9	-	155	190	34.9	+ Great powertrain, secure chassis - The new RS4 is here now...	★★★★★
Audi S4 (Mk2)	073 D	'05-'08	8/4163	339/7000	302/3500	1700kg	206	4	-	155	-	-	+ Effortless V8, agile handling - Lacks ultimate finesse of class leaders	★★★★★
Audi RS4 Avant (Mk3)	173 D	£55,525	8/4163	444/8250	317/4000	1795kg	251	4.6	-	174	249	26.4	+ Looks, value, quality, noise, balance - Harsh ride, unnatural steering	★★★★★
Audi RS4 (Mk2)	088 R	'06-'08	8/4163	414/7800	317/5500	1650kg	255	4.5	10.9	155	-	-	+ A leap on for fast Audis, superb engine - Busy under braking	★★★★★
Audi RS4 Avant (Mk2)	105 R	'07-'08	8/4163	414/7800	317/5500	1710kg	246	4.6	-	155	-	20.6	+ 414bhp at 7800rpm! - Everyone thinking you're married with kids	★★★★★
Audi RS4 (Mk1)	024 R	'00-'02	6/2671	375/6100	325/2500	1620kg	236	4.8	12.1	170	-	17.0	+ Effortless pace - Lacks finesse. Bends wheel rims	★★★★★
Audi RS2	101 R	'94-'95	5/2226	315/6500	302/3000	1595kg	201	4.8	13.1	162	-	18.0	+ Storming performance (thanks to Porsche) - Try finding one	★★★★★
Audi S6	091 D	'06-'11	10/5204	429/6800	398/3000	1910kg	228	5.2	-	155	299	22.4	+ Even faster, and discreet with it - Very muted V10	★★★★★
Audi RS6 Avant	183 D	£76,985	8/3993	552/5700	516/1750	1935kg	290	3.9	-	155	229	28.8	+ A mighty ground-coverer - Is that all you want?	★★★★★
Audi RS6	124 D	'08-'10	10/4991	572/6250	479/1500	1985kg	293	4.5	-	155	331	20.3	+ Looks and drives better than estate version - M5 still looks tempting	★★★★★
Audi RS6 Avant	116 R	'08-'10	10/4991	572/6250	479/1500	2025kg	287	4.3	9.7	155	333	20.2	+ The world's most powerful estate - Power isn't everything	★★★★★
Audi RS6 Avant	052 R	'02-'04	8/4172	444/5700	413/1950	1865kg	242	4.8	11.6	155	-	19.3	+ The ultimate estate car? - Numb steering	★★★★★
Audi RS7	187 D	£83,495	8/3993	552/5700	516/1750	1920kg	292	3.9	-	155	229	28.8	+ Stonking performance, great looks - Numb driving experience	★★★★★
Audi S7	171 D	£62,330	8/3993	414/5000	406/1400	1945kg	216	4.6	-	155	225	-	+ Looks and drives better than S6 it's based on - Costs £8000 more	★★★★★
Audi S8	164 D	£78,225	8/3993	513/5800	479/1700	1975kg	264	4.1	-	155	237	21.7	+ Quicker and much more economical than before - But still underwhelming to drive	★★★★★
Audi S8	088 D	'06-'10	10/5204	444/7000	398/3500	1940kg	232	5.1	-	155	-	21.4	+ V10 engine, ceramic brakes, fantastic gearbox - Light steering	★★★★★
Audi Q7 V12 TDI	124 D	'08-'12	12/5934	493/3750	737/1750	2635kg	190	5.1	12.2	155	298	25.0	+ Undeniably quick, relatively economical - A tad ostentatious	★★★★★
Bentley Continental Flying Spur	185 D	£140,900	12/5998	616/6000	590/1600	2475kg	253	4.3	-	200	343	19.0	+ More power than old Flying Spur Speed - Feels its weight; engine sounds dull	★★★★★
Bentley Continental Flying Spur	080 D	'05-'12	12/5998	552/6100	479/1600	2475kg	226	4.9	-	195	396	16.6	+ Performance, wonderful interior - Have you seen petrol prices?	★★★★★
Bentley Continental Flying Spur Speed	141 R	'08-'12	12/5998	600/6000	553/1750	2440kg	250	4.6	-	200	396	16.6	+ 600bhp; surprisingly fun handling - Could look a bit more like it goes	★★★★★
Bentley Mulsanne	178 F	£225,900	8/6752	505/4200	752/1750	2585kg	198	5.1	-	184	393	16.7	+ Drives like a modern Bentley should - Shame it doesn't look like one too	★★★★★
BMW 320d	168 R	£28,410	4/1995	181/4000	280/1750	1495kg	123	7.4	-	146	120	61.4	+ Fleet-friendly new Three is economical yet entertaining - It's a tad noisy	★★★★★
BMW 328i	165 D	£29,400	4/1997	242/5000	258/1250	1430kg	172	5.8	-	155	149	44.8	+ New-age four-pot 328i is great all-rounder - We miss the six-cylinder soundtrack	★★★★★
BMW 330d M Sport	180 D	£36,610	6/2993	254/4000	413/2000	1540kg	168	5.6	-	155	129	57.6	+ Great engine, fine handling, good value - Steering confuses weight with feel	★★★★★
BMW M3 (E90)	123 R	'08-'11	8/3999	414/8300	295/3900	1605kg	262	4.9	10.7	165	290	22.8	+ Every bit as good as the E92 M3 coupe - No carbon roof	★★★★★
BMW M3 CRT (E90)	179 R	'11-'12	8/4361	444/8300	324/3750	1580kg	285	4.4	-	180	295	-	+ Saloon chassis + weight savings + GTS engine = best E90 M3 - Just 67 were made	★★★★★
BMW 335i M Sport (E90)	134 R	'05-'11	6/2979	302/5800	295/1300	1535kg	200	5.6	-	155	196	31.0	+ Stunning drivetrain, controlled chassis - Looks a bit steady	★★★★★
BMW 528i	164 D	£34,020	4/1997	242/5000	258/1250	1710kg	144	6.2	-	155	152	41.5	+ Four-pot 528i is downsizing near its best - You'll miss the straight-six sound effects	★★★★★
BMW 535i	141 D	£39,370	6/2979	302/5800	295/1200	1685kg	182	6.1	-	155	185	34.9	+ New 5-series impresses... - But only with all the chassis options ticked	★★★★★
BMW M5 (F10M)	165 R	£73,375	8/4395	552/6000	501/1500	1870kg	300	4.3	-	155	232	28.5	+ Twin-turbocharging suits all-new M5 well - Can feel heavy at times	★★★★★
BMW M5 Touring (E60)	105 R	'07-'10	10/4999	500/7750	383/6100	1780kg	285	4.8	-	155	-	19.3	+ Brilliant at ten tenths - Feels slightly clumsy when pottering	★★★★★
BMW M5 (E60)	129 R	'04-'10	10/4999	500/7750	384/6100	1755kg	289	4.7	10.4	155	-	19.6	+ Close to being the ultimate supersaloon - SMG gearbox feels old-tech	★★★★★
BMW M5 (E39)	110 R	'99-'03	8/4941	394/6600	369/3800	1795kg	223	4.9	11.5	155	-	-	+ Magnificent V8-engined supersaloon - We'd be nit-picking	★★★★★
BMW M5 (E34)	110 R	'92-'96	6/3795	340/6900	295/4750	1653kg	209	5.9	13.6	155	-	-	+ The Godfather of supersaloons - The family can come too	★★★★★
BMW M5 (E28)	182 R	'86-'88	6/3453	282/6500	251/4500	1431kg	200	6.2	-	151	-	-	+ The original storming saloon - Understated looks	★★★★★
BMW M6 Gran Coupe	184 D	£97,490	8/4395	552/6000	501/1500	1875kg	299	4.2	-	155	232	28.5	+ Enormous performance, stylish looks - Price tag looks silly next to rivals, M5 included	★★★★★
BMW X6 xDrive 50i	118 D	£58,420	8/4395	408/5500	442/1750	2190kg	186	5.4	-	155	292	22.6	+ Stunningly good to drive - Will you want to be seen arriving?	★★★★★
BMW X6M	134 D	£86,220	8/4395	547/6000	502/1500	2305kg	241	4.7	-	171	325	20.3	+ Fast, refined and comfortable - But it definitely lacks the M factor	★★★★★
BMW 750i	174 D	£71,355	8/4395	449/5500	480/2000	2020kg	226	4.7	-	155	199	-	+ Well specced, impressively refined - Lags far behind the Mercedes S-class	★★★★★
Bowler EXR S	180 R	£186,000	8/5000	550/6200	461/2100	1800kg	310	4.2	-	155	-	-	+ Outlandish all-terrain supercar - Vast suspension travel takes some getting used to	★★★★★
Brabus Bullit	119 R	£330,000	12/6233	720/5100	811/2100	1850kg	395	3.8	-	217	-	-	+ Seven hundred and twenty bhp - Three hundred thousand pounds	★★★★★
Cadillac CTS-V	148 R	£67,030	8/6162	556/6100	551/3800	1928kg	293	3.9	-	191	365	18.1	+ It'll stand out among M-cars and AMGs - But the novelty might wear off	★★★★★
Chrysler 300C SRT8	096 D	'06-'11	8/6059	425/6000	420/4800	1965kg	220	4.9	-	168	337	20.2	+ Looks, supple ride, composed chassis - Too much understeer, slow 'box	★★★★★
Ford Mondeo 2.0 EcoBoost Titanium X		£28,115	4/1999	237/n/a	251/n/a	1569kg	153	7.5	-	153	179	36.7	+ Terrific chassis, sweet engine - People will still want an Audi	★★★★★
Ford Mondeo ST220	043 D	'02-'07	6/2967	223/6150	204/4900	1550kg	146	6.8	-	151	-	27.7	+ Muscular engine, fine chassis - Hotted-up repro image	★★★★★
Ford Sierra RS Cosworth 4x4		'90-'93	4/1993	220/6250	214/3500	1305kg	159	6.6	-	144	-	24.4	+ Fast and furious - Try finding a straight one	★★★★★
Ford Sierra RS Cosworth		'86-'90	4/1993	204/6000	204/4500	1220kg	169	6.2	-	143	-	-	+ Roadgoing Group A racer - Don't shout about the power output!	★★★★★
Honda Civic Type-R *	108 D	'07-'10	4/1998	222/8000	158/6100	1252kg	180	5.9	-	150	-	-	+ Screaming engine, razor-sharp chassis - Specialist import only	★★★★★
Honda Accord Type-R	012 R	'99-'03	4/2157	209/7200	158/6700	1306kg	163	6.1	17.4	142	-	29.4	+ One of the finest front-drivers of all time - Lack of image	★★★★★
Infiniti M37S	150 D	£45,225	6/3696	316/7000	265/5200	1765kg	182	6.2	-	155	235	21.7	+ Stands out from the crowd - Not as involving as some rivals	★★★★★

Has your car warranty expired?



Warrantywise

Wise about warranties

The UK's Best Used Car Warranty

Call today on freephone

0800 030 4569

Or get a quote now at

www.warrantywise.co.uk

For full details look at the inside back cover of your Evo Magazine ▶



Designed by...

Jonathan Walker



DTUK[®]

DIESEL TUNING UK LTD

CARS • VANS • TRACTORS • MOTORHOMES

**EXCLUSIVE
READERS OFFER
£50 OFF**
the rrp on all DTUK systems
(use the code EV050)
or give us a call



**FINANCE
AVAILABLE
SYSTEMS FROM ONLY
£7.55
PER MONTH**

- Up to 40% more BHP and Torque
- Up to 20% improved fuel economy
- Adjustable Plug and Play systems
- 10 Minute average fitting time
- TuV approved Digital Technology
- 24/7 Aftersales support
- 14 Day money back guarantee
- Next day delivery (UK only)

Performance Gains and Improved Fuel Economy



DTUK CRD2+ Multimap system

with a DTUK CRD2+ Multimap Power Digital Diesel Tuning System

Improve your Fuel Economy



DTUK Green ECO 3 Maximum Economy

with a DTUK Green ECO 3 Digital Diesel Tuning System*

for further information contact sales:

Tel: 01207 299 538

email: sales@diesel-performance.co.uk

www.diesel-performance.co.uk

*DTUK GREEN ECO 3 system is suitable for the majority of common rail diesel engines. **these results are an average of feedback from customers, you may see higher or lower results depending on driving style



AMD[®]
serious about tuning

AmD
Tuning.com



facebook.com/AmD-Essex
twitter.com/amdessex




Official fitting centre www.amdtuning.com

1000bhp 4wd Rolling Road available for tuning and power testing

Tuning for Performance and Economy

- Engine remapping for normally aspirated and turbo charged vehicles using world leading software tuners - from £299.95
- AmD Tuning Power Packs - from £399.00
- Upgraded brake pads, discs and calipers for road and track
- Performance suspension from leading manufacturers
- Workshop, Servicing and Vehicle Diagnostics



AmD Tuning

Close to M25 Dartford Crossing
Unit 6, Cliffside Trade Park, Motherwell Way,
West Thurrock, Essex RM20 3LE

Tel: +44 (0) 1708 861827 E-mail: essex@amdtuning.com www.amdtuning.com

**Now also at
Northampton
and Harrow**





driver development programme
www.driverdp.com



PETROL HEAD CHRISTMAS PRESENT

Increment value vouchers available for
Performance Car Control Course

Trackday or road driver: Explore your performance car's full capabilities and develop your car control skills.

A bespoke day in your car with coaching from carefully selected top professional drivers.

Fee £365 Full day including lunch

Courses run Saturday 19 October, Saturday 23 November, Saturday 14 December.

2014 dates available towards the end of the year.

Venue Manufacturer Proving Ground, Kenilworth, Warks

Carolyn Barker: **T.** 01223 873113 **M.** 07796 305973
[E. carolynbarker@driverdp.com](mailto:E.carolynbarker@driverdp.com)



K-TEC RACING
RENAULT TUNING & STYLING SPECIALISTS

KTR 215 CLIO 3 RS CAMSHAFT & REMAP PACKAGE

- > Adds 15 BHP & 12 lb/ft
- > 12 Month / 30,000 Mile Warranty
- > £1366.80 inc VAT Fitted



Rated
★★★★★
EVO
Magazine



*Test driven EVO Issue 180

KTR 215
for Clio 3 RS
197/200

The KTR 215 camshaft and remap package is suitable for all Clio 3 RS models and can be fully fitted and remapped in our workshop facility or supplied in kit format for as little as **£995.00 inc VAT***

*Warranty applicable to in house installations only.

For more information on this and any other product from our extensive range
CALL US ON (01202) 820800 or visit our website
www.k-tecracing.com

Saloons / Estates / 4x4s

Car	Issue no.	Price	Engine cyl/cc	bhp/rpm	lb ft./rpm	Weight	bhp/ton	0-60mph	0-100mph	Max mph	CO2 g/km	EC mpg	evo rating	
Jaguar XF 3.0 V6 Diesel S	145 D	£41,860	6/2993	271/4000	443/2000	1695kg	162	5.9	-	155	159	47.1	+ Sweet handling plus diesel economy - But we'd still have the R	★★★★★
Jaguar XF Sportbrake 3.0 V6 Diesel S	177 D	£44,360	6/2993	271/4000	443/2000	1695kg	153	6.1	-	155	163	46.3	+ Looks and drives better than the saloon - Pity there's no Sportbrake R...	★★★★★
Jaguar XF 3.0 V6 Supercharged	178 D	£47,570	6/2995	335/6500	332/3500	1695kg	201	5.7	-	155	224	29.4	+ Fast, comfortable, refined - Bland engine, poor economy compared to diesel V6	★★★★★
Jaguar XFR	181 D	£65,415	8/5000	503/6000	461/2500	1800kg	284	4.8	10.2	155	270	24.4	+ Brilliant blend of pace and refinement - Doesn't sound as special as it is	★★★★★
Jaguar XFR-S	187 R	£79,995	8/5000	542/6500	502/2500	1912kg	288	4.4	-	186	270	24.4	+ XF gets turned up to 12 - Except for the soundtrack	★★★★★
Jaguar XJ 3.0 V6 Diesel	148 D	£56,265	6/2993	271/4000	442/2000	1700kg	162	6.0	-	155	167	46.3	+ A great Jaguar - But not as great as the Supersport...	★★★★★
Jaguar XJ Supersport	163 R	£91,770	8/5000	503/6000	461/2500	1795kg	285	4.7	-	155	270	24.4	+ Superb handling, monster performance - Opinion-dividing looks	★★★★★
Jaguar XJR	054 R	'03-'09	8/4196	400/6100	408/3500	1665kg	244	5.0	-	155	-	23.0	+ Genuine 7-series rival - 2007 facelift didn't help middle-aged image	★★★★★
Lamborghini LM002	016 R	'86-'89	12/5167	450/6800	369/5200	2700kg	169	-	-	130	-	-	+ Craziest 4x4 ever, Countach V12 - Craziest 4x4 ever...	★★★★★
Lexus IS-F	151 R	£58,416	8/4969	417/6600	372/5200	1714kg	247	4.7	10.9	173	270	24.4	+ Shockingly good Lexus - The M3's available as a (second hand) four-door too	★★★★★
Lotus Carlton	170 R	'91-'93	6/3615	377/5200	419/4200	1658kg	231	4.8	10.6	176	-	17.0	+ The Millennium Falcon of saloon cars - Every drive a work-out	★★★★★
Maserati Quattroporte S	184 D	£80,095	6/2979	404/5500	406/1750	1860kg	221	5.3	-	177	242	26.9	+ Tempting alternative to V8 - Feel-free steering, secondary ride lacks decorum	★★★★★
Maserati Quattroporte V8	179 D	£108,160	8/3798	523/6800	479/2250	1900kg	280	4.7	-	191	274	23.9	+ Performance, sense of occasion - Lacks the charisma and edge of its predecessor	★★★★★
Maserati Quattroporte S	137 R	'08-'12	8/4691	425/7000	361/4750	1990kg	216	5.1	12.1	174	365	18.0	+ A QP with the bhp it deserves - Grille is a bit Hannibal Lecter	★★★★★
Maserati Quattroporte Sport GTS	141 R	'08-'12	8/4691	433/7000	361/4750	1990kg	221	5.1	-	177	365	18.0	+ The most stylish supersaloon - Slightly wooden brakes, unforgiving ride	★★★★★
Maserati Quattroporte	085 R	'04-'08	8/4244	394/7000	333/4500	1930kg	207	5.1	-	171	-	17.9	+ Redefines big-car dynamics - Don't use auto mode	★★★★★
Maserati Quattroporte Sport GTS	113 D	'07-'08	8/4244	396/7000	339/4250	1930kg	208	5.5	-	167	-	-	+ Best Quattroporte chassis so far - More power wouldn't go amiss	★★★★★
Mercedes-Benz 190E 2.5-16	185 F	'89-'92	4/2498	201/6750	177/5500	1360kg	147	7.2	-	142	-	24.4	+ M-B's M3 alternative - Not as nimble as the Beemer	★★★★★
Mercedes-Benz C63 AMG	151 R	£56,965	8/6208	451/6800	442/5000	1655kg	277	4.4	9.7	160	280	23.5	+ Monstrous pace and extremely engaging - M3's just a little better...	★★★★★
Mercedes-Benz C55 AMG	088 R	'04-'08	8/5439	367/5250	376/4000	1635kg	228	5.2	-	155	-	23.7	+ Furiously fast, commendably discreet - Overshadowed by M3 and RS4	★★★★★
Mercedes-Benz E63 AMG	187 D	£73,745	8/5461	549/5500	531/1750	1770kg	315	4.2	-	155	230	28.8	+ Power, response and accuracy in spades - A little lacking in originality	★★★★★
Mercedes-Benz E63 AMG	165 R	'11-'13	8/5461	518/5250	516/1750	1765kg	298	4.2	-	155	230	28.8	+ Turbo engine doesn't dilute E63 experience - Sometimes struggles for traction...	★★★★★
Mercedes-Benz E63 AMG	096 D	'06-'09	8/6208	507/6800	464/5200	1765kg	292	4.5	-	155	-	19.8	+ Brilliant engine, indulgent chassis - Vague steering, speed limits	★★★★★
Mercedes-Benz E55 AMG	052 R	'03-'06	8/5439	476/6100	516/2650	1760kg	271	4.8	10.2	155	-	21.9	+ M5-humbling grunt, cosseting ride - Speed limits	★★★★★
Mercedes-Benz E55 AMG	'98-'02	8/5439	354/5500	390/3000	1642kg	219	5.5	-	-	155	-	23.0	+ Dragster disguised as a limo - Tyre bills	★★★★★
Mercedes-Benz S63 AMG	148 D	£113,765	8/5461	536/5500	590/2000	2040kg	267	4.5	-	155	244	26.9	+ Massive torque, massively reduced emissions - Massive car	★★★★★
Mercedes-Benz S65 AMG	098 R	£165,120	12/5980	604/4750	737/2000	2185kg	281	4.4	-	155	334	19.8	+ God's own supersaloon - Unholy price and thirst	★★★★★
Mercedes-Benz CLS63 AMG	178 R	£81,905	8/5461	518/5250	516/1700	1795kg	293	4.4	-	155	231	28.5	+ Monster performance, 549bhp an option - Not as desirable as a Bentley or Aston	★★★★★
Mercedes-Benz CLS63 AMG	099 R	'06-'11	8/6208	507/6100	464/2650	1905kg	270	4.5	-	155	345	19.5	+ Beauty, comfort, awesome performance - M5 has the edge on B-roads	★★★★★
Mercedes-Benz ML63 AMG	176 R	£83,655	8/5461	518/5250	516/1750	2270kg	232	4.7	-	155	276	23.9	+ Great engine, surprisingly good dynamics - £85K buys a Boxster and an ML350...	★★★★★
Mercedes-Benz G63 AMG	172 D	£123,140	8/5461	537/5500	560/2000	2475kg	220	5.4	-	130	322	-	+ It exists; epic soundtrack - Ancient chassis, silly price	★★★★★
Mitsubishi Evo X FQ-300 SST	118 R	£31,349	4/1998	290/6500	300/3500	1590kg	185	5.2	13.9	155	256	26.2	+ Evo gets twin-clutch transmission - Not as exciting as it used to be	★★★★★
Mitsubishi Evo X FQ-360	122 D	£38,559	4/1998	354/6500	363/3500	1560kg	231	4.1	-	155	328	19.9	+ Ridiculously rapid new Evo - A five-speed gearbox?!	★★★★★
Mitsubishi Evo X FQ-330 SST	134 R	'08-'12	4/1998	324/6500	322/3500	1590kg	207	4.4	-	155	256	-	+ Great engine and gearbox combo - It still lives in the shadow of the Evo IX	★★★★★
Mitsubishi Evo X FQ-400	181 R	'09-'10	4/1998	403/6500	387/3500	1560kg	262	3.8	-	155	328	-	+ Most powerful factory Evo ever... - ...about X grand too much when new	★★★★★
Mitsubishi Evo IX FQ-340	088 R	'05-'07	4/1997	345/6800	321/4600	1400kg	250	4.3	10.9	157	-	-	+ Gives Porsche drivers nightmares - Points, Lots of	★★★★★
Mitsubishi Evo IX MR FQ-360	181 R	'05-'07	4/1997	366/6887	363/3200	1400kg	266	3.9	-	157	-	-	+ Well-executed engine upgrades - Prison food	★★★★★
Mitsubishi Evo VIII	055 R	'03-'04	4/1997	276/6500	289/3500	1410kg	199	5.1	-	157	-	-	+ The Evo grows up - Brakes need beefing up	★★★★★
Mitsubishi Evo VIII MR FQ-300	057 R	'03-'05	4/1997	305/6800	289/3500	1400kg	221	4.8	-	157	-	20.5	+ Extra pace, extra attitude - Extra money	★★★★★
Mitsubishi Evo VII	031 R	'02-'03	4/1997	276/6500	282/3500	1360kg	206	5.0	13.0	140	-	20.4	+ Terrific all-rounder - You tell us	★★★★★
Mitsubishi Evo VII RS Sprint	041 D	'02-'03	4/1997	320/6500	327/6200	1260kg	258	4.4	-	150	-	-	+ Ruthlessly focused road weapon - For the truly committed	★★★★★
Mitsubishi Evo VI RS Sprint	011 R	'99	4/1997	330/6500	323/3000	1255kg	267	4.5	11.8	145	-	-	+ Lighter, keener, quicker than regular Evo - A little uncompromising	★★★★★
Mitsubishi Evo VI Mäkinen Edition	181 R	'00-'01	4/1997	276/6500	275/2750	1365kg	205	4.6	-	150	-	-	+ Our favourite Evo - Subtle it is not	★★★★★
Porsche Panamera 4S	186 D	£85,721	6/2997	414/6000	383/1750	1870kg	225	4.8	-	177	208	31.7	+ Strong performance and typically fine Porsche chassis - Misses characterful V8 of old S'	★★★★★
Porsche Panamera GTS	168 D	£91,239	8/4806	430/6700	383/3500	1920kg	228	4.4	-	179	251	26.4	+ Sharper chassis; more urgent and vocal V8 - A BMW M5 is £17K less...	★★★★★
Porsche Panamera Turbo	137 R	£104,758	8/4806	493/6000	516/2250	1970kg	254	3.6	8.9	188	270	24.6	+ Fast, refined and dynamically sound - It still leaves us cold	★★★★★
Porsche Panamera Turbo S	159 D	£123,776	8/4806	542/6000	590/2250	1995kg	276	3.7	-	190	270	24.6	+ Pace, excellent ergonomics - Steering feel, ride	★★★★★
Porsche Cayenne S Diesel (Mk2)	185 D	£59,053	8/4134	377/3750	627/2000	2195kg	174	5.7	-	156	218	34.0	+ Supercar levels of torque; impressive all-round performance - GTS drives better	★★★★★
Porsche Cayenne GTS (Mk2)	173 D	£68,117	8/4806	414/6500	380/3500	2085kg	202	5.6	-	162	251	26.4	+ Dynamically the best SUV on sale - At two tons, it's still no sports car	★★★★★
Porsche Cayenne Turbo (Mk2)	144 D	£89,324	8/4806	493/6000	516/2250	2170kg	231	4.7	-	173	270	24.6	+ Greener, faster, better - Odd rear styling, numb steering	★★★★★
Porsche Cayenne Turbo S (Mk2)	184 D	£107,784	8/4806	542/6000	553/2250	2215kg	249	4.5	-	175	270	24.6	+ Near-identical power and torque to a Zonda C12S - In an SUV	★★★★★
Porsche Cayenne Turbo (Mk1)	104 R	'06-'10	8/4806	494/6000	516/2250	2355kg	213	4.7	11.4	171	-	19.0	+ Appears to defy physics - Still cracks mirrors at 50 paces	★★★★★
Range Rover Evoque Coupe Si4	160 D	£41,510	4/1999	237/6000	251/1900	1670kg	144	7.0	-	135	199	-	+ Striking looks, sporting dynamics - Hefty price, and petrol version is auto-only	★★★★★
Range Rover Sport V8 Supercharged	186 D	£81,550	8/4999	503/6000	460/2500	2310kg	221	5.0	-	155	298	22.1	+ Deceptively quick and capable sports SUV - It's still got a weight problem	★★★★★
Range Rover Sport V8 Supercharged	135 D	'09-'12	8/5000	503/6000	461/2000	2590kg	200	5.9	-	140	348	19.0	+ Thumpingly fast and hugely comfortable - It's no Cayenne in the corners	★★★★★
Range Rover SDV8	180 D	£78,120	8/4367	334/3500	516/1750	2360kg	144	6.5	-	140	229	32.5	+ Lighter, more capable, even more luxurious - Diesel V6 model feels more alert	★★★★★
Range Rover V8 Supercharged	134 D	'09-'12	8/5000	503/6000	461/2000	2710kg	189	5.9	-	140	348	19.0	+ Fast, comfortable, luxurious - Big, heavy, thirsty	★★★★★
Rolls-Royce Ghost	186 D	£200,500	12/6592	563/5250	575/1500	2360kg	242	4.7	-	155	317	20.8	+ It's quicker than you think - It's more enjoyable driven slowly	★★★★★
Rolls-Royce Phantom	054 R	£276,275	12/6749	453/5350	531/3500	2560kg	180	5.7	-	149	377	18.0	+ Rolls reinvented for the 21st Century - The roads are barely big enough	★★★★★
Subaru WRX STI	151 D	'10-'13	4/2457	296/6000	300/4000	1505kg	200	5.1	-	158	243	26.9	+ Fast Subaru saloon returns - Without the blue paint and gold wheels	★★★★★
Subaru Impreza WRX GB270	109 D	'07	4/2457	266/5700	310/3000	1410kg	192	5.2	-	143	-	-	+ Fitting final fling for 'classic' Impreza - End of an era	★★★★★
Subaru Impreza STI	090 R	'05-'07	4/2457	276/6000	289/4000	1495kg	188	5.3	-	158	-	25.9	+ Stunning to drive - Not so stunning to look at	★★★★★
Subaru Impreza STI Spec C *	084 D	'05-'07	4/1994	320/6730	311/3500	1350kg	240	4.3	-	157	-	-	+ Lighter, faster, fiercer - The need for self-restraint	★★★★★
Subaru Impreza RB320	105 R	'07	4/2457	316/6000	332/3750	1495kg	215	4.8	-	155	-	-	+ Fitting tribute to a rallying legend - Too hardcore for some?	★★★★★
Subaru Impreza WRX STI PPP	073 R	'03-'05	4/1994	300/6000	299/4000	1470kg	207	5.2	12.9	148	-	-	+ A Subaru with real edge - Bit too edgy in the wet	★★★★★
Subaru STI Type RA Spec C *	067 R	'03-'05	4/1994	335/7000	280/3750	1380kg	247	4.3	11.1	160	-	-	+ Best Impreza since the PI - Lost its throbby flat-four voice	★★★★★
Subaru Impreza WR1	067 R	'04-'05	4/1994	316/5800	310/4000	1470kg	218	5.3	13.1	155	-	-	+ Most powerful official UK Impreza until RB320 - Spec C is better	★★★★★
Subaru Impreza Turbo	011 R	'98-'00	4/1994	215/5600	214/4000	1235kg	177	5.4	14.6	144	-	27.2	+ Destined for classic status - Thirsty	★★★★★
Subaru Impreza PI	067 R	'00-'01	4/1994	276/6500	260/4000	1283kg	219	4.9	13.3	150	-	25.0	+ Ultimate old-shape Impreza - Prices reflect this	★★★★★
Subaru Impreza RB5 (PPP)	187 R	'99	4/1994	237/6000	258/3500	1235kg	195	5.0	14.1	143	-	-	+ Perfect blend of poise and power - Limited numbers	★★★★★
Subaru Impreza 22B	188 R	'98-'99	4/2212	276/6000	265/3200	1270kg	220	5.0	13.1	150	-	-	+ The ultimate Impreza - Doesn't come cheap	★★★★★
Vauxhall Insignia VXR SuperSports	163 R	£30,020	6/2792	321/5250	321/5250	1810kg	180	5.6	-	170	249	26.6	+ A170mph Vauxhall - Not as exciting as the figures suggest	★★★★★
Vauxhall Vectra VXR	102 D	'06-'09	6/2792	276/5500	262/1800	1580kg	177	6.1	-	161	-	27.4	+ Great engine, effortless pace, good value - Numb steering, lumpy ride	★★★★★
Vauxhall VXR8	160 R	£49,615	8/6162	425/6000	406/4600	1831kg	236	4.9	-	155	320	20.9	+ Oversteery and characterful. Available as a pick-up too! - Nearly M3 saloon money	★★★★★
Vauxhall VXR8 Supercharged	113 R	'07-'11	8/5967	533/6000	568/4400	1831kg	296	4.5	-	180	-	-	+ The Lotus Carlton reinvented - Doesn't have polish of best Europeans	★★★★★
Vauxhall VXR8 Bathurst S	148 R	'09	8/6162	564/6000	527/4000	1866kg	307	4.6	10.7	155	-	-	+ A tauter VXR8. Bonkers pace, brilliant noise - Gearchange still rubbish	★★★★★
Volvo S60 Polestar	179 D	£40,160	6/2953	324/5250	354/5250	1716kg	192	5.5						

2010 2011 **Championship Winners - Production Touring Car Trophy 2010 & 2011** **PTCT**
PRODUCTION TOURING CAR TROPHY

Courtenay

SPORT

**Race Winning, Track Proven,
Road Friendly**



Photo Mark Watts

- Vauxhall Tuning
- Mail Order
- Workshop Facilities
- Rolling Road
- Online Shop

Tel: 01692 404313

Courtenay Sport Ltd, Folgate Road,
North Walsham NR28 0AJ

www.courtenaysport.co.uk



Porsche Fixed Price Maintenance. The quality you'd expect, a price you wouldn't.

Whether it's a new set of brake pads or a replacement clutch, rest assured that with our new fixed price tariffs for a range of maintenance jobs on selected Boxster and 911 models* it doesn't have to be a balancing act between quality and cost. Our Porsche accredited technicians are trained to the very highest standards and only use the precise tools and genuine parts required to do the job to the standard your car deserves.

Get the best of both worlds with fixed price maintenance from Porsche.

For more information visit www.porscheownerservices.co.uk



*Participating centres only. Fixed price maintenance tariffs apply to Boxster Type 986 (1996-2004) and selected 911 Type 996 (1998-2005) models only. Fixed price maintenance tariffs may be withdrawn or varied at any time. Contact participating centres for full details, terms and conditions.



PORSCHE



Our Choice

Audi R8 Spyder. The Spyder boasts supercar looks, presence and performance, yet you really could drive one every day. The V8 has a sweet engine and great dynamics, but if money's no object, we'd be seriously tempted by the equally brilliant V10.



Best of the Rest

The mk3 Porsche Boxster S is a brilliant all-rounder, while the Lotus Evija S Roadster counters with a more focused driving experience. Jaguar's F-type also impresses in both V6 S (left) and V8 S forms. Mazda's MX-5 is best for budget rear-drive fun, but for the ultimate thrills, get a Caterham 620R or Ariel Atom.

Sports Cars / Convertibles

Car	Issue no.	Price	Engine cyl/cc	bhp/rpm	lb ft/rpm	Weight	bhp/ton	0-60mph	0-100mph	Max mph	CO2 g/km	EC mpg	EVO rating	
Alfa Romeo 8C Spider	161 R	'09-'11	8/4691	450/7000	354/4750	1675kg	273	4.5	-	181	-	-	+ Beauty meets beast. They hit it off - Good luck trying to buy one	★★★★★
Ariel Atom 3.5 Supercharged	180 D	£38,000	4/1998	310/8400	169/7200	550kg	573	2.7	-	155	-	-	+ As mad as ever - Rain	★★★★★
Ariel Atom Mugen	165 R	£55,000	4/1998	270/8300	188/6000	550kg	499	2.9	-	150	-	-	+ Perfect engine for the Atom's chassis - Only ten being made	★★★★★
Ariel Atom V8 500	165 R	£146,699	8/3000	475/10,500	284/7750	550kg	877	3.0	5.8	170	-	-	+ An experience unlike anything else on Planet Car - £150K for an Atom	★★★★★
Ariel Atom 3 245	113 D	'08-'12	4/1998	245/8200	155/5200	500kg	498	3.2	-	150	-	33.0	+ The Atom just got a little bit better - Can still be a bit draughty...	★★★★★
Ariel Atom 3 Supercharged	138 R	'09-'12	4/1998	300/8200	162/7200	550kg	554	3.3	-	155	-	-	+ It's brilliant - It's mental	★★★★★
Ariel Atom 2 300 Supercharged	123 R	'03-'09	4/1998	300/8200	162/7200	550kg	554	3.3	-	155	-	28.0	+ Makes your face ripple - ...like Clarkson's	★★★★★
Ariel Atom 1	015 R	'99-'03	4/1796	125/5500	122/3000	496kg	256	5.6	18.0	115	-	-	+ Amazing styling, huge fun - As practical as a chocolate teapot	★★★★★
Aston Martin V8 Vantage Roadster	130 R	£95,080	8/4735	420/7000	346/5750	1710kg	250	4.7	-	180	328	20.4	+ Sportiest, coolest drop-top Aston in years - Starting to feel its age	★★★★★
Aston Martin V8 Vantage S Roadster	161 R	£105,080	8/4735	430/7300	361/5000	1690kg	258	4.6	-	189	299	21.9	+ Sounds amazing, looks even better - Still not the best drop-top in its class	★★★★★
Aston Martin V12 Vantage Roadster	175 R	£151,080	12/5935	510/6500	420/5750	1760kg	294	4.4	-	190	-	-	+ As good as the coupe, with amplified V12 rumble - Just a smidgen shakier	★★★★★
Aston Martin DB9 Volante	150 D	£143,080	12/5935	470/6000	443/5000	1815kg	263	4.6	-	190	368	18.2	+ Consummate cruiser and capable when pushed - Roof-up wind noise	★★★★★
Aston Martin DBS Volante	133 D	'09-'12	12/5935	510/6500	420/5750	1810kg	286	4.3	-	191	388	17.3	+ A feelgood car par excellence - It's a bit of a heavyweight	★★★★★
Audi TTS Roadster	122 D	£38,025	4/1984	268/6000	258/2500	1455kg	187	5.6	-	155	189	34.9	+ Effortlessly quick - Long-term appeal open to question; not cheap either	★★★★★
Audi TT RS Roadster	133 D	£48,140	5/2480	335/5400	332/1600	1510kg	225	4.7	-	155	212	31.0	+ Terrific engine... - ...is the best thing about it	★★★★★
Audi TT Roadster (Mk1 225bhp)	016 R	'00-'06	4/1781	225/5900	206/2200	1395kg	164	6.9	20.0	150	-	30.4	+ Winner on the King's Road - Trails Boxster on the open road	★★★★★
Audi S5 Cabriolet	130 D	£46,500	6/2995	328/5500	325/2900	1875kg	178	5.6	-	155	199	33.2	+ Gets the S4's trick supercharged engine - Bordering on dull	★★★★★
Audi RS5 Cabriolet	179 D	£68,985	8/4163	444/8250	317/4000	1920kg	235	4.9	-	155	249	26.4	+ Pace, looks, interior, naturally aspirated V8 - Not the last word in fun or involvement	★★★★★
Audi RS4 Cabriolet	094 D	'06-'08	8/4163	414/7800	317/5500	1845kg	228	4.9	-	155	-	-	+ That engine - Wibble wobble, wibble wobble, jelly on a plate	★★★★★
Audi R8 V8 Spyder	186 D	£101,360	8/4163	424/7900	317/6000	1660kg	259	4.8	-	187	337	19.6	+ More delicate and subtle than the V10 - The V10 sounds even better	★★★★★
Audi R8 V10 Spyder	185 R	£122,460	10/5204	518/8000	391/6500	1720kg	306	4.1	-	194	349	19.0	+ Sensational for the money - Not quite a rival for the 458 and 12C Spiders	★★★★★
BAC Mono	176 R	£101,940	4/2261	280/7700	206/6000	540kg	527	2.8	-	170	-	-	+ The most single-minded track car available - That means no passengers...	★★★★★
Bentley Continental GTC V8	168 R	£136,250	8/3933	500/6000	487/1700	2470kg	207	4.9	-	187	254	25.9	+ Arguably the world's best topless GT - Still no sports car	★★★★★
Bentley Conti GT Speed Convertible	187 D	£168,000	12/5998	616/6000	590/1700	2495kg	251	4.1	-	202	347	19.0	+ Effortless performance, style - Running costs a tad on the high side	★★★★★
Bentley Continental Supersports	147 D	'10-'12	12/5998	621/6000	590/2000	2395kg	263	3.9	-	202	388	17.3	+ Fast, capable and refined - Coupe does the Supersports thing better	★★★★★
Bentley Continental GTC Speed	131 D	'09-'11	12/5998	600/6000	590/1750	2485kg	245	4.5	-	200	396	17.0	+ A great convertible just got better - Optional carbon brakes a necessity	★★★★★
BMW Z4 sDrive 20i (Mk2)	164 D	£29,715	4/1997	181/4800	199/1520	1470kg	125	6.8	-	142	159	41.5	+ The Z4 has grown up... - ...and got fat	★★★★★
BMW Z4 sDrive 35i (Mk2)	186 D	£39,935	6/2979	302/5800	295/1300	1505kg	204	5.2	-	155	219	30.1	+ Looks, hard-top versatility, drivetrain - Clumsy chassis is upset by ragged surfaces	★★★★★
BMW Z4 3.0si (Mk1)	094 D	'06-'09	6/2996	265/6600	232/2750	1310kg	205	5.7	-	155	-	32.9	+ Terrific straight-six - Handling not as playful as we'd like	★★★★★
BMW Z4 M Roadster	091 R	'06-'09	6/3246	338/7900	269/4900	1410kg	244	4.8	-	155	-	23.3	+ Exhilarating and characterful, that engine - Stiff suspension	★★★★★
BMW M Roadster	002 R	'98-'02	6/3246	325/7400	258/4900	1375kg	240	5.3	-	155	-	25.4	+ Fresh-air M3, that motor, hunky looks - M Coupe drives better	★★★★★
BMW 335i SE Convertible	102 D	£40,580	6/2979	302/5800	295/1300	1735kg	177	5.8	-	155	205	32.1	+ Looks good, great to drive, fantastic engine - A bit shaky	★★★★★
BMW M3 Convertible (E93)	119 D	£59,075	8/3999	414/8300	295/3900	1810kg	232	5.3	-	155	297	22.2	+ M DCT transmission, pace, slick roof - Extra weight blunts the edge	★★★★★
BMW M3 Convertible (E46)	035 D	'01-'06	6/3246	338/7900	269/5000	1655kg	207	5.3	-	155	-	23.3	+ That engine - Gets the wobbles on British B-roads	★★★★★
BMW M6 Convertible	098 D	'06-'10	10/4999	500/7750	384/6100	1930kg	264	4.8	-	155	352	19.2	+ Composure, grip, power, comfort - Steering lacks feel at low speed	★★★★★
BMW Z8	026 R	'00-'03	8/4941	400/6600	369/3800	1585kg	256	4.8	11.1	155	-	14.4	+ M5-powered super-sportster - M5's more fun to drive	★★★★★
Brooke 260 Double R	094 R	£34,995	4/2261	260/7500	200/6100	550kg	480	3.9	-	155+	-	-	+ Fast, dynamic, well built - No roof, looks not for everyone	★★★★★
Caterham 7 Roadsport 125	105 R	£22,995	4/1595	125/6100	120/5350	539kg	235	5.9	-	112	-	-	+ New Ford-engined model is just great - Bigger drivers need SV model	★★★★★
Caterham 7 Roadsport SV 175	140 D	£30,995	4/1999	175/7000	139/6000	555kg	321	4.8	-	138	-	-	+ The Caterham for everyday use, R300 engine - Loses intensity of R300	★★★★★
Caterham 7 Supersport	165 R	£24,495	4/1595	140/6900	120/5790	520kg	273	4.9	-	120	-	-	+ One of the best Caterhams is less than £20K... - ...if you build it yourself	★★★★★
Caterham 7 Supersport R	180 D	£27,995	4/1999	180/7300	143/6100	535kg	342	4.8	-	130	-	-	+ The best road-and-track Seven yet - Impractical, noisy, uncomfortable	★★★★★
Caterham 7 Superlight R400	105 R	£35,995	4/1999	210/7800	152/5750	525kg	406	3.8	-	140	-	-	+ R400 reborn with (lots of) Ford power - Slightly hesitant low-rev pick-up	★★★★★
Caterham 7 Superlight R500	123 R	£42,495	4/1999	263/8500	177/7200	506kg	528	2.9	-	150	-	-	+ Better power-to-weight ratio than a Veyron - Until you add the driver	★★★★★
Caterham 7 620R	187 R	£49,995	4/1999	311/7700	219/7350	545kg	580	2.8	-	155	-	-	+ Banzai on track, yet still relevant on the road - £50k for a Seven?	★★★★★
Caterham CSR 260 Superlight	094 R	£44,995	4/2261	256/7500	200/6200	565kg	460	3.8	-	155	-	-	+ Brilliant for high days, holidays and trackdays - Wet Wednesdays	★★★★★
Caterham Levante	131 R	£115,000	8/2398	550/10000	300/8500	520kg	1074	4.8	8.2	150	-	-	+ Twice the power-to-weight ratio of a Veyron! - Not easy to drive slowly	★★★★★
Caterham 7 Superlight R300	150 R	'09-'12	4/1999	175/7000	139/6000	515kg	345	4.5	-	140	-	-	+ Possibly all the Caterham you need - They're not cheap	★★★★★
Caterham 7 R300	068 R	'02-'06	4/1796	160/7000	130/5000	500kg	325	4.7	-	130	-	-	+ Our 2002 Trackday Car of the Year - Not for wimps	★★★★★
Caterham 7 R400	068 R	'03-'06	4/1796	200/7500	150/5750	490kg	415	3.9	-	140	-	-	+ Race-car with a number plate - Your missus will leave you	★★★★★
Caterham 7 R500	068 R	'99-'06	4/1796	230/8600	155/7200	460kg	510	3.6	8.8	146	-	-	+ Fine for the Nürburgring - Hard work around the Bullring	★★★★★
Caterham 7 R500 Evolution	069 R	'04	4/1998	250/8000	190/4000	460kg	552	3.9	8.1	150	-	-	+ Madder than Mad Jack McMad - Er, it's a bit mad	★★★★★
Chevrolet Corvette C6	083 D	'04-'13	8/6162	430/5900	424/4600	1460kg	300	4.3	-	186	316	21.2	+ Corvette performance - Convertible dynamics, electronics	★★★★★
Donkervoort D8 GTO Performance	185 R	£130,000	5/2480	375/5500	350/1750	695kg	548	2.8	-	168	-	-	+ There's nothing else like it - Pricey for a car with a five-cylinder engine	★★★★★
Ferrari California	171 D	£152,154	8/4297	483/7750	372/5000	1705kg	290	3.8	-	193	299	-	+ Revised with sharper performance and dynamics - We'd still take a 458 Spider	★★★★★
Honda S2000	118 D	'99-'09	4/1997	237/8300	153/7500	1260kg	191	6.2	-	150	-	28.2	+ An alternative and rev-happy roadster - The Boxster's better	★★★★★
Jaguar F-type V6	186 R	£58,520	6/2995	335/6500	332/3500	1597kg	213	5.3	-	161	209	31.4	+ Beautiful, enjoyable, responsive - Noticeably junior to the V6 S	★★★★★
Jaguar F-type V6 S	183 R	£67,520	6/2995	375/6500	339/3500	1614kg	236	4.9	-	171	213	31.0	+ Better-damped and more rounded than the V8 S - A Boxster S is £20k cheaper	★★★★★
Jaguar F-type V8 S	183 R	£79,985	8/5000	488/6500	461/2500	1665kg	298	4.3	-	186	259	25.5	+ Wilder than the V6 S - Could be too exuberant for some	★★★★★
Jaguar XK 5.0 Convertible		£71,465	8/5000	380/6500	380/3500	1621kg	238	5.3	-	155	264	25.2	+ Basic XK gets extra power... - ...but loses some of its GT refinement	★★★★★
Jaguar XKR Convertible	130 R	£84,965	8/5000	503/6000	461/2500	1725kg	296	4.6	-	155	292	23.0	+ Gains Jag's fantastic new V8 - Loses sporting ground to its main foes	★★★★★
Jaguar XKR-S Convertible	167 R	£103,465	8/5000	542/6500	502/2500	1725kg	319	4.2	-	186	292	23.0	+ Loud and mad; most exciting Jag in years - It's also the most expensive in years	★★★★★
Jaguar XK	089 R	'06-'09	8/4196	294/6000	303/4100	1635kg	183	6.6	-	155	-	25.0	+ Every bit as good as the XK coupe - 294bhp still only just enough	★★★★★
Jaguar XKR		'06-'09	8/4196	414/6250	413/4000	1705kg	247	5.0	-	155	-	-	+ First Jag sports car for years - Overworked detailing	★★★★★
Jaguar XKR	004 R	'97-'06	8/3996	370/6150	387/3600	1750kg	215	5.4	12.8	155	-	15.6	+ Hurricane-in-the-hair motoring - A danger to toupees everywhere	★★★★★
KTM X-Bow GT	183 D	£574,000	4/1984	281/6400	310/3200	875kg	326	4.1	-	144	189	34.0	+ Extraordinary ability, now in a more road-friendly package - Price	★★★★★
KTM X-Bow R	165 R	£64,850	4/1984	296/5500	295/3300	818kg	368	3.6	-	144	-	-	+ Sharper handling, more power - Pity it's not even lighter, and cheaper	★★★★★
KTM X-Bow	138 R	'08-'12	4/1984	237/5500	229/2000	818kg	294	3.8	-	137	-	-	+ Mad looks; real quality feel - Heavier and pricier than you'd hope	★★★★★

PAST master

It broke TVR's dyno and was deemed too powerful to sell. John Barker drove the one and only Speed 12

TVR Cerbera Speed 12 Issue 079, May 2005

'The sound is HUGE and absolutely glorious, like an Italian V12 but one fuelled with a mixture of broken glass and 100-octane anger. Squeeze the throttle a little more and the V12 spits and bangs from its four side-exhausts before clearing its throat and assuming a sonorous, jogging idle. 'Out of a second-gear chicane, I find the throttle stop.

Fully hooked up to the tarmac, the Speed 12 lunges forward with such immense force that I grab third gear almost by instinct. The dizzying acceleration resumes, and even into fourth it shows no sign of fading. There is more, though, because the full 880bhp is delivered at about 7250rpm and so far I still haven't used more than 5000rpm...



BEST SOLUTIONS FOR EVERY DEMAND



coilover



coilover



coilover



ddc



hls



*club
sport*



*dlc
intelligent
electronic*



INOX-LINE
STAINLESS STEEL

FOR MORE THAN
4600 TYPES AVAILABLE

FOR EVERY DEMAND
THE RIGHT SUSPENSION

*competition
race-suspension*



*street
comfort*



THE PERFECT SUSPENSION FOR EVERY PURPOSE.

KW automotive UK Ltd
Phone: 0870 990 7536
Fax: 0845 021 2548
eMail: info@KWautomotive.co.uk



Sports Cars / Convertibles

Car	Issue no.	Price	Engine cyl/cc	bhp/rpm	lb ft/rpm	Weight	bhp/ton	0-60mph	0-100mph	Max mph	CO2 g/km	EC mpg	EVO rating	
Lotus Elise 1.6	144 D	£29,050	4/1598	134/6800	118/4400	876kg	155	6.0	-	127	149	45.0	+ New 1.6 Elise is light and fantastic - Smaller engine could put some off	★★★★★
Lotus Elise 1.6 Club Racer	183 R	£28,450	4/1598	134/6800	118/4400	852kg	160	6.0	-	127	149	45.0	+ Even lighter, even more focused - A touch pricier for a stripped-out Elise	★★★★★
Lotus Elise S	172 R	£37,150	4/1798	217/6800	184/4400	924kg	239	4.5	-	145	175	37.5	+ New supercharged Elise boasts epic grip and pace - £37k before (pricy) options...	★★★★★
Lotus Exige S Roadster	186 R	£52,900	6/3456	345/7000	295/4500	1166kg	301	4.0	-	145	236	28.0	+ Like the hard-top Exige S, but more road-friendly - Boxster S is a better all-rounder	★★★★★
Lotus Elise R	068 R	'04-'11	4/1796	189/7800	133/6800	860kg	223	5.6	13.9	150	196	34.4	+ Most thrilling some Elise yet - Blaring engine note	★★★★★
Lotus Elise SC	131 R	'08-'11	4/1794	218/8000	156/5000	870kg	254	4.5	11.4	148	199	33.2	+ All the usual Elise magic - Supercharged engine lacks sparkle	★★★★★
Lotus Elise S 1.8	104 R	'06-'10	4/1794	134/6200	127/4200	860kg	158	6.3	18.7	127	-	37.2	+ Brilliant entry-level Elise - Precious little	★★★★★
Lotus Elise S2 IIIS	049 R	'02-'04	4/1796	156/7000	129/4650	860kg	197	5.1	-	131	-	40.9	+ A genuinely useable Elise - Air-con? In an Elise?	★★★★★
Lotus Elise S2 Sport 135	040 D	'03	4/1796	135/6200	129/4850	726kg	189	5.4	-	129	-	-	+ One of our fave S2 Elises - Brakes need more bite and pedal feel	★★★★★
Lotus Elise S2 Sport 190	044 R	'03	4/1796	190/7800	128/5000	710kg	272	4.7	12.1	135	-	-	+ Fabulous trackday tool - Pricy	★★★★★
Lotus Elise SI	126 R	'96-'00	4/1796	118/5500	122/3000	731kg	164	6.1	18.5	126	-	39.4	+ A modern classic - A tad impractical?	★★★★★
Lotus 2-Eleven Supercharged	123 R	'07-'11	4/1796	252/8000	179/7000	670kg	382	3.8	-	150	-	-	+ Impressive on road and track - Not hardcore enough for some	★★★★★
Lotus 2-Eleven GT4	138 R	'09-'11	4/1796	266/8200	179/7200	670kg	403	3.7	-	155	-	-	+ evo Track Car of the Year 2009 - It's a 76-grand Lotus with no roof	★★★★★
Lotus 2-Eleven	126 R	'07-'11	4/1796	189/7800	133/6800	720kg	267	4.3	-	140	-	-	+ Not far off supercharged car's pace - Pricy once it's made road-legal	★★★★★
Lotus 340R	126 R	'00	4/1796	190/7800	146/5000	658kg	293	4.5	12.5	126	-	-	+ Hardcore road-racer... - that looks like a dune buggy from Mars	★★★★★
Lotus Elan SE	095 R	'89-'95	4/1588	165/6600	148/4200	1022kg	164	6.7	-	137	-	21.0	+ Awesome front-drive chassis - Rather uninvolving	★★★★★
Lotus Elan Sprint	126 R	'71-'73	4/1558	126/6500	113/5500	720kg	178	6.6	-	122	-	-	+ Sensational chassis, properly quick - Affording a mint one	★★★★★
Maserati GranCabrio	142 D	£98,315	8/4691	434/7000	332/4750	1980kg	223	5.3	-	176	358	18.3	+ As good to drive as it is to look at - Lacks the grunt of some rivals	★★★★★
Maserati GranCabrio Sport	161 D	£103,910	8/4691	444/7000	376/4750	1980kg	228	5.1	-	177	377	19.5	+ Looks, performance, cruising ability - Brakes could be sharper	★★★★★
Maserati GranCabrio MC	185 D	£113,710	8/4691	451/7000	383/4750	1973kg	234	4.9	-	179	337	19.5	+ Most powerful GranCabrio yet - The GranCabrio is starting to show its age	★★★★★
Mazda MX-5 1.8i SE		£18,495	4/1798	124/6500	123/4500	1155kg	109	9.9	-	121	167	39.8	+ Basic MX-5 offers ESP-less fun - But you'll probably want the 2.0's power	★★★★★
Mazda MX-5 2.0i Sport Tech	170 R	£21,595	4/1999	158/7000	139/5000	1173kg	144	7.6	-	132	181	36.2	+ Handles brilliantly again - Less than macho image	★★★★★
Mazda MX-5 1.8i (Mk3 vi)	091 R	'05-'09	4/1798	124/6500	123/4500	1155kg	108	9.3	-	122	-	-	+ Gearchange, interior - Lost some of the charm of old MX-5s	★★★★★
Mazda MX-5 1.8i (Mk2)	017 R	'98-'05	4/1839	146/7000	124/5000	1065kg	140	8.6	-	123	-	32.5	+ Affordable ragtops don't get much better - Cheap cabin	★★★★★
Mazda MX-5 1.6 (Mk1)	131 R	'89-'97	4/1597	115/6500	100/5500	971kg	120	9.0	-	114	-	-	+ The original and still (pretty much) the best - Less than rigid	★★★★★
Mercedes-Benz SLK350 Sport	161 R	£44,600	6/3498	302/6500	273/3500	1465kg	209	5.5	-	155	167	39.8	+ Best non-AMG SLK yet - Still no Boxster-beater	★★★★★
Mercedes-Benz SLK55 AMG	186 R	£55,335	8/5461	416/6800	398/4500	1615kg	262	4.6	-	155	195	33.6	+ Quicker and more economical than ever - Needs to be sharper, too	★★★★★
Mercedes-Benz SLK55 AMG	087 R	'05-'10	8/5439	355/5750	376/4000	1575kg	229	4.9	-	155	-	23.5	+ Superb engine, responsive chassis - No manual option, ESP spoils fun	★★★★★
Mercedes-Benz SLK55 AMG Black	110 R	'07-'08	8/5439	394/5750	383/3750	1495kg	268	4.9	11.2	174	-	-	+ AMG gets serious - Dull-witted 7G-Tronic auto box, uneven dynamics	★★★★★
Mercedes-Benz SL500	169 D	£83,490	8/4663	429/5250	516/1800	1705kg	255	4.8	-	155	212	31.0	+ Wacky performance, beautifully engineered - Lacks ultimate sports car feel	★★★★★
Mercedes-Benz SL63 AMG	171 D	£110,785	8/5461	530/5500	590/2000	1770kg	304	4.3	-	155	231	-	+ Monster performance, lighter than before - Still heavy, steering lacks consistency	★★★★★
Mercedes-Benz SL65 AMG	183 D	£168,285	12/5980	621/4800	731/2300	1875kg	336	4.0	-	155	270	24.4	+ Chassis just about deals with the power - Speed limits	★★★★★
Mercedes-Benz SL63 AMG	117 D	'08-'13	8/6208	518/6800	464/5200	1970kg	278	4.6	-	155	328	20.0	+ More focused than old SL55 AMG - Lost some of its all-round appeal	★★★★★
Mercedes-Benz SL55 AMG	070 R	'02-'07	8/5439	493/6100	516/2650	1955kg	256	4.6	10.2	155	-	-	+ As fast as a Murielago - Not as much fun	★★★★★
Mercedes-Benz SL65 AMG	071 D	'04-'10	12/5980	604/4800	737/2000	2035kg	302	4.1	-	155	-	-	+ Gob-smacking performance - Gob-smackingly pricey	★★★★★
Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG Roadster	167 R	£176,985	8/6208	563/6800	479/4750	1660kg	345	3.7	-	197	308	21.4	+ Loses none of the coupe's talents - But (understandably) loses the gullwing doors	★★★★★
Mini John Cooper Works Convertible	130 R	£24,950	4/1598	208/6000	206/1850	1230kg	172	6.9	-	146	169	38.7	+ A manlier Mini cabrio. As hardcore as the hatch... - which is still better	★★★★★
Morgan 3 Wheeler	177 R	£30,000	2/1990	80/5300	103/3250	525kg	155	6.0	-	115	-	-	+ Quirky, characterful, brilliant - Unnatural brake feel; you'd better not be shy	★★★★★
Morgan Plus 8	171 R	£85,200	8/4799	362/6300	370/3600	1100kg	334	4.4	-	155	-	-	+ Hilarious mix of old looks and new mechanicals - Refinement is definitely old-school	★★★★★
Morgan Aero SuperSports	145 R	£126,900	8/4799	362/6300	370/3600	1180kg	312	4.2	-	170	-	-	+ As above, with a V8 and targa top - It's proper supercar money	★★★★★
Morgan Aero 8	105 R	'02-'08	8/4799	362/6300	361/3400	1100kg	334	4.5	-	170	-	25.2	+ Glorious sound, view over bonnet, dynamics - Awkward-looking rear	★★★★★
Nissan 370Z Roadster	143 R	£36,495	6/3696	326/7000	269/5200	1554kg	213	5.5	-	155	262	25.2	+ The Zed's old-school character remains intact - Its purposeful looks don't	★★★★★
Nissan 350Z Roadster		'04-'09	6/3498	309/6600	264/4800	1600kg	196	5.8	-	155	-	24.8	+ Drives just like the coupe - But doesn't look as good	★★★★★
Porsche Boxster (981)	172 R	£38,237	6/2706	261/6700	206/4500	1310kg	202	5.4	-	164	192	34.5	+ Goes & looks better; cleaner Boxster ever - Steering now electric to help cut CO2	★★★★★
Porsche Boxster S (981)	186 R	£45,384	6/3436	311/6700	265/4500	1320kg	239	5.1	-	173	206	32.1	+ Boxster steps out of 911's shadow - But gets 911's less appealing new steering	★★★★★
Porsche Boxster (987)		'05-'12	6/2893	252/6400	214/4400	1335kg	192	5.9	-	163	221	30.0	+ Second-gen Boxster's as brilliant as ever - It's a typically Porsche redesign	★★★★★
Porsche Boxster S (987)	161 R	'05-'12	6/3436	306/6400	265/5500	1355kg	229	5.3	-	170	223	29.7	+ As above, but with more power - Lighter steering than before	★★★★★
Porsche Boxster Spyder (987)	188 R	'10-'12	6/3436	316/7200	273/4750	1275kg	252	5.0	-	166	221	29.1	+ Lighter, more driver-centric Boxster - Collapsed-brolly roof not the most practical	★★★★★
Porsche Boxster (986)	049 R	'99-'04	6/2687	228/6300	192/4700	1275kg	182	6.3	-	155	-	29.1	+ Still an impeccable sports car - Very little	★★★★★
Porsche Boxster S (986)	070 R	'99-'04	6/3179	260/6200	228/4700	1320kg	200	5.5	-	164	-	26.9	+ Added power is seductive - As above	★★★★★
Porsche 911 Carrera Cabriolet (991)	183 R	£82,072	6/3436	345/7400	288/5600	1450kg	242	5.0	-	178	217	30.7	+ Brilliant engine - Doesn't quite have the 'magic at any speed' character of previous 91ls	★★★★★
Porsche 911 Carrera S Cabriolet (991)	171 R	£92,108	6/3800	394/7400	324/5600	1465kg	273	4.6	-	187	229	29.1	+ All-new open 911 drives just like the coupe - Which means the same artificial steering	★★★★★
Porsche 911 Turbo Cabriolet (997)	139 D	'07-'12	6/3800	493/6000	479/1950	1645kg	305	3.8	-	194	275	24.1	+ Absurdly quick and capable drop-top - We'd still take the coupe	★★★★★
Porsche 911 Turbo Cabriolet (996)	060 R	'03-'05	6/3596	414/6000	413/4600	1700kg	250	4.7	-	185	-	-	+ Faster than you'll ever need it to be - Just the image thing again	★★★★★
Radical SR3 SL	174 R	£69,850	4/2000	300/6000	265/4000	795kg	383	3.0	-	161	-	-	+ Our 2011 Track Car of the Year, and it's road-legal - You'll need to wrap up warm	★★★★★
Radical SR8LM	138 R	'09-'12	8/2800	460/10,500	260/8000	680kg	687	3.2	-	168	-	-	+ Fastest car around the Nordschleife - Convincing people it's road legal	★★★★★
Renault Sport Spider	183 R	'96-'99	4/1998	148/6000	136/4500	930kg	157	6.5	-	131	-	-	+ Rarity, fabulous unassisted steering feel - Heavier than you'd hope	★★★★★
Tesla Roadster	131 R	'08-'12	Ac motor	248/4500	273/0-4500	1283kg	196	5.0	14.3	120	-	-	+ If this is the future, it's going to be fun - Limited range, high price	★★★★★
Toyota MR2	187 R	'00-'06	4/1794	138/6400	125/4400	975kg	141	7.2	21.2	130	-	38.2	+ Tight lines, taut dynamics - Minimal luggage space	★★★★★
TVR Tamora	070 R	'01-'07	6/3605	350/7200	290/5500	1050kg	338	4.5	-	160	-	-	+ Well-sorted soft-top TVR - Awkward styling	★★★★★
TVR Tuscan Convertible	091 R	'05-'07	6/3996	365/6800	315/6000	1100kg	337	3.8	8.1	195	-	-	+ Spirit of the Griff reborn - Over 195mph? Really?	★★★★★
TVR Chimaera 5.0	007 R	'93-'03	8/4988	320/5500	320/3750	1060kg	307	4.6	-	167	-	26.4	+ Gorgeous noise, tarmac-ripping grunt - Details	★★★★★
TVR Griffith 4.3	068 R	'92-'93	8/4280	280/5500	305/4000	1060kg	268	4.8	11.2	148	-	-	+ The car that made TVR. Cult status - Mere details	★★★★★
TVR Griffith 500	009 R	'93-'01	8/4988	320/5500	320/3750	1060kg	307	4.8	11.2	167	-	22.1	+ Griff diamond - A few rough edges	★★★★★
Vauxhall VX220	023 R	'00-'04	4/2198	145/5800	150/4000	875kg	168	5.6	-	136	-	34.4	+ Absurdly good Vauxhall - The badge?	★★★★★
Vauxhall VX220 Turbo	066 R	'03-'05	4/1998	197/5500	184/1950	930kg	215	4.7	-	151	-	-	+ Nothing comes close for the money - Marginal everyday usability	★★★★★
Westfield XTR4	068 D	'01-'10	4/1781	220/5500	184/5000	542kg	413	3.6	-	160	-	-	+ Mini-Le Mans racer - You wouldn't want to drive it there	★★★★★

CARS FOR SALE

powered by **evo**

visit forsale.evo.co.uk to advertise your car for free*

*100% discount special launch offer.

**PRESTIGE
PERFORMANCE
CENTRE
GB.COM**

Visit our Online Catalogue at
www.ppcgb.com

**The ULTIMATE
CAR TUNING and
STYLING CENTRE**

Performance upgrades and power tuning

Mail order & National fitting centres



ESSEX
0845 1630 130

MILTON KEYNES
0845 2876 678

SCOTLAND
0845 8694 982

EASTBOURNE (East Sussex)
0845 1633 722

KENT
0845 5919 766

MANCHESTER
0845 5646 581

CRAWLEY (West Sussex)
0845 5644 576

ALLOY WHEELS & TYRES,
SPORTS EXHAUST,
PERFORMANCE BRAKES,
TUNING, BODY STYLING,
INDUCTION KITS,
LED LIGHTS AND LAMPS,
SUSPENSION UPGRADES.

NATIONAL FRANCHISE AVAILABLE



The UK's Leading Independent BMW Specialists

Munich Legends Are Now Recruiting

We currently have vacancies for ambitious and energetic individuals to join the globally renowned team in the following roles:

- BMW Technician
- Parts Controller
- Sales Coordinator / Administrator

For a more detailed breakdown of each job role, and for information on how to apply, visit the Munich Legends website.

Munich Legends

01825 740 456

www.munichlegends.co.uk

Ratings Thrill-free zone ★ Trepid ★★ Interesting ★★★ Seriously good ★★★★★ A truly great car ★★★★★★



Our Choice

Porsche 911 GT3. PDK, electric steering, a new engine with zero racing pedigree... Yes, we were nervous about the new GT3 before its arrival. Thankfully, it's still fully deserving of the badge, although you'll now need a healthy disregard for your licence to feel it truly come alive.



Best of the Rest

The Carrera 4S is our pick of the 'regular' 911s, while the new Cayman S is right up there with it. The Lotus Evija S (left) is a proper road racer for £53k and our joint 2012 Car of the Year. Audi's R8 is another gem, especially in V10 Plus form. And, of course, we wouldn't dare not mention the Nissan GT-R...

Coupes / GTs

Car	Issue no.	Price	Engine cyl/cc	bhp/rpm	lb ft/rpm	Weight	bhp/ton	0-60mph	0-100mph	Max mph	CO2 g/km	EC mpg	EVO rating	
Alfa Romeo Brera 3.2 V6	120 R	'08-'11	6/3195	256/6300	237/4500	1532kg	170	6.9	-	155	260	-	+ Brera made better for UK roads - Steering lacking some feel	★★★★★
Alfa Romeo 8C Competizione	120 R	'07-'09	8/4691	450/7000	354/4750	1585kg	288	4.1	-	181	-	-	+ Looks, exclusivity, noise, balance - They're all sold	★★★★★
Alpina B3 Biturbo (E92)	108 R	'07-'13	6/2979	355/5500	369/3800	1570kg	230	4.8	-	177	-	29.1	+ Alpina's M3 alternative - Too refined for some	★★★★★
Alpina B3 GT3 (E92)	176 D	'06-'09	6/2979	402/6000	398/4500	1535kg	266	4.4	-	186	224	-	+ Alpina's M3 GT3 alternative - Auto gearbox frustrates when pressing on	★★★★★
Aston Martin V8 Vantage (4.7)	169 D	'08-'11	8/4735	420/7000	346/5750	1630kg	262	4.7	-	180	328	20.4	+ 2012 upgrades keep the V8 Vantage on song - Starting to feel a little dated, though	★★★★★
Aston Martin V8 Vantage S	168 R	'10-'12	8/4735	430/7300	361/5000	1610kg	271	4.5	-	189	299	21.9	+ Keener engine, V12 Vantage looks - Slightly sluggish auto only	★★★★★
Aston Martin V12 Vantage	146 R	'13-'15	12/5935	510/6500	420/5750	1680kg	308	4.4	9.7	190	388	17.3	+ The best series production car that Aston Martin makes - Erm, a tad thirsty?	★★★★★
Aston Martin V12 Zagato	181 F	'09-'10	12/5935	510/6500	420/5750	1680kg	308	4.2	-	190	388	17.3	+ The looks, the noise, the way it drives - It's three times the price of a V12 Vantage	★★★★★
Aston Martin V8 Vantage (4.3)	109 R	'05-'08	8/4281	380/7300	302/5000	1630kg	237	5.2	12.0	175	-	-	+ Gorgeous, awesome soundtrack - Can't quite match 911 dynamically	★★★★★
Aston Martin DB9	178 R	'03-'06	12/5935	510/6500	457/5500	1785kg	290	4.6	-	183	368	18.2	+ Better than the old DB9 in every respect - Automatic gearbox could be quicker	★★★★★
Aston Martin DB9	146 D	'10-'12	12/5935	470/6000	443/5000	1760kg	271	4.6	-	190	368	18.2	+ Ride & handling improved for 2010 model - Rapide makes 2+2 seating pointless	★★★★★
Aston Martin DBS	142 R	'07-'12	12/5935	510/6500	420/5750	1695kg	306	4.2	-	191	388	17.3	+ Stupendous engine, gearbox, brakes - Pricey. Can bite the unwary	★★★★★
Aston Martin DB7 Vantage	010 R	'00-'05	12/5935	420/6000	400/5000	1770kg	241	4.9	11.2	185	-	18.6	+ DB7 with near-supercar pace - Handling lacks edge	★★★★★
Audi TT 2.0 TFSI	155 R	'02-'04	4/1984	208/4300	258/1600	1295kg	163	6.3	15.7	152	154	42.8	+ Front-driver loses nothing to quattro TTs - Steers like a computer game	★★★★★
Audi TT S	119 D	'03-'05	4/1984	268/6000	258/2500	1395kg	195	5.4	-	155	184	35.8	+ Usefully quicker TT; great drivetrain - Still steers like a computer game	★★★★★
Audi TT RS	158 R	'06-'10	5/2480	335/5400	332/1600	1450kg	235	4.4	11.1	155	209	31.4	+ Sublime 5-cylinder turbo engine - Rest of package can't quite match it	★★★★★
Audi TT RS Plus	185 D	'09-'11	5/2480	355/5500	343/1650	1450kg	249	4.3	-	174	209	31.4	+ Stonkingly fast cross-country - Shockingly expensive for a TT	★★★★★
Audi TT Sport (Mk1)	081 D	'05-'06	4/1781	237/5700	236/2300	1390kg	173	5.7	-	155	-	30.3	+ Deliciously purposeful interior, crisp chassis - Numb steering	★★★★★
Audi S5	163 D	'02-'06	6/2995	328/5500	325/2900	1675kg	199	4.9	-	155	190	34.9	+ Supercar-charged V6 makes S5 cleaner and faster - Pricey once you add options	★★★★★
Audi RS5	'05-'10	8/4163	444/8250	317/4000	1715kg	245	4.5	-	155	246	26.9	-	+ Brilliant engine and improved chassis - Still not as exciting as you'd hope	★★★★★
Audi R8 V8	168 R	'08-'10	8/4163	424/7900	371/4500	1560kg	276	4.1	9.9	188	332	19.9	+ Finally, a true 911 alternative - Exclusivity comes at a price	★★★★★
Audi R8 V10	181 D	'11-'12	10/5204	518/8000	391/6500	1620kg	325	3.9	8.4	194	346	19.0	+ Real supercar feel - The V8 is £20k less, and still superb	★★★★★
Audi R8 V10 Plus	183 R	'12-'13	10/5204	542/8000	398/6500	1570kg	351	3.8	-	198	346	19.0	+ An R8 fit to take on the 458 and 12C - Firm ride may be too much for some	★★★★★
Audi R8 GT	169 F	'10-'12	10/5204	552/8000	398/6500	1520kg	369	3.6	-	199	-	-	+ Everything we love about the R8 - Not as hardcore as we wanted	★★★★★
Audi Quattro 20V	019 R	'90-'91	5/2226	220/5900	228/1950	1329kg	146	6.2	18.2	143	-	19.1	+ Modern classic - Buy wisely to avoid big bills	★★★★★
Bentley Continental GT V8	178 R	'12-'13	8/3993	500/6000	487/1700	2295kg	221	4.6	-	188	246	27.0	+ A proper drivers' Bentley with decent economy - W12 suddenly seems pointless	★★★★★
Bentley Continental GT	152 D	'13-'15	12/5998	567/6000	516/1700	2320kg	248	4.6	-	198	384	17.1	+ 200mph in utter comfort - Weight, thirst	★★★★★
Bentley Continental GT Speed	177 D	'15-'16	12/5998	616/6000	590/2000	2320kg	258	4.0	-	205	338	19.5	+ 205mph in utter comfort - Feels nose-heavy in slow corners	★★★★★
Bentley Continental Supersports	137 R	'17-'18	12/5998	621/6000	590/2000	2240kg	282	3.7	-	204	388	17.3	+ A thoroughly impressive car... - rather than a fun and involving one	★★★★★
Bentley Continental GT Speed	115 R	'07-'11	12/5998	600/6000	553/1750	2350kg	259	4.3	-	202	396	17.0	+ Stupendous performance, fine dynamics - Weight, thirst...	★★★★★
BMW 135i M Sport	113 R	'08-'12	6/2979	302/5800	295/1300	1455kg	211	5.3	-	155	198	33.2	+ Fast, fun, £20k cheaper than an M3 - You really want the 1-series M Coupe	★★★★★
BMW 1-series M Coupe	188 R	'11-'12	6/2979	335/5900	369/1500	1495kg	228	4.8	-	155	224	-	+ Character, turbo pace and great looks - Came and went too quick	★★★★★
BMW 435i M Sport Coupe	187 D	'06-'10	6/2979	302/5800	295/1200	1510kg	203	5.4	-	155	169	35.8	+ Betters the already outstanding dynamics of the 3-series - Engine could sound sweeter	★★★★★
BMW 335i M Sport Coupe (E92)	095 D	'06-'13	6/2979	302/5800	295/1300	1525kg	201	5.2	12.2	155	196	33.6	+ Eager engine, exploitable chassis - Slightly unadventurous styling	★★★★★
BMW M3 (E92)	162 R	'07-'13	8/3999	414/8300	295/3900	1580kg	266	4.3	10.3	155	290	22.8	+ Fends off all of its rivals - ...except the cheaper 1-series M	★★★★★
BMW M3 GT3 (E92)	171 R	'10-'11	8/4361	444/8300	324/3750	1530kg	295	4.3	-	193	295	-	+ Highly exclusive, one of the most focused M-cars ever - Good luck trying to find one	★★★★★
BMW M3 (E46)	066 R	'00-'07	6/3246	338/7900	269/5000	1495kg	230	5.1	12.3	155	-	23.7	+ One of the best BMWs ever - Slightly artificial steering feel	★★★★★
BMW M3 CS (E46)	088 R	'05-'07	6/3246	338/7900	269/5000	1495kg	230	5.1	-	155	-	23.7	+ CSL dynamics without CSL price - Looks like the standard car	★★★★★
BMW M3 CSL (E46)	060 R	'03-'04	6/3246	355/7900	273/4900	1385kg	260	5.3	12.0	155	-	-	+ Stripped-down road-race M3 - Standard brakes barely adequate	★★★★★
BMW M3 (E36)	148 R	'93-'98	6/3201	321/7400	258/3250	1460kg	223	5.4	12.8	157	-	25.7	+ Performance, image - Never quite as good as the original	★★★★★
BMW M3 (E30)	165 R	'86-'90	4/2302	212/6750	170/4600	1165kg	185	6.7	17.8	147	-	20.3	+ Best M-car ever! Race-car dynamics for the road - LHD only	★★★★★
BMW Z4 M Coupe	097 R	'06-'09	6/3246	338/7900	269/4900	1420kg	242	5.0	-	155	-	23.3	+ A real drivers' car - You've got to be prepared to get stuck in	★★★★★
BMW M Coupe	005 R	'98-'03	6/3246	325/7400	258/3250	1375kg	240	5.1	-	155	-	25.0	+ Quick and characterful - Lacks finesse	★★★★★
BMW 640d	165 D	'02-'06	6/2993	309/4400	465/1500	1790kg	175	5.5	-	155	144	51.4	+ Great engine and economy, excellent build - Numb steering, unsettled B-road ride	★★★★★
BMW M6 (Mk2)	178 R	'03-'06	8/4395	552/6000	501/1500	1850kg	303	4.2	-	155	232	28.5	+ Mighty ability, pace, technology - There are more exotic badges at this money	★★★★★
BMW M6 (Mk1)	106 R	'05-'10	10/4999	500/7750	384/6100	1635kg	311	4.8	10.0	155	342	19.8	+ Awesome GT, awesome sports car - SMG gearbox now off the pace	★★★★★
Chevrolet Camaro	148 R	'03-'06	8/6162	426/5900	420/4600	1769kg	245	5.1	-	155	329	20.0	+ Looks like a Transformer made real - We'd prefer it in robot mode	★★★★★
Chevrolet Corvette C6	116 D	'04-'08	8/6162	430/5900	424/4600	1461kg	300	4.3	-	186	316	21.2	+ A Corvette with no apologies needed - Still left-hand drive only	★★★★★
Chevrolet Corvette Z06	099 R	'06-'08	8/7011	505/6300	469/4800	1418kg	363	3.9	8.5	198	350	19.2	+ 8.5 to 100, brakes, price - Not quite the road-racer we expected	★★★★★
Ford Shelby GT500 *	178 R	'06-'08	8/5812	662/6500	631/4000	1747kg	385	3.5	-	202	-	-	+ Huge performance for the money - Putting it to use takes nerve	★★★★★
Ginetta G40 R	165 R	'02-'05	4/1999	175/6700	140/5000	795kg	224	5.8	-	140	-	-	+ A race-compliant sports car for the road - Feels too soft to be a hardcore track toy	★★★★★
Ginetta G60	165 D	'06-'08	6/3721	310/6500	288/4500	1080kg	292	4.9	-	165	-	-	+ Reborn Fabio GTS boasts great engine and good looks - The ride still needs work	★★★★★
Honda CR-Z GT	144 R	'12-'13	4/1497	122/6100	128/1500	1198kg	103	9.9	-	124	117	56.5	+ The first hybrid with sporting intent - No match for a good diesel hot hatch	★★★★★
Honda Integra Type-R (DC2)	095 R	'96-'00	4/1797	187/8000	131/7300	1101kg	173	6.2	17.9	145	-	28.9	+ Arguably the greatest front-drive car ever - Too raw for some	★★★★★
Honda Integra Type-R (DC5) *	037 R	'01-'06	4/1998	217/8000	152/7000	1250kg	176	7.1	16.7	140	-	-	+ Sharp looks, massive grip - Lost a little of the DC2's magic	★★★★★
Honda NSX	188 R	'90-'05	6/3179	276/7300	224/5300	1410kg	196	5.5	-	168	-	22.8	+ The usable supercar - 270bhp sounds a bit weedy today	★★★★★
Honda NSX-R *	051 R	'02-'03	6/3179	276/7300	224/5300	1270kg	221	4.4	-	168	-	-	+ evo Car of the Year 2002 - Honda never brought it to the UK	★★★★★
Hyundai Veloster Turbo	176 D	'12-'13	4/1591	184/5500	195/1500	1313kg	142	8.2	-	133	157	40.9	+ The usual Hyundai value, with added fun - Styling might be too quirky for some	★★★★★
Infiniti G37S Coupe	127 R	'06-'09	6/3696	316/7000	265/5200	1706kg	188	5.8	13.8	155	246	26.9	+ Softer 370Z delivers sharp-driving swing at the Germans - Bland looks	★★★★★
Jaguar XK 5.0	130 D	'06-'08	8/5000	380/6500	380/3500	1585kg	244	5.2	-	155	264	25.2	+ Fine car for the likes of us - Jag buyers may not like the harder edge	★★★★★
Jaguar XKR	168 R	'06-'08	8/5000	503/6000	461/2500	1678kg	305	4.6	-	155	292	23.0	+ Fast and incredibly rewarding Jag - The kids will have to stay at home	★★★★★
Jaguar XKR-S	168 R	'06-'08	8/5000	542/6500	502/2500	1678kg	328	4.2	-	186	292	23.0	+ The most exciting XKR ever - It's nearly £100,000	★★★★★
Jaguar XKR	'98-'06	8/4196	400/6100	408/3500	1735kg	234	5.2	-	155	-	22.9	-	+ Extra grunt of 4.2-litre motor - Lacks feedback	★★★★★
Lotus Exige S (V6)	171 R	'13-'14	6/3456	345/7000	295/4500	1176kg	298	3.8	-	170	236	-	+ Breathtaking road-racer; our joint 2012 Car of the Year - Doubts over Lotus's future	★★★★★
Lotus Exige S	105 R	'06-'11	4/1796	218/7800	158/5500	930kg	238	4.5	-	148	199	33.2	+ Lightweight with a hefty punch - Uninspiring soundtrack	★★★★★
Lotus Exige Cup 260	139 D	'10-'11	4/1796	256/8000	174/6000	890kg	293	4.0	-	152	199	31.1	+ Feels like a race car, yet works on the road - Pricey for a four-pot Exige	★★★★★
Lotus Exige (series 2)	068 R	'04-'08	4/1796	189/7800	133/6800	875kg	219	4.9	-	147	-	32.1	+ Highly focused road and track tool - Lacks visual impact of S1	★★★★★

POCKET buying guide

BMW M5 (E60)

Years 2005-2010 Engine V10, 4999cc
Power 500bhp @ 7750rpm
Torque 383lb ft @ 6100rpm
0-62mph 4.7sec Top speed 155mph



WHY WOULD YOU?

That mighty, normally aspirated 500bhp V10 delivers supercar performance. Being based on a 5-series, the M5 is practical too, especially in rare Touring form. And despite costing from £61,775 new, today prices start at just £12,000.

WHAT TO PAY

£15k is where the clearly-cared-for stuff starts. £20k-£25k gets you a tip-top, low-mileage car.

WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR

An engine warning light could mean the VANOS oil pump needs replacing – a £2000 job. Judder when pulling away could spell a new clutch – that'll be over £2000. Avoid cars that have had the launch control used more than a handful of times, too (BMW can tell you for around £150). And check the brakes: a full set of discs and pads will cost up to £1800. (Full guide, [evo 185](#).)

PAINT) (SHIELD

• XPEL ULTIMATE

SELF HEALING PROTECTIVE FILM

XPEL Ultimate Paint protection film from Paintshield. Provides state of the art Stone chip protection for your vehicle.

"But wait that's not all"

If you are unlucky enough to get those annoying swirl marks and washing scratches in this astounding product, you can either wait while it fixes itself (healing time depends on temperature) or alternatively take the highly technical step of throwing a bucket of hot water over the car.

Best in class doesn't even begin to describe this new film check out the online videos for yourself or pop round and we will show you the scratch test undertaken in the video for you. We guarantee you won't believe your eyes!

stone chip protection
combat swirl marks
self-healing technologies
protect from -

- stone chips
- swirl marks
- bird lime
- brake fluid & oil resistant

concours winning finish
best in class for durability



PAINT) (SHIELD



Paintshield Ltd · Unit 4 · Morley Court · Morley Way · Peterborough · Cambridgeshire · PE2 7BW
t: 01733 390777 · f: 01733 390778 · w: <http://www.paintshield.co.uk> · e: info@paintshield.co.uk

Coupes / GTs

Car	Issue no.	Price	Engine cyl/cc	bhp/rpm	lb ft/rpm	Weight	bhp/ton	0-60mph	0-100mph	Max mph	CO2 g/km	EC mpg	evo rating	
Lotus Exige (series 1)	067 D	'00-'01	4/1796	192/7800	146/5000	780kg	247	4.6	-	136	-	-	+ Looks and goes like Elise racer - A tad lacking in refinement	★★★★★
Lotus Evora	138 R	£52,500	6/3456	276/6400	258/4700	1382kg	203	5.6	13.6	162	217	30.3	+ Sublime ride and handling. Our 2009 car of the year - Pricey options	★★★★★
Lotus Evora S	168 R	£61,500	6/3456	345/7000	295/4500	1430kg	245	4.6	-	172	229	28.7	+ A faster and better Evora - But one which spars with the Porsche 911...	★★★★★
Lotus Europa SE	127 R	'08-'10	4/1998	222/5600	221/4000	995kg	227	4.9	-	146	-	28.8	+ More of a Lotus than S version - Overshadowed by the Exige and Evora	★★★★★
Lotus Esprit Sport 350	005 R	'99-'00	8/3506	350/6500	295/4250	1299kg	274	4.3	9.9	175	-	22.0	+ Designed for track work but brilliant on the road - Limited edition	★★★★★
Maserati GranTurismo	114 R	£82,190	8/4244	399/7100	339/4750	1880kg	216	5.5	12.7	177	330	19.8	+ Striking, accomplished GT - Doesn't spike the pulse like an Aston or 911	★★★★★
Maserati GranTurismo Sport	188 R	£90,750	8/4691	454/7000	383/4750	1880kg	245	4.8	-	185	331	-	+ The best everyday GranTurismo yet - Starting to get long in the tooth	★★★★★
Maserati GT MC Stradale	160 R	£110,045	8/4691	444/7100	376/4750	1770kg	255	4.6	-	187	337	19.6	+ Brilliant blend of road racer and GT - No rear seats	★★★★★
Maserati Coupe	064 R	'03-'07	8/4244	390/7000	333/4500	1680kg	237	4.8	-	177	-	17.6	+ Glorious engine, improved chassis - Overly sharp steering	★★★★★
Maserati GranSport	073 R	'04-'07	8/4244	400/7000	333/4500	1680kg	239	4.8	-	180	-	-	+ Maser Coupe realises its full potential - Very little	★★★★★
Mazda RX-8	122 R	'03-'11	2R/1308	228/8200	156/5500	1429kg	162	6.5	16.4	146	299	24.6	+ Never mind the quirkiness, it's a great drive - Wafer-thin torque output	★★★★★
Mercedes-Benz C63 AMG Coupe	162 R	£57,165	8/6208	451/6800	442/5000	1655kg	277	4.4	10.3	186	280	23.5	+ Mercedes makes a proper two-door M3 rival - C63 saloon looks better	★★★★★
Mercedes-Benz C63 AMG Black	171 R	£98,765	8/6208	510/6800	457/5200	1635kg	317	4.1	-	186	286	-	+ The C63 turned up to 11 - Too heavy, not as fiery as Black Series cars of old	★★★★★
Mercedes-Benz CLK63 AMG	092 D	'06-'09	8/6208	481/6800	464/5000	1755kg	278	4.6	-	155	-	19.9	+ Power, control, build quality - Lacks ultimate involvement	★★★★★
Mercedes-Benz CLK63 AMG Black	106 R	'07-'09	8/6208	500/6800	464/5250	1760kg	289	4.2	-	186	-	-	+ AMG goes Porsche-hunting - Dull-witted gearshift spoils the party	★★★★★
Mercedes-Benz CL63 AMG	150 D	£115,660	8/5461	536/5500	590/2000	2010kg	271	4.5	-	155	244	26.9	+ Presence, pace, monster engine - Stiff ride, stiff competition	★★★★★
Morgan AeroMax	097 D	£110,000	8/4799	362/6300	370/3600	1180kg	312	4.1	-	170	-	-	+ Weird and utterly wonderful - They're all sold	★★★★★
Nissan 370Z	180 R	£26,995	6/3696	326/7000	269/5200	1520kg	218	5.4	-	155	248	26.7	+ Quicker, leaner, keener than 350Z - Not quite a Cayman-killer	★★★★★
Nissan 370Z Nismo	186 D	£36,995	6/3696	339/7400	274/5200	1535kg	224	5.2	-	155	248	26.7	+ More controlled, more polished, more fun - More expensive	★★★★★
Nissan 350Z	107 R	'03-'09	6/3498	309/6800	264/4800	1532kg	205	5.5	13.0	155	-	24.1	+ Huge fun, and great value too - Honestly, we're struggling	★★★★★
Nissan GT-R (2012MY/2013MY)	187 R	£76,610	6/3799	542/6400	466/3200	1740kg	316	2.8	-	196	275	24.0	+ GT-R is quicker and better than ever - But over £20K more than its launch price	★★★★★
Nissan GT-R (2010MY)	152 R	'10-'12	6/3799	523/6400	451/3200	1740kg	305	3.0	-	194	279	23.5	+ More powerful version of the original - But they're not worlds apart to drive	★★★★★
Nissan GT-R (2008MY)	125 R	'08-'10	6/3799	473/6400	434/3200	1740kg	276	3.8	-	193	-	-	+ Our 2008 Car of the Year, now from just £35K - You won't see 20mpg often	★★★★★
Nissan Skyline GT-R (R34)	009 R	'99-'02	6/2568	276/7000	289/4400	1660kg	180	4.7	12.5	165	-	20.1	+ Big, brutal, and great fun - Very firm ride	★★★★★
Nissan Skyline GT-R (R33)	019 R	'97-'99	6/2568	276/6800	271/4400	1540kg	182	5.4	14.3	155	-	22.0	+ Proof that Japanese hi-tech can work (superbly) - Limited supply	★★★★★
Noble M400	089 R	'04-'06	6/2968	425/6500	390/5000	1060kg	407	3.5	-	185	-	-	+ Devilishly fast - Demon Tweaks interior	★★★★★
Noble M12 GTO-3R	070 R	'03-'06	6/2968	352/6200	350/3500	1080kg	332	3.8	-	170	-	-	+ The ability to humble exotica - Flawed driving position	★★★★★
Peugeot RCZ 1.6 THP 200	155 R	£23,595	4/1598	191/5500	202/1700	1421kg	141	7.3	18.1	147	155	42.1	+ Distinctive looks, highly capable handling - Could be a bit more exciting	★★★★★
Porsche Cayman (981)	185 F	£39,694	6/2706	271/7400	214/4500	1310kg	210	5.7	-	165	192	34.4	+ Very enticing for the money in basic spec - You might still want the power of the 'S'	★★★★★
Porsche Cayman S (981)	181 R	£48,783	6/3436	321/7400	273/4500	1320kg	247	5.0	-	176	206	32.1	+ The Cayman comes of age - Erm...	★★★★★
Porsche Cayman (987)	131 R	'11-'13	6/2893	261/7200	221/4400	1330kg	199	5.8	-	165	221	30.1	+ Extra power, just as involving - Still lacks the desirability of other Porsches	★★★★★
Porsche Cayman S (987)	132 R	'06-'13	6/3436	316/7200	273/4750	1350kg	237	5.2	-	172	223	29.7	+ Still want that 911? - Yeah, us too	★★★★★
Porsche Cayman R (987)	158 R	'11-'13	6/3436	325/7400	273/4750	1295kg	255	4.7	-	175	228	29.1	+ Total handling excellence - Styling additions not to all tastes	★★★★★
Porsche 911 Carrera (991)	168 R	£71,449	6/3436	345/7400	288/5600	1380kg	254	4.7	-	179	212	31.4	+ 911 becomes cleaner and cleverer - But some of its character's gone AWOL	★★★★★
Porsche 911 Carrera S (991)	168 R	£81,242	6/3800	394/7400	324/5600	1395kg	287	4.4	-	188	224	29.7	+ As above, but with supercar pace - Electric steering robs it of some tactility	★★★★★
Porsche 911 Carrera 4 (991)	177 D	£77,924	6/3436	345/7400	288/5600	1430kg	245	4.5	-	177	219	30.4	+ A touch more engaging than 2wd 991 - Still stand-offish compared to 997	★★★★★
Porsche 911 Carrera 4S (991)	179 R	£87,959	6/3800	394/7400	324/5600	1445kg	277	4.5	-	185	234	28.5	+ The best 991-generation Carrera - Choose your spec carefully	★★★★★
Porsche 911 Carrera (997.2)		'08-'11	6/3614	341/6500	288/4400	1415kg	245	4.9	-	180	225	29.4	+ Faster and greener than the mkl 997 - Lost a little of the 911 magic	★★★★★
Porsche 911 Carrera S (997.2)	121 R	'08-'11	6/3800	380/6500	310/4400	1425kg	271	4.7	-	188	242	27.4	+ Poise, precision, blinding pace - Feels a bit clinical	★★★★★
Porsche 911 Carrera S (997.1)	070 R	'04-'08	6/3824	350/6600	295/4600	1420kg	246	4.6	10.9	182	-	24.5	+ evo Car of the Year 2004; like a junior GT3 - Tech overload?	★★★★★
Porsche 911 Carrera 4S (996)	051 R	'02-'05	6/3596	316/6800	273/4250	1470kg	218	5.1	-	174	-	-	+ Second best 996 only to the GT3 - Very little	★★★★★
Porsche 911 Carrera (996 3.4)	008 R	'98-'01	6/3387	300/6800	258/4600	1320kg	230	4.6	-	173	-	28.0	+ evo Car of the Year 1998; beautifully polished - Some like a bit of rough	★★★★★
Porsche 911 Carrera (993)		'94-'97	6/3600	285/6100	251/5250	1372kg	211	5.2	-	168	-	25.0	+ More character than 996 - Harder work at speed	★★★★★
Porsche 911 GT3 (991)	187 R	£100,540	6/3799	468/8250	324/6250	1430kg	332	3.5	-	196	289	23.0	+ Devastating dynamics - Sense of connection has been eroded a fraction	★★★★★
Porsche 911 GT3 (997.2)	182 R	'09-'11	6/3797	429/7600	317/6250	1395kg	312	4.2	9.2	194	303	22.1	+ Even better than the car it replaced - Give us a minute...	★★★★★
Porsche 911 GT3 RS (997.2)	152 R	'10-'11	6/3797	444/7900	317/6750	1370kg	329	4.0	-	193	314	-	+ Our 2010 car of the year - Looks and noise are slightly OTT	★★★★★
Porsche 911 GT3 RS 4.0 (997.2)	187 R	'11-'12	6/3996	493/8250	339/5750	1360kg	368	3.8	-	193	326	-	+ The ultimate modern 911, and our 2011 Car of the Year - Unforgiving on-road ride	★★★★★
Porsche 911 GT3 (997.1)	182 R	'07-'09	6/3600	409/7600	298/5500	1395kg	298	4.3	9.4	192	-	-	+ Runner-up evo Car of the Year 2006 - Ferrari 599 GTBs	★★★★★
Porsche 911 GT3 RS (997.1)	105 R	'07-'09	6/3600	409/7600	298/5500	1375kg	302	4.2	-	193	-	-	+ evo Car of the Year 2007 - A chunk more money than the brilliant GT3	★★★★★
Porsche 911 GT3 (996.2)	082 R	'03-'05	6/3600	375/7400	284/5000	1380kg	272	4.3	9.2	190	-	-	+ evo Car of the Year 2003 - Chassis is a bit too track-focused for some roads	★★★★★
Porsche 911 GT3 RS (996.2)	068 R	'03-'05	6/3600	375/7400	284/5000	1330kg	286	4.2	9.2	190	-	-	+ Track-biased version of above - Limited supply	★★★★★
Porsche 911 GT3 (996.1)	182 R	'99	6/3600	360/7200	273/5000	1350kg	271	4.5	10.3	187	-	21.9	+ Our Car of the Year 1999 - Porsche didn't build enough	★★★★★
Porsche 968 Club Sport	019 R	'93-'95	4/2990	240/6200	225/4100	1335kg	183	6.1	15.7	149	-	-	+ One of the all-time greats - Lots have been driven very hard	★★★★★
Renault Alpine A610	187 D	'91-'95	6/2975	247/5750	258/2900	1420kg	177	5.4	13.8	166	-	21.0	+ Overlooked, bargain-price French 911. Try one - R5 interior	★★★★★
Subaru BRZ	170 R	£24,995	4/1998	191/7000	151/6400	1230kg	163	7.6	-	140	181	36.2	+ Fine chassis, great steering - Weak engine, not the slide-happy car they promised	★★★★★
Toyota GT86	174 R	£24,995	4/1998	191/7000	151/6400	1275kg	157	7.6	-	140	181	36.2	+ More fun than its cousin (above) - Same lack of torque, poor interior quality	★★★★★
Toyota Celica GT-Four ST205	187 R	'94-'99	4/1998	239/6000	223/4000	1496kg	162	5.2	-	143	-	-	+ Criminally overlooked homologation special - Finding one	★★★★★
TVR T350C	057 R	'03-'07	6/3605	350/7200	290/5500	1100kg	318	4.7	10.0	175	-	-	+ Looks, engine - Unsupportive seats; chassis lacks ultimate polish	★★★★★
TVR Sagaris	099 D	'05-'07	6/3996	406/7500	349/5000	1078kg	383	3.7	-	185	-	-	+ Looks outrageous - 406bhp feels a touch optimistic	★★★★★
TVR Tuscan S (Mk2)	076 R	'05-'07	6/3996	400/7000	315/5250	1100kg	369	4.0	-	185	-	-	+ Possibly TVR's best ever car - Aerodynamic 'enhancements'	★★★★★
TVR Cerbera Speed Six	004 R	'98-'04	6/3996	350/6800	330/5000	1130kg	315	5.0	11.4	160+	-	-	+ Accomplished and desirable - Check chassis for corrosion	★★★★★
Vauxhall Monaro VXR 6.0	079 D	'05-'07	8/5967	398/6000	391/4400	1677kg	241	5.1	-	180+	-	-	+ Improved chassis and steering, 180mph - Looks a bit snouty	★★★★★
VW Scirocco GT 2.0 TSI	155 R	£24,705	4/1984	207/5300	207/1700	1373kg	153	6.1	15.8	149	172	38.2	+ Golf GTI price and performance - Interior lacks flair	★★★★★
VW Scirocco R	181 R	£31,135	4/1984	261/6000	258/2500	1352kg	196	5.8	-	155	189	34.9	+ Great engine, grown-up dynamics - Perhaps a little too grown-up for some	★★★★★
VW Corrado VR6	095 R	'92-'96	6/2861	190/5800	180/4200	1237kg	156	6.2	-	143	-	29.5	+ One of the great all-rounders - A little nose-heavy	★★★★★
Wiesmann GT MF5	127 D	£150,000	10/4999	500/7750	383/6100	1380kg	368	3.9	-	193	-	-	+ Striking coupe mated to BMW M5's V10 - Steering a little light	★★★★★



**ON
SALE
NOW!**

THE THRILL OF DRIVING – NOW ON T-SHIRTS!
View the full range at evo.co.uk. Prices from just £15.99

STILL TO COME

AT BRANDS HATCH

Brands Hatch is set to host some sensational events this autumn, including the final rounds of both the MCE British Superbike and Dunlop MSA British Touring Car Championships, plus the firework spectacular at the Truck Superprix in November.

Sat/Sun 12/13 October

Dunlop MSA British Touring Car Championship

Fri-Sun 18-20 October

MCE Insurance British Superbike Championship

Sat/Sun 26/27 October

Formula Ford Festival

Sat/Sun 2/3 November

Delphi British Truck Racing Championship and Fireworks

Sat/Sun 9/10 November

Lotus 6hr and Vee Festival

Sat/Sun 23/24 November

Formula 4 Winter Series and Britcar



**CHILDREN 12 & UNDER
GO FREE TO ALL EVENTS**

0843 453 9000

www.brandshatch.co.uk

BrandsHatch

GET ON TRACK FOR JUST £25

**GIFT
VOUCHERS
AVAILABLE
FROM
£25**

Trackday Taster Sessions

If you have always dreamed of driving around a race track then look no further than our Trackday Taster Sessions, where 20 minutes of track time **in your own car** is available for just £25! These events are aimed at newcomers to trackdays and are a great place to start if you have never driven on track before.

ALSO AVAILABLE FROM MSVT

- NOVICE ONLY EVENTS
- ONE TO ONE DRIVER TRAINING
- ARDS TESTS
- GIFT VOUCHERS FROM £25

CONTACT US

0843 453 3000

info@msvtrackdays.co.uk

www.msvtrackdays.co.uk

MSVT
MOTORSPORT VISION TRACKDAYS



Our Choice

Ferrari 458 Italia. A huge step on from the F430 it replaced. The lack of a manual gearbox is a shame, but the scintillating 4.5-litre V8 and snappy seven-speed twin-clutch transmission result in a car that's markedly quicker than its V8 predecessors.



Best of the Rest

Pagani's awesome Huayra (left) is our reigning joint Car of the Year. Ferrari's fastest-ever road car, the F12, is on a whole new level to its rivals technologically, but Lamborghini's Aventador has it licked for visual drama. The updated McLaren 12C, meanwhile, remains tantalisingly close to greatness.

Supercars

Car	Issue no.	Price	Engine cyl/cc	bhp/rpm	lb ft/rpm	Weight	bhp/ton	0-60mph	0-100mph	Max mph	CO2 g/km	EC mpg	EVO rating	
9ff GT9R	127 D	£450,000	6/4000	1120/7850	774/5970	1346kg	845	2.9	-	260	-	-	+ Above 100mph eats Veyrons for breakfast - Eats M3 dust at traffic lights	★★★★★
Aston Martin Vanquish (Mk2)	182 R	£189,995	12/5935	565/6750	447/5500	1739kg	330	4.1	-	183	335	19.6	+ A much better car than the DBS it succeeds - Shame it looks little different, then	★★★★★
Aston Martin Vanquish S (Mk1)	110 R	'05-'07	12/5935	520/7000	425/5800	1875kg	282	4.9	10.1	200	-	-	+ Vanquish joins supercar greats - A tad intimidating at the limit	★★★★★
Aston Martin One-77	179 R	'10-'12	12/7312	750/6000	553/7600	1740kg	438	3.7	-	220+	-	-	+ The engine, the looks, the drama - Gearbox hates manoeuvring; only 77 were made	★★★★★
BMW M1	110 R	'78-'81	6/3500	277/6500	239/5000	1303kg	216	5.8	-	161	-	-	+ Early supercar icon - A bit under-endowed these days	★★★★★
Bugatti Veyron 16.4	134 R	'05-'11	16/7993	1000/6000	922/2200	1950kg	521	2.8	5.8	253	596	11.4	+ Superbly engineered 4wd quad-turbo rocket - Er, lacks luggage space?	★★★★★
Bugatti Veyron Grand Sport	133 R	£1.4m	16/7993	1000/6000	922/2200	1990kg	510	2.6	-	253	596	11.4	+ Warp speed and ferocious noise sans-roof - Ridiculous broolly/roof thing	★★★★★
Bugatti Veyron Super Sport	151 R	£2.0m	16/7993	1183/6400	1106/3000	1838kg	654	2.5	-	268	539	12.2	+ The world's fastest supercar - Limited to 258mph for us mere mortals	★★★★★
Bugatti Veyron Grand Sport Vitesse	185 R	£1.7m	16/7993	1183/6400	1106/3000	1990kg	604	2.6	-	254	539	12.2	+ The world's fastest convertible - Limited to 258mph for us mere mortals	★★★★★
Bugatti EB110	078 R	'91-'95	12/3500	552/8000	451/3750	1566kg	358	3.4	-	212	-	-	+ Superbly engineered 4wd quad-turbo rocket - It just fizzled out	★★★★★
Caparo T1	138 R	£301,975	8/3499	575/10,500	310/9000	689kg	848	3.8	6.2	205	-	-	+ Absolutely staggering performance - Absolutely staggering price tag	★★★★★
Chevrolet Corvette ZR1	133 R	£106,605	8/6162	638/6500	603/3800	1528kg	424	3.8	7.6	205	355	18.8	+ Huge pace and character - Take plenty of brave pills if there's rain	★★★★★
Ferrari 458 Italia	183 R	£178,526	8/4499	562/9000	398/6000	1485kg	384	3.2	6.8	202	307	20.6	+ An astounding achievement, looks fantastic - There'll never be a manual	★★★★★
Ferrari 458 Spider	185 R	£198,971	8/4499	562/9000	398/6000	1530kg	373	3.3	-	198	275	23.9	+ A 458 that sounds and feels more organic - Er, 4mph slower?	★★★★★
Ferrari F430	163 R	'04-'10	8/4308	483/8500	343/5250	1449kg	339	4.0	-	196	-	-	+ Just brilliant - Didn't you read the plus point?	★★★★★
Ferrari F430 Spider	095 R	'04-'10	8/4308	483/8500	343/5250	1520kg	326	4.1	-	193	-	18.6	+ Berlinetta dynamics, 8000rpm with the roof down - Looks?	★★★★★
Ferrari 430 Scuderia	121 R	'07-'10	8/4308	503/8500	347/5250	1350kg	378	3.5	7.7	198	-	15.7	+ Successful F1 technology transplant - Likes to shout about it	★★★★★
Ferrari 360 Modena	163 R	'99-'04	8/3586	394/8500	275/4750	1390kg	288	4.5	9.0	183	-	17.0	+ Worthy successor to 355 - Not quite as involving as it should be	★★★★★
Ferrari 360 Challenge Stradale	068 R	'03-'04	8/3586	420/8500	275/4750	1280kg	333	4.1	-	186	-	-	+ Totally exhilarating road-racer. It's loud - It's very, very loud	★★★★★
Ferrari F355 F1 Berlinetta	163 R	'97-'99	8/3496	374/8250	268/6000	1350kg	281	4.7	-	183	-	16.7	+ Looks terrific, sounds even better - Are you kidding?	★★★★★
Ferrari F12 Berlinetta	182 R	£239,736	12/6262	730/8250	509/6000	1630kg	455	3.1	-	211	350	18.8	+ 730bhp isn't too much power for the road - We'd rather have an Aventador (just)	★★★★★
Ferrari 599 GTB Fiorano	101 R	'06-'12	12/5999	611/7600	448/5600	1688kg	368	3.5	7.4	205	415	15.8	+ evo Car of the Year 2006 - Banks are getting harder to rob	★★★★★
Ferrari 599 GTO	161 R	'11-'12	12/5999	661/8250	457/6500	1605kg	418	3.4	-	208	-	-	+ One of the truly great Ferraris - Erm, the air con isn't very good	★★★★★
Ferrari 575M Fiorano Handling Pack	169 R	'02-'06	12/5748	508/7250	434/5250	1730kg	298	4.2	9.6	202	-	12.3	+ Fiorano pack makes 575 truly great - It should have been standard	★★★★★
Ferrari 550 Maranello	169 R	'97-'02	12/5474	485/7000	415/5000	1716kg	287	4.3	10.0	199	-	12.3	+ Everything - Nothing	★★★★★
Ferrari Testarossa	185 R	'84-'91	12/4942	385/6300	361/4500	1506kg	260	5.8	-	171	-	-	+ The ultimate '80s supercar - Intimidating handling; needs big roads	★★★★★
Ferrari FF	164 R	£227,107	12/6262	651/8000	504/6000	1880kg	347	3.7	-	208	360	15.4	+ Four seats and 4WD, but a proper Ferrari - Looks divide opinion	★★★★★
Ferrari 612 Scaglietti F1	090 R	'04-'11	12/5748	533/7250	434/5250	1840kg	294	4.3	9.8	199	470	13.8	+ Awesomely capable grand tourer - See above	★★★★★
Ferrari Enzo	156 R	'02-'04	12/5998	650/7800	485/5500	1365kg	484	3.5	6.7	217+	-	-	+ Intoxicating, exploitable - Cabin detailing falls short of Zonda or F1	★★★★★
Ferrari F50	186 R	'96-'97	12/4699	513/8500	347/6500	1230kg	424	3.9	-	202	-	-	+ Still the best drivers' Ferrari - The F40 looks better	★★★★★
Ferrari F40	186 R	'87-'92	8/2936	471/7000	426/4000	1100kg	437	4.1	-	201	-	-	+ Brutally fast - It's in the dictionary under 'turbo lag'	★★★★★
Ferrari 288GTO	064 R	'84-'85	8/2855	400/7000	366/3800	1160kg	350	4.9	-	189	-	-	+ Painfully beautiful, rarer than the F40 - You are joking?	★★★★★
Ford GT	188 R	'04-'06	8/5409	550/6500	500/3750	1583kg	353	3.7	-	205	-	-	+ Our 2005 Car of the Year - JC had one. Reckoned it didn't handle...	★★★★★
Gumpert Apollo	110 R	£275,000	8/4163	690/6300	675/4000	1200kg	584	3.0	-	220+	-	-	+ Stupendous performance, Apollo - High price, 'Gumpert'	★★★★★
Hennessey Venom GT	180 R	£900,000	8/7000	1244/6500	1155/4000	1244kg	1016	2.5	-	275	-	-	+ 0-200mph in 14.5sec, and they handles too - Looks like an Exige	★★★★★
Jaguar XJ220	157 R	'92-'94	6/3498	542/7200	475/4500	1470kg	375	3.7	-	213	-	-	+ Britain's greatest supercar... - ...until McLaren built the F1	★★★★★
Koenigsegg Agera R	180 R	£1,080,000	8/5000	1140/7100	885/2700	1435kg	807	2.9	-	273	-	-	+ As fast and exciting as your body can handle - It's Veyron money	★★★★★
Koenigsegg CCX	094 R	'06-'10	8/4700	806/6900	678/5700	1180kg	694	3.9	7.7	241	-	-	+ Sweden's greatest supercar - Sweden's only supercar	★★★★★
Koenigsegg CCXR Edition	118 R	'08-'10	8/4800	1004/7000	796/5600	1280kg	797	2.8	-	254+	-	-	+ One of the world's fastest cars - Spikey power delivery	★★★★★
Lamborghini Gallardo LP550-2	176 F	£166,784	10/5204	542/8000	398/6500	1380kg	399	3.9	-	199	315	16.0	+ The mad rear-driven Lambo is back! - Gallardo not feeling as fresh as the 458	★★★★★
Lamborghini Gallardo LP560-4	180 D	£164,444	10/5204	552/8000	398/6500	1410kg	398	3.7	-	202	325	16.0	+ Still a missile from A to B - Starting to show its age	★★★★★
Lamborghini LP570-4 Superleggera	152 R	£178,560	10/5204	562/8000	398/6500	1340kg	426	3.5	-	202	325	20.6	+ A reminder of how great the Gallardo is - LP560-4 does as good a job	★★★★★
Lamborghini Gallardo	094 R	'06-'08	10/4961	513/8000	376/4250	1520kg	343	4.3	9.4	196	-	-	+ On a full-bore start it spins all four wheels. Cool - Slightly clunky e-gear	★★★★★
Lamborghini Gallardo Superleggera	104 R	'07-'08	10/4961	522/8000	376/4250	1420kg	373	3.8	-	196	-	-	+ Lighter, more agile - Grabby carbon brakes, clunky e-gear	★★★★★
Lamborghini Aventador LP700-4	182 R	£247,000	12/6498	690/8250	509/5500	1575kg	445	2.9	-	217	370	17.7	+ Most important new Lambo since the Countach - Erm... expensive?	★★★★★
Lamborghini Aventador Roadster	184 R	£294,665	12/6498	690/8250	509/5500	1625kg	431	3.0	-	217	370	17.7	+ Sensational engine and styling - A wee bit on the thirsty side	★★★★★
Lamborghini Murciélago	089 D	'01-'06	12/6192	570/7500	479/5400	1650kg	351	4.0	-	205	-	-	+ Gorgeous, capable and incredibly friendly - V12 feels stressed	★★★★★
Lamborghini Murciélago LP640	093 R	'06-'11	12/6496	631/8000	487/6000	1665kg	385	3.3	-	211	-	21.3	+ Compelling old-school supercar - You'd better be on your toes	★★★★★
Lamborghini Murciélago LP670-4 SV	186 R	'09-'11	12/6496	661/8000	487/6500	1565kg	429	3.2	7.3	212	-	-	+ A supercar in its truest, wildest sense - Be prepared for stares	★★★★★
Lamborghini Diablo GT	016 R	'99-'00	12/5992	575/7300	465/5500	1490kg	392	4.1	8.3	211	-	12.5	+ Briefly the world's fastest production car - They made only 80	★★★★★
Lamborghini Diablo 6.0	019 R	'00-'02	12/5992	550/7100	457/5500	1625kg	343	3.8	-	200+	-	-	+ Best-built, best-looking Diablo of all - People's perceptions	★★★★★
Lamborghini Countach 5000 QV	184 R	'88-'91	12/5167	455/7000	369/5200	1488kg	311	4.2	10.0	182	-	13.7	+ Still the definitive supercar - Visibility, pract- oh hell, who cares?	★★★★★
Lexus LFA/LFA Nürburgring	161 R	'10-'12	10/4805	552/8700	354/6800	1480kg	379	3.7	-	202	-	-	+ Absurd and compelling supercar - Badge and price don't quite match	★★★★★
Maserati MC12	079 R	'04-'05	12/5998	621/7500	481/5500	1445kg	437	3.8	-	205	-	-	+ Rarer than an Enzo - The Ferrari's better	★★★★★
McLaren 12C	187 R	£176,000	8/3799	616/7500	442/3000	1434kg	435	3.1	-	207	279	24.2	+ Staggering performance, refinement - Engine noise can be grating	★★★★★
McLaren 12C Spider	177 R	£195,500	8/3799	616/7500	442/3000	1474kg	425	3.1	-	207	279	24.2	+ No discernible dynamic compromises - Requires commitment to come alive	★★★★★
McLaren F1	186 R	'94-'98	12/6064	627/7500	479/4000	1137kg	560	3.2	6.3	240+	-	19.0	+ Still the most single-minded supercar ever - There'll never be another	★★★★★
Mercedes-Benz SL65 AMG Black	131 R	'09-'10	12/5980	661/5400	737/2200	1876kg	358	4.0	8.1	199	-	-	+ Bonkers looks, bonkers speed - Bonkers £250K price	★★★★★
Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG	159 R	£168,395	8/6208	563/6800	479/4750	1620kg	335	4.1	8.4	197	308	21.4	+ Great engine and chassis (gulling doors too!) - Slightly tardy gearbox	★★★★★
Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG Black	182 D	£229,985	8/6208	622/7400	468/5500	1550kg	408	3.6	-	196	321	20.6	+ Stunning engine, superb body control - Appetite for expensive tyres	★★★★★
Mercedes-Benz SLR McLaren	073 R	'04-'07	8/5439	617/6500	575/3250	1693kg	370	3.7	-	208	-	-	+ Zonda-pace, 575-style drivability - Dreadful brake feel	★★★★★
Noble M600	186 R	£200,000	8/4439	650/6800	604/3800	1198kg	551	3.8	7.7	225	-	-	+ Spiritual successor to the Ferrari F40 - It's a bit pricey	★★★★★
Pagani Huayra	185 R	£1m	12/5980	720/5800	737/2250	1350kg	542	3.3	-	224	-	-	+ Our joint 2012 Car of the Year - Engine isn't as nape-prickling as the Zonda's	★★★★★
Pagani Zonda 760RS	170 R	£1.5m	12/7291	750/6300	575/4500	1210kg	630	3.3	-	217+	-	-	+ The most extreme Zonda ever - The last Zonda ever (probably)	★★★★★
Pagani Zonda C12S	096 R													

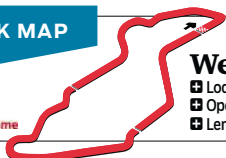
Track Times

Knowledge

Key + = new addition this month. Red denotes the car is the fastest in its class.

Car	Lap time	Peak mph	Issue no.	Conditions
Radical SR8LM (fastest car)	1:13.6	127.8	138	Dry
Caparo T1 (fastest supercar)	1:14.8	130.9	131	Dry
Ferrari 458 Italia	1:19.3	120.0	159	Dry
Gumpert Apollo S	1:19.4	120.4	119	Dry
McLaren MP4-12C (Corsa tyres)	1:19.6	121.2	159	Dry
Caterham Levante V8	1:19.6	118.6	131	Dry
Porsche 997 GT2 RS	1:19.9	122.3	158	Dry
Lotus 2-Eleven GT4	1:20.1	113.2	138	Dry
Caterham Superlight R500	1:20.2	115.7	119	Dry
McLaren MP4-12C	1:20.6	120.9	159	Dry
Noble M600	1:20.8	121.8	159	Dry
Porsche 997 GT3 RS 4.0 (fastest coupe)	1:21.0	118.2	160	Dry
Lamborghini Murciélago LP670-4 SV	1:21.3	121.1	134	Dry
Ariel Atom 3 Supercharged	1:21.5	113.6	119	Dry
KTM X-Bow (300bhp)	1:21.5	112.7	138	Dry
Ferrari 430 Scuderia	1:21.7	117.2	121	Dry
Porsche 997.2 GT3 RS (3.8)	1:21.9	116.8	150	Dry
Lamborghini Gallardo LP560-4	1:22.5	119.1	122	Dry
Brooke Double R	1:22.5	113.2	119	Dry
Lamborghini Murciélago LP640	1:22.9	116.7	143	Dry
Porsche Carrera GT	1:23.3	115.2	119	Dry
Porsche 997.2 GT3	1:23.3	114.5	138	Dry
Porsche 997 Turbo S	1:23.5	117.5	146	Dry
Porsche 997 GT2	1:23.5	115.1	119	Dry
Nissan GT-R (2008MY)	1:23.6	113.1	119	Dry
Porsche 991 Carrera	1:23.6	112.5	182	Dry
Porsche 991 Carrera Cabriolet	1:23.9	112.3	183	Dry
Porsche 997 Turbo	1:24.1	113.5	136	Damp
Lotus 340R (190bhp)	1:24.2	110.0	135	Dry
Porsche Boxster S (981)	1:24.2	109.3	183	Dry
Caterham Superlight R300	1:24.3	101.5	138	Dry
Maserati GranTurismo MC Stradale	1:24.5	115.1	160	Dry
Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG	1:24.6	115.7	146	Dry
Porsche Boxster Spyder (987)	1:24.7	107.7	167	Dry
Ferrari California	1:25.0	111.8	134	Dry
KTM X-Bow	1:25.0	105.0	123	Dry
BMW E92 M3 Coupe	1:25.1	109.1	162	Dry
Mercedes-Benz SL65 AMG Black	1:25.2	108.6	131	Dry
Jaguar F-type V8 S	1:25.2	111.2	183	Dry
Audi R55	1:25.4	108.8	162	Dry
Audi R8 Spyder V8	1:25.5	107.0	167	Dry
Porsche Cayman R	1:25.5	106.8	158	Dry
Aston Martin V8 Vantage Roadster	1:25.6	109.1	183	Dry
BMW M5 (F10) (fastest saloon)	1:25.7	112.0	165	Dry
Aston Martin V12 Vantage	1:25.8	110.9	146	Dry
Mitsubishi Evo X FQ-400	1:25.9	107.5	138	Dry
BMW 1-series M Coupe	1:25.9	106.4	158	Dry
Mitsubishi Evo X RS 360	1:26.1	106.6	153	Dry
Renaultsport Mégane 265 Trophy (fastest hot hatch)	1:26.1	105.3	166	Dry
Audi TT RS	1:26.3	107.2	149	Dry
Aston Martin DBS	1:26.4	109.5	143	Dry
Porsche Panamera Turbo	1:26.5	109.2	137	Dry
Jaguar XJ220	1:26.7	111.7	131	Dry
Mercedes-Benz E63 AMG	1:26.8	104.9	165	Dry
Porsche Cayenne Turbo (fastest 4x4)	1:26.9	107.4	158	Dry
Lotus Evora	1:27.1	104.2	145	Dry
Nissan 370Z	1:27.1	104.0	158	Dry
Porsche Panamera S	1:27.3	102.4	165	Dry
Mercedes-Benz C63 AMG Coupe	1:27.7	111.0	162	Dry
Lotus Elise SC	1:27.7	104.6	131	Dry
Vauxhall VXR8 Bathurst S	1:27.8	106.1	131	Dry
BMW E46 M3 CSL	1:27.8	105.4	153	Dry
Renaultsport Mégane R26.R	1:27.8	103.3		
Audi RS6 Avant (fastest estate)	1:27.9	111.0	121	Dry
Jaguar XFR	1:27.9	108.1	137	Dry
Lexus IS-F	1:28.1	106.4	151	Dry
Porsche Boxster S (987)	1:28.1	105.4	120	Dry
Subaru WRX STI	1:28.3	101.6	157	Dry
SEAT Leon Cupra R	1:28.7	102.4	162	Dry
Bentley Continental Supersports	1:29.2	105.8	149	Dry
Lotus Elise Club Racer	1:29.2	95.5	162	Dry
Renaultsport Mégane 250 Cup	1:29.9	101.4	156	Dry
Honda NSX	1:30.1	101.3	145	Dry
Nissan 370Z Roadster	1:30.3	100.1	173	Dry
VW Scirocco 2.0 TSI	1:30.4	98.9	155	Dry
Ford Focus RS (Mk2)	1:30.8	101.8	131	Dry
Vauxhall Astra VXR (Mk2)	1:31.4	100.9	174	Damp
Renaultsport Clio 200 Cup	1:31.9	97.2	144	Dry
VW Golf GTI (Mk6)	1:32.4	99.3		

TRACK MAP



West Circuit facts

- Location Bedford Autodrome
- Opened 1999
- Length 1.85 miles (2.98 kilometres)
- Direction Anti-clockwise
- Left turns 9
- Right turns 6

CHIP EXPRESS™
tuning specialists

Plug-in Diesel Upgrades

Enjoy up to 40% more **POWER**
and 20% better **ECONOMY!**



Diesel Tuning for Cars, Commercials, Tractors & Boats
Fit yourself in minutes - instantly improve drivability!



Easy to:
- Fit
- Remove
- Transfer



The CHIP Express™ tuning system is without doubt the most advanced plug-in diesel upgrade available. It works in harmony with your engine, retaining all safety functions without needing to interfere with the vehicle's existing on-board computer. It can be self fitted in minutes, adjusted for more performance and easily removed. It will free your vehicle from its manufacturer's limits.

www.chipexpress.com

Visit our website, see your vehicle's
true potential, order online.

e: email@chipexpress.com t: 01727 730 956

TERGUS
CAR INTERIORS

Fully bespoke car interiors

Tergus: latin for skin, hide, leather

- Leather, Alcantara, Vinyl, Original cloths
- Custom embroidery and embossing
- Over 100 colour options including perforated and metallic options
- Carbon fibre effect leathers
- All work guaranteed for 3 years/60,000 miles
- Seats, headrests, door panels
- Parcel shelves, carpet sets
- Full dashboards, boot builds and installs trimmed in leather



For Further information please contact **0116 2696470**

email: sales@terguscarinteriors.com

or visit our website at www.terguscarinteriors.com





SKY INSURANCE.co.uk

03303 331 250

**UP TO 20% DISCOUNT AVAILABLE FOR EVO READERS,
PLEASE QUOTE PROMOTIONAL CODE 'EVO1'**

Hayward Scott

Stainless Steel Exhaust Manufacture

Very Competitive Prices • Excellent Workmanship • Lifetime Guarantee

Bespoke and Competition Requirements are our speciality



For all your Bentley exhausts, be it stainless steel or mild steel, classic or modern come to Hayward and Scott.

For further information please telephone

Tel + 44(0)1268 727256

Email sales@haywardandscott.co.uk

10-11 Nobel Square, Basildon, Essex SS13 1LS

www.haywardandscott.com

HANGAR 111

WWW.HANGAR111.COM

EXCLUSIVE EXIGE V6 & EVORA S UPGRADES



OFFICIAL UK PARTNER



EX390 - 390BHP / 435NM

EX410 - 410BHP / 455NM

£ P.O.A.

EXCLUSIVE ELISE & EXIGE UPGRADES



280S - 278BHP / 245NM

300S - 298BHP / 277NM

£ P.O.A.

ROAD | TRACK | RACE

SALES | SERVICE | PERFORMANCE TUNING | REPAIRS
VEHICLE SETUP | PARTS | ACCESSORIES

t: +44 (0) 1473 811811 e: info@hangar111.com

Specialist Car Insurance

Adrian Flux know how much you love your car, that's why we are dedicated to finding you a policy, tailor-made to your own personal requirements and driving history. Call us today for a free, no obligation quote!



0800 081 8989
adrianflux.co.uk

Authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority

High Performance Insurance



Benefits available include:

- FREE Legal Cover
- Breakdown Cover
- EU Cover
- Imports Cover
- Limited Mileage Discounts
- Modifications Cover
- Club Members Discounts
- Track Day Cover

One discount, two discount, three discount, more...

Insure your cars with Admiral MultiCar, and each car receives a great discount. More cars equals more discounts!



Admiral.com

0800 600 880



GROUP 30⁺

CAR INSURANCE



ELITE INSURANCE. FOR THOSE WHO NEED IT.

An award winning broker with over 35 years history of providing bespoke solutions. Elite Insurance is exclusive to Lloyd Latchford Schemes and our rates are not available online.

MARKET LEADING COVER AS STANDARD INCLUDING:

- 24 Hour Accident Helpline
- Lost Key Cover
- Misfuel Cover
- Nil Fire and Theft Excess
- Full Legal Cover
- Modified Cars Accepted

To get a quote please contact us on freephone:

Free Phone 0800 6781090



Sunset Court, High Street,
Princes Risborough, Bucks, HP27 0AX
Email: salesteam@lloydLatchford.co.uk



LLOYD LATCHFORD
SCHEMES LIMITED

Art of speed



Camera: Nikon D700. Focal length: 44.0mm. Exposure: 1/125 sec at f/8.0 (ISO 100)

Mercedes-Benz SLS gullwing doors

by DAVID VIVIAN | PHOTOGRAPHY by JAMES LIPMAN

I**N BACK TO THE FUTURE, DOC BROWN HAS IT ABOUT** right when he explains to an incredulous Marty McFly that if you're going to build a time machine, you might as well do it with style. Whatever John DeLorean's DMC-12 may have lacked in pre-flux capacitor powertrain credibility, dynamic flair and aesthetic originality, it had one killer feature that, even with Brown's shaggy time-travelling dog Einstein in the driving seat, looked right on the money: gullwing doors.

Functionally at least the equal of their side-hinged antecedents, the gullwing door – hinged at the roof and opening upwards – invests the otherwise mundane business of getting out of a car with an unprecedented sense of occasion and glamour. And whereas cars with conventional doors look messy with them open, gullwings arguably look their evocative best 'in full flight'.

Perhaps fittingly, the only current production car on sale in the UK with true gullwing doors, the Mercedes SLS, is a distant descendant of the first. Although Jean Bugatti had the idea for upwardly hinged 'portes papillon' (butterfly doors) on the Type 64 in 1939, the design was never intended for mass production, clearing the way for Mercedes and the gullwing-doored 300SL race car (W194) in

1952, with its road-going equivalent (W198) following in 1954.

It's tempting to imagine that Mercedes' usually sober-minded designers took a few months off while more style-savvy souls pushed the daring gullwing through. But as with most of the best designs, it came down to necessity. The unusual tubular alloy construction of the 300SL's chassis combined high rigidity with low weight but, in order to do so, the framing overshot the normal sill-line, making normal-sized doors an impossibility. Tiny ones, meanwhile, would have made entry and exit tough for the leanest racer, let alone the average Merc customer.

The solution was delivered by Mercedes' chief engineer Rudolf Uhlenhaut and his team, driven by a simple logic. With no way to lower the sill line, the only way was up: make the door and half the roof a single unit hinged at the top. Mercedes has always prided itself as an innovator, but this was truly radical. Getting in and out still wasn't exactly casual, but a steering wheel that could be tilted downwards allowed the driver's legs a more elegant passage into the footwell.

Today's SLS isn't so compromised. It has low sills, door handles that glide out from flush surfaces and huge gullwing doors that swing effortlessly skywards on powerful gas struts. Pure homage to the original SL. Pure theatre. ☒

NEXT MONTH IN
evo



CAR OF THE YEAR **2013**
Who takes the *ultimate* accolade?

Plus

- ✚ McLaren P1
- ✚ Aston Vanquish Volante
- ✚ Lexus LFA



Don't risk wallet busting garage repair bills, protect your car today!



Has your Car Warranty expired?

Take out an extended car warranty with Warrantywise and you'll benefit from the UK's highest level of used car warranty cover - bar none.

We cover more parts of your car than any of our competitors and include unlimited repairs up to the retail price of your vehicle, cover for wear & tear, no excess to pay on claims and recovery expenses as standard. We also cover you throughout the EU and pay for the garage labour charges too!

Quentin Willson has been instrumental in the design of the Warrantywise car warranty, so you can be sure it's genuinely on the side of the consumer. We don't use complicated insurance jargon and everything is completely transparent, just as you'd expect from Quentin.

Call us on 0800 030 4569 for a quote today.

or go online for an instant quote, just enter your reg number at:

warrantywise.co.uk



Customer Testimonials

This was my second successful claim within a two month period and was handled efficiently with minimum of input from me.

Mr Birtwhistle

Thanks for your courteous and efficient service, Taking out your warranty was one of the best things

Miss Reyburn

Many thanks to Lynne and Gemma for their help, and in changing me from a pessimist to optimist.

Mr Stallard

happy customers at: www.warrantywise.co.uk/happy



Quentin Willson
Designed by **Quentin Willson**

2H6XXQ

Here are some of the recent repair costs we've covered for our customers.

visit warrantywise.co.uk/paid to see how much we've paid out for your car!



Theo Paphitis gets Warrantywise!

Read the full story on our web site about how the Dragons' Den star contacted Quentin to protect his famous Chromomobile!

Visit:

www.warrantywise.co.uk/theo





THE NEW SEAT LEON

From just **£169** per month
with **£1,000** towards your deposit.[†]



ENJOYNEERING

ORDER BY 31ST DECEMBER AND GET THE FOLLOWING EQUIPMENT FREE OF CHARGE (WORTH £1,915).**

NAVIGATION SYSTEM



FULL LED HEADLIGHTS



DAB DIGITAL RADIO



SEAT Leon 5DR 1.2 TSI S – Solutions representative example based on 10,000 miles per annum*

Duration:	36 months	SEAT UK Deposit contribution [†] :	£1,000.00	Optional final payment:	£6,506.97	Amount of credit:	£11,320.61
35 monthly payments of:	£169.00	Retail cash price:	£15,670.00	Option to purchase fee ² :	£60.00	Representative APR:	4.9% APR
Customer deposit:	£3,349.39	Acceptance fee ¹ :	£125.00	Total amount payable:	£16,956.36	Rate of interest:	4.2% fixed
Full deposit:	£4,349.39	Total payable by customer:	£15,956.36				

4.9% APR representative

FOLLOW US ON: **SEAT.CO.UK**

Official fuel consumption for the New SEAT Leon range in mpg (litres per 100km): urban 36.7 (7.7) – 61.4 (4.6); extra-urban 57.6 (4.9) – 85.6 (3.3); combined 47.9 (5.9) – 74.3 (3.8). CO₂ emissions 137 – 99g/km.

Standard EU Test figures for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results. Model shown is the New Leon 1.2 TSI 105PS SE at £16,790 RRP with optional electric sunroof at £695 RRP, 17" Dynamic alloy wheels at £350 RRP and full LED headlights at £995 RRP. Offer may be varied or withdrawn at any time. Retail Sales only. ¹Payable with first payment. ²Payable with optional final payment. *4.4p per mile excess mileage charges apply. [†]£1,000 deposit contribution is available to customers who purchase their car with Solutions. Terms and conditions apply. Further charges may be payable if vehicle is returned. Indemnities may be required. Subject to vehicle availability. Subject to status. Available to over 18s in the UK from participating dealers only. SEAT Finance, Freeport SEAT Finance. Subject to each model specification and cost option fitment. Pricing and finance valid from 1st July 2013 to 31st December 2013. **Offer available on SE and FR models when ordered before 31st December 2013 from participating dealers only. £1,915 RRP refers to optional specification if priced individually.



SEAT recommends Castrol EDGE Professional