







ISSUE SPECIAL



HE THRILL OF DRIVING



20 FINALISTS • WHICH ONE OF THESE IS THE WINNER?





























### Defectors willkommen

The Volvo V40 R-Design







For years we've been indoctrinated to believe that German cars are the only choice; the only option. But an alternative is out there, and it's closer than you think. Just look north to Sweden, and come see what's on the other side:

- Adaptive Digital Display
- R-Design Sports Upholstery with perforated leather
- 5 spoke diamond cut 17" Ixion alloy wheels
- Up to 53.3 MPG (Combined figure)
- · City Safety as standard



**SEARCH VOLVO V40** 



36 monthly payments	£249.00
On the road price (after Dealer discount*)	£19,333.25
Customer deposit	£1,999.00
Total amount of credit	£16,834.25
Interest charges	£2,414.25
Total amount payable	£21,747.50
Final Payment	£10,284.50
Finance Deposit Contribution	£500.00
Duration of agreement (months)	37
Mileage per annum	8000
Excess mileage charge	14.9p per mile
Representative APR	5.9% APR

Official fuel consumption for the Volvo V40 T2 R-Design (manual) in MPG (I/100km): Urban 41.5 (6.8), Extra Urban 62.8 (4.5), Combined 53.3 (5.3). CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions 124g/km. MPG figures are obtained from laboratory testing intended for comparisons between vehicles and may not reflect real driving results.

Finance subject to status. Retail sales only. \*Subject to availability at participating dealers only on vehicles registered by 30th September 2014. At the end of the agreement there are three options: (i) Renew: Part exchange the vehicle. (ii) Retain: Pay the Optional Final Payment to own the vehicle or (iii) Return the vehicle. Further charges may be made subject to the condition or mileage of the vehicle. Terms and conditions apply. Applicants must be 18 or over. Guarantee/Indemnity may be required. Volvo Car Credit RH1 1SR. You will not own the vehicle until all payments are made.





GOODWOOD REVIVAL MEETING SEPTEMBER 12TH TO 14TH, 2014



### SOME WILL SEE GREEN

CIVIC BLACK SPECIAL EDITION **0% APR** Representative. £0 deposit

78.5 miles per gallon

Voted UK's most reliable car brand for 8 years by What Car? readers





SAVING £1,290



Fuel consumption figures for the Civic 1.6 i-DTEC Black Special Edition in mpg (I/100km): Urban 70.6 (4.0), Extra Urban 85.6 (3.3), Combined 78.5 (3.6). CO<sub>2</sub> emissions: 94g/km.

Model Shown: Civic 1.6 i-DTEC Black Special Edition in Crystal Black Pearl at £22,460 On The Road (OTR). Terms and Conditions: New retail Civic registered from 1 July 2014 to 30 September 2014. Subject to model and colour availability. Offers applicable at participating dealers and are at the promoter's absolute discretion. Civic Black Special Edition Honda Aspirations (PCP): Example shown based on Civic 1.6 i-DTEC Black Special Edition in Crystal Black Pearl at £22,460 total cash price (and total amount payable) with 37 months 0% APR Representative (interest rate per annum 0% fixed) with £0 (0%) deposit, £408.29 monthly payment, Guaranteed Future Value / Optional Final Payment and £7,761.73 annual mileage of 10,000 and excess mileage charge: 6p per mile. You do not have to pay the Final Payment if you return the car at the end of the agreement on you have paid all other amounts due, the vehicle is in good condition and has been serviced in accordance with the Honda service book and the maximum annual mileage has not been exceeded. Indemnities may be required in certain circumstances. Finance is only available to persons aged 18 or over, subject to status. All figures are correct at





Fuel consumption figures sourced from official EU-regulated laboratory test results, are provided for comparison purposes and may not reflect real-life driving experience.

time of publication but may be subject to change. Credit provided by Honda Finance Europe Plc. 470 London Road, Slough, Berkshire SL3 8QY. Honda Finance Europe plc is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority, Financial Services Register number 312541. The 5 Year Care Package includes: Servicing: All scheduled servicing, as detailed in the vehicles service book, will be covered for 5 years or 62,500 miles, whichever comes first. Warranty: In addition to the standard 3 year warranty the customer will receive a complimentary 2 year extended guarantee taking the warranty to 5 years or 90,000 miles, whichever comes first. Roadside Assist: In addition to the standard 3 years roadside assistance package the customer will receive complimentary Hondacare Assistance for a further 2 years, taking it to 5 years or 90,000 miles, whichever comes first. The 5 Year Care Package: The 5 Year Care Package is optional. It is being offered for £555 including VAT (usual value £1,845 including VAT, resulting in a £1,290 saving for the customer) and is available to finance or non-finance customers. Please note, should you sell the vehicle during the period of cover, the package remains with the vehicle.





### LIMITED OFFER UNLIMITED ON TRACK ADRENALINE



1949

2014

IT IS 65 YEARS SINCE THE LEGENDARY
ABARTH MARQUE WAS FOUNDED, AND TO
CELEBRATE THIS WE ARE OFFERING 65
ABARTH 500 CARS WITH AN UPGRADED
SPECIFICATION PACK, INCLUDING A ONE
TO ONE ADRENALINE FILLED TRACK
EXPERIENCE WITH AN ABARTH EXPERT.

AN ABARTH 500 CUSTOM, INCLUDING A CELEBRATION PACK, CAN BE YOURS FOR £14,990 $^{\circ}$  OTR AND INCLUDES:

RECORD GREY METALLIC PAINT

**REAR PRIVACY GLASS** 

YELLOW PAINTED BRAKE CALLIPERS

10 SPOKE DIAMOND FINISH ALLOY WHEELS

UNIQUE ABARTH TRACK DAY EXPERIENCE

### JOIN OUR CELEBRATIONS VISIT ABARTHCARS.CO.UK

Range of official fuel consumption figures for the Abarth 500 range: Urban 27.7 - 28.0 mpg (8.5 - 8.4 l/100km); Extra Urban 36.2 mpg (6.5 l/100km); Combined 43.6 (5.4 l/100km). CO<sub>2</sub> emissions 155 - 151 g/km. \*Model shown is the New Abarth 500 Custom 1.4 TB T-Jet 135 BHP at £14,990 OTR including Celebration Pack at £430. Fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> figures obtained for comparative purposes in accordance with EC directives/regulations and may not be representative of real-life driving conditions. Factors such as driving style, weather and road conditions may also have a significant effect on fuel consumption.



### **Subscriptions**

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

### EVO ISSUE 200 OCTOBER 2014

### **Ed Speak**

### **Editorial**

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

Editor Art director Features editor Henry Catchpole Road tester Dan Prosser Production editor Ian Eveleigh Contributing photographer Dean Smith Staff writer Stephen Dobie Sub editor Dan McCalla Will Beaumont Designer

Staff writer (website)
Staff photographer
Contributing editor
Contributing editor
Contributing editor
Tiff Needell
Road test contributor

Road test contributor

 Columnist
 Richard Porter

 Columnist
 Dario Franchitti

 Office manager
 Jane Townsend-Emms

### Contributors (words)

John Barker, Simon de Burton, Andrew English, Antony Ingram, Peter Tomalin, Michael Whiteley

### Contributors (pictures)

Gus Gregory, Malcolm Griffiths, David Shepherd

### It wouldn't have been possible without

Anglesey Circuit, Will Backen, Katherine Baxter, Bedford Autodrome, Ruth Haddock, Adam Shorrock, Richard Usher and Blyton Park, all the owners who kindly provided cars for this issue, and you, our wonderful readers

### **Advertising & Promotions**

**Telephone** 020 7907 6773 **Fax** 020 7907 6601 **ISDN** 020 7580 0297 **Email** ads.evo@dennis.co.uk 30 Cleveland Street, London WIT 4JD

MD of advertising
Advertising director
Advertising manager
Business development

Mulian Lloyd-Evans
Sarah Perks
Tim Deeks

manager Shaza Agabani
Account manager Neale Salt
Sales executive Lifestyle director Sophie Kochan

Content partnerships manager Group advertising

manager digital Elaine de la Cruz
Production executive Michael Hills
Marketing &

Marketing &
events co-ordinator Tr
Newstrade director Da
Head of direct marketing G

Traci McLean David Barker

Nicole Adams

Andy Edwards

### **Creative solutions**

Commercial director Jonathan Kitchen
Designer Rob Callaghan
Senior project manager Avril Donnelly
Projects co-ordinator Ludovica D'Angelo

### **Licensing & syndication**

International director Ian Bedwell
Syndication senior manager Anj Dosaj-Halai
Licensing manager Carlotta Serantoni
Licensing &

syndication executive

### evo Cars for Sale

Telephone 0207 907 6660 Email chris\_wood@dennis.co.uk
Commercial director Chris Wood

### **Publishing**

Publishing director Geoff Love

### Dennis Publishing Ltd

Group managing director
Chief financial officer
Group finance director
CEO
James Tye
Company founder

### W

### 'WHERE IS THE LAFERRARI?'YOU ASK. WE TRIED.

but Ferrari wouldn't provide one (it doesn't have a press car) and told us there would be repercussions if we sourced one from elsewhere. We looked, of course, but LaFerraris are few are far between in the UK and thus we drew a blank. That test would have to wait.

'We'd have more chance finding an LFA,' said one office wag, referring to Lexus's unicorn. Stupidly, I offered a £1million bonus to anyone who could find an LFA or a LaFerrari, and while I was relaxing on holiday in Cornwall during early production of this issue, Dickie texted me: 'You owe me £1million.' He'd found an LFA.

The generosity of our readers never ceases to amaze me. It was at times a desperate search for the top 20 best cars we've ever driven, but you came to the rescue. To everyone from Simon (Integra Type-R) to the owner who threw us the keys to the LFA, thank you for not only making this story possible but also for making us realise that we're not all weirdos for loving the performance car as much as we do.

The test was doubly fascinating because we could share it with not only owners, but also a certain Dr Will Backen. Sure, he made us feel thoroughly inadequate for having jobs that in terms of human endeavour make absolutely no difference, but he is also our longest-serving subscriber and for that we thought it would be a suitable thank you to invite him on the big tests in this mag. You can read his story on page 102.

Speaking of newbies (and oldies – sorry guys), I'm sad to report that our brilliant staff photographer Dean Smith leaves us for a freelance career. However, the good news is that Dean will still shoot regularly for **evo**. Our new staff snapper is talented, and annoyingly young. Please welcome Aston Parrott. And yes, that is his real name.

Finally, it was fantastic to welcome back John Barker and Harry Metcalfe during the making of this issue. They've both moved into senior consultancy roles within the industry, but it was a real treat to see them switch effortlessly back into 'evo' mode (avoiding bar bills, oversteering wildly, demonstrating the 'imaginary steering wheel' pose, etc). Thanks to them, and to you, for helping us reach the milestone that is our 200th issue. If the new-gen heroes like the 458 Speciale, Porsche 918 and McLaren P1 featured in this issue are anything to go by, the next 200 are going to be a blast.

### **Nick Trott** Editor (@evoNickTrott)









Huge thanks to Simon Adney, Chris Burbidge and Auto Vivendi, Joe Charles, Lawrence Cookson, Amilios Costa, Brian Davies, Rob Gray, Andrew Hamilton, Mark Inman, Andy Peirson, Ben Samuelson, Richard, and a generous customer of Litchfield Imports for the loan of their fabulous cars, plus a big thank you to all at the Brynteg Holiday Home Park

### evo Worldwide editors-in-chief

Argentina Pablo Perez Companc Mastralia Jesse Taylor Multaria Georgi Ivanov China Shawn Lee Croatia Nikola Curic
Czech Republic Petr Ehrlich Egypt Omar Khalifa Mastralia Jesse Taylor Schlesinger Malaysia Albakry Salehuddin Mildle East Bassam Kronfli Singapore Sheldon Trollope Mildle Singapore Sheldon Trollope Mastralia Matjaž Korošak
Thailand Chettha Songthaveeool

**evo** is available for international licensing and syndication. Email Carlotta\_Serantoni@dennis.co.uk



### **DRIVEN**



INFINITI Q50 EAU ROUGE

033
BENTLEY CONTINENTAL

GT SPEED

034

VW SCIROCCO R

037 CITROËN C4 CACTUS

038 URBAN TRUCK ULTIMATE

041 MERCEDES-BENZ C250 BLUETEC ESTATE

042 BENTLEY FLYING SPUR V8

**044** VW GOLF GTD v BMW 220d

### **FEATURES**

### 062 THIS IS EVO

For nigh on 16 years we've tested every performance car of any significance (and the Daewoo Kalos Blue). The 20 cars here are the pure distillation of 'The Thrill of Driving'; a score of cars that, regardless of price, power and layout, deliver superlative driving experiences. Over 35 pages (and via countless north Welsh driving miles) we pick the most exciting, satisfying and driveable car of the last 200 issues

### 098

### THE ZONDA

We couldn't possibly cover the breadth of performance cars made since autumn 1998 without a nod to the Zonda. Prosser aims to lose his 'new boy' status in the office by finally having a go in one





### **104** EVO ULTRACAR

Thousands of cars have passed through the **evo** car park, but what would the mash-up of the very best engine, gearbox, and interior et al look like? Richard Porter finds out

104





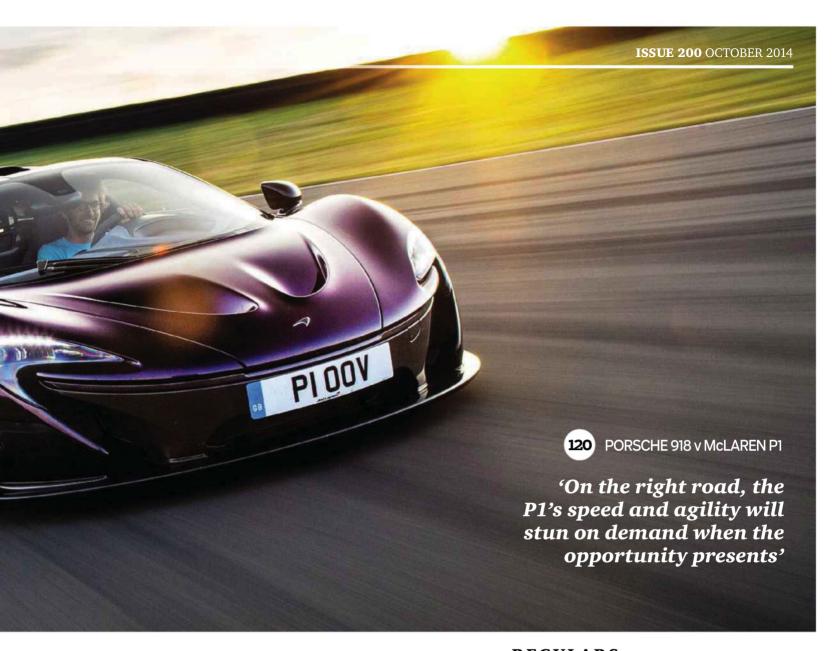
© Copyright Evo Publications Ltd which is a subsidiary of Dennis Publishing Limited. Evo is a trademark of Evo Publications Ltd.





Photographic repro by Evo Magazine. Printed in the UK by BGP, Bicester, Oxfordshire OX26 4Q2 Printed in China by C&C Offset Printing Distributed by Seymour, 2nd Floor, 2 East Poultry Avenue, London ECIA 9PT Tel: 020 7429 4000. Fax: 020 7429 3625. Web: seymour.co.uk ISSN 1464-2786 USPS 024-183







### 106 **EVO ULTRAROAD**

The greatest roads we've had the pleasure of testing cars on... and the paradise island where they could all live together in helmsman's harmony

### **EVO PEOPLE**

The sharpest cars wouldn't have happened without sharp minds behind their development. Here are the 25 most influential people in the performance car world

### WHAT'S CHANGED?

In issue 001 a Nissan Almera was among the highest rated hot hatches evo had tested. Now it's, er, not. Flick this way for other, more technical observations



918 v P1

been waiting for

After months of emails and calls

to respective press offices, we've

finally got the headline, 1778bhp

hybrid hypercar twin-test we've

### REGULARS

### **NEWS**

Got a great stretch of road nearby? Start lobbying your local MP to get it closed for motorsport. The perfect opportunity to stretch out McLaren's new P1 GTR..

### 053 **COLUMNS**

Meaden's getting excited about creating his own rally special stages while Porter sheds some light on evo's lesser-known history

### 059

### **LETTERS**

A moan at Bernie Ecclestone, a discussion of dream road test recipes and why the future's bright for Aston Martin

### LONG-TERM TESTS

It's a fast Ford switcheroo on the fleet this month, as our photographer's Focus ST Estate departs and our road test editor's feisty Fiesta ST arrives

### **EVO KNOWLEDGE**

One hundred and ninety-nine issues ago, the Maserati 3200GT graced the first cover of evo. Now you can pick one up for Dacia Duster money. Here's what to look out for if you're checking one out on a forecourt

### 194

### **ART OF SPEED**

The gorgeous carbonfibre chassis from Aston Martin's million-pound One-77 supercar

evo (USPS 024-183) is published monthly by Dennis Publishing Ltd. 30 Cleveland Street, London, W1T 4JD, United Kingdom, For 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 1-800-428-3003, 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.

## Calm before the



### **CORSA VXR CLUBSPORT**

1.6 Turbo 205PS **Drexler Limited Slip Differential Brembo Brakes Bilstein Shocks** 

Official Government Test Environmental Data. Fuel consumption figures mpg (litres/ 100km) Combined: 37.2 (7.6). CO<sub>2</sub> emissions 178g/km\*.





and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (g/km). Corsa VXR Clubsport: Urban: 27.7 (10.2), Extra-urban: 46.3 (6.1),







McLaren developing 986bhp, £2million track-only version



News, new metal, investigations, interviews, technology and more...



### V8 POWER FOR AMG GT **COUPF**

New Mercedes grand tourer gets 503bhp twin-turbo powerplant





The second part of our tech insight looks into the latest develonments in differentials



Crowdsourced American project spearheads new production technology





**Left:** Birmingham Superprix attracted huge crowds in the late-'80s. Below left: Isle of Man is a tarmac rally hotspot, as is Ireland on both sides of the border (below)



What the Motor Sports Association has campaigned for since 2010 is for the power to suspend the Road Traffic Act to lie with local authorities, thereby making the process of a location being picked, an event being drawn up and permission being granted significantly shorter, easier and more likely to be instigated in the first place.

The idea is far from new, as Ben Taylor, managing director of International Motor Sports Ltd (the MSA's commercial arm) acknowledges: 'If it's successful, it will be the culmination not just of the five years of the project I've been working on, but an issue that's been bubbling for the best part of 20 years.

'I remember sitting at the Autosport show in January 2010 before the general election, working on a manifesto for British motorsport, and we made a decision there and then that this was going to be the centrepiece of our activity. It started then and if we end up five years later with a successful conclusion then it will be a massive credit to everyone who's been involved.'

A parliamentary vote still awaits, but the MSA is confident of crossparty support, so we could see closedroad motorsport events from 2015. 'It's nearer than it's ever been and we're a very short distance away,' MSA chief executive Rob Jones tells us. 'We need our vote in parliament, so what people should be doing is lobbying their local MP to say, "We know about this, we know the prime minister supports it, and we want you, as our MP, to make sure it becomes law."



Naturally, a positive financial impact should spread through local communities from the inevitable increase in passing trade, while taking motorsport closer to casual observers should also be a force for good. Taylor continues: 'If you have kids standing on the side of the road and cars are going past their front door then that's a really good way of lighting the touchpaper and getting them more interested in motorsport. The really exciting bit is the sport has a chance to go to the people, rather than make

them trudge off into a forest or go to a permanent motorsport venue.'

The successful implementation of this ruling could open the floodgates for all manner of local hill climbs and sprints around the country. Highprofile political backing has naturally reawakened calls for a London Grand Prix, but Silverstone's long-term British GP deal – plus the endless hoops Ecclestone and Co would likely make organisers jump through - means any possibility of F1 in the capital is some way off. What is far more likely,

as early as next year if all goes to plan, is a round of Formula E on London's streets, its zero pollution (both noise and exhaust) endearing itself to those who'd rubber-stamp its arrival.

Rally GB (and rallying in general) will benefit too: the ability to lift restrictions on public highways would allow separate gravel sections to be strung together to make longer, more dramatic stages. 'I think that will create some really interesting new tests for rallying the length and breadth of the country,' Taylor says.

### Road racing in the USA

Nine years ago, I entered the Silver State Classic Challenge the world's fastest road race as certified by Guinness. It runs 90 miles on State Route 318 between Lund and Hiko in Nevada, with official road closure permits issued by the state. The fastest speed ever recorded in the race is an unbelievable 217.557mph average.

Pretty much anyone over 18 can enter, driving any roadworthy vehicle. The event



is as professionally run as any motorsport event I've witnessed and the local communities benefit greatly from it. It is a prime example of how closed-road racing can boost industry and local economies. NT

### EVO'S CLOSED-**ROAD WISH LIST**

A tarmac rally in **north Wales** using the B4407 and the B4391

A hill climb up the **Hardknott Pass** in the Lake District

A Targa Florio-style road race using the Wollaston-Harrold-Lavendon circuit

Edinburgh F1 circuit. More elevation change than London and the cobbles of the Royal Mile, too, just for fun

A tarmac rally in the **Peak District** 



McLAREN HAS previewed a P1 GTR with this design sketch. After asking its 375

P1 customers how they felt about a harder-cored, track-only version and presumably being greeted by a resounding 'build it!' - the Woking carmaker is set to join the burgeoning hypercar track toy market, where a LaFerrari XX is likely to be a key rival.

The P1 base is evident in the sketch. but everything beyond the car's basic body is satisfyingly crackers. The colossal fixed rear wing replaces the standard P1's speed-activated item, a development that will up downforce well beyond the road car's already high level – as should the eye-popping rear diffuser, which looks pure race car.

The twin exhausts are almost comically big - quite how their appearance will translate into reality remains to be seen – but they do give a firm nod to the GTR's greater performance. The P1's 3.8-litre twinturbo V8 hybrid powertrain's peak output rises from 903 to 986bhp, and while McLaren is currently tight-lipped

> 'Each buyer will get time in simulators and trackdays on F1 circuits'

about the GTR's technical details, the enhanced exhaust system suggests the extra power comes from the P1's fossilfuelled source. Increased track widths and slick tyres complete the somewhat striking transformation.

Priced at £1.98million - a stark climb over the base P1's £866.000 - the GTR is being sold as a 'programme';



each buyer will get a tailored package of driver training elements, including fitness tests, time in racing simulators and six trackdays on 'iconic Formula 1 circuits'. Production numbers are yet to be confirmed, but a McLaren spokesman told us to expect 'low double digits'.

A P1 GTR design study will take its bow at the Pebble Beach concours event on August 15. GTR production will start once the final road-going P1 has been completed in June 2015, which its maker is keen to point out is the 20th anniversary of the legendary Le Mans win by the McLaren F1 GTR (pictured left). A canny marketing opportunity or a hint at an endurance racing comeback? We've got everything crossed for the latter.

### Supercar track specials



### FERRARI FXX & 599XX

Ferrari made the track supercar its own when the FXX launched in 2005. A c£1.5million package bought a feral, 789bhp Enzo and track events to drive it on. The 599XX followed with a similar ethos and a 6:58 Nürburgring lap time.



### PAGANI ZONDA R

The track-only supercar so good that buyers demanded they made something similar for the road, too. Slender 1070kg kerb weight met 739bhp 6-litre V12. The result? A 6:47 lap of the Ring to best the 599XX.



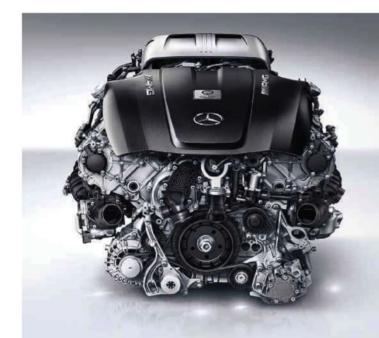
### LOTUS T125

A far cry from an attainable little Elise, the Lotus translation of 'supercar track special' was a £650,000 F1-aping single seater. Powered by a 640bhp Cosworth V8, it was designed as a halo car for Dany Bahar-era Lotus.



### LAMBO SESTO ELEMENTO

Its name sounds more like a magic spell, and this 20-off Lamborghini has an air of wizardry about it - clever carbon construction means it's over 300kg lighter than a Gallardo. Priced at £2million, 0-62mph takes 2.5 seconds.



### AS MERCEDES continues the slow reveal of its SLS-replacing AMG GT Coupe, the latest big announcement from Affalterbach concerns the 503bhp, 4-litre twin-

Codenamed M178, this new engine is considerably smaller and lighter than the naturally aspirated 6.2 found in the SLS. Rather than turning to a version of the existing 5.5-litre twin-turbo

turbo V8 that will power the car.

'M157' engine – which powers most of the current AMG range - Mercedes chose to develop this new, even more compact and efficient quad-cam, 32-valve motor. Amongst its array of impressive features are a 'hot in V' twin-turbo arrangement, which places the turbos between the two cylinder banks for added space saving and thermal efficiency. Running at a relatively unstressed 1.2bar boost pressure, the turbos have been tuned

### **AMG GT gets** new 4-litre V8

Twin-turbo powerplant to give Mercedes' next supercoupe 503bhp. Full car set for unveil at Paris motor show words: Matthew Hayward

to offer a broad spread of torque across the rev range - 479lb ft from 1750 to 4750 rpm.

A lot of the M178's technology has been transferred from the four-cylinder A45 AMG engine, and it shares the same bore and stroke measurements. demonstrating its shared lineage. Meanwhile, as with the V8 in the SLS, it's a dry-sump affair, meaning the engine can sit closer to the ground (bringing weight distribution benefits) and also run with higher lateral G loadings on track without fuss.

No new engine in this class would be complete without some exotic materials, and perhaps the most impressive sounding here is the

zirconium alloy used in the cylinder heads. These apparently provide improved thermal conductivity and house four overhead camshafts with a low-friction valvetrain to further increase efficiency.

To ensure the car produces the right sound, a sports exhaust with active flaps has been promised. Like current AMG cars fitted with these systems, the flaps open up to bypass extra silencers when the car is in its Sport setting, or at full throttle.

After being given our first peek of the GT Coupe's interior at the New York motor show in April, we're expecting to see the final car unveiled to the public at the Paris show in October.

### Williams steps up its road tech involvement

Demand for F1 team's Advanced Engineering division leads to new £8million facility words: Stephen Dobie

WILLIAMS HAS OFFICIALLY opened its new Advanced Engineering facility at its F1 headquarters in Oxfordshire. The 3800 square metre building is the result of an £8million investment, and while UK prime minister David Cameron officially opened it in July, the site has actually been standing for a little while already, with production of the abandoned Jaguar C-X75 (pictured) intended to be one of its first uses.

'If C-X75 had continued to production it would have been built here,' WAE managing director Craig Wilson tells us. 'But C-X75 was only ever one programme of 200 cars. Investment wasn't made for one car programme

- it was all about the bigger picture of the business. We've been lucky in that we were able to backfill behind the C-X75 with other programmes. Should anything like it come up again, we're well placed to support it.

While it's clear that there is some disappointment across all levels of the company that the hybrid supercar was never able to do battle with the LaFerrari, P1 and 918. Williams Advanced Engineering has clearly been very busy with other projects. It has worked on hybrid elements of the Porsche 911 GT3 R Hybrid and Audi R18 TDI e-tron race cars, is sole battery supplier for the Formula E series, and is also responsible



for the Nismo GT-R Time Attack and its Nürburgring triumph. WAE is becoming a go-to place for race teams and road car manufacturers seeking assistance with aerodynamic, thermodynamic, weight loss or hybrid programmes.

Williams' relationship with Nismo continues, as do its ties with Jaguar. 'We've continued to work with them post C-X75', says Wilson. 'We've got other road car programmes we're working on with them.' He's sceptical about the return of Williams-branded specials, though: 'If it were absolutely the right thing to have Williams on the car, we wouldn't dismiss it, but Williams will continue to be a brand that's below the surface'.

### **Interview: Dan Ammann**

### **SETTING THE SCENE**

**Job** President of General Motors **Responsibilities** Managing GM's regional operations around the world, managing the global Chevrolet and Cadillac brands, global product planning and overseeing **GM Financial** Interviewer Nick Trott, evo editor Interview location Inside a Vauxhall VXR8 at the Goodwood Festival of Speed, where Ammann

was demonstrating the car

### You oversee GM's global operations, including Vauxhall in the UK. Do you think Britishness has positive connotations?

In Britain, yes. And that's what we're looking to draw on moving forward with Vauxhall. But that's an observation from the other side of the Atlantic.

### So can we see Britishness becoming part of an overt marketing strategy for Vauxhall going forward?

Well, Jaguar did a campaign with the James Bond connotations: 'good to be bad'. It was interesting to see how that was received, but in terms of Vauxhall you'll have to wait and see.

### Is Britain a country you can do business with?

The Luton plant is very important to us and I've had some meetings with the senior British government to discuss manufacturing in the UK. It was clear that manufacturing was underemphasised year after year in this country, but the government decided that they need a strategy around it. So it was a good few days of discussions and I feel reasonably encouraged. In all, I feel like we have the tools to do business.

### Do you think Vauxhall's cars are good enough?

We've got to get the Corsa and Astra right. You can have some interesting things around the fringes but unless you get the core product right you're



in trouble. You can't have a version of a core product that doesn't improve on the one before or stand tall amongst the competition. The bar is so high now and the cars are so well executed.

### So product aside, what does the success of Vauxhall depend on?

If you have the clarity around the brand, have the dealer network working for you and you have the product – and do it consistently for a number of years then you have all the right pieces. In the UK, we have the right people in place running the business and I feel pretty good about what's coming.

### What's giving you headaches at the moment?

Nothing is giving me headaches, but what's occupying my time is clarifying the plan for Europe. All the things I've said for Vauxhall are the same for Opel. We are also working hard on Cadillac and have some really strong product.

### Can Cadillac be a true global brand?

I'm really confident that there's a real opportunity globally, and from a volume perspective primarily in the US and China. We have to do something here [in the UK] too, and we can use our absence from the market here as an advantage and approach it in a way that's different to those manufacturers who sell hundreds of thousands of cars.

There's still something there with Cadillac, isn't there? I admire what the [German manufacturers] have done, but it's predictable - the Russian doll strategy. There's a pro-American state of mind in some countries, particularly in, say, Sweden. The desire for something that is not the three Germans gives us a real opportunity.

### Do you think the customer cares, or even knows, which wheels are driven?

Depends. There are segments when the answer is clearly yes, but there are emerging sectors where the answer is maybe no. If you sat down with some of those groups, and said, 'Do you care about rear-wheel drive?' they'd say no. But if you said, 'Here are two proportional models of the car, which one do you prefer?' they would pick the rear-wheel-drive car's proportions. And we've done this research. They don't know why they like the proportions of the rear-wheel-drive car, but they do. So there's an aesthetic dimension.

There's an aspect of 'where's the brand at?' and in the case of Cadillac we're still depositing money into the brand bank account, whereas BMW and Mercedes are making withdrawals with CLA and so on.

### Are there any cars conspicuous by their absence from the Cadillac line-up?

There are several gaps in the Cadillac range that need to be filled, but before we fill those micro-segments we've got to fill up the obvious ones. But before we do that we've got to make a statement about what Cadillac can be.

### Who buys Cadillac?

Over 50 per cent are conquests [customers taken from other carmakers], and we're pleased with that because we're in the middle of a transition of the product. But there's a lot more to come.

### IF YOU THINK THE PRICE IS GOOD,

### XF FROM £299 A MONTH\* +VAT\* **ON JAGUAR CONTRACT HIRE**

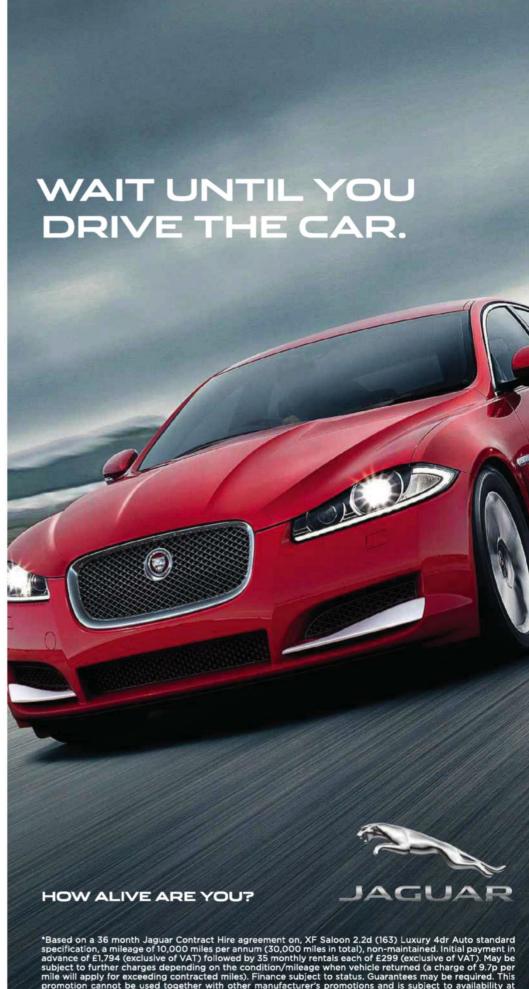
Even the price of XF has the power to raise your heartbeat. Now imagine how you'll feel experiencing these class-leading features as standard every single day...

- · Leather seats with full electric adjustment
- 7" touchscreen navigation system and DVD player
- 8-speed automatic transmission with SPORT mode and paddles

Initial payment of £1,794 +VAT. †Business users only. VAT at 20% may be payable. Model pictured (including optional metallic paint) from £321 a month +VAT plus initial payment of £1.926 +VAT.

**SEARCH 'JAGUAR OFFERS'** 

Official fuel economy figures for the Jaguar XF Saloon range in mpg (I/100km): Urban 16.7-48.7 (16.9-5.8); Extra Urban 32.8-64.2 (8.6-4.4); Combined 24.4-57.7 (11.6-4.9). CO<sub>2</sub> emissions 270-129 (g/km). Official EU Test Figures. For comparison purposes only. Real world figures may differ.



\*Based on a 36 month Jaguar Contract Hire agreement on, XF Saloon 2.2d (163) Luxury 4dr Auto standard specification, a mileage of 10,000 miles per annum (30,000 miles in total), non-maintained. Initial payment in advance of £1,794 (exclusive of VAT) followed by 35 monthly rentals each of £299 (exclusive of VAT). May be subject to further charges depending on the condition/mileage when vehicle returned (a charge of 9.7p per mile will apply for exceeding contracted miles). Finance subject to status. Guarantees may be required. This promotion cannot be used together with other manufacturer's promotions and is subject to availability at participating Dealers only for new vehicles ordered by 30th September 2014, or while stocks last. Jaguar Contract Hire is provided by Lex Autolease Limited, trading as Jaguar Contract Hire, Heathside Park, Heathside Park Road, Stockport SK3 ORB. Written quotations are available on request. All details are correct at time of publication and are subject to change without notice. publication and are subject to change without notice.

### Radar



Last time we looked at how mechanical differentials work. Now we find out what can happen if you introduce an element of electronic control

Words: Michael Whiteley, research scientist

IN PART ONE of our exploration of differentials (evo 198) we looked at the three main

types of mechanical limited-slip diff: Torsen, viscous and clutch-type. A good mechanical LSD needs to offer a balance between mobility and handling: a fully open diff hinders performance, while a fully locked diff hinders general operation. So what if we can have the best of both worlds, and not have to cut a balance? This is where electronically controlled differentials can help...

### **E-DIFFS**

Whereas the mechanical diffs covered in part one were reactive diffs (speed or torque sensing), e-diffs are proactive and can act in a blink of an eve. E-diffs use an array of sensors to detect if the driver requires the diff to lock or not. These can include steering angle, yaw, accelerometer, ABS ring speed and throttle position sensors. Inputs from these enable the ECU to determine

whether the differential should remain in a mobility-friendly mode, or handlingorientated mode.

The diff part of the e-diff is not all that different from a clutch-pack LSD; the main difference is that an electronic actuator controls the locking of the diff.

Jaguar, with its V8 F-types, and Ferrari are just two manufacturers currently employing e-diffs in their cars.

### **BRAKE-BASED LSDs**

These are often confused for e-diffs, but operate in a completely different manner, and are more of a traction control strategy than a true limited-slip differential. Whereas e-diffs use sensors and actuators to control a mechanical LSD, brake-based systems use the basic operation of an open diff to their

As was discussed in part one, open diffs distribute torque 50:50 to each wheel on the driven axle. If one of the wheels is spinning and wasting useful torque (on ice, say, or under high lateral acceleration), the individual brake on

that side of the axle can provide enough resistance to trick the open diff into providing more torque to the wheel with more grip.

Such systems are often, but by no means exclusively, found on powerful front-wheel-drive cars, for example the second-gen Mini GP, and while they can feel artificial and inconsistent compared to a mechanical LSD, when executed well, they can be extraordinarily effective – as the McLaren P1 has ably demonstrated.

There is, however, a concern with this type of operation, particularly in rear-drive applications and if you like to drive sideways absolutely everywhere. This is because brake friction converts kinetic energy into heat, and if you are locking the diff for prolonged periods of time in this way, the brakes will get hot. There will be a failsafe for this instance. and the system will no longer lock the diff when the brakes are too hot.

Another drawback is that using the brakes is inevitably slowing you down a degree. The system will be linked into

**Left:** F-type V8 S features an e-diff. Below: P1 employs a brake-based LSD. **Bottom:** torque vectoring instigates yaw, illustrated here on a Cayman





the throttle body actuator to try to compensate for lost torque, but this can still be considered as wasted torque.

### **TORQUE VECTORING**

Torque vectoring is a very clever control system that uses the same set of sensors previously mentioned to help sharpen turn in, and improve road handling during cornering. It is quite a simple concept where brake pressure is applied to generate a yaw moment around the vertical axis. What is yaw? If you imagine a large metal pin driven down through the middle of the car's roof through to the ground, the rotating of the car around this pin is the yaw movement.

Using inputs from the sensors, the ECU can calculate if you are turning through a corner and apply light brake pressure to the inside wheel(s) to pull the car into the apex. This control system is best served for all-wheel-drive electric vehicles, where power to each individual wheel can also be controlled. However, torque vectoring is used by Porsche in the Cayman (as an option) and 911 Turbo (as standard) and Jaguar in the F-type (R only), amongst others.

SO THERE YOU have it. The increasing complexity of the electronic control systems in modern cars means they no longer just help to contain a car's performance, but can now positively enhance it. For people like us, that has to be a good thing.



### INTRODUCING THE NEW KIA RIO 'VR7'

Over 13,000 customers have posted their honest reviews of our cars. Isn't it time to review your current car?

35% deposit. 24 month term on Personal Contract Purchase.

Bluetooth® with Reversing Alloy 3 years' music streaming sensors wheels servicing for £99°

Fuel consumption figures in mpg (I/100km) for the Kia Rio 5-dr range are: Urban 33.6 (8.4) – 80.7 (3.5), Extra Urban 53.3 (5.3) – 94.2 (3.0), Combined 44.1 (6.4) – 88.3 (3.2). CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are 150 – 85 g/km. MPG figures are official EU test figures for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results. Model shown is the Kia Rio 5-dr 'VR7' 1.25 84bhp 5-speed manual @ £11,195 including £1,000 customer saving. Customer savings vary by model derivative. Specification is subject to change without notice. Price, Reevoo score and number of reviews correct at time of going to press. 13 years' servicing (Kia Care-3) for £99 offer is only valid on applicable 'VR7' models. Log onto kia.co.uk/vr7 for full details. 7 year / 100,000 mile manufacturer's warranty, for terms and exclusions visit www.kia.co.uk. Offer not available in conjunction with

purposes and may not reflect read not ingressuriss. Model shown is the kid Nio 3-cir v? 1.25 oranip 3-speed manual we 11, 195 including 2 11, 195



### News in brief



### Lagonda returns

With sales planned exclusively in the Middle East, Aston Martin is to produce a new luxury saloon as a Lagonda, a name not used since 1990. It'll be based on Aston's new VH architecture and feature carbonfibre bodywork with subtle nods to the William Towns 'wedge' Lagonda. Prices are unknown, with order books currently only open to customers invited by Aston Martin.



### Auto Vivendi grows

Supercar club Auto Vivendi has acquired CLUBGT, which specialises in the hire of modern classics. The resulting combined collection totals some 17 different supercars, including a Lamborghini Aventador Spider, a McLaren 12C and an Aston Martin Vanguish. It will be based at Auto Vivendi's Supercar Clubhouse in St John's Wood, London.



### Cayenne facelift

Porsche's big money-maker has been given a facelift that brings in a range of more efficient engines and some minor cosmetic tweaks. Changes include re-styled front and rear ends, with 918-style four-point LED running lights. This update also introduces a new plug-in hybrid model, which produces 410bhp and is officially capable of 83mpg.



TOUGH ECONOMIC conditions mean that low-volume sports cars are rarely viable for major carmakers these days, but crowdsourcing and 3D printing could allow smaller manufacturers to take up the slack

American firm Local Motors is applying both techniques to its latest project. The company is best known for the Rally Fighter, a desert racer with a coupe-style body and a Chevroletsourced V8 engine. The design was essentially crowdsourced; Local Motors held a contest to determine which of thousands of designs submitted would become the final product, after which the vehicle was built in 'micro-factories' around the US.

Local Motors has also produced a range of two-wheeled vehicles in a similar fashion, but its latest project, a lightweight two-seater sports car, throws 3D printing into the mix. The advantage of 3D printing is that it allows complex, intricate designs to be produced without concession to expensive and time-consuming tooling. For Local Motors, whose unique selling point is the ability to design, innovate

and manufacture at a far greater pace than monolithic car companies, the technology is an ideal fit.

More than 200 entries were submitted for the sports car project, with the Strati concept of Italian Michele Anoé emerging victorious. With 'an excellent balance between innovation, complexity and practicality', in Local Motors' words, Anoé's entry will make its debut at the International Manufacturing Technology Show in Chicago on September 8-13.

On the show stand, the prototype

Top: prototype Strati will be 'built' on show stand in just five days. Below: design won its creator \$5000 (c£3000)

Strati's structural components will be 3D-printed using a technique known as Direct Digital Manufacturing (DDM). Using a machine developed at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory in Tennessee, the DDM process can print 3D objects at high speed before the same printing head then returns to machine each surface to a more precise specification.

Local Motors is now in the process of choosing which engine will power Anoé's design before it makes its debut. A Subaru boxer four is currently leading that race, though the Mitsubishi Evo X's 2-litre turbo is also under consideration, and suggestions from Local Motors' community include Hyundai, Ford, GM and VW powerplants.





# Up to the CHALLENGE?

Stretch your trackday driving skills when you enter the Michelin Pilot Sport Challenge, where consistency lap after lap is more important than outright speed

WE ALL LOVE A GOOD trackday. The freedom to drive to the limit of your car, its tyres and your skill. Now Michelin, in partnership with one of the UK's premier trackday operators, RMA Trackdays, has

introduced a thrilling new dimension to the traditional trackday format in the form of the

Michelin Pilot Sport Challenge.

Rather than chasing ultimate outright speed, the aim of the Pilot Sport Challenge is to consistently achieve a pre-determined lap time, with points deducted for going slower or faster. If you think that sounds easy, give it a go – it's named "Challenge" for good reason. Especially as you have to try hitting your target for 10 laps, not just one, during a 20-minute session. And to ensure accurate, consistent recording of lap times, you won't be surprised

to learn that "there's an app for that..." The first step in facing up to the Michelin Pilot Sport Challenge is to register to attend one of the selected trackday events at iconic UK and European circuits. You can do this by logging on to www.pilotsportexperience.michelin.co.uk.

Your car will, understandably, need to be fitted with tyres from Michelin's outstanding Pilot Sport range (2,3, Super Sport, Cup, Cup+ and the extraordinary new Pilot Sport Cup 2), it is possible to purchase a set in advance and have them fitted for free on the day of the Challenge, as part of the Pilot Sport Experience (see panel, opposite). The Michelin Pilot Sport range is the ideal tyre for a challenge of this nature, because not only is it supremely grippy, its materials and engineering promote accurate steering response and very dependable, predictable performance for lap

after lap. And when you really need every lap to be the same, those are qualities to be treasured.

Once registered, you're part of Community Michelin, and you'll be able to download the Michelin Lap Timer app. Frankly, though, the app's name undersells its capability, as not only does it measure a multitude of performance parameters during both your training sessions and Challenge laps, it's also pre-loaded with many of Europe's best known circuits.

In addition to the Lap Timer, those signing up will have exclusive access to video tutorials as well as the services of Michelin's resident racing expert – for the UK it's Scott Mansell, former F1 development driver with teams including Lotus – for specific advice on how to tackle a particular track.

On the day of your Challenge – and the next one is scheduled for 17 September at



### Michelin Pilot Sport Experience



THROUGH its Pilot Sport high-performance tyre range, Michelin has enjoyed a long-standing relationship with the trackday world, and this commitment continues with the Michelin Pilot Sport Experience, which is supporting a selection of RMA Trackdays events during 2014.

The Pilot Sport Experience allows you to collect pre-ordered Michelin tyres and have them fitted for free at the trackside. You also get to enjoy Michelin Trackside Hospitality, which includes light refreshments, and free Wi-Fi, phone charging and photo downloading facilities (subject to availability and local track policy).

Graham Clarke of RMA Trackdays, said: 'learning how to lap a track efficiently is no easy matter in itself, but to achieve consistency for lap after lap requires special concentration and skill.

But it's that extra discipline, that sense of doing something different, that really appeals to our clients here at RMA. No-one who has taken part in the Michelin Pilot Sport Challenge has found it easy, but they've all truly enjoyed having to push themselves that bit harder.'



### Michelin Pilot Sport Cup 2

'THE best way to improve is to surpass yourself' – so says one of Michelin's core philosophies. And it's a philosophy that has been neatly applied to the new Michelin Pilot Sport Cup 2, the company's flagship road-legal trackday tyre.

The Pilot Sport Cup 2 also embodies the spirit of Michelin Total Performance, in that not only does it offer more roadholding than its predecessor as well as sharper directional changes, it also lasts up to 50 per cent longer than its predecessor – proof that actually you can have your cake and eat it...

The Pilot Sport Cup 2 is available in a range of sizes from 21 inches all the way down to 17-inch fitments. Following the tyre's launch, there will be an increasing availability for smaller wheel sizes down to 15 inches, enabling Michelin to cater for many popular trackday cars.





Far left: All sorts of exotic machinery will be welcome at the Michelin Pilot Sport Challenge Left: Michelin and RMA experts are on hand to ensure all participants are briefed thoroughly

Silverstone – information recorded by the app during the morning training sessions will be used by a Michelin expert to help you determine what your reference time should be.

And once you're happy with that, you present your mobile device to another Michelin representative for your reference time to be logged into the app's software.

So far, so easy. Now for the challenging part. Each of your 10 eligible laps is worth 100 points, so 1,000 in total. For every tenth of a second you're adrift of your reference time – either faster or slower – one point is deducted. While getting within two seconds of your target might seem a good achievement (and in other circumstances it is), that's 20 points docked from your 1,000 on one lap alone. You can quickly see how this is a

### "At the end of each session, your nerves will be jangled and your adrenaline spiking"

challenge of mind power rather than horsepower. At the end of the session – probably with your nerves jangled and your adrenaline level spiking – you hand over your mobile device again for your times to be downloaded and your position on the leaderboard established.

The top three drivers on the day get to climb aboard the podium to receive prizes of

Michelin lifestyle products. Their points totals are also entered on to the European-wide Michelin Pilot Sport Challenge league table, where at the end of the season the leader will become a Michelin ambassador for a year and be invited along as a special guest to several major motorsport events, including Le Mans.

Everyone needs a challenge in their lives – make the Michelin Pilot Sport Challenge yours.

For all track and travel news go to: www.evo.co.uk/carreviews/trackandtravel/archive/



### Every new **evo** car that matters, rated

### This month

### **BENTLEY CONTINENTAL GT SPEED**

With a 626bhp W12 engine, it's the fastest production Bentley ever





### VW SCIROCCO R

Styling tweaks and extra power revitalise VW's quickest coupe



### CITROËN C4 CACTUS

Huge weight savings and off-beat design for French crossover



### **URBAN TRUCK ULTIMATE**

Land Rover Defender gets tricked up both inside and out



### MERCEDES-BENZ **C250 BLUETEC ESTATE**

New version of C-class wagon precedes likely AMG version











### **FLYING SPUR V8** Smaller-engined four-door offers

lighter, cheaper alternative to W12



### TWIN TEST: VW GOLF GTD v BMW 220d

German oil-burners with almost identical stats go head-to-head



### The test team

To mark the 200th issue of evo, the team recall the first time they took a car to 200mph (or not, as the case may be):



### NICK TROTT

**Fditor** 





### HENRY CATCHPOLE

Features editor

'Bentley Continental GT Speed. At night on the Autobahn. Took a bend at 199mph, topped out at 205mph. Massage seats on'



### **DAN PROSSER**

Road tester

'Shamefully I'm yet to crack 200mph, but I've passed 190mph several times at Bruntingthorpe'



### JETHRO BOVINGDON

Contributing editor

'MTM Bimoto - a twin-engined Audi TT - late at night on an Autobahn. Hit 204.9mph. Will never forget it'



### RICHARD MEADEN Contributing editor

'First time I exceeded 200mph was at a V-max event in a Noble M600. Went faster in a Skoda two months later...'



### DAVID VIVIAN Contributing road tester

'Passing 200mph was the very first thing I did after jumping into a Bugatti Veyron for the first time



Test location: Millbrook Proving Ground, Bedfordshire, UK GPS: 52.045200, -0.534200

### **Infiniti** Q50 Eau Rouge

Prototype shows what Nissan's luxury offshoot could do with its entry-level saloon – namely install the twin-turbo engine from the GT-R and tune it to 560bhp. 0-60mph in under 4sec... but will they make it?



a hint of enthusiasm for all things four-wheeled, the Infiniti Q50 Eau Rouge is

undoubtedly made of The

Right Stuff. For a start it looks brilliantly pumped up and the neat carbonfibre aero flicks and turning vanes that nod towards F1 are a little bit geeky but wholly enticing. However, that perfectly judged tyre-to-wheelarch gap, the F1-style rear fog light treatment, the sheer muscularity of the shape... they all fade into nothingness when you are told one simple fact: the Q50 Eau Rouge is powered by the Nissan GT-R's 3.8-litre twin-turbocharged V6 engine.

That means this car – somewhere between an M3 and M5 in terms of dimensions – has the potential to vaporise the established competition from BMW, Mercedes and Audi just as the bruising R35 GT-R did to 911s, R8s and Aston V8 Vantages when it arrived in 2007. For now the Eau Rouge is just a prototype, but Infiniti really wants to build this car. We know how they feel.

Our taste of what might be comes on the fabulously challenging Hill Route at the Millbrook Proving Ground. This wicked stretch of two-lane (but one-way) tarmac climbs, banks, falls away mid-corner, has gradients of up to 26 per cent, has a massive yump and has



'This is a great deal more than just a GT-R chassis with a saloon body squeezed over the top of it' the ability to unravel a shoddy chassis in one short loop. We can run continuously for three straight hours if we so wish. So as 'controlled environment' test drives go, this one should be genuinely revealing. The location also demonstrates a level of confidence from Infiniti that makes the Q50 Eau Rouge an even more intriguing and exciting proposition.

The prototype has been developed by the RML Group in Northamptonshire, the race and engineering outfit that designed and ran the four-time World Touring Car Championshipwinning Chevrolet Cruze, that was recently involved in the DeltaWing and Nissan ZEOD RC Le Mans programme and which also created and produced a small production run of the wild and wonderful Juke R. However, unlike the Juke R, which was essentially a cut-down GT-R chassis under a pumped-up Juke body, the Eau Rouge has been developed with a real production run in mind. That means many of the parts utilised are from the Infiniti range and comply with durability and safety standards.

This is a great deal more than just a GT-R chassis with a saloon body squeezed over the top of it.

That mighty, industrial GT-R engine now drives through a seven-speed automatic gearbox borrowed from Infiniti's QX70 SUV and the four-wheel-drive system is also similar to the QX's, albeit with a much-strengthened and revised rear differential to take the power. The Eau Rouge rides on fixed-rate KW dampers, lifts the GT-R's braking system wholesale and sees the V6's outputs massaged up to 560bhp and 442lb ft. RML initially experimented with Infiniti's DAS steer-by-wire system but switched to a traditional power steering set-up around a week before our test drive, looking for a little more feel. The car rides on 20-inch wheels and the aggressive Dunlop SP SportMaxx GT 600 runflat tyres that contribute to the GT-R's startling agility. All up the prototype weighs a chunky 1826kg, which is around 300kg more than an M3 but 44kg lighter than an M5.

On a perfect English summer's day and with a pretty good approximation of the perfect









English country road all to ourselves, the Eau Rouge really does look enticing. The heave of the wheelarches to cover the gorgeous forged alloys, the deep gloss black of the carbonfibre splitter and roof, those funky turning vanes rising out of the carbonfibre sills and the pronounced flick of the boot spoiler all serve to give an awkward shape a real hit of menace. The GT-R intakes on the bonnet are also a cheeky clue as to what's hidden beneath. I'm hoping the aesthetic aggression is matched by the driving experience. I can't help but think that if Infiniti really wants to lure AMG or M division customers, it needs to offer something unique and outrageous. The GT-R has shown how loyal a fan base you can build if you can enter into a sector and decimate the established players' performance credentials...

First impression of this prototype, which I'm told is in a constant cycle of evolution and is really worked very hard indeed, is how together it feels. The damping is superbly controlled and quiet, the steering is a shade heavy but feels

beautifully located and the brake response is terrific. We'll call on the ultimate power of the six-piston 390mm front brakes soon, but their low-speed response is instantly reassuring and helps build a picture of real integrity. Of course, the hugely charismatic and shockingly brawny engine helps in that respect, too. Infiniti claims that the Eau Rouge is good for 60mph in less than 4 seconds and a top speed of 180mph.

So immediately the Eau Rouge has a polish to it that's at odds with its prototype status, but perhaps its politeness is slightly at odds with its M division-hunting swagger, too. The engine, which feels so alive and rampant in the GT-R, is actually very quiet indeed, and although it picks up the Eau Rouge well enough, the venom usually associated with this twin-turbocharged unit is lacking somehow. The slightly slowwitted seven-speed automatic gearbox doesn't help and Infiniti is well aware that a better solution needs to be found - probably in the shape of the Mercedes 7G-tronic MCT 'box through Infiniti's new tie-up with the Daimler



Above left: 3.8-litre V6 puts out 18bhp more than in the 2014MY GT-R. Above middle: 20-inch wheels scaled down from 21s on initial concept. Above: sevenspeed auto is sluggish



### 'It can be made to oversteer with a bit of brutality but it's the smaller gestures that we really miss'



Top: restyled exterior features conspicuous GT-R bonnet vents. Above: interior is as luxurious as you'd expect from Infiniti

Group. Hopefully that will reinstate the killer bite so central to the GT-R's appeal.

As the loops of this amazing test facility unravel, it becomes clear that the Eau Rouge, despite its remarkable cohesiveness and quality, is still in search of its ultimate character and is still a compromise due to some of the hardware borrowed from less sporting relatives. For example, the four-wheel-drive system does an incredible job of getting 560bhp to the road but it lacks a degree of precision and adjustability. Turn-in response is good but less aggressive than, say, an M3's, and although the Eau Rouge never washes into understeer it's not a car you really balance with the throttle, either. It can be made to oversteer with a bit of brutality but it's the smaller gestures that we really miss - the precise tightening of its line with a throttle lift, the rear axle gently pushing wide under hard power. Instead the Eau Rouge feels very secure and totally hooked up but rather leaden just when you want it to come alive.

Even so, there's obviously a vast amount of potential lurking underneath. A new and faster gearbox will transform the sense of immediacy, slightly lighter steering would increase the

sense of agility, and perhaps giving the engine its voice back could add to the sense of drama. However, to deliver a devastating blow to AMG and the M division it'll need all this and more – most importantly a thoroughly revised fourwheel-drive system to allow real engagement and adjustability. Of course the Eau Rouge shouldn't just be a four-door GT-R but it could do with channelling the big Nissan's fury and excitement. For the time being the Eau Rouge is tantalising, but if Infiniti chooses to unshackle it then it could be sensational. Come on guys, you know it makes sense.

Jethro Bovingdon (@JethroBovingdon)

Engine	V6, 3799cc, twin-turbo	
CO2	n/a	
Power	560bhp @ n/a rpm	
Torque	442lb ft @ n/a rpm	
Performance	sub-4sec (claimed 0-60mph), 180mph (claimed)	
Weight	1826kg (312bhp/ton)	
Basic price	n/a (production TBC)	

evo rating:  $\star\star\star\star$ 

■ Aggressive additions find tension in a frumpy shape
■ Needs to be turned up to 12 to really unleash its potential



### INTRODUCING THE NEW KIA CEE'D 'VR7'

Over 13,000 customers have posted their honest reviews of our cars. Isn't it time to review your current car?

35% deposit. 24 month term on Personal Contract Purchase.

Bluetooth® with Reversing Alloy 3 years' music streaming sensors wheels servicing for £99°

Fuel consumption figures in mpg (I/100km) for the Kia cee'd range are: Urban 29.1 (9.7) – 68.9 (4.1), Extra Urban 46.3 (6.1) – 80.7 (3.5), Combined 38.2 (7.4) – 76.3 (3.7). CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are 171 – 97 g/km. MPG figures are official EU test figures for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results. Model shown: cee'd 'NR7' 1.4 98bhp 6-speed manual @ £14,200 including customer saving of £1,000. Customer savings vary by model derivative. Specification is subject to change without notice. Price, Reevoo score and number of reviews correct at time of going to press. ¹3 years' servicing (Kia Care-3) for £99 offer is only valid on applicable 'NR7' models. Log onto kia.co.uk/vr7 for full details. 7 year / 100,000 mile manufacturer's warranty, for terms and exclusions visit www.kia.co.uk. Offer not available with any other offer. Retail sales only. Subject to availability on vehicles registered between 01/07/2014 and 30/09/2014. Finance subject to status. Terms and conditions apply. 18's or over. Guarantee/ indemnity may be required. Further charges may be made subject to the condition or mileage of the vehicle. Anticipated annual mileage 12,000 miles, excess mileage charge 14.9p per mile. **You will not own the vehicle until all payments are made.** At the end of the agreement there are 3 options: (i) Renew: Part exchange the vehicle, where equity is available. (ii) Retain: Pay the Optional Final Payment (£6,404,75) to own the vehicle or (iii) Return the vehicle. Kia Motors Finance RH1 1SR. The Bluetooth® word mark and logo are registered trademarks and owned by the Bluetooth SIG, Inc.





BENTLEY LIKES THE fact that it still produces cars

with 12-cylinder engines. It's keen to promote the intrinsic value of the 'W' offset cylinder

configuration that makes its particular brand of multi-pot hedonism relatively compact and more rigid than a conventional V12. And it likes the fact that, while the Crewe operation may be a small cog within the VW Group, it has been declared the Centre of Excellence for the W12. Visit the Crewe factory and the sense of pride shared by the people who work on this engine is palpable.

Some might argue that this chunky powerplant, whether turbocharged in a Bentley or naturally aspirated in an Audi A8, is a decadent anachronism that has been usurped for relevance in the modern world by the more efficient, cleaner Audi-sourced V8 that powers the slightly less costly Continental GTs. After all, the Conti we'd really like to take for a blast down a long and winding road, the GT3-R, uses the V8 and is being touted by Bentley as a defining moment in the big coupe's eight-year production life – at least when it comes to accelerative prowess and chassis dynamics.

But, for all that, there are a couple of things about the latest 6-litre, twin-turbo W12, as fitted to the mildly overhauled Conti GT Speed, and its Convertible sibling, that melt rational considerations like snowflakes on a barbecue.

One is 626bhp at 6000rpm. The other is 605lb ft of torque at 1700rpm. What this means is that the assiduous weight-paring measures applied to the GT3-R to make the most of its 572bhp can be looked upon with detached amusement by W12 Speed customers, who presumably want it all, and with knobs on. And that doesn't come *lite*. In fact, it weighs 2.3 tonnes.

Of course, GT3-R drivers will own the 0-60 bragging rights: 3.6sec versus 4.0 for the Speed coupe (4.1 for the soft-top). But the 12 gets to 100mph in an improbable 9.0sec and eventually gets the upper hand, surging imperiously on to a claimed top speed of 206mph (203 for the convertible), making it the fastest production Bentley ever. On the launch we hit (with a bit of a run-up) an indicated 182mph on a 1.7mile stretch of tarmac parallel to the main runway at Campbeltown airport, so the claim seems realistic. Even more impressively, the Speed feels stable at that speed and the way the optional carbon-ceramic brakes send the speedo into reverse at the end of the strip is remarkable. But then they do cost £10,000.

The W12's prodigious outputs are, as before, fed through an eight-speed ZF auto transmission to all four wheels with the bias split 40/60 in favour of the rear axle. Ride height is lowered by 10mm compared to the regular GT's and there's a 15 per cent increase in the front camber angle in conjunction with stiffer air springs and bushes. Press a button

on the centre console and you can choose one of four chassis settings on the touchscreen in the middle of the dash. 'Comfort' is purely for wafting, maximising ride comfort but pretty hopeless if you really want to exercise those 626 horses in anger. 'Sport', on the other hand, eradicates almost every vestige of slop and wallow and introduces a level of precision and body control that almost beggars belief for such a heavy car while retaining a perfectly decent ride. The combination of effortlessly mammoth thrust, unerring grip and sufficient AWD traction to squirt you back onto the straight bits with the throttle pinned to the floor endows the Speed with point-to-point pace that would suit something low, snarly and Italian.

We've always been fans of the GT Speed. It may not look much different in its latest guise, but it still delivers. ▼

David Vivian (@davidjvivian)

 Engine
 W12, 5998cc, twin-turbo

 CO2
 338g/km

 Power
 626bhp @ 6000rpm

 Torque
 605lb ft @ 1700rpm

 Performance
 4.2sec (claimed 0-62mph), 206mph (claimed)

 Weight
 2320kg (274bhp/ton)

 Basic price
 £156,700

evo rating: \*\*\*\*

■ Fabulous performance and luxury
■ Ageing looks



Scirocco's 40th birthday, Volkswagen has updated the current model with a raft of minor styling and technical revisions. Power is up across the range, and the R retains its position at the head of the table.

The third-gen Scirocco, a contemporary of the Mk5 Golf, isn't shaped to accommodate the 297bhp EA888 engine that serves in the impressive Mk7 Golf R. VW therefore finds itself building two four-cylinder, 2-litre turbo units with similar outputs, the Scirocco R retaining the EA113 that served in the pre-facelift model – and the Mk5 Golf GTI before that – albeit with power up by 15bhp to 276bhp. The 0-62mph time has been cut from 6.0sec to 5.7 (5.5 with DSG), while stop/start technology has helped drag the EA113 towards EU6 compliancy, with Volkswagen claiming modest improvements in fuel consumption and emissions as a result.

This certainly isn't a thorough reworking. There was very little wrong, it must be said, with the aesthetic of the six-year-old Scirocco, but the new angular headlights do lend a certain menace to an otherwise timeless and confident shape. The R takes that sense of purpose one step further with aggressive bumper treatments front and rear, twin exhaust tips, LED daytime running lights and 19-inch 'Cadiz' wheels. And for a cabin that owes much to a Golf now two generations out of date, the Scirocco's feels remarkably fresh. The group's latest infotainment system helps, as does the new stack of auxiliary dials atop the dashboard that pay tribute to the original Scirocco.



With its spring and damper rates unchanged, the Scirocco R's driving dynamics are simply as they were. With the optional Dynamic Chassis Control system (£810) set to Comfort, the ride quality on the smooth roads between Cologne and Frankfurt is very impressive indeed. We accept that Britain's more lumpen roads might not flatter the R in quite the same way, but for a car of genuine super-hatch performance the level of comfort in this mode is noteworthy.

The quality of the ride does ring some distant alarm bells, though. In Comfort the chassis is woolly and imprecise when pushed, which is perfectly reasonable, but the Sport setting doesn't quite tighten the car's responses sufficiently. Throw the R into a sequence of corners and it always feels a bit baggy, rolling markedly in direction changes and eventually losing control of its own masses over undulations. Switching to Sport also adds weight to the steering, which simply corrupts the rack's otherwise quite detailed, grainy feel.

A step or two back from the limit, however, the R does show willing thanks to its abundant

grip, pointy front end and the strong traction afforded by the electronic XDS differential. The Scirocco R is said to be tuned to be slightly more focused than the Golf R, but initial impressions suggest the Golf is more responsive and enjoyable, perhaps as a result of its four-wheel-drive system.

The EA113 engine doesn't feel like a poor or outmoded relation. It's responsive and pulls hard throughout the rev range, and with more character than many other four-cylinder turbo engines. The six-speed manual gearbox is rather notchy and, at times, awkward to use, which comes as a surprise given that most of the group's manual 'boxes feel slick and well oiled. The optional (£1500) DSG transmission suits the R's refined nature very well, although the plastic paddles do feel cheap.

Very little of any real consequence has changed, then, which is to say the Scirocco R remains an appealing everyday four-seat sports coupe, but it still isn't a car that will drag you out of bed early on a Sunday morning. 

■

Dan Prosser (@TheDanProsser)

 Engine
 In-line 4-cyl, 1984cc, turbo

 CO2
 187g/km

 Power
 276bhp @ 6000rpm

 Torque
 258lb ft @ 2500rpm

 Performance
 5.7sec (claimed 0-62mph), 155mph (limited)

 Weight
 1426kg (197bhp/ton)

 Basic price
 £32,295

evo rating: ★★★★☆

Ride quality, enduring engine and cabin

The best hot hatches are more fun

# SPECIAL ADDITION

The New Lexus IS 300h Executive Edition loaded with luxury features:

- + Heated leather seats
- +Lexus Navigation
- + Front and rear parking sensors
- + Smart (keyless) entry system

PREMIUM VALUE

103 G/KM CO<sub>2</sub>

from Lexus 
AVAILABLE
FROM JUST

\$329\*
PER MONTH

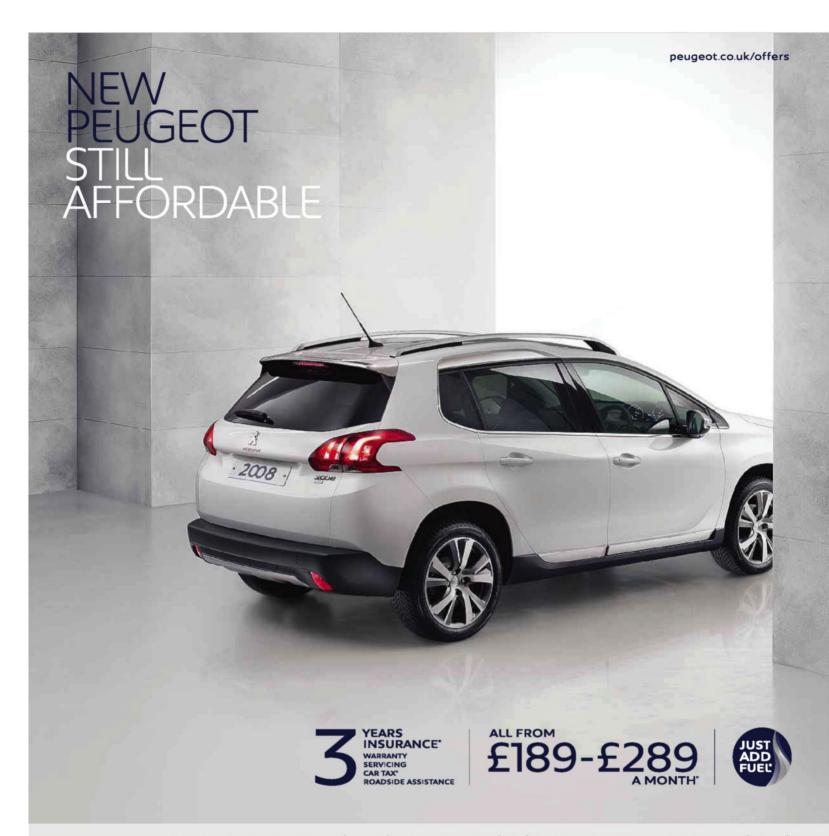
13% BIK

IS

**AMAZING IN MOTION** 

IS 300h prices start from £29,495. Model shown is IS 300h Executive Edition £29,995, plus £610 metallic paint. \*For Business Users only. Initial rental and VAT applies. Available on new sales of IS 300h Executive Edition when ordered, registered and linanced between 1 July 2014 and 30 September 2014 through Lexus Financial Services on Lexus Connect Contract Hire. Advertised rental is based on a 3 year non-maintained contract at 10,000 miles per annum with an initial rental of £1974 + VAT. Excess mileage charges apply. Other finance offers are available but cannot be used in conjunction with this offer. At participating Lexus Centres Lexus Centres are independent of Lexus Financial Services. Terms and conditions apply. Indemnities may be required. Finance subject to status to over 18s only. Lexus Financial Services is a trading name of Toyota Financial Services (UK) PLC. Registered Office Great Burgh, Burgh Heath, Epsom KT18 5UZ. Authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. The MPG figures quoted are sourced from official EU-regulated test results. They are provided for comparability purposes, and may not reflect actual driving experience.

IS 300h Executive Edition fuel consumption and  $CO_2$  figures: urban 61.4 mpg (4.6 I/100km), extra-urban 61.4 mpg (4.6 I/100km), combined 64.2 mpg (4.4 I/100km), 103g/km  $CO_2$  (13% BIK)



PEUGEOT RODAL Official Fuel Consumption in MPG (1/100km) and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (g/km) for the 2008 range are: Urban 32.1–68.9 (8.8–4.1), Extra Urban 54.3–78.5 (5.2–3.6), Combined 43.5–74.3 (6.5–3.8) and CO<sub>2</sub> 150–98 (g/km).

MPG figures are achieved under official EU test conditions, intended as a guide for comparative purposes only and may not reflect actual on-the-road driving conditions. Terms and conditions apply, participating dealers only or visit peugeot co uk "The first year Road Fund Licence (RFL) is included in the on the road price. The Dealer will provide customers with a cheque equivalent to twice the current RFL cost. The customer must apply for years 2 and 3 RFL Just Add Fuel (JAF) is subject to status. "Minimum age 21, 25 or 30 on selected models, maximum age 75. Policyholder must have a minimum of 2 years NCD to use on the vehicle. All drivers must meet eligibility criterio including minimum? years' full UK icence, driving convictions/claims limits Excesses apply 3 years motor insurance is provided and underwritten by U K insurance Limited by the Financial Conduct Authority and the Production Regulation Authority. A guarantee may be required. Written quotations available from Peugeot Financial Services, Quadrant House, Princess Way, Redhill, RH1 1QA JAF is incorporated into a Personal Lease contract. "From price 2008 Access+ 1.2 VTI Metallic Paint, £3,115 initial rental, £6,221 final rental." To price and model featured 2008 Feline 1 6 – HD1 Mistral Ambience with peariescent paint, £3,532 initial rental, £9,476 final rental 3 5 monthly rentals but will not own the car Ownership is possible with JAF Possport, ask your Dealer for details. Rentals quoted for a typical customer and will vary according to age, postcode, initial rental and annual mileage. Excess mileage charges may apply. Routine servicing included only. Excludes wear parts. This offer is not available in Northern Ireland. Offer available on cars ordered by 30th September 2014. Information correct at time of going to press.

### PEUGEOT 2008





ALTHOUGH UNABLE TO invoke, in any way that will make your heart beat faster, 'the thrill of driving' (it's a personal thing, I know, but trust

me here), the Citroën C4 Cactus isn't without a certain 'evoness'. It splits three ways. First, for a medium-sized crossover, it's properly light at just 1020kg, some 260kg less than the regular C4. Second, what kit remains from the radical paring-down process is useful and well designed. And third, in certain of the darker colour combinations, it looks like it's auditioning for a part in the next Robocop film. Let's call it future dystopia chic.

If Citroën intends to re-engage with the quirkiness that once marked it out, the Cactus isn't a bad way to start. Citroën calls the plastic protector pads on the sides, nose and tail 'Airbump technology' and, as a styling conceit, they draw attention to the car as effectively as if it had 'look at me' written in neon tubing across the roof. But they're functionally smart, too, the air-filled thermoplastic polyurethane pockets re-inventing the idea of the simple rubbing strip in IMAX 3D. Citroën reckons that errant shopping trolleys in supermarket car parks will simply bounce off them.

Citroën has dared to be just as different on the inside. Forget the usual chunky, slightly macho architecture most designers feel appropriate for anything with a marginally raised ride height, the Cactus's cabin looks more like something you'd find in the pages of an IKEA catalogue, with comfy sling-style sofas for seats, spare dashboard design with



knowingly retro digital instruments, a tabletsized touchscreen in the middle and numerous nods to designer luggage that impart a feeling of classy functionality. It's an impressively roomy thing, too, especially in the front. And by relocating the passenger airbag to the roof, that long undervalued stowage compartment, the glovebox, gets an XXL makeover.

Things aren't quite so much fun in the back. Again, there's bags of leg-, head- and shoulder-room and the rear bench is squishy and comfortable, but there's no split-fold for the time being and the rear side windows hinge out rather than wind down (part of the extensive weight-saving programme). Big boot, though: 358 litres expands to 1170 litres with the singlepiece backrest folded flat.

The lightness of the Cactus manifests itself on the road in a couple of ways. First, PSA's direct-injection petrol 1.2-litre three-cylinder turbo engine feels a good deal gutsier than its modest 109bhp would suggest. It's a thrummy and energetic performer that belies its modest capacity with decent low-speed tug and

perfectly adequate roll-on acceleration. Its flexibility cuts down on cog-swapping, too, which is no bad thing as the light but slightly vague gearchange isn't exactly addictive.

The ride quality is, though. The Cactus always feels comfortable and composed in a way that the best French cars always used to. It's reasonably agile, too, and so long as you don't expect hot hatch levels of entertainment, it can be hustled along at a respectable lick. It's certainly a long way removed from the soggy compromise some crossovers turn out to be.

The C4 Cactus goes on sale in October, priced from £12,990 to around £18k. There'll be three trim levels: Touch, Feel and Flair (we tested the Feel here). Engine choices will be the turbo 1.2-litre three-pot petrol, a pair of lesspowerful, non-turbo versions, and two 1.6-litre turbodiesels, while there will be a choice of manual and auto gearboxes.

To drive, the Cactus isn't quite as arresting as it looks, but it is a car that has its priorities straight. And those we like.

David Vivian (@davidjvivian)

Engine In-line 3-cyl, 1199cc, turbo CO2 105g/km Power 109bhp @ 6150rpm 151lb ft @ 1750rpm Torque 9.3sec (claimed 0-62mph), 117mph (claimed) Performance Weight 1020kg (109bhp/ton) Basic price £12,990

#### **evo** rating: $\star\star\star\star$

Properly quirky; lean build; roomy and comfortable No split rear seat, 'quirky' isn't for everyone



for the rapid expansion of the modified Defender market in recent years – perhaps it can be explained by the looming discontinuation of Land Rover's timeless

discontinuation of Land Rover's timeless utilitarian workhorse – it's little surprise that tuning companies are scrambling to claim their slices of the pie. Milton Keynes-based Nurburg Ltd entered the marketplace last summer with its Urban Truck, and by mid-July it had shifted some 70 units since the start of the year.

A small but thriving sub-culture is developing around this type of car and Nurburg is one of the most active players. 'People are buying them because they're trendy at the moment,' explains founder Simon Dearn. 'Our entry-level model, which costs £34,995, is bought as an only car, but the Ultimate, costing £49,995, is bought by high net worth individuals. It'll be a fourth of fifth car and they want everything on it.

'All our cars are brand-new from Land Rover,' he continues. 'We strip them down and rebuild them to our specification.' The Ultimate gets a performance package, which includes an intercooler, air filter, a stainless steel exhaust and an ECU remap, to give 182bhp (up from 120) and 318lb ft (up from 265). This model is also on new springs, which lower the car by two inches, with a Bilstein damper kit that is switchable inside the cabin. There are also sports anti-roll bars and Overfinch wheels.

'We fit new grilles, LED lights, underbody protection and colour co-ordinate everything,' explains Dearn. 'We also fit stainless steel bolts and apply a full paint package to prevent



corrosion. Inside, we fit sports seats with Nappa leather, an Alpine stereo system, Alcantara headlining and a Momo steering wheel. We get as much performance as we can out of the Defender, but it's really more about the refinements. It still drives like a Defender, but it gets a lot of attention. It will still go off-road and the clearance is good, but of the 70 cars we've sold so far this year only a few have done so.'

The Urban Truck Ultimate drips with presence and the quality and fit of the upgrades is very good. The leather is soft and fragrant and the only interior components that feel workmanlike are the standard Land Rover items. There is no point in deconstructing the car's driving dynamics as we normally would do – that would be as redundant as discussing a Caterham's interior fit and finish – but it is worth describing the experience.

Driving the Urban Truck is a busy, involving activity. The gearing is short and the sweet spot of the four-cylinder turbodiesel is narrow, so gearchanges comes thick and fast. The steering is also quite slow, so it takes an armful of lock

to navigate a roundabout or 90-degree corner. Combined with the commanding driving position, that level of activity is actually quite good fun, and there's nothing about the major controls that's recalcitrant or awkward.

With 318lb ft of torque the Urban Truck pulls strongly enough in its sweet spot that you don't feel like a moving chicane among traffic. In proper Defender fashion the engine is noisy and unrefined when accelerating hard, but at a cruise it settles and drops out of earshot. The big tyres and relatively soft set-up means it rides comfortably, even with the dampers set to Sport mode. In fact, it's probably best to use this as the default setting because the ride quality isn't compromised and the extra support just trims out a little of the roll and slop.

The upgrades can be fitted to any style of Defender and to second-hand cars as well as new. The Urban Truck will divide opinion, but for those who find appeal in this modern reimagining of a British motoring icon there's little doubt that Nurburg does the business.

Dan Prosser (@TheDanProsser)

 Engine
 In-line 4-cyl, 2198cc, turbodiesel

 CO2
 n/a

 Power
 182bhp @ 3500rpm

 Torque
 318lb ft @ 2000rpm

 Performance
 11.0sec (estimated 0-60mph), 90mph+ (est)

 Weight
 177lkg (104bhp/ton)

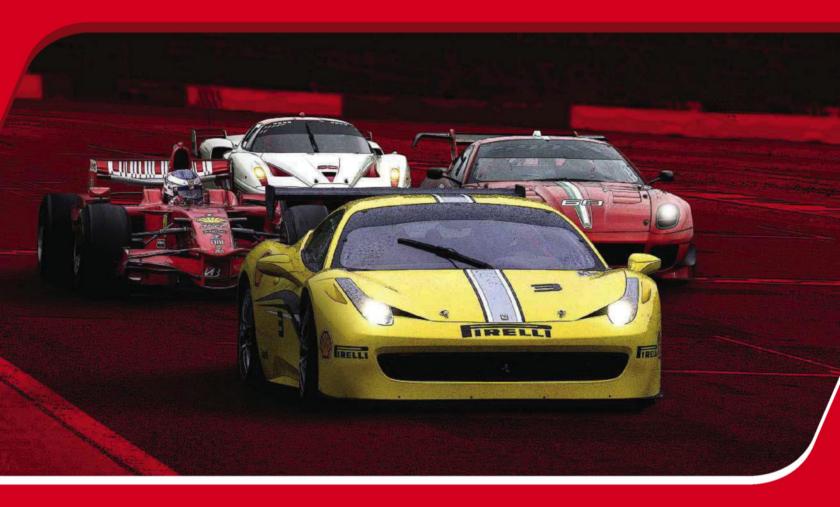
 Basic price
 £49,995

**evo** rating:  $\star\star\star\star$ 

High quality, sense of fun
Not to all tastes



Silverstone 13 - 14 September



#### FERRARI RACING DAYS IS BACK IN THE UK

The spectacular Ferrari Racing Days returns to Silverstone on the 13th - 14th September 2014

#### Highlights

- > European Ferrari Challenge Trofeo Pirelli Series
- > Ferrari F1 Clienti cars
- > XX programmes
- > Ferrari car displays
- > Ferrari tribute parade

- > Free access to the Silverstone Wing building
- > Free open paddock
- > Free grandstand seating
- > Free entrance for children 15 years and under

#### Exclusive reader offer for advance ticket purchases

**50% off advance weekend ticket price** if purchased before 5pm on the 3rd September 2014. Please quote **FRD14–EV** Visit **www.silverstone.co.uk** or call the ticket hotline for more information **0844 3750 740** 











# ADVENTURE CALLING. THE ALL NEW NISSAN X-TRAIL.

With Intelligent Park Assist and Safety Shield technologies the new Nissan X-Trail takes the city in its stride. But, its bold contours reflect a capability that goes far beyond into tougher terrains. That's when you can really make use of its All MODE 4x4-i, impressive towing capability and room for seven.\*

So when you get the call, you'll always be ready to answer.

nissan.co.uk/adventurecalling

Fuel consumption figures for New X-Trail range: URBAN 45.6-49.6mpg (6.2-5.7L/km), EXTRA URBAN 58.9-62.8mpg (4.8-4.5L/km), COMBINED 53.3-57.6mpg (5.3-4.9L/km), CO<sub>2</sub> emissions 139-129g/km.

MPG figures are obtained from laboratory testing, and intended for comparisons between vehicles and may not reflect real driving results. \*All Mode 4x4-i, Safety Shield technologies and Intelligent Park Assist available with selected models only. Seven seats is an optional extra. Model shown is an X-Trail Tekna. Refer to dealer for exact specification. Models subject to availability. Information correct at time of going to print. Nissan Motor (GB) Ltd, The Rivers Office Park, Denham Way, Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire WD3 9YS.



WHEN IT COMES TO combining performance and dynamic acuity with load space and practicality, nothing does it better than a wagon. At evo.

we'll take a muscular estate with a sorted chassis from the likes of Audi, Jaguar or Mercedes over a pumped-up SUV with wide wheels any old day of the week. So, along with other fast estate fans, we can't wait to get behind the wheel of the new Mercedes C-class Estate with an AMG badge on its tailgate. But we'll all have to probably until November.

Truth is, we're a bit concerned as much as anything. As we've discovered already, the new 'W205' C-class saloon is a very different car from its predecessor - more of a scaleddown take on the S-class limo than a conscious rival to the inherently sporty BMW 3-series. It's encouraging to note that AMG has been involved with the development of the new C-class from day one and is therefore able to lay the foundations for a rubber-roasting charter but, then again, maybe those days are over.

The launch line-up is all four-cylinder, comprising Bluetec diesels (168bhp C220, 201bhp C250) and an entry-level C200 petrol, to be followed by a more economical C200 Bluetec diesel and a diesel-electric C300 Bluetec Hybrid (essentially the C250 with an additional 26bhp of electric urge and only 99g/km of CO2). Although the Hybrid boasts the best power, torque and economy stats, its battery pack and motor weigh 60kg and make an already supple and unmistakably air-sprung ride borderline floaty. The early onset of understeer in tighter



bends if you're determined to press on - even if you've selected Sport Plus from the so-called Agility menu – is a little disappointing, too. The Hybrid has its niche, but it's not a great advert for the new car's performance potential.

The C250 Bluetec, as well as being an entirely sensible choice, is better to drive and equally good to look at. Like the saloon, it benefits from the currently ongoing 'handsome' phase of Merc's design evolution. It's bigger than the old estate, too, with a longer and wider body (49 per cent aluminium content for reduced weight) and a wheelbase stretched by 80mm. Cargo capacity thus swells to 490 litres, or 1510 with the three-way 40:20:40 split folding rear seats down – respectable rather than remarkable.

The self-levelling air suspension is optional but on all the launch test cars, which is a pity because it imposes a very particular character on the chassis that, in concert with the accurate but utterly feel-less variable-ratio electromechanical steering, seems to rob the handling of life and subtlety. So while there can be no quibble with the C250's pace or composure through the twisty stuff - 'surefooted' would be selling it short - it makes no concessions for anyone seeking involvement. You can switch some of the 'driver assist' aids off should you wish, but not the stability or traction electronics. All very safe and prescriptive. Instinct suggests steel-sprung cars will feel somewhat sharper.

That said, the C250 estate is civilised, sophisticated, whisper-quiet and for the most part superbly comfortable. The roomy cabin looks and feels like it belongs to an altogether more expensive car and the whole thing is extremely well built and finished. The 250's turbodiesel motor only has an appreciable aural presence in the cabin under hard acceleration (0-62mph takes 6.9sec) and is amply endowed with mid-range overtaking urge, of which the standard seven-speed auto makes efficient, if occasionally slightly thumpy, use. Merc's new nine-speed auto, which will debut on the S-class, is slated as a replacement in due course.

Not in the least bit sporty, where the C250 is good it's very good. But the world needs more performance estates. Over to you, AMG. David Vivian (@davidjvivian)

Engine In-line 4-cyl, 2143cc, twin-turbo diesel CO2 117g/km 201bhp @ 3800rpm Power 369lb ft @ 1600-1800rpm Torque Performance 6.9sec (claimed 0-62mph), 150mph (claimed) Weight 1585kg (129bhp/ton) Basic price £33.220

evo rating:  $\star\star\star\star$ 

Essentially a baby S-class with a big boot Despite good pace, an inert, uninvolving steer



I LIKE BENTLEYS. REALLY
like them. I thought I should say
that up front because amongst
genuine car enthusiasts I seem
to be in a minority. Post a picture
of one on Twitter and people pour forth bile and
hatred. Maybe there are rational reasons for
this. Bentleys are heavy and consume lots of
fuel. But that's also true of Rolls-Royces and the
reaction to them is the opposite – a collective
swoon wherever you go.

No, the real hatred seems to stem from the fact that over the years, some people have painted Continental GTs in awful colours and fitted massive chrome wheels. And while that's indisputably true, it doesn't change the fact that the moment you drive or ride in a Bentley, all of that baggage seems to disappear and a sense of well-being washes over you. They're just lovely things to spend time in and, even better, usually pretty incredible dynamically considering their near-2.5 tons of bulk.

However, the new Flying Spur is a different proposition to the various Continental GTs now on offer and is also deliberately less 'sporty' than its predecessor. This is the new V8 version and despite downsizing from a 6-litre W12 to just 4 litres (with two turbochargers, naturally) it's still endowed with 500bhp at 6000rpm and 486lb ft. Although those numbers pale compared to the W12's 616bhp and 590lb ft, the claimed 0-60mph in 4.9sec and top speed of 183mph should be adequate. The Flying Spur V8 costs from £136,000, around £14,000 less than the W12, and is a bit lighter, too. Don't get too excited, it's still 2425kg.



With modest 19in wheels and a paint colour a million miles away from the brash schemes beloved of people who run around after a ball and fall over a lot at weekends, our test car is about as restrained as a 5.3-metre saloon with a huge wire mesh grille can be. Inside, the quality in every little detail, the tactility of the materials and the sense of opulence is shamefully pleasing. In terms of technology it's not a patch on, say, the new Mercedes S-class (and the satnav is still terrible), but there's a timelessness about it that is hard to beat.

Dynamically though, the Flying Spur is resolutely not sporting. At all. It's bloody fast, the V8 is a really sweet, progressive engine and the eight-speed automatic gearbox is just about quick enough – although it lacks the precision and speed of the same 'box in cars like the F-type R Coupe – but it's not a car to hustle or to carry speed into corners in. There are clues to its relaxed brief immediately: the elevated driving position, the gearshift paddles being a stretch too far to use comfortably and the light, slightly vague steering. These subtle messages

tell you not to expect the surprising agility and body control of a Continental GT.

Having said that, the ride quality from the air suspension is never as smooth as you might expect. You feel little surface ripples shudder up through the structure and there's a bit of steering kickback over bigger lumps and bumps, too. Dial the suspension to its stiffest of four settings and it feels more composed, and although there's plenty of body roll, vertical body movements are kept well in check and you can storm along at quite a pace. The engine doesn't quite have the ever-ready torque of the W12 but it sounds great and has a free-revving top-end delivery that's more enjoyable.

In terms of ultimate balance, the all-wheel-drive Flying Spur tends towards understeer but will exit a corner with a hint of oversteer if you get the V8 spinning hard. I dare you to try it... Most of the time you'll sit back, relax and be swept along. It's not the fastest or the most sophisticated car, but it's a glorious way to get around if you're not in a hurry.

Jethro Bovingdon (@JethroBovingdon)

 Engine
 V8, 3997cc, twin-turbo

 CO2
 254g/km

 Power
 500bhp @ 6000rpm

 Torque
 486lb ft @ 1700rpm

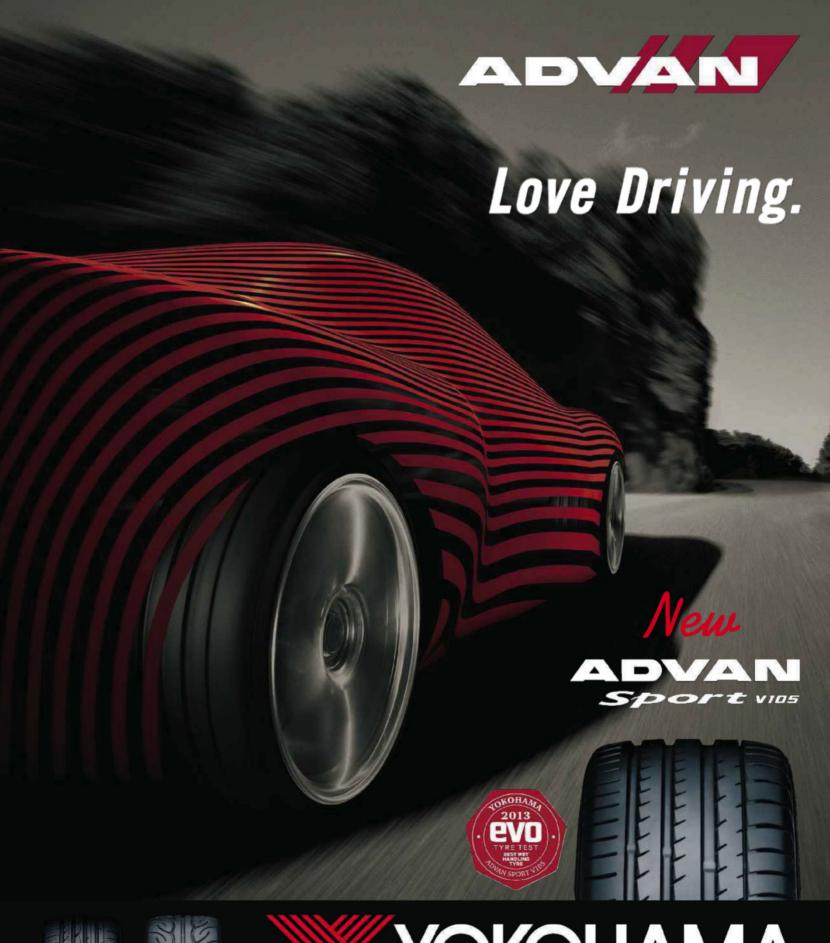
 Performance
 5.2sec (claimed 0-62mph), 183mph (claimed)

 Weight
 2425kg (209bhp/ton)

 Basic price
 £136,000

#### evo rating: $\star\star\star\star$

Quality; effortless performance with a real top-end kick
 Ride not as pillowy as you'd expect, determinedly unsporting









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



W

WITH A COMBINED torque output of 560lb ft, the Volkswagen Golf GTD and BMW 220d could out-pull a McLaren 650S. There are

benefits to drinking from the black pump – notably in torque output, fuel economy and CO2 emissions – and for buyers with even half an interest in the thrill of driving, the GTD and 220d are the two most appealing four-cylinder diesels on the market.

Volkswagen bills the GTD as one third of its hot-Golf triumvirate, alongside the petrol-powered GTI and R models. Apart from the grille accent being chrome rather than red and the different wheels, exhaust tips and badging, the GTD looks exactly like a GTI, which is to say handsome and purposeful. Its 2-litre engine falls 36bhp short of its petrol stablemate, but it counters with an additional 22lb ft of torque. The GTI remains the quicker car because of the narrow band in which the GTD — inevitably — returns the bulk of its torque, but there's no doubt the diesel model is a sprightly performer. According to VW's figures it should cover an extra 20 miles for each gallon of fuel, too.

The BMW's power and torque outputs match the GTD's figures, but its rear-wheel-drive layout gives it a 0.3-second advantage in the 0-62mph sprint. The claimed top speed for both is 143mph, and just £100 separates the two in the favour of the Volkswagen. On paper, at least, the margins are almost non-existent.

In basic SE trim this 220d test car lacks the visual purpose of the more expensive M Sport version, and alongside the tough-looking GTD it therefore shrinks into the background a little. The 2-series shape is pretty enough, but the GTD is just that much more menacing. The BMW responds with a more sporting cabin. It may lack the Volkswagen's GTI-inspired flourishes, such as the tartan seat trim and golf ball gearknob, but its driver-centric, coupelike dashboard architecture makes the 220d feel more like a sports car than the GTD. The seating position itself is also more redolent of a sports car, with the seat mounted low to the floor and the steering wheel offered towards the driver's chest.

The Golf's interior feels slightly lower-rent in places with some hard and scratchy plastics





**Above:** Golf is precise despite lack of steering feel. **Right:** rear-driven BMW allows for some cornering fun



away from the primary points of contact, while the 220d's cabin feels tougher with higher quality materials. BMW has also refined its iDrive interface to a point where it is more intuitive to navigate and easier to use on the go than the Golf's touchscreen system. With more rear legroom, a hatchback boot and the option of four doors, the Golf will be more practical in day-to-day use, though.

Once on the move the Golf quickly announces itself as the more focused of the pair. It rides with a sense of solidity and a distinct firmness, while the 220d is more fluid and pliant. In fact, the GTD's busy ride over smaller imperfections could well prove tiresome for those with more conservative tastes. That aside, the GTD



Above: 2-litre turbodiesel engines in both the 220d and Golf GTD produce identical outputs of 181bhp and 280lb ft

and 220d are both refined and long-legged motorway tools.

That taut ride pays off when the road becomes more interesting, though, for the Golf always feels like the better-supported and more precise of the two. Both have firmer suspension modes that do a good job of sharpening each car's responses, but the BMW's damping is always geared towards comfort rather than control. The 220d does get out of shape earlier than the GTD on an undulating road, but in truth both reach their limits much sooner than their more overtly sporting, petrol-powered counterparts would. Through sheer tyre grip and stability they carry impressive speed down a road, although both have remote steering that never really communicates.

While the Volkswagen feels more precise and agile because of its firmer set-up, the BMW soon reveals a fundamental cornering balance – a result of its rear-wheel-drive layout – that its rival can't replicate. If its driver is willing to be foolish it can be tipped into slight oversteer in medium-speed corners, but even with a more sensible approach you can still enjoy the eternal sensation of a well-balanced, rear-wheel-drive car. It's the artifice of a firm ride and supportive seats versus an inherent chassis balance.



# 'Both cars feel impressively strong in the mid-range with enough roll-on performance to dismiss most traffic'

Below: BMW's Drive Performance Control affects the accelerator response and (if fitted) adaptive suspenson. Bottom: Driver Profile Selection does similar things in the Golf





With 280lb ft of torque apiece, both cars feel impressively strong in the mid-range with enough roll-on performance to dismiss most traffic. There is no pleasure to be had from working either engine terribly hard, though, for both are just as gruff and uncultured as any four-cylinder diesel would be. The Golf seems to pull a little harder from lower in the rev range (despite the figures suggesting that the BMW reaches its torque peak sooner), the 220d revs a little freer through the mid-range, and both keel over into a flat, gutless top end. Some things will never change. The Golf's gearshift action is more mechanical than the slick, overlight VW Group manual gearboxes of recent times, while the BMW's is smoother and less notchy than some from the same stable.

If we're discussing this pair in sporting terms, the 220d does trail the GTD for styling and sense of purpose when on the move. Those criticisms are swiftly deflected by the M Sport version, though, which costs £2350 more than this SE model and comes with aggressive body styling and a firmer set-up. Combined with the 2-series' fundamental balance that would make for an overall package that holds more appeal than the GTD, if only by a small margin.

Ultimately, both cars are held back by lifeless steering and their unsatisfying diesel drivetrains. Nonetheless, of all the sporting four-cylinder diesel cars on the market, the Golf GTD and 220d are the most convincing of the bunch.

Dan Prosser (@TheDanProsser)

#### VW GOLF GTD

Engine
CO2
Power
Torque
Performance
Weight
Basic price

In-line 4-cyl, 1968cc, turbodiesel 109g/km 181bhp @ 3500rpm 280lb ft @ 2500rpm 7.5sec (claimed 0-62mph), 143mph (claimed)

1377kg (134bhp/ton)

£25,765

#### evo rating: ★★★★☆

- Styling, economy, eager chassis
- Uncultured diesel engine

#### BMW 220d

In-line 4-cyl, 1995cc, turbodiesel 119-125g/km 181bhp @ 4000rpm 280lb ft @ 1750-2750rpm 7.2sec (claimed 0-62mph), 143mph (claimed)

1375kg (134bhp/ton)

£25,865

evo rating: ★★★★☆

- Chassis balance, economy, interior
- Bland styling, uncultured diesel engine



#### ALL-NEW MAZDA 3. BOOK YOUR TEST DRIVE TODAY.

At Mazda, we know that challenging conventional thinking can lead to incredible results and SKYACTIV Technology is proof of that. Completely redesigned from the ground up, we've designed a lighter, stiffer chassis to deliver a better driving experience and combined it with a 120ps petrol engine that returns an impressive 55.4mpg.



The official fuel consumption figures in mpg (I/100km) for the Mazda3 range: Urban 37.7 (7.5) - 60.1 (4.7), Extra Urban 58.9 (4.8) - 80.7 (3.5), Combined 48.7 (5.8) - 72.4 (3.9).  $CO_2$  emissions (g/km) 135 - 104.

The mpg figures quoted are sourced from official EU-regulated test results obtained through laboratory testing, are provided for comparability purposes and may not reflect your actual driving experience.

\*Offer available to individuals for orders received between 01.07.2014 and 30.09.2014. Figures based on Mazda Personal Contract Hire on a non-maintenance contract hire package over 42 months and 9,000 miles per year (max). Monthly payment example: an advance rental of £1,592.00 is payable, equal to 8 monthly payments, then 41 monthly rentals of £199.00 for an all-new Mazda3 120ps SE without metallic paint. Rentals and excess charges are based on the current VAT rate. An excess charge of up to 11.87ppm will be applied for mileage in excess of 9,000 mile p.a. Excess charges also apply if the car is not serviced and maintained in accordance with manufacturer guidelines and returned to Mazda Contract Hire in a condition commensurate with the BVRLA Fair Wear & Tear guidelines for its age and mileage. Package includes R.F.L. and Mazda Roadside Assistance. Offer subject to availability and status. UK supplied vehicles only. For full specifications, details, terms and conditions, contact your local retailer. Guarantee and/or indemnity may be required. Applicants must be 18 or over. Details correct at time of publication and may vary, e.g. if its price changes. Personal contract hire by ALD Automotive Ltd., trading as Mazda Contract Hire, Oakwood Park, Lodge Causeway, Fishponds, Bristol BS16 3JA. Model shown with monthly payment: all-new Mazda3 120ps SE, OTR from £17,295. Model shown features optional Soul Red Metallic paint (£660). On-the-road prices include 20% VAT, number plates and 3 years' European Roadside Assistance.

# Simulations

The latest news, kit and reviews from the world of driving games

Words: Matthew Havward



## **MOTION SIMULATION TL1 & TL3**

**Price:** from £20.000 **From:** motionsimulation.com

THESE POD ARE self-contained simulators including a projector screen, a high-spec gaming PC and a solidly mounted adjustable seat with steering wheel and pedals. The party trick with the premium TL3 model, meanwhile, is the addition of articulation to the seat, providing simulation of pitch, roll and heave motions.

When spending upwards of £20k on hardware, most people would expect a certain amount of wow factor, and that's certainly something these clever pods have in bucketloads. The composite outer shell looks absolutely fantastic, and as you walk around to the back, surprisingly inviting too.

Jonathan Bell, the brains behind Motion Simulation, offered us a go in the TL3, which is in its final stages of development, but to ensure I had a solid benchmark, my first run would be in the current flagship TL1 unit. One of Motion Simulation's USPs is its adjustable seat, which unlike more conventional bucket seats gives a number of different positions – from a GT or rally car's bolt upright settings to the much lower and reclined single-seater angle.

Once in, you really appreciate why that pod design is so brilliant. Projectors onto the inner walls of the unit, giving a 200-degree field of vision. After showing me the different seating configurations, I climbed on board, and was pleased to find an abundance of legroom and adjustability in the seat.

After the first few laps it all starts to fall into place and you can really push. The pedal box is solidly mounted, which is great as you need to exert a decent amount of force to make the most of the hydraulic brake pedal.

display a huge 5760 x 1080-pixel image



For our test we were running iRacing, although most software options can be catered for through the Windows 7 or XP operating systems.

Once comfortable that I was running a reasonable pace, it was time to drive the TL3. The differences in the TL3 don't instantly make themselves apparent. It's fundamentally the same set-up, but as soon as you drive out of the pits, the movement in the seat is surprising in its ferocity and speed. After about 10 to 15 minutes of driving, however, you dial into the simulator and it feels almost completely natural. Compared to the TL1, the added pitch, roll and heave give you an even greater sense of immersion. Quite frankly, it puts the TL3 into a different league.

Bell also went through some of the company's future plans, which include a fully functioning cockpit for a flight simulator, and a few different options, including cheaper entry-level models comprising the seat on its own. The real beauty is that these guys can pretty much build anything you desire, and the unit has been designed to fit through a standard household doorway when disassembled. It even runs off a single 13-amp plug for convenience.

Prices for the entry-level units run from £6000, while the top-of-the range TL3 should come in at below £30.000 when it goes on sale later this year.



#### **Peripherals**



#### **FERRARI 458 SPIDER RACING WHEEL**

Price: £83.95 **From:** thrustmaster.com Designed for use on the Xbox One, this officially licensed 7:10-scale replica of the Ferrari 458's steering wheel is powered by Thrustmaster's 'Bungee Cord' mechanism, which sounds fun...



#### **iPHONE POWERSHELL CONTROLLER**

Price: £59.99 From: logitech.com Struggling to get on with using the touchscreen for games on your iOS device? Logitech's PowerShell controller gives you proper buttons, as well as a handy built-in battery booster pack.



#### **TURTLE BEACH EAR FORCE** 7 SEVEN HEADSET

Price: £229.99 From: turtlebeach.com To save family and neighbours the tyre-screeching sound effects often associated with late-night gaming sessions, this headset offers professional-quality sound, with on-board digital processing and customisable audio presets.

# Every one of our tyres is a special edition.













**EfficientGrip** 

**EfficientGrip** 

Eagle F1 Performance | Asymmetric 2 **EfficientGrip** SUV

Eagle F1 Asymmetric SUV



Congratulations to evo on your 200th edition. It's a real achievement - and we know a thing or two about them. One of our proudest was winning evo's Summer Tyre Test in 2013 with our Eagle F1 Asymmetric 2 tyre.



Watches

This month, the McLaren and Mercedes F1 teams and Porsche's Le Mans racer are celebrated

**Words:** Simon de Burton

#### TAG Heuer Carrera McLaren 1974 Edition

Price: £4500 From: tagheuer.com

Marking 40 years since McLaren's first F1 titles, this version of the ever-popular Carrera chronograph gets the '1887' self-winding movement with vertical sub-dials. Special McLaren touches include orange highlights on the top push piece and the central seconds and chronograph hands, while the bezel and sapphire crystal back carry anniversary engraving. The stopwatch-style dial (marked in seconds, rather than hours) might take some getting used to, but the white finish works well, especially in contrast with the tyre-tread rubber strap.

#### Chopard Superfast Chrono Porsche 919

Price: £8320 From: chopard.com

We announced Chopard's backing of Porsche Motorsport in **evo** 196, since when Le Mans has been and gone, the 919 didn't perform as well as many expected – and Chopard has unveiled a special-edition watch. It's based on the standard Superfast, so gets a 45mm case and flyback movement. The differences are the vertical grid pattern on the dial, the '919' logo and an oscillating weight (visible through the case back) inscribed with 'Official Timing Partner Porsche Motorsport'. Just 919 will be made, all with 'slick tyre' rubber straps.

# IWC Ingenieur Automatic Carbon Performance

Price: £16.400 From: iwc.com

IWC has expanded its Ingenieur range, developed as part of its link with the Mercedes F1 team, with the introduction of this new model replete with F1-style materials. That means a 46mm carbon case, a carbon dial, a mirror-finished ceramic bezel and a titanium case back and screws. Further motorsport imagery is provided by the piston-shaped automatic winding rotor and the rubber-lined calfskin strap with green stitching to evoke the sidewall stripes on wetweather race tyres. Just 1000 will be available.

#### Now & Then

#### NOW Oris

#### Worn by: Dindo Capello

Three-time Le Mans winner Capello raced for Audi from 1994 to 2012 and is now a brand ambassador for the marque. Oris recently became the official watch partner of Audi Sport's WEC and DTM teams, so Capello now wears various Oris models.



### THEN

#### Rolex Reference 2508 Chronograph

Worn by: Peter Scott-Russell

Originally acquired by David Brown in 1947, the year he bought Aston Martin, this piece is believed to have passed through works driver Peter Collins to current owner Scott-Russell. It recently appeared at auction in Monaco with a €25,000 (c£20,000) pre-sale estimate.



#### Watch tech

# The indestructible watch?



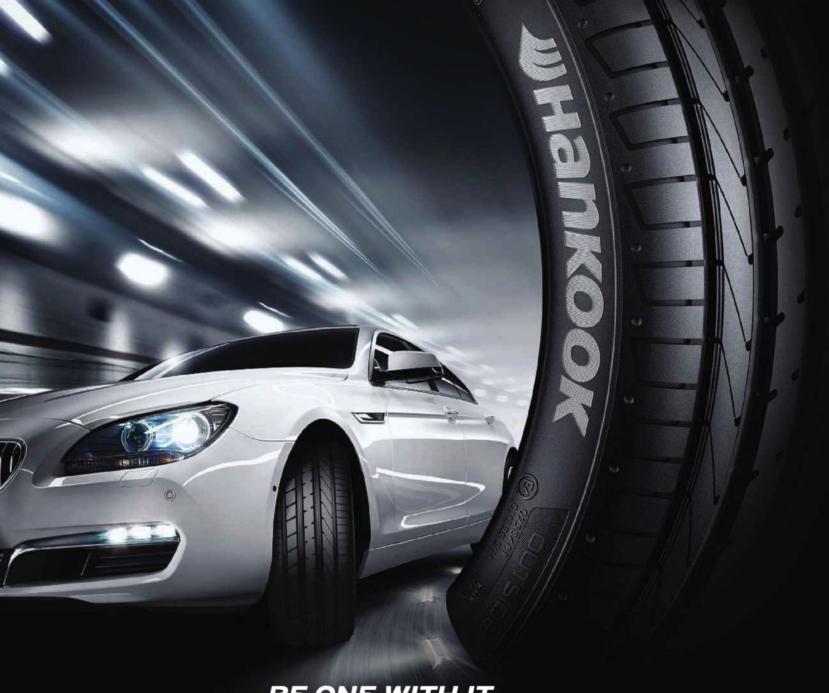
There are plenty of watches on the market which are claimed to be shockproof, dustproof, waterproof, heatproof, antimagnetic and so on, but hands up who has worn a supposedly tough 'tool watch' while delving into the innards of an engine bay, only for it to emerge freshly scratched?

It's for people like us that Victorinox decided to mark its 25 years in the watch game by introducing the INOX, said to be just about the toughest timepiece on the market. Prototypes have (allegedly) survived being run over by tanks, falling onto concrete from a great height and being left in sandstorms for two hours. The quartz-powered INOX is also waterproof down to 200 metres, capable of operating from -51deg C to +71deg C, and virtually immune to damage by regular solvents and chemicals.

Part of its strength lies in its 43mm case being milled from a single block of steel, its one-piece dial carrying stamped indexes rather than applied ones (so they can't fall off) and the pinion holding the hands being reinforced. The crown is protected with substantial shoulders and the sapphire crystal is recessed below the level of the bezel to reduce scratching, while the strap lugs are solid, as on military-issue watches.

And, just to be sure, the INOX is supplied with a quick-fit over-dial 'bumper' made from nylon and silicon. And all this for £329. It's out on September 1.





# **BE ONE WITH IT**

Be one with your tyres, and the road will be one with you.



Kinergy Eco 195/65 R15 V



KINERGYECO

Provides fortified fuel efficiency and wet braking performance enabled by the revolutionary technology of nano-scale silica particles









**NO SHIELD** 

SHIEL

Now available at

halfords

A MOTOR STORES

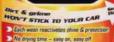
& other good accessory shops

#### DIRT AND GRIME WON'T STICK TO YOUR CAR

Armor All<sup>®</sup> Shield is even better than a wax. Its revolutionary formula forms a protective shield against the elements so dirt and grime won't stick to your car. Once applied, each wash reactivates shine and protection for up to 10 washes guaranteed. Can your wax do this? Now available at Halfords, A1 Motor Stores and other good accessory shops.

NEW ARMOR ALL® SHIELD WASH - NOW AVAILABLE!







# Meaden sees a revolution for British motorsport on the horizon in the form of more events on closed public roads

A

#### APOLOGIES IF THIS OUTSIDE LINE READS

more like a call to action than a pithy column, but in the 200 issues **evo** has been around, no one single piece of news has got closer to our 'Thrill of Driving' ethos than the British government

pledging its support for more closed-road motorsport in the UK.

We might be the epicentre of F1, but the truth is that until now the inflexibility of our Road Traffic Act has meant we've lagged behind when it comes to real motorsport on real roads. Yes, there are glorious exceptions like the Jim Clark Rally and the nearby Isle of Man TT motorcycle races, but by and large our motorsport scene remains dominated by circuit racing and stage rallying.

Not that there's anything wrong with that, of course, but if you compare it to the diverse array of motorsport that takes place in mainland Europe, the USA and Australia, where events such as the European Hill Climb Championship, Targa Tasmania and Silver State Classic attract such a following and such a broad spread of cars and drivers you can perhaps get a sense of what we've been missing.

So what does the government's backing of closed-road motorsport mean? If you're the mainstream media, it means you fixate on how this exciting and unusually enlightened decision might lead to a Grand Prix on the streets of London or Formula E fizzing around Battersea Park. Either – or both – of those events would be spectacular, but my thoughts immediately turned to the opportunity it affords grassroots motorsport and the tens of thousands of British drivers who hold competition licences. It took me all of five seconds to conclude it could be the biggest boost for UK motorsport in generations.

In idle moments (of which I have many, be they sitting in traffic or behind my laptop locked in mortal combat with writer's block) I've often daydreamed about roads I've driven in the UK that would make fantastic sprint, hill climb, V-max or road race venues. It won't surprise you to learn many of these form the backbone of evo's test routes, but there are plenty of others, from short, sinuous, tree-lined ascents in leafy Surrey to arrow-straight bypasses and labyrinthine trading estates in countless areas of urban sprawl from Maidstone to Motherwell. I'm sure most of you have your own fantasy stages or circuits. What's so exciting about the government's announcement is that with sufficient energy, planning and investment from organising clubs and local authorities, some of these dreams could actually be made real.

It's not all plain sailing, though. Take a look through the lengthy Proposal to Authorise Motor Sport Events on Public Roads, and the equally detailed Impact Assessment that followed its approval (visit gov.uk and search for 'motor sport') and it's clear

there's considerable support from local authorities and regional police forces. They also share a sensibly pragmatic view on how closed-road events can and should be run, and how they might minimise or mitigate any traffic disruption or noise pollution. However, there are some valid concerns. Foremost amongst those is the fear that allowing motor racing on closed public roads will mean drivers and riders will be drawn to those roads and succumb to the red mist. As I once wrote a book entitled 'Classic Motorsport Routes: 30 Legendary Routes You Can Drive Today' (now available in all good bargain bins) I'm hardly in a position to counter the suggestion that stretches of public roads with connections to motorsport possess a certain magnetic quality. Unfortunately you'll always have idiots who act without

# 'When it comes to reckless acts of copycat driving, Vin Diesel has more to answer for than Vic Elford'

thought or care, but motorsport is rarely, if ever, the inspiration. I'd certainly suggest when it comes to reckless acts of copycat driving, Vin Diesel has more to answer for than Vic Elford.

While it's true that certain sections of the media will be only too eager to pounce upon any illegal racing-related accidents, it's my feeling that the most likely and suitable locations for closed-road events will either be in urban or inner-city areas, where speed enforcement is already draconian, or in isolated areas that are sufficiently off the beaten track to be too much effort for cretins and troublemakers to find. Either way I don't envisage a wave of recklessness sweeping the nation's roads. Nor, it seems, do the government, local authorities and regional police forces, or else the proposal would not have gained such a high level of support.

So, if you've always promised yourself that you'd get a Motor Sports Association competition licence, do it! Then you can stop fighting the urge to buy a weekend car, share it – and the costs – with a mate, then use it for sprinting or hill climbing. Who knows, you might even take part in one of the estimated 20-odd new closed-road motorsport events the MSA predicts will take place in the next few years as a direct result of the government's support. See you out there.

🕒 @DickieMeaden

Richard is a contributing editor of **evo** and one of the magazine's founding team

# URBAN TRUCK

Tel: 01908 366788



URBAN TRUCK specification is available on all 90 and 110 derivitives. All vehicles are brand new with delivery miles, VAT qualifying and exportable to certain countries. For more details and high resolution images please visit our website. We aim to deliver exceptional quality alongside amazing value, our terms agreement with Land Rover direct gives us guaranteed access to stock across the 90 and 110 range between now and the end of production.

# Petrolhead

by RICHARD PORTER



# To celebrate 200 issues of **evo**, Porter provides an insight to the less-publicised parts of its history



#### AS EVO REACHES ITS MOMENTOUS

200th issue, it seems the right time to share some amazing and lesser-known facts about the world's best car magazine that doesn't feel the need to write that on the cover:

**evo** was originally meant to be a magazine about Australian men, called **stevo**.

Legend has it that if you say **evo** backwards 50 times in front of a mirror, John Barker will appear and accidentally tell you the winner of eCoty.

**evo** is named not after fast cars such as variants of the Mitsubishi Lancer, Lancia Delta Integrale and Ford RS200, but after mildmannered computer programmer Ian Eveleigh, who was eventually so embarrassed by this that he had to take a job as the magazine's production editor.

**evo** co-founder Richard Meaden once developed an impressive new oversteer cornering technique dubbed 'power into entry system' or 'PIES'.

**evo** was originally meant to be a magazine about opera singers called **divo**.

In 2001 **evo** hired a dedicated sunglasses correspondent, Jethro Bovingdon. He turned out to be quite good at testing and writing about cars so management let him do some of that too.

The 2009 **evo** Trackday Car of the Year shootout was delayed after the entire office supply of race suits was ruined by a moth that had escaped from founder Harry Metcalfe's wallet.

Undertaking a work experience placement at **evo** can lead to greater things. Former workies include Sébastien Loeb, who went on to win the World Rally Championship nine times, Giorgetto Giugiaro, who went on to design the Lotus Esprit, and Mika Häkkinen, who was already a double Formula 1 world champion but was a bit bored and fancied two weeks making tea and opening post in a small office in Northamptonshire.

Any new staff writer joining **evo** is given extensive driver training to ensure they get the best from a car, and then sent on a course which teaches them how to affect a steely-eyed, head-tilted look in driving photos known as 'helmsman's face'.

**evo** was originally intended to be a magazine about American motorcycle stuntmen, called **evil knievo**.

Issue 150 of **evo** is infamous for binning the usual highquality photography and hiring an artist to render every car in oils. Unfortunately, most of the models featured had gone out of production by the time he finished.

Regular readers will be familiar with the network of north Walian roads known as the **evo** Triangle. Less well known are some

of the magazine's other favourite test routes, the **evo** Rhombus, the **evo** Trapezium and the **evo** Sphere, described by one former sportscar racer as 'insanely disorientating'.

**evo** features editor and hirsute discomfort enthusiast Henry Catchpole is so outdoorsy that at night he sleeps in a yard outside the office like a sheepdog.

It's rare that every single member of the **evo** team has a love for one single model. A notable exception to this is the Mitsubishi 3000GT, which everyone would love to set on fire.

In Yorkshire, evo is known as eeeevo.

Former **evo** writers include post-modernist author Milan Kundera who wrote a seminal first drive entitled *The Unbearable Lightness of the Steering in the Jaguar XKR-S* and erotic novelist

# 'The **evo** office is actually a **large**, **flat-six-powered Portakabin** that endlessly laps the Bedford Autodrome'

EL James whose famous work *Fifty Shades of Grey* was originally a hard-hitting column about the Audi colour range.

The **evo** office is actually a large, flat-six-powered Portakabin that endlessly laps the Bedford Autodrome. New staffers are put on a probation period during which they are assessed on timekeeping, writing accuracy and ability not to vomit into the recycling bin.

In 2010 the magazine set up a female-biased spin off called **shevo**. It was exactly the same as **evo**, except with a hair tie around the gearlever.

Every year around eCoty time, Porsche allegedly sends a brown envelope full of money to people on the internet, in return for continually mentioning the company's name as they moan about the result.

**evo** was originally going to be a magazine dedicated to crewing a 16th-century pirate ship, called **heaveho**.

This is actually the 201st issue of **evo**, if you count the infamous 'lost' edition from 2011 which had to be scrapped after it was found to contain a feature in which the words 'helm', 'nuggety' and 'skids' all appeared in the same sentence and was therefore considered too annoying to read.

Here's to the next 201 issues! ■



Richard has been a columnist for **evo** since issue 052 and is 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 1351 (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"

"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 CYCLINDER DIESEL ENGINES UP TO V12 SUPERCARS:

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 3.45 >> 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 (+DF-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

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 F90 >> 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 for more info

#### **EXOTIC / MISC**

FERRARI CALIFORNIA » 487 BHP FERRARI 599 33 647 RHP 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 for more info AUDI RS6 4.0 T V8 Please call for more info 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.

WORLDWIDE OFFICES AND INSTALLATION: UK » IRFLAND » FUROPE USA » ASIA » AUSTRALIA » S.AFRICA

#### E: SALES@DMSAUTOMOTIVE.COM

/DMSAUTOMOTIVE FOLLOW US FOR OUR LATEST NEWS!

WWW.DMSAUTOMOTIVE.COM

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









#### Owner of all 200 issues of evo, Dario looks back on the major role magazines have played in his obsession with motoring



#### WITH EVO CELEBRATING ITS 200TH

issue I've found myself thinking about car magazines and motoring media in general. As far back as I can remember, there were always car and motor racing magazines in the house because

my dad was a huge car fan. For a long time they were all I would read, much to the dismay of my English teacher. It was definitely my dad who ignited my passion for cars, but there's no doubt that magazines fuelled it.

When I was very small we would go and visit my grandparents' house in Italy. I can clearly remember that there were copies of Motor Sport magazine there. I was too young to read them at the time, but I would waste hours just looking at the pictures. Those magazines are still there, actually, and I happily pass time flicking through them to this day.

As I started to get closer to driving age during the late 1980s I would read magazines more and more. This was the decade when power outputs and performance figures (or at least the claims...) really seemed to be getting out of hand. It was a Top Trumps mentality and I was so in awe of it all. There were top speed claims that you just couldn't imagine and acceleration times that didn't seem plausible. Of course, those figures

would look tame by modern standards, but back then they seemed so exciting.

These days I buy the same 10 or 15 car and racing magazines each month. I'm as guilty as anybody of hoarding magazines. I've got a room in my house that's just full of them; shelf upon shelf of copies of evo (I've got a complete collection!), Octane, Motor Sport, the specialist Ferrari and Porsche titles and others. They're even sorted in date order...

There's nothing like poring over a magazine collection. While I was recovering from my accident I would spend days hobbling around that room, pulling out magazines and looking back at old road tests. One of the weeklies from years ago had a Porsche 968 Turbo S and a Ferrari 348 Spider on the cover. The story said that the Ferrari was the best thing ever and the Porsche was a heap of junk. It's curious how attitudes can change over time, because most would agree that the opposite is true now. That's part of the fun of digging around a magazine collection.

I also like to play a sadistic game with my old magazines: I'll pull one off the shelf and flick to the classified pages to see how much cheaper certain cars were a few years ago. I suggest you give it a go. It's amazing, if not a little upsetting, to see how cheap a Porsche 911 2.7 RS was a couple of decades ago compared to how much they're worth now, or how much a Ferrari F50 has risen in value in just a few years. You could get a 250 GTO for nothing not too long ago!

The internet is changing the way we consume motoring media and my reading habits have changed as a result; I read a lot of car stuff online these days. I'll look at the forums to see what people are chatting about and, of course, it's only too easy to slide over to the classifieds from there. I've also killed day after day just watching car videos. Internet video is the perfect medium for cars and car enthusiasts. Go to YouTube and search 'Novitec Lamborghini Aventador' and tell me that's not the best-sounding car ever. For me, that demonstrates how brilliantly cars can come across in video in a way that they never could in print.

My favourite type of article will always be the road-trip story. Some time back in the '80s the writer would go to Ferrari

## 'The '80s was when performance figures really seemed to be getting out of hand. It was a Top Trumps mentality and I was so in awe of it all'

or Lamborghini to collect a car and drive it back to the UK, for instance. Some of the trips the evo guys go on now and the places they explore really are incredible. That sort of thing just really captures my imagination, perhaps because I love going on road trips myself, or maybe it's because they go somewhere I had never thought of going before. When the car isn't perfectly suited to the journey it just makes it seem like even more of an adventure, which is true both in print and in reality.

Magazines have definitely played a significant role in my motoring life. Back when I was a kid the one car that I couldn't get enough of in magazines was the F40. From the very first spy shots I just knew I had to have one, but that seemed like an impossible dream at the time. I remember some of the American magazines were slating it before it came out, saying it was just cashing in on the Ferrari brand. How wrong they were.

I was 15 or 16 when I first read about the F40. Here was a car that, as far as I knew, I would never get to drive, but one particular story put me right in the driver's seat and allowed me to actually experience the F40. For me, that will always be what car magazines are all about.

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

# EXPERIENCE THE POWER Akrapovič exhaust systems





Audi

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.



T: 0845 68 09 342 | info@peron-automotive.co.uk | www.peron-automotive.co.uk









# Who won't be seeing your tweets this month?



## Bernie in denial?

In Ed Speak in evo 199, Nick Trott asks whether F1 and especially Bernie Ecclestone should embrace social media. As an old-fashioned 50-year-old with a hatred of said social media, I firmly believe that the sport has to embrace it.

Ecclestone's refusal to buy in, citing lack of profit, seems to fly in the face of not only most other sports but also the vast majority of businesses as well. These brands (for want of a better word) use the medium to build awareness of their company, especially with the young, which is something that Formula 1 cannot afford to miss out on. F1 definitely needs its own Facebook and Twitter sites on which it can post the latest pictures and comments, the Silverstone accident involving Kimi Räikkönen being an obvious example.

I wonder whether Ecclestone believes social media is an unproven bubble to be ignored rather than taken advantage of. Yet by doing so he risks alienating not only the teams but current and future sponsors.

Ian Davies



#### The Letter of the Month wins an Elliot Brown watch

This month's star letter writer receives an Elliot Brown Canford 202-002 (pictured), worth £500. It has a black PVD brushed stainless steel case and has been individually tested in water to 200m water resistance.

**ELLIOT BROWN®** 



www.elliotbrownwatches.com

#### Holiday snap

Having saved my copy of **evo** 198 for the flight to my holiday in Majorca, imagine my joy at reading Catchpole's adventure in the new Porsche Boxster GTS... in Majorca.

Leaving the apartment outside Palma at 5 o'clock one morning for a quick blast up to the top of the island before attacking the route to the lighthouse, I can't say the Hyundai i30 hire car gave me the same thrill as the GTS, but it wasn't for lack of trying! The drops, twists and goats certainly give the roads unrivalled character.

Upon arrival at the lighthouse. not only were we treated to a visit from the ginger tom cat but also an amazing sunrise. Thank you for sharing this hidden gem with us to enjoy!

Sam Alsop

#### Loved and lost

I enjoyed Dickie Meaden's article on cars becoming commodities (Outside Line, evo 197). It hit home with me as I recently sold my 2000 BMW Z8.

Ownership had become bittersweet. I was starting to drive it less and less as I was concerned about putting miles on it, and also knew I had it underinsured, so worried it might get T-boned by a Dodge Dart. With values on their way skyward, I decided to get when the getting was good. It sold in a week to a dealer in Germany, where prices are rocketing up.

I still have a weekend car – a Ferrari 575M – but not one that's attracting silly money. And I still miss the Z8. Earle Vance, Niagara-on-the-

#### Aston thriller

Lake, Canada

The news that Aston Martin is to receive growing Mercedes investment



Above: Jennifer Smith has warmed to the idea of Mercedes-powered Aston Martins

and hardware initially had me quivering at the thought of the next DB9 becoming diluted as a recycled SLS (or worse, SL) replete with uncouth AMG exhaust note. This demeanour may suit the Vantage but is unbefitting of the suave GT and would fool nobody.

Since then, however, with reports of shareholder investment in a nextgeneration VH platform, specifically engineered AMG V8s and the best electronic systems going, I'm full of enthusiasm for Aston's future. Just imagine a new-generation DB9 family with partial electric running and torque-fill. Considering the current situation of ageing engines manufactured by Ford, this new dawn looks encouraging, especially when considering what AMG did for the Zonda

As with many of our premium brands in Britain, we can design and build stunning cars like no one else but require German overlords to steer us in the right direction. Whereas many bemoan this fact, I think we should gladly accept and embrace it. It's a great formula that has significantly contributed to the growth of our motor industry, and one that Aston is set to benefit from in the long term.

Jennifer Smith

#### If the cap fits...

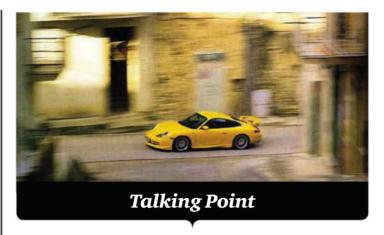
Interesting reading about the distributor cap issue Nick Trott had with his 911 (Fast Fleet, evo 199). I had a 1988 3.2 Carrera for ten years, and one day a similar thing happened on a favourite back road. The RAC came to the rescue and diagnosed moisture in the distributor. Best solution is to buy a new one: the car felt livelier afterwards!

**Paul Cheung** 



**Above:** Sam Alsop was one of a few readers to retrace Catchpole's tracks in Majorca





## Your dream drive

Last month we took a Ferrari F40 to the Alps for the drive of a lifetime. So we asked you: what would your perfect car and location combination be?

A McLaren F1 to experience the central driving position in a road car. Locationwise, round Le Mans would be fun – part-road, part-track.

#### JonMad

Pan-American Highway. Dream car for it would be a mildly fettled '64 Impala SS (this is subject to change).

#### zedleg

A 458 Speciale on a loop from/to southern Switzerland via Italy and France. Limone Piemonte to Route Napoleon, then up past Grenoble to Megève and back via Chamonix and several Alpine passes – with unlimited budget for tyres, brakes, hotels and restaurants...

#### Piro

San Sebastián to Girona, zig-zagging over the Pyrenees in a BAC Mono.

#### damo.666

Eagle E-type roadster in the Alps. With the *Italian Job* music playing on a loop. I know it's not correct but it's my fantasy.

#### Barry

Any of the Alpine passes in an F430 Scuderia Spider 16M would be perfect!

#### McSwede

F50 or Carrera GT. No roof. Mountain roads, preferably in Norway where there would lots of tunnels involved.

#### Twig

A 250 GTO around Monaco.

Paul1985

As I'm a family man, I'll have to pick the sensible choice: Ferrari FF and the whole route structure of Europe would just about be big enough. See you in a year!

#### IanF

Alfa Romeo 8C Spider from the UK to Tivat, Montenegro. A fantastic combination of driving roads combined with wonderful scenery and the noise and looks of the 8C.

#### Jackleg

I wouldn't mind driving a 991 GT3 round the Targa Florio course, much like Dickie Meaden did years ago in a 996 GT3 (**evo** 028) [pictured].

#### Marv

I would take a new F-type Coupe up Glen Coe from Green Welly to Fort William then up to Mallaig, perhaps round the ends of Loch Ness then up to Dunnet Head.

#### Daddydadbo

Daddydadbo is bang on the money for location – Glen Coe through to Fort William – but my choice of car would be an Aston Martin DBS. Also a Lamborghini Aventador would do nicely exploring Bologna.

#### 27Gilles

Honda NSX-R on Mount Harunafuji. **Bunta** 

E39 M5 from NY to LA in 27 hours, or Texarkana to Georgia in a TransAm with a moustache and a cowboy hat.

Jimmy Choo

#### Next month

This month we've created an **evo** 'ultracar' from our favourite parts of a host of models. Which bits of other cars would you borrow for your perfect machine?

Email your thoughts to letters@evo.co.uk, or join the discussion at community.evo.co.uk

From the forums: community.evo.co.uk

## Thread of the Month

BUNTA

# 200 issues: the **evo** forum favorites

What have been your highlights? Harry driving a Lotus 340R up a snowy mountain pass (evo 021), Zonda tailpipes glowing orange after Andy Wallace gave it the beans on the Autobahn (055), and any issue with Russell Bulgin in it – a brilliant writer.

Mine still is the 288 GTO, F40, F50, Enzo group test (**evo** 064).

#### David\_Yu

Too many good ones! Dickie driving the 911 GT3 in Sicily on Targa Florio roads sticks on my mind (028).

#### Marv

Issue 195. Hot Hatch test. Did I mention my car was featured?

#### andybond

I loved the 'whoops' feature where there were confessions of cars that had been stuffed on various mags over the years (053). The 993 Turbo in the ditch, etc.

#### mik

Issue 001. I saw it in Smiths and after a quick scan of the writers' names I realised it was *Performance Car* back at it's peak and I was buzzing! Never missed an issue since.

#### Zonda

All the 'these are the best roads' articles, as I'm a sucker for a road trip.

#### Markcoopers

Catchpole's Swift rallying stories really captured the campaign.

#### Samoht

The Road Racers test with the Impreza WRC is still the stand out for me (144). **dichocice** 

The Grand Challenge [pictured]. **Delphi** 

Issue 22, 'The Test'. First time I realised how special the Zonda was.

#### Rallye666

I've got a list: 288 GTO, F40, F50, Enzo; the Westfield XI build; Henry's rallying exploits; Land's End to John O'Groats in an Elise avoiding motorways; the Grand Challenge; 12C to Africa...

#### Jimmy Choo



# Thread of the Month wins a Road Angel safety camera & blackspot alert device worth £159.99



The originator of the best **evo** forum thread wins a Road Angel Gem+. The Gem+ automatically updates its camera database as you drive and allows users to share the locations of 'live' camera vans.

#### **ROAD ANGEL**



## XXX DRIVE.

# WARRANTY-FRIENDLY UPGRADES FOR YOUR BMW.

Transform your BMW into something special with our range of dedicated engine and suspension upgrades. Our slightly lower and progressively-wound suspension spring kits reduce body roll and enhance handling with no loss of ride quality. And our engine performance upgrades safely release untapped potential for confident overtaking and greater driving pleasure. Both come with our industry-leading warranty solution and can be ordered and fitted at selected BMW dealers around the country.

See our website for details, or call us for your nearest AC Schnitzer dealer.





beyond the standard.

www.ac-schnitzer.co.uk 01485 542000





the best 20 cars we have ever driven will undoubtedly cause debate, and we welcome said debate

(tweet us on @evomagazine or me on @evoNickTrott, or email letters@evo. co.uk). But it has to be said that to a man we're all thoroughly satisfied that the right cars made it through.

The initial idea was to assemble every eCoty winner, but after Jethro nearly turned himself inside-out laughing at the thought of a 911 group test, we sketched out an idea based around the cars that we thought best represented 'The Thrill of Driving'. The phrase 'This is evo' was coined and swiftly became a working, then a real title for the piece. We then moved on to create a list of all the cars we thought qualified.

It was an absurdly long list - you can read more about the cars that didn't quite make it on page 94 - and the task of refining it was rather tortuous. I was keen to concentrate solely on cars that were born or manufactured during the lifespan of **evo** (i.e. the last 16 years) because I'm proud of the fact that evo is a relative newcomer in the world of British motoring magazines, and I'm proud that we're considered the best at assessing modern performance cars. This removed gems such as the 911 2.7 RS and Ferrari F50, but it still didn't shorten the list enough. Eventually, though, the top 20 slowly revealed itself - we didn't have to force it.

And what of Koenigseggs, Veyrons and Huayras? Again, it wasn't an easy decision, but we omitted the 'surreal world' cars because we wanted to describe the process in which the Thrill of Driving interlinks those cars familiar to the majority of our readers. The groups? We chose a mix of cars in each group for that same reason - to investigate what it is that connects these cars. However, we couldn't ignore hypercars entirely, so we sent newbie Dan Prosser to drive arguably our favourite of them all.

But for now, sit back and enjoy four groups of five cars described by arguably the best writers to have graced these pages. Oh, and a story written by me: for some crazy reason I've decided to pen the final test, between the four group winners and one wildcard runner-up, that will decide the overall victor. Gulp.

evo magazine has never attempted to pick its favourite car in 16 years and 200 issues. Until now. Enjoy the ride.

#### THE TOP 20 ———



**CATCHPOLE** 

evo's features editor. adventurer, and allround good egg. Big question: will he fit in the Lotus?



#### **LOTUS** EXIGE S1

Engine In-line 4-cyl, 1796cc Power 192bhp @ 7800rpm Torque 146lb ft @ 5000rpm Weight (kerb) 780kg Power-to-weight 247bhp/ton **0-60mph** 4.6sec (claimed) **Top speed** 136mph (claimed) Price £31,471 (2001)



#### **SUBARU** IMPREZA P1

Engine Flat-four, 1994cc Power 276bhp @ 6500rpm Torque 260lb ft @ 4000rpm Weight (kerb) 1295kg Power-to-weight 216bhp/ton 0-60mph 4.9sec (tested) Top speed 150mph (claimed) Price £37,847 (2000)



#### **JETHRO BOVINGDON**

Contributing editor, highly skilled driver and joker. Big question: which shades will he bring on the test?



#### **MITSUBISHI** EVO VI MÄKINEN

Engine In-line 4-cyl, 1997cc, turbo Power 276bhp @ 6500rpm Torque 275lb ft @ 2750rpm Weight (kerb) 1365kg Power-to-weight 205bhp/ton **0-62mph** 4.6sec (claimed) **Top speed** 150mph (claimed) **Price** £32,995 (2000)



#### **NOBLE M12 GTO-3R**

Engine V6, 2968cc, twin-turbo Power 352bhp @ 6200rpm Torque 350lb ft @ 3500-5000rpm Weight (kerb) 1080kg Power-to-weight 332bhp/ton **0-60mph** 3.8sec (claimed) **Top** speed 170mph (claimed) Price £52,055 (2003)



#### JOHN BARKER

Guest tester, ex-evo editor, V8 Capri owner. Big question: has he still got it? (Big answer: oh yes.)



#### **RENAULTSPORT** MÉGANE R26.R

Engine In-line 4-cyl, 1998cc, turbo Power 227bhp @ 5500rpm Torque 229lb ft @ 3000rpm Weight (kerb) 1220kg Power-toweight 189bhp/ton 0-62mph 6.0sec (claimed) Top speed 147mph (claimed) Price £23,815



#### **AUDI R8 V8**

Engine V8, 4163cc Power 414bhp @ 7800rpm Torque 317lb ft @ 4500rpm Weight (kerb) 1560kg Power-to-weight 270bhp/ton **0-62mph** 4.6sec (claimed) **Top speed** 187mph (claimed) Price £76,725 (2007)



#### RICHARD MEADEN

Contributing editor, ex-evo editor, racer. Big question: where's the other half of him gone?



#### **RENAULTSPORT** CLIO TROPHY

Engine In-line 4-cyl, 1998cc Power 180bhp @ 6500rpm **Torque** 148lb ft @ 5250rpm **Weight** (kerb) 1090kg Power-to-weight 168bhp/ton 0-60mph 6.6sec (tested) Top speed 140mph (claimed) Price £15,500 (2005)



#### **HONDA** INTEGRA TYPE-R

Engine In-line 4-cyl, 1797cc Power 187bhp @ 8000rpm **Torque** 131lb ft @ 7300rpm **Weight** (kerb) 1101kg Power-to-weight 173bhp/ton 0-60mph 6.2sec (claimed) Top speed 145mph (claimed) Price £19,500 (1998)





#### **CATERHAM** 7 SUPERLIGHT R500

Engine In-line 4-cyl, 1796cc Power 230bhp @ 8600rpm Torque 155lb ft @ 7200rpm Weight (kerb) 460kg Power-to-weight 510bhp/ton O-60mph 3.6sec (tested) Top speed 146mph (claimed) Price £37,395 (2004)



#### **BMW** M3 CSL (E46)

Engine In-line 6-cyl, 3246cc Power 355bhp @ 7900rpm Torque 273lb ft @ 4900rpm Weight (kerb) 1385kg Power-to-weight 255bhp/ton 0-60mph 5.3sec (tested) Top speed 155mph (limited) Price £58.455 (2003)



#### **FERRARI** 458 SPECIALE

Engine V8, 4497cc Power 597bhp @ 9000rpm Torque 398lb ft @ 6000rpm Weight (kerb) 1395kg Power-to-weight 435bhp/ ton 0-62mph 3.0sec (claimed) Top speed 202mph+ (claimed) Price £208,065



#### **PORSCHE** 911 GT3 RS (3.8)

Engine Flat-six, 3797cc Power 444bhp @ 7900rpm Torque 317lb ft @ 6750rpm Weight (kerb) 1370kg Power-to-weight 329bhp/ton O-62mph 3.7sec (claimed) Top speed 193mph (claimed) Price £106,870 (2010)



#### **FORD** GT

Engine V8, 5409cc, supercharged Power 550bhp @ 6500rpm Torque 500lb ft @ 3750rpm Weight (kerb) 1583kg Power-to-weight 353bhp/ton 0-60mph 3.7sec (claimed) Top speed 205mph (claimed) Price £125,000 (2005)



#### **FERRARI** 575M

Engine V12, 5748cc Power 508bhp @ 7250rpm Torque 434lb ft @ 5250rpm Weight (kerb) 1730kg Power-to-weight 298bhp/ton O-62mph 4.2sec (claimed) Top speed 202mph (claimed) Price £160,845 (2002)



#### **TVR** TUSCAN CONVERTIBLE (MK3)

Engine In-line 6-cyl, 3605cc Power 350bhp @ 7200rpm Torque 290lb ft @ 5550rpm Weight (kerb) 1100kg Power-to-weight 323bhp/ton 0-60mph 4.5sec (estimate) Top speed 160mph (estimate) Price £39,950 (2005, 4-litre version)



#### **LAMBORGHINI** MURCIÉLAGO LP670-4 SV

Engine V12, 6496cc Power 66lbhp @ 8000rpm Torque 487lb ft @ 6500rpm Weight (dry) 1565kg Power-to-weight (dry) 429bhp/ton 0-60mph 3.2sec (tested) Top speed 212mph (claimed) Price £221,335 (2009)



#### **MERCEDES** SLS AMG BLACK SERIES

Engine V8, 6208cc Power 622bhp @ 7400rpm Torque 468lb ft @ 5500rpm Weight (kerb) 1550kg Power-to-weight 408bhp/ton O-62mph 3.6sec (claimed) Top speed 196mph (claimed) Price £229,985



#### NISSAN GT-R (2014MY)

Engine V6, 3799cc, twin-turbo Power 542bhp @ 6400rpm Torque 466lb ft @ 3200-5800rpm Weight (kerb) 1740kg Power-to-weight 316bhp/ton 0-62mph 2.8sec (claimed) Top speed 196mph (claimed) Price £78,020



#### **PORSCHE CARRERA GT**

Engine V10, 5733cc Power 604bhp @ 8000rpm Torque 435lb ft @ 5750rpm Weight (kerb) 1380kg Power-to-weight 445bhp/ton 0-62mph 3.7sec (claimed) Top speed 205mph (claimed) Price c£323,000 (2004)



#### **LEXUS** LFA

Engine V10, 4805cc Power 552bhp @ 8700rpm Torque 354lb ft @ 6800rpm Weight (kerb) 1480kg Power-to-weight 379bhp/ton O-62mph 3.7sec (claimed) Top speed 202mph (claimed) Price £352,000 (2010)



 $\frac{by \ \mathsf{HENRY} \ \mathsf{CATCHPOLE}}{\mathsf{PHOTOGRAPHY} \ by}$   $\mathsf{MALCOLM} \ \mathsf{GRIFFITHS}$ 



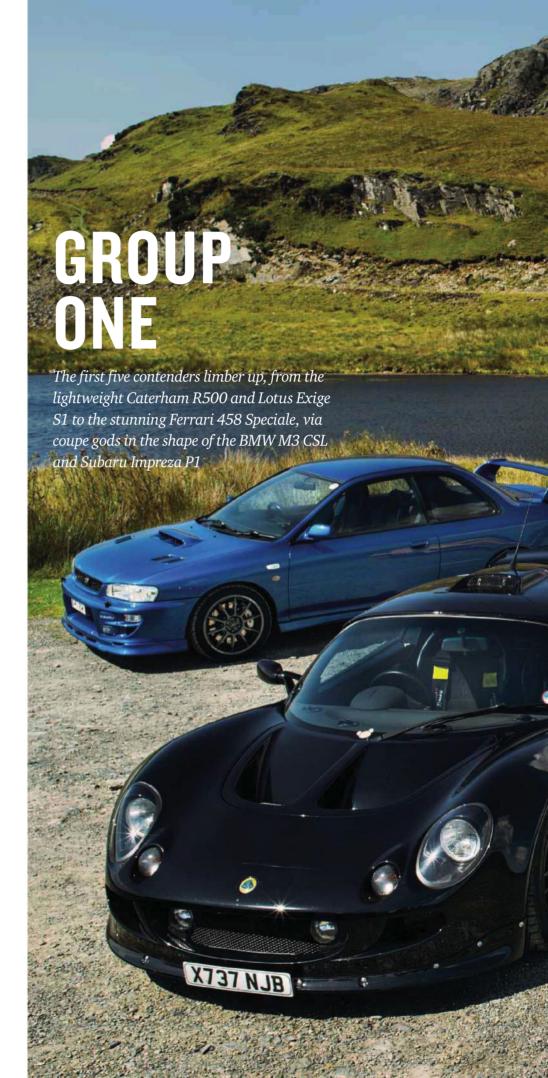
WE MAY BE FIRST IN

these pages, but we are the last of the four groups to leave the famous Shell garage in Betws-y-Coed, the magnetic strip on my fuel

card gently smoking as I collect the last receipt. For many years this petrol station used to have page 005 from issue 064 of **evo** Blu-Tacked to the wall behind the counter, the photo showing four Ferraris filling up beneath its yellow and red canopy. Today, as I walk out onto the same forecourt, there is an equally tantalising group gorged with V-Power (née Optimax).

The BMW key in my hand is small compared to most modern lumps of plastic that do the same job. There was little discussion about which generation of M3 we were going to bring along, because the E46 has always felt like a perfect blend of grip, chassis balance and power. I remember John Barker proclaiming early on that the standard 18-inch wheels were definitely the ones to go for if you valued ride and handling, even though almost everyone plumped for 19s for their looks. **evo** also championed the late CS manual, but it was neck and neck with the lighter CSL when we drove them both for the 'Greatest M-car ever' test in issue 110, and it's the CSL that we've got here.

As I lead our quintet (plus photographer Malcolm Griffiths in a Skoda Yeti – one of







the more unlikely evo heroes of the past 200 issues) out of the petrol station and up the A5, it seems hard to believe just how right the CSL still feels, a decade after it was launched. The automated single-clutch gearbox is an annoyance at anything other than maximum attack and high revs, but the steering's weight and rate of response are both spot-on, while the firm suspension feels perfectly judged, making the car alert and adjustable as soon as you turn into a corner. The naturally aspirated, 3.2-litre, 355bhp straight-six sounds utterly glorious too, emitting that complex, almost metallic timbre that makes you feel like you've got half a V12 in front of you. And it's surprisingly loud, even before the stone walls close in and bounce the sound back through the open windows.

Once we arrive at our designated stretch of road, Malcy is keen to get the obligatory oversteer shot in the bag. The chosen corner is an uphill, second-gear left-hander, rock face on the inside, black and white Armco on the outside. As soon as you turn in the front feels suitably loaded and you know that the rear will break free easily when you get on the throttle. I remember that the Michelin Pilot Sport Cups

came in for criticism when the car was new and I can see why, because they're not particularly progressive. However, the fundamental balance of the E46 is so good that the catch feels completely natural once you're over the limit and steering into the slide. I'm convinced that if you launched it today exactly as it is – same power, torque, sound, grip and weight – but with a current dual-clutch 'box, the CSL would be a massive hit. Something for the M2 to aim at...

Simply dropping down through the 'roof' of the roll-cage into Joe Charles's Caterham R500 is enough to get the heart beating a little faster. The cosy clinch twixt transmission tunnel and body panel, the tiny wheel and the small spread of pedals all provide an intimacy that is unmatched by any other road car. It's been well documented over the years just how much I love Caterhams – a well set-up Seven is pretty close to motoring nirvana as far as I'm concerned.

We wanted a K-series car for this top 20 because there's something about the diminutive 1.8's hunger for revs that has never *quite* been matched by the Ford-engined cars. And if you're going to have a K-series, you might as well have

'The P1 has a suppleness and compliance that lets it work underneath you'



the maddest of the lot. Putting out 230bhp at 8600rpm and with only 460kg (plus my 73) to lug, it is a ferocious and frantic experience.

I actually spend some time short-shifting and just enjoying all the other bits that an R500 shares equally with any other Seven. At lesser speeds when you're not living off instinct alone, you appreciate that your interaction with everything the car is doing is on another level to almost any other car, and not only because of the connection through the seat of your pants and the palms of your hands. It's also in the way you can see the front wheels at the end of the bonnet moving over bumps. It's in the smell of the engine, tyres and brakes. And in the case of Joe's aeroscreen car, it's in the feel of the slipstream's pressure on your face waxing and waning as you brake and accelerate. It is total immersion in the sensations of driving.

Picking an Impreza is almost as complicated as picking a Seven, but if you're going to pick evo's favourite three, it would be P1, RB5 and Spec C. I've driven RB5s and Spec Cs in the past but amazingly never a P1, so I'm just a little bit excited by the prospect of its debossed rear wing. I clearly remember reading the issue of evo (019) where it beat an all-star cast to be crowned Britain's greatest real-world drivers' car and then went on to do battle with a 550 Maranello. That was in north Wales too.

After the Caterham, the Subaru's steering wheel feels almost comically large and slow to react as I settle into the car through the first few corners. But what strikes me most is just how special the P1 feels. People tend to look at the humble origins of Imprezas and fixate on the prosaic elements, like the dash. But when you're actually driving the car all you can see are the big bold bonnet scoop through the windscreen and the enormous rear wing in the rear-view mirror - hardly everyday sights. Likewise the gloriously rich warbling sound created by the unequal-length exhaust manifold is as distinctive and iconic as any other in our top 20. Your torso is gripped snugly by a Recaro, the gearshift is short, quick and pleasingly mechanical and that steering, you quickly realise, fits well with the amount and rate of roll in the suspension.

Any road where the tarmachas been ploughed by sumps that have yumped is a road that looks fit for an Impreza. The single-track stretch that

#### MY EVO MOMENT

High in the Atlas Mountains, I'm waiting for Dean Smith's 'all clear' over the radio. After two days, a bit of rock climbing, customs shenanigans, a terrifying midnight taxi ride, far too much sugar and just a bit of lateral thinking, we've discovered the one photo location that will explain in a single frame why we've taken a McLaren to Morocco. All we need now is to augment the view with the car. Preferably sideways. These trips would be mere jollies if we didn't come back with images capable of transporting everyone else there. The satisfaction when we get it right is huge, because we know we've added something to the pantheon of evo features that Dean and I devoured long before we worked here, 'All clear!' Revs. hang time, shutter release. Big smile.

Henry Catchpole





wanderingly bisects the bleak moorland near our base for the day has numerous such crests and compressions with accompanying gouge marks in it and the P1 instantly feels right at home. Damper technology has certainly moved on in the last 14 years, but nevertheless the P1 has a suppleness and compliance that lets it work underneath you. Even when there's air beneath one or more of the wheels it's something that doesn't panic you as a driver because the car feels calm and controlled.

The two-door P1 feels slightly more rigid and keener than the four-door RB5s I've driven. Turn in hard and you feel the relatively skinny front tyres scrub wide quite early, but it's almost immediately followed by a gentle transition into a neutral or even mildly oversteering balance. The weight and focus of the car moves from the outside front to the outside rear in such an encouraging way through the corner that you inevitably find you're on the throttle early and hard, driving the P1 out on a surge of boost and burble. The flat-four punches out every bit of its 276bhp, too. As road tester Dan Prosser comments: 'It feels incredibly strong once the

turbo has started boosting, and it even seems to find a second wind as it passes 5000rpm.'

Gorgeous though that Sonic Blue is, and sucker though I am for a rally car silhouette, for me the best-looking car in our car park, possibly in the whole of north Wales right now, is the Lotus Exige S1. Pert. And purposeful. Those are the words, I think. The Kamm tail and the riveted front splitter have an obvious air of motorsport about them, but allied to the Exige's smiling face and almost cute overall dimensions the whole package looks friendly and inviting rather than intimidating. The only part that's not terribly tempting is the aperture that's revealed when you open the door.

In order to wriggle yourself in through the letterbox, you're required to adopt the sort of crumpled posture you might if you'd slipped over in the shower, but once inside you find yourself cocooned in a beautifully uncluttered environment. The simplicity of your surroundings seems to clear your mind as well, as though all your worldly troubles couldn't quite squeeze in with you through the door, leaving you free to concentrate on one of the purest driving experiences ever created.

Whatever the speed, the small, unassisted steering wheel fluctuates in weight subtly but constantly as you drive down the road. The engine (you don't drive a K-series for yonks and then two come along at once!) needs to be kept above 5000rpm to be on the boil, but the delicate gearshift is better than I remember and the extruded aluminium pedals are perfectly spaced so it's easily done. Accelerating hard, the 192bhp VHPD four-cylinder fills the sparse interior with a hollow, blaring bark like a single bank of a Ferrari flat-plane crank V8.

Jinking between the dry stone walls, the little Exige has huge reserves of grip to lean on, yet the kerb weight of just 780kg, combined with that renowned Lotus ability to set up suspension for British tarmac, means that at times it seems to be floating down the road. The brakes have truckloads of feel but are perhaps not as strong as you would expect, but the short wheelbase means you place the Exige wherever you want, scribing precise lines through bends, and yet if you need to adjust a trajectory, there's no Eliselike panic if you lift off mid-corner. Bliss.











Top left: BMW's 355bhp straight-six is aurally magnificent, to match the superb handling (above). Above left: P1 was developed by Prodrive in its WRC heyday. Left: Exige's rear wing and Caterham's roll-cage both symbolise track credentials

'From the very first drive in the 458 Speciale you feel telepathically hardwired into its psyche' And so we come to the Ferrari. A car that is everything you want a Ferrari to be and more. From the very first drive in the 458 Speciale you feel telepathically hardwired into its psyche, so that despite travelling faster down the road than in any other car in this group you also feel calmer behind the wheel and able to exploit it to a greater degree. So good is the damping that you're never unsure of where the car is beneath you, so you can play it through corners with steering, brakes and throttle like you've suddenly found an extra dose of driving talent.

As Dan says: 'The V8 is just a little bit terrifying when you really wind it all out – it feels as though it's trying to tear itself away from the chassis. And the gearbox is something else.' I know what he means. You'll struggle to find a bigger advocate of three pedals and a lever than me, but the shifts from the Speciale's dual-clutch transmission are so downright exciting that it actually adds to the whole experience. You wouldn't dare downshift so early in a manual for fear of over-revving, but the 458 positively encourages it, giving the mad sensation of the rear axle tightening, almost

locking as the lower ratio comes in.

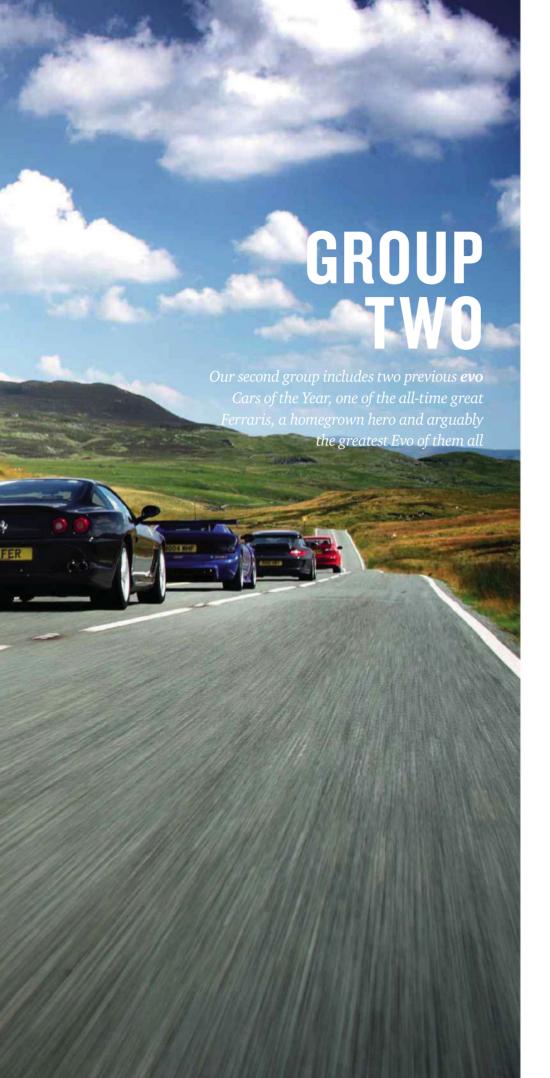
Turn-in is equally aggressive. A nudge of lock and the yellow nose hooks into the corner without hesitation, the rear dragging viciously round behind you, ready and eager for the throttle. Oblige and you'll feel the rear tyres begin to flare, but progressively, controllably, perfectly. After 20 minutes you feel almost drunk on adrenalin and vaguely heroic, like you've consumed some sort of wickedly addictive visceral cocktail. It must be love.

It almost seems wrong to put the Ferrari through, given you could buy the other fantastic four put together for less. And I feel like I'm somehow betraying the Caterham. However, the truth of the matter is that the Speciale combines the Seven's agility and anger, with the M3's adjustability, with the Exige's precision and the P1's B-road ability. Then it wraps it all up in enough power, sound and drama to make your skin goosebump like bubblewrap. Everyone agrees it is an astonishing car. And every time, five minutes after getting out of it, I'd find myself looking for an excuse to go for another drive. Which says it all, really.











by JETHRO BOVINGDON PHOTOGRAPHY by DEAN SMITH

# SO MANY MEMORIES wrapped up in these cars and

often on these roads. Funny, most of them involve that tightening in your stomach when you breathe out and

ask yourself: 'Did I really get away with that?' or simply those fractions of a second when the road and car seem to combine to perfection. My Top 5 has it all: on this very stretch of tarmac, coming around a corner in a Noble to find a 360 Challenge Stradale on the wrong side of the road for a tracking photo and locking up for about 50 yards; an amazing drive along the Pacific Coast Highway in California in a Ford GT at unprintable speeds; countless moments in RO10 HBY with that Mezger motor's unique buzzsaw howl ripping into the air; the amazing feeling of an Evo getting up on tiptoes and dancing through a series of corners; and the sheer majesty of a Ferrari V12 chomping through gears on the Route Napoléon... To experience them all again and create some new memories on a day like this... well, it's magic. No near-misses today though, I hope.

Remember the fuss about the Ford GT when it was announced? People got so upset, crying 'pastiche' and lamenting Ford's lack of imagination. But who needs imagination when you have a back catalogue that can gift you one of the most knee-tremblingly horny supercar





shapes of all time? In Gulf colours, this Heritage Edition, kindly loaned to us by Lawrence Cookson, has a charisma that draws you in and just won't let go. I simply adore the shape and, if memory serves, the driving experience is more than a match. Enough for the GT to be crowned **evo** Car of the Year back in 2005.

The GT was Ford's centenary present to itself and underneath the retro wrapping it's light, stiff and possessed of some serious firepower. With an aluminium spaceframe chassis, superplastic-formed aluminium body panels, a 5.4-litre supercharged V8, six-speed manual 'box and double-wishbones all round, the GT utilised new technology and polished old solutions. Quoted outputs were 550bhp and 500lb ft and the kerb weight 1583kg... There are very few left pushing just 550bhp, though. Indeed the press car was suspiciously ballistic, I seem to remember. Lawrence's baby is running a nice round 650bhp.

The thunderous power is, of course, highly addictive, but within yards it's the overall sense of polish that is truly staggering. You fold yourself into the GT, duck and wince as you shut the door hoping not to be scalped. The laid-back driving position is great; the GT40-style interior feels a bit cheap but is deliciously evocative. The unyielding seats are disappointing, though. But that's it, the last negative your brain registers whether you go for a gentle pootle on the big waves of torque or rev the V8 to its limiter and push the 345-section rear tyres to the very edge.

In fact 'edge' is the wrong word because the GT defies expectations by feeling so wellrounded it's quite jaw-slackening. You somehow expect a heft, a sense of great forces acting on those massive tyres. In fact everything is light, effortless and shot-through with quality. The damping is supple and pours the car across these tricky roads, the gearbox - a short-shift is fitted to this car - is light and supremely accurate and the steering is just perfection; smooth, perfectly weighted and so in tune with the chassis' responses. The engine's mighty torque adds to that sense of effortlessness, but the precise power delivery also gives the car a real tension as you start to up the pace and snap through those fabulous gearchanges. It's better than I'd remembered. If the GT were being launched today, I'd be saying McLaren, Ferrari et al have a serious challenge on their hands...

The Ferrari 575M – six-speed manual, Fiorano pack, naturally – shares the Ford's timeless appeal. It's a super-GT rather than a supercar, but with three pedals, an open gate, and a refreshing lack of F1-aping technology leaking into the cabin or onto the lovely plain steering wheel, this is another classic recipe perfected with modern performance, damping and brakes... Well, not modern in the sense of a 730bhp F12, but modern enough to feel



stormingly fast and eminently useable. Amilios Costa's beautiful Nero car has just 16,000 miles showing and it seems almost too perfect to drive. Almost.

I shake off that silly thought in seconds, settle in to the slightly high-set driving position and turn the key to begin that classic Ferrari V12 start-up ritual – the high-pitched, fast-spinning starter motor and then the creamy, complex, allenveloping noise that follows. It has none of the new Ferrari blare and not much more than half the volume, but it feels real and expensive. The pedals are perfectly located and feel weighty; the gearbox also requires firm inputs but it's precise and just so evocative, and the steering, initially slightly dead around the neutral position, quickly shows signs of life and streams detail back to your hands. In fact the whole car pulsates with tactility, and to master it requires patience, a determination to read the road to time gearshifts correctly and a confidence to drive hard enough to uncover its balance.

That means switching off the traction control, which is simply way too eager and way too clumsy when it arrives. But doing so doesn't feel at all risky because the 575 telegraphs its intentions so clearly, doesn't have crazily grippy tyres and is so innately balanced that exploiting its full potential requires competence and an understanding of weight transfer but no great heroics. That isn't to say the 575 is like some great big early MX-5; with 508bhp it's just too fast for that and the 1730kg requires respect, too. In fact the weight is ultimately its weakness. Or rather it's the dampers being stretched just out of their comfort zone by that mass when you really start to drive quickly. Although the 575 does a fantastic job across these roads, if you try to drive it like you might, say, the GT, then the body control *j-u-s-t* unravels. Into compressions

# 'The GT3 RS bombards you with sensations as it flows along the road'

# MY EVO MOMENT

There are so many magic moments to choose from, but I think the one I'll always remember in intimate detail is a short drive in a SEAT Leon 20V Turbo, 2001 vintage: the drive home after my first day in my new dream job. The Leon felt so fast and *new* to my inexperienced senses... but that was hardly the point. I'd survived my first day, my tea- and coffee-making skills were deeply appreciated and it seemed to me that my dream job was even dreamier than I'd imagined. It was the Monday after another intense deadline and nobody seemed to do anything. Ah, for the days before internet publishing really screwed things up!

Jethro Bovingdon





Left: sublime Ferrari 575. Below left: GTs always felt like they were making more than the claimed 550bhp; this one churns out 650bhp. Below: GT3 RS press car feels like an old friend





it hits its bumpstops and then sproings up, leaving you momentarily unsure of whether the car is ready for the next steering input. This is right at the outer edges, but in this company it's reason enough to undermine the 575's case.

There could be no starker contrast than jumping from Ferrari's sumptuous frontengined V12 and into Mark Inman's Noble M12 GTO-3R... God I used to love these things, but after the elegance of the 575 it's something of a culture shock to find your butt cheeks at ground level and to be surrounded by an interior that looks like it was grudgingly 'designed'. It's not without its charms though; the sense that your feet are almost in line with the front axle and the big plank of rear wing visible through the letterbox rear screen and in the egg-shaped mirrors send clear messages that this is a car that's all about agility and performance.

It really is, too. The Noble feels almost completely free from inertia between direction changes, with all traces of slack chased out, and the composure as you roll off the big surge of turbocharged torque, stand on the superbly feelsome and strong (but ABS-less) brakes and pitch the front tyres into a turn is almost dizzying. In fact its total lack of understeer and its pinpoint precision reminds me of the Speciale. Of course its power delivery, gearbox and steering are a world away from the Ferrari. But the 3-litre twin-turbocharged V6 has 352bhp and 350lb ft and the 3R weighs just 1080kg. Ten-eighty. That figure is key to every part of the experience, especially how 350lb ft can feel like twice that as the turbos take hold and throw the Noble along in furious lunges.

The notchy, loose gearchange is lightweight but in a bad way. It feels fragile and slow and it interrupts the performance of a car that in every other sense flows fast and sweet. Like the GT, it's supple, but the experience is so different - everything happens faster, there's no need to allow for any body roll, it just snaps into corners and howls out, limited-slip diff doing a terrific job of getting the power down, and light, clean steering feel encouraging ever more commitment. In fact that word 'clean' sums up the way a Noble dissects a road. There's such instant control and the damping is so within itself, yet with this manic, turbocharged edge that brings vivid, eye-widening speed.

After the eerily flat body control of the Noble and its resolutely neutral handling balance, the Evo VI Tommi Mäkinen feels initially all at sea, then intriguing and effective, and then, step by step, the way it so tangibly manages its balance throughout a corner, the body roll and the way you actively and aggressively use the weight transfer becomes riotously good fun.

Curiously, the Mäkinen's oddly weighted and feel-free steering just around the straightahead feels very similar to the 575's, but like the Ferrari's it takes just a quarter of a turn to really come alive. In the Mäkinen that sense is exaggerated though, because the significant body roll and the way the car immediately leans on its outside front tyre and seems to hoik its inside rear wheel in the air gives a perfect picture of the grip available.

Actually that should read 'the grip that appears to be available'. Once you feel the



'Keep on the power, the understeer magically disappears and the Evo adopts some angle at the rear'



front end push, you sense that the Mäkinen is all done. But it isn't. Keep on the power and the four-wheel-drive system and the torquevectoring Active Yaw Control rear differential feeds the outside rear wheel with more torque, the understeer magically evaporates and the car adopts some angle at the rear.

It's a spooky but hugely exciting feeling and from here on in it's as if you've got the Mäkinen on a string. Keep your foot in and the angle will stabilise and you'll rocket out of the corner; lift sharply to loosen the rear grip and further rotate the car... There are options laid out before you and soon you experiment, throwing the car into turns on the brakes, provoking the chassis just to see what happens. Its appetite for being driven with a kind of abandon is deeply infectious. The gravelly, 276bhp engine loves to rev-out, the tyres howl but never truly give up, the brakes have real bite and feel and the chunky, unburstable five-speed 'box is joyous when hurried. Tommi Mäkinen the man's wildeyed commitment was legendary and this car has the same unswerving focus.

Of course nothing has quite the focus of a 911 with a plastic rear screen, a roll-cage, Michelin Pilot Sport Cup tyres and an engine that sounds like a bucket of rusty nails being thrown down a fire escape. Sitting low in the driver's seat,

holding the well-worn Alcantara steering wheel, the grippy Nomex seats pinching your hips as you spar with the heavyweight gearshift at a standstill - just to practice the action - is one of the great motoring experiences. The Mezger engine makes an ugly buzzing noise at idle, the lightweight flywheel rattles and chatters and when you finally reach for first and depress the hefty clutch you know there's a workout coming.

Perhaps surprisingly, the wheels don't fight with the surface; the damping is tight at very low speeds but soon smoothes out. And while the steering doesn't have the response of the Noble's, there's feel oozing from the Alcantara. The surface texture of the road shimmies through, but more essential and even more satisfying is the information about the peculiar weight distribution... That fascinating rearengined feel is alive despite active engine mounts, wide tracks and sticky tyres. The GT3 RS literally bombards you with sensations and as it flows along the road, the light front end bobbing and the rear axle skipping a little over lumps and bumps, you wonder if this fluidity will rob the car of precision and response when you push a bit more.

So you push, and suddenly the whole experience is pulled tight and the front end

finds astonishing grip. Of course, once the nose has locked onto line the rear tyres are ready for the full force of that magnificent engine and the RS leaps out of the apex, gnashing and howling, steering writhing. It's at once brutal, from the sheer forces being exerted and the urgency, and dreamily fluid thanks to the feedback and the composure. The 'box on this particular car is starting to feel a little too heavy and awkward (a legacy of 22,000 miles of press drives), but I love that it requires technique to master. It demands that you get involved.

Show commitment and patience to the RS and its abilities are unveiled corner by corner. Eventually, when you bleed into a turn and feel the front end dig into the surface, loosen the rear tyres with a little lift and then unleash all 444bhp so that the RS is charging at full speed with the perfect little angle of oversteer. Not much else comes close.

The sheer reach of the RS's performance and the quality of the controls make it stand above the Noble, Mäkinen and Ferrari: cars that I love but that feel overwhelmed by the Porsche's astonishing ability. It has to make the final. But how can I leave the GT behind? It just needs to be there, standing toe-to-toe with the greatest drivers' cars we've ever assembled. Erm, guys... about that wildcard entry.



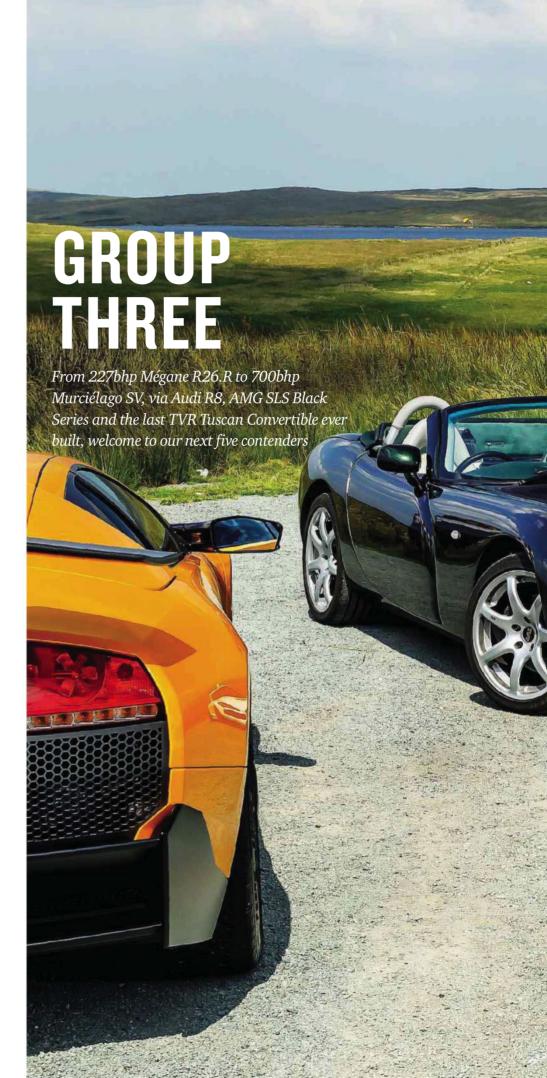
 $\frac{\textit{by}\; \text{JOHN BARKER}}{\text{PHOTOGRAPHY}\; \textit{by}}$  DAVID SHEPHERD

but it's good to be back in the R26.R, gently clamped by the Sabelt racing seat. In truth, it feels like I've never been away because

the Renaultsport Mégane is one of those cars perfectly preserved in my memory – I can recall in detail the incredible way it blended specific strings of corners together. So while it may be the least expensive car in this group, when it comes to the Thrill of Driving it's one of the most focused cars at any price.

I quite clearly have a selective memory, though, as I'd forgotten how, er, lively the Mégane can be early in the morning. Its trackday-spec tyres tug the nose this way and that like a sniffer dog in an Ibiza nightclub, and they thrum too, like a Land Rover Defender's M+S chunkies. It just needs to warm up and hit its stride, much like a 911 RS, whose crisp livery and ruthless approach to weight reduction it shares. One of the great joys of the R26.R is that it rides better than the Plain Jane R26, thanks partly to the weight savings delivered by the carbonfibre bonnet, the cling-film rear screen and the absence of rear seats and trim (savings offset somewhat by the web of glossy red scaffolding now spanning the space).

The suppleness of the R26.R's ride under pressure is key to the ease with which it devours







difficult roads, and the 227bhp turbocharged 2-litre four seems all the stronger and more generous for the lower mass too. The Llanberis Pass is soon added to my mental portfolio of difficult roads defused by the Mégane. Twin tailpipes blowing gustily, we push past a couple of dawdling cars and get a clear run at the twists and turns of the climb. Everything is warmed now and the Mégane cuts hard and precise into late apexes, inch-perfect between the waisthigh stone walls, suspension parrying expertly.

Agile but calm, absorbent but incisive, the R26.R feels effortless at the limit and flattering too. Sitting quite high, you feel in command, both on top of and at the centre of things, able to perceive subtle shifts in line and apply adjustments accordingly. It's a great feeling. No question, there is magic here.

Having started with least expensive car we might as well continue up the price ladder, though this particular Tuscan Convertible is perhaps worth more than other 'Mk3s' because it's the last one ever assembled at TVR's factory in Bristol Avenue, Blackpool. It's a piece of TVR history and comes with a decent certificate of

authenticity: its owner, Ben Samuelson, who was TVR's PR man under Peter Wheeler and then Nikolai Smolenski. Meeting up with him again feels like old times.

The robust PR line toed by Samuelson made the company appear a bit 'chippy'; the cars had obvious strong points but weaknesses too, and when the latter were pointed out in copy there would often be a protesting phone call. Both parties doing their job was how I saw it.

Samuelson is all smiles today. I'm wondering how this will turn out, though, as I know the next bit of road well – it's the left-hand leg of the **evo** Triangle – and although the Tuscan is one of the better-sorted TVRs, this familiar stretch of asphalt will be a challenge for it. Samuelson has other things on his mind. 'You might be shocked at how a customer Tuscan goes,' he says, pointing out that almost all the press Tuscans had the 4-litre Speed Six engine while this is the lesser-spotted 3.6.

The contrast with the Mégane couldn't be more acute. You drop down and down into the seat of this curvy, open-topped sports car until you're lower than the Renault's window-line. 'I reckon this is the best-handling TVR I've driven. It's also a taste of what might have been...'











This should be snug but the Tuscan's seat-back feels overstuffed and the cushion sides lack support, so I'm not sitting in the seat but on it. As ever, it's a stylish place to be, a unique blend of sculpted leather and aluminium detailing, and also as ever, when the engine fires up, a smile breaks across your face. This may be the 'little' Speed Six but the modified exhaust gives it a voice of thunder. It's classic British straight-six, only double concentrate, with a resonant, aristocratic drawl at low revs. Control weights are nicely hefty, the gearshift notchy and deliberate, the non-servo brakes firm but responsive. And the 350bhp 3.6 proves to be a gem, shedding the heavyweight exhaust note mid-range and spinning sweetly for the red line with real urge. Who needs four litres?

Mégane looming in the mirrors, there's another mini-revelation as we hit the first corners. This Tuscan handles really well. The direct steering still has the slightly disconcerting trait of speeding up the more lock you apply, but there's more poise and control here than I remember from the press cars. Calm your steering inputs, pour on the

power at just the right point and the rear tyres will smudge the tarmac on the exit, the car beautifully balanced. Even the difficult stuff passes uneventfully beneath the wheels. Wow. There's still a slight undercurrent of wander and distraction, but I reckon this is the besthandling TVR I've driven. 'We spent two days at and around Brunters with a whole bunch of factory and race engineers and played with dampers and geometry,' reveals Samuelson. It's a taste of what might have been...

My musings are rudely interrupted – it seems TVR doesn't have the monopoly on bombastic exhaust notes. The SLS AMG Black Series sounds loud and deadly serious stomping up and down the road beside our muster point, and looks get-out-of-my-way! substantial, too. It's also pretty intimidating when you flop into the driving seat; the expanse of bonnet beyond the screen looks like the deck of an aircraft carrier.

Expensively trimmed with carbonfibre addenda, this particular example stands at £244k. Big money, for sure, but it buys equally big performance - no less than 631PS (622bhp) says the spec sheet, and when finally you find

# MY EVO MOMENT

Former associate ed Ollie Marriage was on the ragged edge in a Nissan GT-R, carrying around 110mph onto Bruntingthorpe's twomile runway from the long right-hander at its far end. Harry Metcalfe and I were waiting in an idling Bugatti Veyron a few car lengths back from the Nissan's curving trajectory. As Ollie crossed my sightline, I buried the throttle. None of us knew what would happen, or even if the Bugatti could catch the fast-dissolving dot streaking for the horizon. At exactly 172mph, the Veyron swept past the GT-R, hitting 202mph before the need for some fairly serious stopping. A life-changing sense of perspective ensued.

#### David Vivian





the right place and nail it, it feels all of that. Oh mercy, yes. Pick-up is ably assisted by the seven-speed AMG Speedshift gearbox, the hybrid unit that mates conventional auto gubbins to a multiplate clutch rather than a torque converter. It's never been more impressive than here.

The car has, though. It was, I have been informed by colleagues, incredible on the Route Napoléon – that wide, sweeping and mostly smooth road in southern France. Hmm. This is Wales and it takes a while to summon up the guts to nail the throttle on the hairy left leg of the Triangle. The SLS is direct and firm and grippy and bellowy, just as I imagine the Nürburgring 24-hour AMG SLS GT3 racers are. All it needs is some Rowe Racing stickers.

It's also an aggressive, choppy, busy sort of car, which is fine at low speed, but it doesn't settle at speed and that's my issue. We are making stunning progress but every now and then the throttle softens and I realise the stability system is cutting the power over what feel like mild bumps. I elect to wait for smoother – and wider – asphalt to unleash the full force.

The engine is 100 per cent natural goodness.

Six-point-two litres of hi-po V8, and the snap is unmistakably big-capacity solid – a hefty billet of torque instantly delivered. On a smooth surface, stability off, there is incredible traction. And then I discover a detent at the base of the throttle pedal. First time I push through it I'm doing 50mph and the Merc erupts forward with a shocking ferocity that's sustained to ludicrously high revs.

But having followed it at close quarters and got the star-chipped windscreen to prove it, I reckon quite a few cars here would cover the Triangle road almost as quickly and with greater reward. Take the Audi. Do you know you can get an early R8 V8 manual for exactly £200k less than this SLS? I have a long-standing admiration for the 4.2-litre R8 and even put it first in eCoty 2007, ahead of the Ferrari Scuderia and Porsche 997 GT3 RS. We had dry roads and wet roads and a lovely racetrack on that eCoty; we drove hard and we ambled and cruised, and the Audi excelled everywhere.

Seven years later, it still feels special. As soon as its wheels begin to roll, the ride feels supple and, happily, this isn't because the dampers are shot. Quite the opposite: this 36k-mile R8 has seen enthusiastic use but feels taut, fresh, spot-on. Initially it's not as quick as I recall, but this is a car whose depth of ability creeps up on you. It is impeccably mannered and finely polished and does not punish indelicate or ill-timed inputs, yet the open-gate shift rewards a finessed approach and the better you drive the car the better it feels.

Forget the nasally, slightly dour-sounding V10 and the clunky old R-tronic automated manual; the rev-happy 414bhp V8 and *click-clack* manual mean less mass behind and greater balance and agility all round. Suspension control is exceptional and the R8 glides along this road and tackles corners with the same disdain, slicing through them with the control, power and accuracy of a Federer backhand. The way it makes difficult appear easy gets me every time, and what elevates it to exceptional is that it does this and also engages and involves the driver with tactility and feedback.

Yet while the R8 might look like a supercar parked at your local supermarket, stood next to the Murciélago LP670-4 SV it looks like a rental.



# 'The engine note loops upwards and the Murciélago lunges forward'





The Lambo buzzes with visual energy, draws you closer in with fascinating sculpted details and then delivers an uppercut with its scissor door. No one does wild quite like Lamborghini and the LP670 was the fitting final send-off for the Murciélago: lighter, more powerful and more exciting than any before.

Then there's the engine, always the engine. Real supercars have 12 cylinders and a soundtrack that's a thrilling sonic landscape. Select third gear, find a long-ish straight and, loping along at tickover, floor the throttle. The Lambo's 6.5-litre V12 snaps you forward instantly, initially churning out a low, heavyweight pulse that ripples through your soft tissues. It then evolves, becoming gradually lighter and more urgent until at somewhere between 5000 and 6000rpm the fizzing fuse hits the kegs of gunpowder. Pow! The engine note loops upwards and the SV lunges forward, covering the last couple of thousand rpm so quickly that the first few times you're too late to prevent it battering the limiter. This particular SV, generously loaned by affable owner Andy Peirson, is extra special as it has been factoryAbove: 622bhp AMG Merc takes on 700bhp Lambo. Opposite: few cars here dish up more thrills on the right road than the R26.R. Below: delicious manual R8 gearshift and TVR curves

tweaked up to 700 horsepower. It's a claim I wouldn't dispute, having felt how it soars, clean and pure, to the 8200rpm red line.

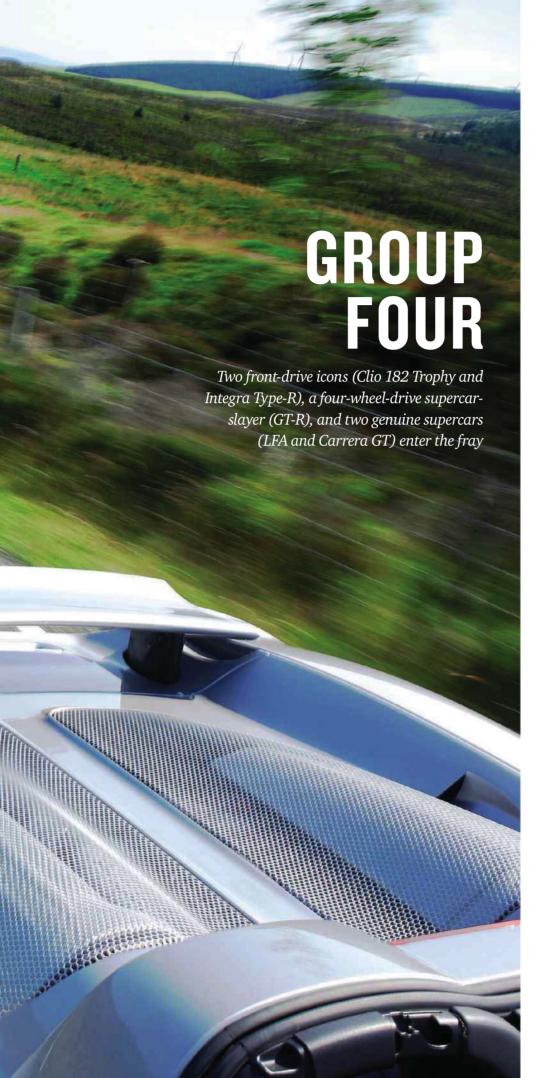
There's a rather old-school feel to the rest of the SV, particularly the transmission. Its automated single-plate clutch can be rather clunky if left to its own devices and is simply brutal in Corsa mode. Meanwhile, accessing the considerable reserves of the Michelin Cup-shod chassis means gritting your teeth, so beefy is the steering's weight. The SV delivers unmatched visual, aural and performance thrills, but it's not the most compelling drivers' car here.

If not the SV, then which of the five? For me, it's between two cars, the Mégane and the R8, both of which feel exceptionally well developed and rewarding. I had considered an R26.R for my daily commute, but such a finely honed drivers' car should be kept for special drives on brilliant roads. The R8, on the other hand, is a fabulously accomplished junior supercar engineered to deliver top-drawer dynamics and soak up the miles. But which delivers the bigger thrill on a great driving road? By a whisker, the Mégane gets the nod.











by RICHARD MEADEN PHOTOGRAPHY by **GUS GREGORY** 

IF EVER A REMINDER were needed that evo has never been, and should never be, solely dedicated to supercars, this test provides it. I mean, where else would

you find a more disparate gathering than that which bridges the gulf between Integra Type-R and Lexus LFA via Clio 182 Trophy, Nissan GT-R and Porsche Carrera GT? They might make an unlikely group but, if you know your cars, there's no question each of these five machines deserves its place here.

Standing amongst them, it seems an impossible task to draw comparisons, yet from the very beginning evo's 'Thrill of Driving' mantra was conceived to cut through convention and get to the heart of the matter: namely how good a car is at delivering on its particular promise of performance, dynamism and engagement. Objectivity has its place in this somewhat nebulous process but, as you'll know only too well, there are times when a car is totally seductive and your head gives best to your heart. Finding a balance somewhere between those two considerations is what we've devoted the last 200 issues to achieving.

And so to the Integra Type-R, or DC2 to Honda geeks. It might not be as extreme as the Mégane R26.R you'll see elsewhere in this monster test, but it was rocking the lightweight

Porsche RS-style vibe long before Renaultsport got in on the act. This example, provided by Simon Adney, has certainly lived a life, but the spark that ignited our love for this exceptional little coupe still shines brightly.

In many ways this car still defines the great joy there is to be had from front-wheel drive. Nobody does mass-produced high-revving four-cylinder engines better than Honda, and the Integra's 187bhp unit is one of the very best. It's not got much to give below 5000rpm, but push a bit further and a feral snargle signals your entry to the fabled VTEC zone. It's a wonderful sensation, and one sadly consigned to history with the resurgence of turbocharging.

The Teg's manual transmission is the perfect partner, with a precise gearshift aided by a beautifully tactile and perfectly weighted gearknob that slices through the gate as fast as you can move your arm. The paucity of torque means the front wheels don't have much of a fight on their hands, but the limited-slip differential works with wonderful subtlety, deploying everything the silky-yet-serrated engine has to give and tightening your line when lesser cars would begin to push wide. It slices from corner to corner, grip and grunt perfectly matched, front-end nailed and rearend dancing nicely, but never out of step.

It's a finely wrought car with precision and delicacy few front-drivers have approached before or since. One of the most attainable cars in our gathering, it remains one of the most inspirational too.

The Clio 182 Trophy is another iconic front-drive car. A high point in Renault's rich tradition of fine hot hatches, it trades the Integra's pure, minimalist potency for something a little more robust and colourful: an aromatic nip of single malt versus a clean shot of vodka. It's a more expressive, boisterous car that needs less work to stoke up thanks to its 180bhp 2-litre's more generous mid-range, but its handling balance asks you to dig deeper than the Honda.

You really have to roll up your sleeves to get the best from the Trophy, but when you commit to it there's a wonderful sense of it raising its game. Lean hard on the outside front tyre and you'll feel the inside rear hoist itself clear of the road like it's the most natural thing in the world. It eggs you on to the point you hurl it at corners, yet it never feels ragged or out of its depth.

As a driving experience it's every bit as special as the Honda, perhaps more so if you like a car that has a wilder side. Both thrive on more confined, technical stretches of road, but neither is overwhelmed by the more expansive elements of our route. Reassuring proof that modest power and humble beginnings are no barrier to lasting brilliance.

The gargantuan step from Clio to GT-R is initially head-scrambling, such is the uplift



in every meaningful, quantifiable measure of performance. The sense you've traded a catapult for a Kalashnikov comes as soon as you squeeze your right foot towards the floor, for the 542bhp Nissan is explosively rapid, propelling you from urban speed limit to unspeakable velocity with seemingly no intermediate phase.

It doesn't need driving in the accepted sense - the epic spread of engine response and the paddleshift transmission see to that - but the sheer speeds it can attain and then sustain place different demands on your skills. Reading the road ahead assumes new and constant significance, as does exercising the self-control to know when enough is enough. In its latest iteration the GT-R has found more pliancy, and on parts of our test loop it's little short of spectacular. It works miracles in minimising the effects of its excess size and bulk, but you are always aware of how hard it's working to do so. Dip into its performance and the delivery feels like you're waging war against the road (and sometimes physics itself) rather than working in harmony with it.

It's shockingly effective and an utterly unique experience, but whether you're seduced by it depends upon your alignment with Nissan's iconoclastic quest to kick sand in the face of prettier, more expensive and more exotic machinery. You won't go faster for the money, but look beyond this and chances are you'll happily trade some pace for a more nuanced, multi-faceted machine.

If the direction in which you look happens to be towards an immaculate Carrera GT, the ballistic Nissan doesn't stand much of a chance. This, as we all know, is one of Porsche's finest creations and one of the most engaging,

# 'The LFA's throttle response is insane, to the point where even the CGT feels a little tardy'

# **MY EVO MOMENT**

I'm tempted to look back to the early days of **evo** for my most memorable moment. However, it's the last 12 months that have left the biggest impression. I've been incredibly fortunate to represent **evo** on the 918 Spyder, P1 and LaFerrari launches, and to do big miles through Norway in a Tesla Model S (pictured) – events that happened in relatively quick succession. So rather than select just one I'm inclined to merge all four, as the combined experience of driving these remarkable machines has led me to the welcome epiphany that the thrill of driving has been successfully future-proofed. Here's to the next 200.

Richard Meaden











**Top:** lusty Renaultsport 2-litre four-pot. **Above left:** brutally quick GT-R harries screaming Type-R. **Above:** Carrera GT's centre-lock wheel nuts a reminder of its race-car roots. **Right:** utterly extraordinary LFA reels in unsuspecting Clio



# MY EVO MOMENT

There are already so many moments to choose from, but the highlight so far has definitely been a breathless passenger ride up the hill at the Goodwood Festival of Speed alongside Sébastien Loeb. I've ridden in countless rally cars with some top drivers at the wheel, but this was the first time I'd sat with the nine-time WRC champ. The ride itself was as intense and exciting as you'd expect, but the lasting impression was of just how cool Loeb was; moments before pinging his Citroën DS3 WRC up the hill in front of tens of thousands of onlookers he was laughing at having accidentally brought two left-hand gloves.

Dan Prosser



rewarding, addictive, analogue supercars ever made. The soft curves of its knee-tremblingly beautiful shape belie a steely, race-bred driving experience built around a wailing V10 engine of uncommon urgency. Mated to a sharp-shifting manual transmission and a chassis tuned for uncompromising agility, it's a thoroughbred with the finest possible bloodline.

Being a Porsche, everything about the CGT is businesslike; the unpretentious interior looks and feels like a 911 or Cayman's. The only thing vaguely nostalgic is the wooden gearknob, which harks back to Stuttgart's sports prototype racers of the '60s and '70s. It remains one of the nicest details of any contemporary supercar.

It's always a surprise how raw the CGT is. The carbon structure transmits road noise and you feel the busy pulse of that V10, which sounds beautiful from the outside, but gritty and full of mechanical malice when you're sitting just ahead of it. The steering is super-direct, so you need to give it calm, measured inputs if you're to make the smoothest, swiftest progress, but this can be difficult when ruts and cambers distract it from your chosen trajectory.

This car, kindly loaned to us by an **evo** reader, benefits greatly from the fitment of Michelin Pilot Sport 2 rubber, giving you more feedback and a more progressive and exploitable window in which to work before grip is finally exceeded. It's a different car to the knife-edge machine it was on Pilot Cups, but still one that you need to stay on top of if you're to safely boss it down a great road. The engine revs die like a snuffed candle if you're not positive with the pedals and snappy with your gearshifts, and you still need to be ready to make quick corrective steering inputs when traction is breached.

Of course this makes it a sensationally rewarding car to master, but there are times when you wish it could relax just a little bit so you can, too. Not that relaxation is high on your list of priorities when you're howling along one of the finest roads in the UK, beneath a cloudless sky without another car to be seen. These are the unforgettable moments the CGT lives for. Moments that are out of the front-drivers' league and beyond the reach of even the mighty GT-R. It's moments like these that make the CGT a shoo-in for the final showdown. Then a black LFA slides down from the back of Litchfield Imports' trailer and all my finely reasoned thoughts are thrown into turmoil.

Very few cars have the LFA's other-worldly aura. Everything about it is immaculately designed, engineered and presented, with every single facet of the car benefiting from an obsessive attention to nano-detail. Even in the wider company of our 20-car gathering it looks – and sounds – like an alien craft. It literally shines with quality and possesses a shape and stance that stop you dead in your tracks.



Everywhere you look there are things that delight, from the exquisite carbonfibre bonnet stay and sculptural indicator and wiper stalks to the LCD instrument cluster, which is something straight out of Stark Industries. The level of bespoke engineering is mind-blowing, the mission to create something that transcends merely building another supercar truly palpable in everything you see, touch and hear. It's little short of a freak.

There's so much to the LFA that's exceptional, yet still its banshee V10 engine is the thing that makes the most immediate and lasting impression. The throttle response is totally insane, to the point where even the CGT's motor feels a little tardy by comparison. It also sounds as good inside the car as it does outside – something the Porsche fails to do. To hear the 552bhp LFA go through its full 9000rpm aural range is to experience something part-way between an internal combustion engine and a musical instrument.

Still the LFA is not perfect. It's not as quick as it sounds (what could be?), and certainly

wouldn't stay with the GT-R (no shame in that), yet for all but the most velocity-addled it's more than rapid enough. The only real flaw, beyond the shallow and entirely predictable accusation of the Lexus badge not carrying sufficient kudos, is the single-clutch paddleshift gearbox. Its downshifts are fine, with plenty of whooping throttle blippage for maximum goosebumps, but full-noise upshifts feel rather hesitant in our post-DSG world. You can finesse them to a degree by easing ever-so-slightly off the throttle, as you would in, say, an E46 CSL, but there's no chance of achieving the synaptic response and near-seamless engagement found in the GT-R or, say, a 458 Speciale.

Of course this is a shame, especially as the rest of the car is so incredibly precise, but is it a bigger failing than the CGT's awkward don't-touch-the-throttle-and-it'll-be-fine clutch engagement? I'm not so sure.

What I do know is the LFA steers with greater precision and a sweeter rate of response than the Porsche, smothers bumps and rides poor surfaces with more control and tracks truer

and with less distraction from cambers and surface changes. In short it's every bit as involving, but more exploitable. What I find most extraordinary is that while it has the CGT's intensity and excitement when fully lit, it's much the nicer car to be in when you're simply making progress or covering miles. More comfortable, more refined, more special and the better car for long drives. It even has some luggage space, a proper satnav and a fabulous hi-fi. Its breadth of abilities is amazing.

Quite how Lexus created such a special car – from scratch – is one of the world's great mysteries; that Toyota is unlikely to sanction its like again is one of the great automotive tragedies. Yet all of this only serves to make the legend of the LFA even more compelling. However they did it, and whatever justification they made for investing insane amounts of time and resource into such a glorious cul-desac, the result is something utterly spectacular and totally unique. Despite my deep love for the Carrera GT I can't put it ahead of the intoxicating and truly wondrous LFA.



by NICK TROTT

PHOTOGRAPHY by GUS GREGORY, DEAN SMITH & DAVID SHEPHERD



WHAT IS EVO? THIS

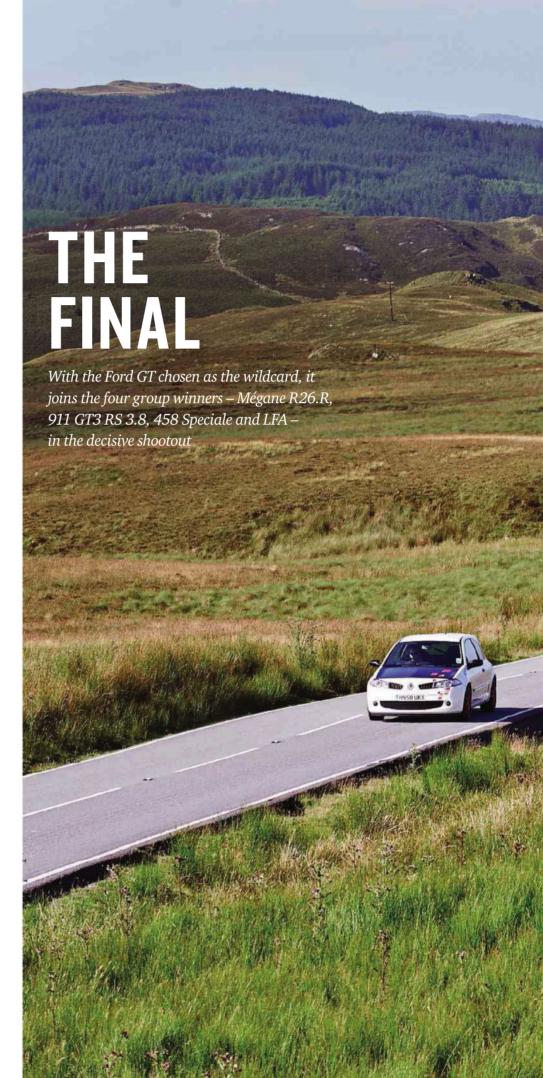
is **evo.** Five cars that encapsulate the central tenet **evo** has held so dear over 200 issues. We're going to pick a winner and, as

complex as the process might be, there'll be no avoiding it: **evo** is 200, and one of the cars that we've driven in the past 16 years will be identified as the zenith, the car which can be held aloft as the one that best represents the Thrill of Driving.

Yes — the time is right to make such a decision. Legislation is forcing change on the performance car; how we use (or are able to use) the performance car is changing too, and modern technology is forcing a seemingly interminable transmogrification of what the modern performance car is capable of. The pace of change is berserk, the cars are extraordinary, the engineers acutely skilled. Today is the greatest era for the performance car thus far and today we pick one car that can call itself the greatest of the modern era.

No pressure, then.

At our 7am departure time, Snowdonia is draped in a blanket of light that's quite shocking in its luminosity. North Wales isn't always like this, but when it is there are only a handful of driving destinations on the planet as good. A few of us simply stop, stare and gawp at the











**Top:** Ford GT rewards smooth, sympathetic driving. Above: sporting decals feature prominently on Renault and Porsche. Right: Mégane chases the LFA, a car that cost nearly 14 times more when new

scenery, then giggle at the queue of five cars that will spend the day immersed in this glorious diorama. Yes. Grown men. Giggling.

The final five cars benefit enormously from this sunshine, cruising in convoy towards the evo Triangle looking like gemstones rolling along a grey velvet road. Even the Mégane's lumpy exterior styling takes on a magical quality in this extraordinary vista, but it's under the skin where the real magic lies. And it takes one drive up on the moors to feel it.

'Mesmerising,' explains John Barker. 'You get sucked into the experience completely, marvelling at the poise, the fine adjustability and the way it makes it all look easy.' Returning from a blast in it, Jethro unbuckles the harness, shakes his head, and exhales loudly. 'It could've faded away in the context of the others, but it's so polished dynamically and every control has an innate rightness that it stands tall even alongside cars as uncompromising and thrilling as the Speciale. It really is one of the greats and absolutely deserves its place in the final five.'

Henry chimes in: 'I was tightening the belts a little bit further on each straight in the R26.R, feeling like I wanted to be an ever more integral part of the car. When I reached the car park at the end I found I was almost crushed into the

For me the R26.R - and the Clio Trophy and Integra Type-R, for that matter - are abject proof that driving thrills are not the sole preserve of pure sports cars and supercars. Jump from it to the GT3 RS, the Speciale or the Ford GT, as we did on numerous occasions during this test, and you experience the same scintillating dialogue between machine and driver. It's a dialogue

that's rich in information and satisfaction.

But what about the Lexus LFA? Can there be two cars that are more diametrically opposed as the Mégane and the LFA? You'd think not: the Lexus is a bespoke, money-no-object, micro-engineered jewel of a supercar, the Renaultsport an enhanced shopping trolley. A brilliantly enhanced shopping trolley, but you know what I mean.

'Nothing is quite as bewitching as an LFA, is it?' gushes Jethro. 'From the meticulous construction to that inertia-free V10, it just feels special.' John concurs: 'Fascinating thing. Very cool, partly because it's sensationally rare, but there's also a real sense of occasion when that V10 fires up.'

Out on the moor, I take the Mégane and chase John in the LFA. The Lexus grabs yards on the straights but the Mégane, as it does against every car in this test, holds its own. The R26.R's sparse interior acts like a resonance chamber, capturing and amplifying the whoops and shrieks of the Lexus ahead - a sound the LFA's chief engineer, Haruhiko Tanahashi, described as 'the roar of an angel'. Either way, this moment, this chase, these cars provide an unforgettable, near out-of-body experience that I'll never forget.

As the R26.R and the LFA dart and dive over the Llanberis Pass, it becomes clear that no matter how different they are in concept and execution, they are both unquestionably rooted in the concept of the Thrill of Driving. They display an unnerving resistance to understeer; the Mégane via quite extraordinary front-end grip and the LFA with a touch of in-built yaw that, as Jethro describes it, 'allows you to feel



involved even at sensible speeds'.

And there follows the first major moment of clarity in this final. All the cars here, and indeed all the best cars we've driven in the past 200 issues, decouple speed from driving thrills. The greatest cars tingle and communicate at low speeds. The greatest cars emit a tangible aura. Hell, the LFA does it standing still. As does, for that matter, the mighty Ford GT.

God, it looks intimidating. Sounds it, too. It's wide, it's unfeasibly low, and if the LFA roars like an angel then the Ford GT gargles like a dragon. It's a hard car to dislike, even if you're a committed modernist. Seeking out reflections in plate glass windows becomes a habit, as does massaging the exquisitely synchronised controls, for this is a car you massage rather than fight in order to extract the thrills.

'It drives in this wonderfully velvety way,' explains Henry, 'with beautifully calm steering, a deliciously slick gearshift and incredibly supple suspension.' John is equally taken: 'I love that the GT engages and entertains when you're ambling, when you're playing it on the edge of

grip and everywhere in between.' Then, despite having just scalped himself on the door-top, John signs off with a controversial line: 'You know what? It could win.'

I'm wondering just how hard John was clocked on the head when I climb inside the GT and burble down the road. It's been nearly ten years since I last drove a GT, mostly on track, and for some reason the shocking brilliance of the car had faded. It all comes back. Yep, this is one of the greats.

The GT's brilliance lies not in its nostalgiatickling styling, nor its engine note – it lies in its beautifully resolved chassis. The GT is a decade old but the manner in which the suspension behaves and the way the pedals, gearlever and steering wheel can be worked with such synchronicity feels better than 99 per cent of the performance cars on sale today. Put simply, if the Ford GT was launched this year and we group tested it against its contemporaries (Huracán, 458, 650S, Noble M600) it would have a very good chance of beating them.

For this, you have to give credit to the

'The Lexus grabs yards on the straights but the Mégane, as it does against every car in this test, holds its own'



# THE NEARLY CARS...

The original shortlist for this test ran to over 60 cars. At this number the feature risked losing focus, so we refined the list... to 37 cars. Still too many, but as painful as it was we decided that another 17 should be removed and we should concentrate solely on those cars that are absolutely imbued with the Thrill of Driving. These cars, brilliant as they are, just missed the final cut:



# **ASTON MARTIN V12 VANTAGE**

The best drivers' Aston, and hugely desirable. V12, front engine, wonderful balance. Sublime – and good value used



# **HONDA NSX**

A very good drivers' car, but not quite a great one. Its significance is indisputable, though: made supercar makers up their game



# **BMW M5 V10**

Arguably the best supersaloon ever, but the M3 CSL advertises the magic of M more acutely so it, not the M5, qualified



## OTHER 911s

Boggo 997 Carrera, GT3 RS 4.0, 991 GT3 – they all made the 'big' list but of them all, we went for the sparkling 3.8 RS



#### **LOTUS 340R**

So close – a true gem of a drivers' car but of all the brilliant Lotuses we felt the S1 Exige was the most authentic





Above: sleek LFA exudes attitude. Left: Mégane's humble origins prove no barrier to excitement.
Below: Ford GT is a riot of retro – except when it comes to the driving experience.
Right: 458 Speciale and 997 GT3 RS renew age old Ferrari-Porsche rivalry

engineers who developed it – which brings us on to another moment of clarity relating to the best cars we've ever driven. The best drivers' cars positively vibrate with a feeling that the people who nurtured them, from sketch to street, did so with an innate sensitivity to what can, and does, constitute the Thrill of Driving. They get it, and moreover, they enjoy it. You can feel it in their work.

As Jethro says: 'I think we all got out of this and had the same thought: "And they developed this in America?!" That sounds massively patronising but it speaks volumes about how honed the GT feels in every single area. I adore the dizzying intensity of the Speciale but this demonstrates that there's more than one way to create a completely intoxicating supercar.'

Jethro continues: 'The damping is just creamy, the 'box is precision itself and the steering also has that effortless but completely natural feel to it. It's just a timeless, simple and mouthwateringly well-executed drivers' car.'

Sure it's big, and sure it's wide, but you can drive it with inch-perfect precision because the controls respond to your actions as if there is no metal, rubber or plastic between you and the road. John uses the word 'perfect' to describe the weighting, feel and feedback. Praise indeed. First a Renault in the final five, then a Lexus, and now a Ford? What next?!

That's more like it. A bright yellow Ferrari. With stripes. And an exhaust note that sounds like a battery of 500cc two-stroke Suzuki motorcycle engines screaming in unison. It is furious and hyperactive and yet driveable and



controllable. It is the automotive equivalent of a terrible beast ripping off your skin and then injecting you with an adrenaline-laced superdrug directly into your heart. And it has a habit of making you talk utter, utter bollocks.

The only car that got close to the sensory involvement among the full 20 cars in this test was the Caterham R500, yet whereas the Caterham is full-time fully-lit, the 458 Speciale can switch it on or off.

'The way something that appears and feels so track-focused manages to blast unruffled down a bumpy B-road is simply staggering,' explains Henry. 'It's more easily adjustable and readily playful than the 911, too.'

John was equally blown away. 'Its willingness to turn is breathtaking and the capacity of the chassis seems inexhaustible. The limit is the driver, not the car. Yet when you do venture over the Speciale's limit the transition is smooth, the progression predictable, the car at your command.'





Jethro adds: "Truly, deeply, madly fabulous. It's capable of such fury and yet the absolute precision of every control and the freakishly meldable chassis balance means that all is calm at the wheel."

And here again, another moment of clarity arrives. The best cars we've ever driven react so intuitively that you seem to drive better than you have ever done before. They encourage you to exercise your driving skills. They coax the best out of you. They work with you, rewarding skilled driving but not overreacting to mistakes. As Jethro comments: 'They are so transparent that you almost drive in slow-motion.'

Of all the cars in the past 200 issues, no car has ever done this quite like the Ferrari 458 Speciale. It's easy to anthropomorphise all the cars in the final group, but the way in which it thrills and encourages and rewards is almost, well, human. 'Simply staggering,' says a wide-eyed Henry.

Late in the afternoon, with the sun high in

the sky and removing all definition from the glorious final five shapes, we have a moment to concentrate on the drive without being teased and cavorted by their visual appeal.

As you'd expect, the Renault benefits the most from this moment of calm reflection. 'If Porsche Motorsport made a hot hatch, it'd feel like this,' says Jethro. 'Not for nothing is this car a legend,' agrees David Vivian. 'But can it win?' I ask. 'Seriously. Can it?'

'Not with that in the running,' says John, nodding at the Ford GT. 'It's the opposite to the Ferrari, digital versus analogue. Both have their merits but the Ford delivers more of what I want more of the time.' So the Ford GT has leapt from a solid top-20 entry to a bona fide potential victor. Choosing a winner is proving every bit as difficult as we expected.

The LFA has seduced one and all – its exquisite detail and focus casting a spell that not even the mildly recalcitrant upshifts can break. 'It just feels special,' Jethro beams. 'It's

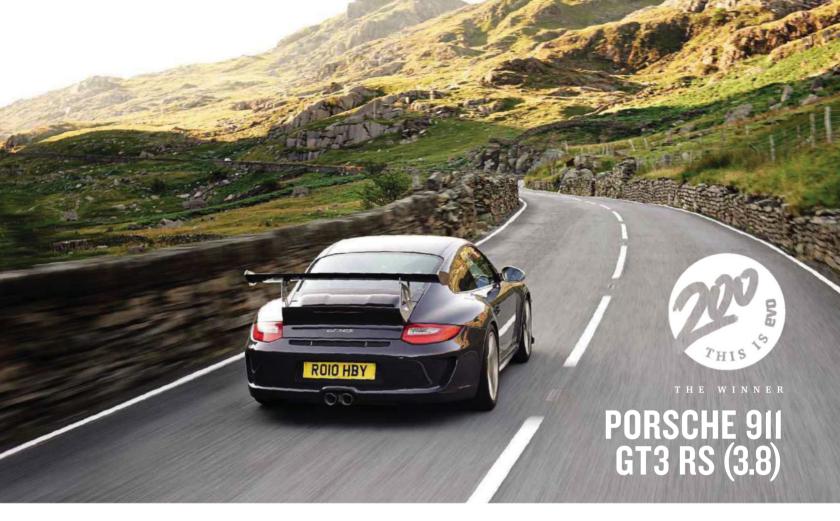
seriously good fun, too. The rear of the car seems to be always just on the move but once you're comfortable with that sensation of the rear axle taking on a bit of attitude, the chassis starts to shine. Summon its full might, which admittedly isn't as mighty as you might expect, and the balance remains, with gorgeously controllable oversteer and supreme damping.'

'So what next?' I ask, viewing the final five with the team. 'Which one wins?'

Cue shuffling of feet, looking at the floor and nervous coughs. 'Um,' says Jethro. 'Er,' says Henry. Then John 'suddenly has to leave'.

The elephant in the room is a Porsche 911 GT3 RS 3.8 parked on the moor, ticking noisily beside the road having been given one final blast by the **evo** team.

Jethro eventually volunteers to be the one to put his thoughts into words: 'Every time I think I've just experienced motoring nirvana in one of the other cars, I drive the Porsche and think, "No, this is it..."



This is the car that we hold aloft as the one that has reached the highest heights in this crazy mixed-up world we call the Thrill of Driving. The Porsche 911 GT3 RS 3.8.

It was a fantastically diverse test and every car in the top 20 was extraordinary. Doubts? Of course. There were always doubts that a duffer would emerge, or that earlier judgments were incorrect, or that some of the older cars would feel just plain geriatric. But every car in the top 20 positively radiated brilliance.

We had two front-engined cars in the final, and two with mid-engines. One was front-wheel drive and the rest rear-wheel drive. Cylinders came in Vs and straights with four, eight and ten pistons blasting up and down inside them. But it's the only car with six flat cylinders and the engine at the rear that wins. And it wins by a cigarette paper, one of those very, very thin cigarette papers.

The Ferrari 458 Speciale came close. Extremely close. 'I love the Speciale's manic energy and the immediacy of its controls,' explains Dickie Meaden. 'It's exuberant if you want it to be, but underneath that wildness is an incredible level of composure. It's a racer at heart, but it works brilliantly on the road.'

That it fights and almost wins against a car that is so aligned with the more analogue leanings of the team is remarkable, and while the GT3 RS should be celebrated as the best of the past 200 issues, it's the Speciale that sets the benchmark for the next 200.

So what is it about the GT3 RS that elevates it above the others? John Barker explains: 'Take the best bits of everything else in this whole test, cram them into a ridiculously compact shell and you've got the 911 GT3 RS.'

'If the Speciale is a masterclass in response, the GT3 RS is the definitive lesson in feedback,' adds Jethro. 'The steering — I know we're forever banging on about bloody steering! — is truly special, bubbling and wriggling with the most wonderful detail. Not just of the road surface but flowing information about weight transfer, the shifts in balance that are at the core of this car.'

At this point Henry chips in: 'The way its damping copes with the Welsh roads is just perfect and not once did I feel like the mighty Mezger wasn't strong enough. What's more, the suppleness in the suspension set-up means that I could enjoy all these lovely adjustable 911 feelings even when we were just pottering along in the morning at five- or six-tenths.'

Back to Barker: 'This is the best balanced of all RSs for me. The ride and handling are perfectly balanced, the crazy top end of the 3.8 is plenty crazy enough, the heft of the hefty gearshift is as hefty as I'd want it and there's nothing I want more of from an RS.'

'It's alive at all times,' explains Jethro, 'and you feel the weight shifting around, the slight softness of response as you guide it gently into

easy curves. But then the transformation when you decide to snap between direction changes is incredible. Suddenly the front-end is pinned and the traction is, of course, almost surreal.

'The Speciale is more expressive if you just love oversteer, but the constant dialogue of the GT3 RS is perhaps even more immersive. And when you finally get to the point where the car is sliding around, the rewards are out of this world... And through all that I didn't even mention the engine! Which is extraordinary!'

The final words go to Dickie: 'As much as I love the Speciale, the RS is a tougher, grittier experience. Of course you have to *drive* the Speciale to get the best from it, but ultimately there's less to get to know. The RS demands a broader skill set and greater intimacy with its ways and foibles before you're able or confident enough to push it.

'Essentially these cars perfectly illustrate the difference between the analogue and digital ages. We just happen to be living through the transitional phase, so while it's brilliant that a car like the Speciale can deliver such a vibrant and all-consuming experience, the appeal of cars that require you to use hard-won skills – and the satisfaction they deliver when you do so to the best of your ability – remains irresistible.'

The epic Speciale proves the future is in good hands, but looking back over the last 200 issues the GT3 RS is the defining car – the pinnacle of an extraordinary era.

# SERENGETI®

THE WORLD'S FINEST DRIVING SUNGLASS™



We focus on every detail of the eye, so you can focus on the detail of every moment.



# PHOTOCHROMIC

ADAPT TO LIGHT// IN AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE THINGS CHANGE FAST, OUR LENSES HELP YOUR EYES ADAPT EVEN FASTER.



# SPECTRAL CONTROL

MANAGE THE LIGHT// THE HUMAN EYE CAN SEE 10 MILLION COLDURS. ACHIEVING THE PERFECT MIX IS OUR JOB.



# POLARIZATION

CONTROL THE LIGHT// TO STOP GLARE, IT'S WHAT YOU CAN'T SEE THAT LETS YOUR EYES SEE MORE.



EXPERIENCE ABSOLUTE CLARITY

serengeti-eyewear.com



by DAN PROSSER

PHOTOGRAPHY by ASTON PARROTT

# What about the Zonda?

Of all the surreal-world hypercars we've ever tested, one stands out above the others. But were we right to celebrate the Zonda? Our newest recruit – a Pagani virgin – finds out

D

**DESPITE THE PRESENCE OF A** fistful of mid-engined supercars, of the extra-terrestrial Lexus LFA, of the mighty 911 GT3 RS and of the two best hot hatches ever built, we did still feel the absence of one particular car during our

200th issue celebration photoshoot. But as the Pagani Zonda goes beyond being a 'mere' supercar, existing instead in the even more rarefied world of the hypercar, it fell outside the boundaries we set for the 'This is **evo**' group test.

Yet we couldn't completely ignore it. This magazine's relationship with Pagani has been a long and intimate one, and on many occasions the brilliance of the Zonda has been extolled in gushing prose among these pages. Pagani as an independent supercar manufacturer and **evo** as a motoring media brand set out on their uncertain journeys almost in parallel: this title first ran images of the newly unveiled Zonda way back in issue 008. As we celebrate 200 issues, Pagani now ranks among Ferrari and Lamborghini in Italian supercar folklore.

For some tastes that relationship has been rather too cosy for comfort. It probably doesn't take a conspiracy theorist to wonder if **evo**'s unflinching endorsement of the Zonda might relate in some way to one of its founding editors happening to own one. Indeed, one former contributor suggested that the magazine has read more like *What Zonda?* at times. Is foul play afoot, or is that mountain of praise for the Zonda entirely justifiable?

As **evo**'s new boy it fell to me to offer a fresh perspective on Pagani's seminal supercar. To a hungry consumer of motoring magazines and videos, the Zonda seems to be such a familiar car now, but it's only when I approach Brian Davies' immaculate Dubai Red Roadster S that I realise I've never before been this close to a Zonda. Upon first acquaintance it's good form to spend at least 15 minutes drinking in the

details; much less feels disrespectful. That stack of quad exhaust pipes poking out from a cylindrical tunnel is the Zonda's defining graphic and to this day it looks impossibly mean. The carbonfibre arrowhead that hangs over the top of the front clamshell like a pendant is exquisite, and beneath the vast engine cover the upper suspension arms are now, by some margin, my favourite detail on any car. The cabin drips with carbon and milled aluminium jewellery, the seats and dash wrapped tightly in soft leather or smooth Alcantara. The attention to detail throughout defies belief.

So many low-volume, independent sports cars feel as though they would benefit from the R&D and quality control of a multinational manufacturer. Their seating positions will be awkward, creaks and rattles will emanate from beyond the dashboard and certain minor controls will be inaccessible. Down to its tiniest detail the Zonda feels as well resolved as a VW Group supercar, but without the jarring discomfort of shared componentry.

Once warmed through, the Zonda is docile at low speeds. The clutch weighting is comfortable, the gearshift is slick and precise and the big 547bhp, 7.3-litre V12 seems to pull any gear from any speed. There is no recalcitrance in the drivetrain whatsoever, which makes it no more stressful to shunt around town than a 911. It's only the width of the car, or rather the greater width of the rear compared to the front, that keeps the mind focused. For the value of the thing the fear of chewing one of those gorgeous wheels against a kerb or scraping a rear arch against a stone wall never does fade.

The ride feels supple, and the steering is light in its weighting and delicious in its sense of connectivity to the front axle. It's one of those racks that you dial a little lock into and out of repeatedly on a straight piece of road just to feel the resistance. As the road sweeps and curves, though, there's the same sense of immediacy and flat-bodied response that all the best midengined performance cars share.

As the story goes, it was the endorsement of one Juan Manuel Fangio that helped convince AMG to supply its V12 to this unheard-of supercar builder. That will forever stand as one of the defining moments in the gestation of Pagani, as it is one of the world's great 12-cylinder engines. The quality and the reach of the sound that flies from those four exhaust pipes at full throttle is truly special.

For the outlandish styling I could forgive the Zonda an uninspiring engine. For the wonderful V12 I could forgive it stodgy dynamics. For the way it handles I could forgive it a low-rent cabin. For the artful interior I could forgive it an unattractive exterior design. Every aspect of the car fights to be the outstanding element. I find it no stretch to believe that the Pagani Zonda is the best 'surreal world' performance car evo has ever tested.

# **Zonda** moments



# DRIVING THE PROTOTYPE

It's hard to imagine the supercar landscape without Pagani, but back in 1999 no one outside the small artisan carmaker's inner circle had driven or even ridden in the first C12 prototype. Having introduced ourselves at that year's Geneva show and visited the factory later that spring, we were thrilled to join that elite group by being the first magazine in the world to be invited to drive it. I was the lucky so-and-so sent to bag the world exclusive.

Looking back, the synergy between **evo** and Pagani was obvious: two fledgling brands attempting big things from small beginnings, but I can remember being amazed - and proud - that we'd been given the opportunity. I can also recall the bemusement at just how good the car felt. The further and faster I drove, the more exceptional it became. How could this be? Had Horacio Pagani spiked my espresso? Could an all-carbon supercar built by a company nobody had heard of really be this good?

Pagani's then-PR man, Mike Perry, was riding shotgun for some of the drive. Having been through the same epiphany when he'd driven the car, he knew what I was struggling with. As we arrived back at the factory I drew breath and paused before attempting to articulate what had just happened. Perry took the words from my mouth: 'No, Dickie, I couldn't believe it either. It's bloody fantastic!' The rest, as they say, is history

Richard Meaden



# VISITING THE FACTORY

Like pretty much every other motoring journalist in the northern hemisphere, my first dalliance with a Zonda turned out to be with the car that Harry Metcalfe later bought. C12 UFO really was the automotive version of the village bike for a certain period in the early 2000s...

My most vivid memory, however, is visiting the original Pagani factory in San Cesario sul Panaro in 2001, and not simply because I was thrown the keys to two Zondas - a coupe and a roadster - but because it was like being interdimensionally teleported into a world where your most vivid fantasies of supercars and supercar people came true

Tucked away in a relatively unremarkable industrial area between Modena and Bologna, the factory wasn't particularly grand on the outside, but when you stepped inside... oh my! Everything that you wanted to believe about Italian supercar expertise, construction, passion and desire was on display in full Technicolor. I had never witnessed such a hive of pure supercar authenticity and emotion, and still haven't to this day.

Everyone, from Horacio himself to the back-room administrators, oozed genuine car cool. No surprise, then, that the best hypercar of its era was born here. And from a player that no one had heard of until 1999. They have now.

Nick Trott



## TARGET: 200MPH

Way back in issue 055 we decided to go to Germany to try to do 200mph on the public road in a number of different and, in hindsight, terrifying cars. The list included an Elise with a twin-turbocharged Audi RS4 V6, the MTM Bimoto (a TT with an engine at each end) and a TVR Tuscan S. It was a great idea but a disaster on the ground - traffic, Autobahn rest areas, Burger King for breakfast, lunch and dinner, and more bloody traffic.

The Zonda S was the last car to go for 200mph on a quiet piece of Autobahn we finally found. Andy Wallace was driving, Colin Goodwin was in the passenger seat and several of us waited in one of those horrid rest areas, the sound of AMG V12 wrung out for mile after mile after mile swirling around us but no sight of the car beyond the thick hedgerow that separated us from the Autobahn.

Eventually the Zonda rolled to a stop next to us, emitting so much heat it was like a punch in the face. The now-iconic four tailpipes were glowing as orange as a three-bar fire and the colour bled all the way down to the big silencer, too. It hadn't hit 200mph but it hardly seemed to matter

Jethro Bovingdon



## ROOFLESS IN THE ROADSTER F

Of all the supercars, the Zonda was perhaps only rivalled by the McLaren F1 on the list of things I longed to drive. The longing was entirely evo's fault too, because over the years I had devoured every eulogising word that had appeared in the magazine. I've still got the CD-ROM that was stuck to the cover of issue 039 when that beautiful bare-carbon Zonda S won eCoty 2001.

The first time I drove a Zonda was back in the summer of 2008, and I remember being left alone in C12 UFO (Harry's own car) for the first time muttering 'Ya fired!' because Harry had said he'd go all Alan Sugar if I bent his car. What I recall most about that first drive (apart from the bald rear tyres...) was the miraculous ride quality. It just felt so supple and connected to the corrugated Cotswold roads. I remember the sound too.

But I remember the sound more from the dark blue Roadster F that we borrowed for our 100 Greatest Drivers' Cars test in issue 135. Its titanium rocket-ship exhausts emitted a yowl that remains unmatched by anything else I've ever driven. Roof off, sun out, it was everything I'd ever read about and more.

Henry Catchpole

# 200

# A brief history of Zonda in evo

The Zonda has been a regular in **evo** since the magazine's early days – and, as we've just read, with good reason. Here we chart the highlights of our encounters with this supercar great

# **JUNE 1999**

The Zonda's first appearance in evo, way back in issue 008. Horacio Pagani – the man behind the Kevlar and carbonfibre Countach Evoluzione concept – exclusively introduces us to his new supercar. The attention to detail is stunning; we just hope the dynamics will be as polished...



# 011

# SEPTEMBER 1999

Our first drive of the Zonda C12, with a 6-litre AMG V12 engine, 389bhp and a £200,000 price tag. 'The supercar establishment should be very worried indeed,' concludes Richard Meaden.



# 055

# MAY 2003

Can the now-7.3-litre S top 200mph on the Autobahn? Erm, no. Not even with Le Mans ace Andy Wallace at the wheel. And lots of downforce-generating Gurneys removed. 197mph is all it's got.



# THE RESULTS 19. Payan brink C225 (H1) 19. Payan brink C225 (H1) 19. Results 19.

# 039

# JANUARY 2002

The 7-litre, 542bhp Zonda S appears in our 2001 **evo** Car of the Year contest. It wins, beating the E46 BMW M3, Lamborghin Murciélago and the revised 996-gen 911 Carrera (which comes fifth, proving Porsches don't always win eCoty).

# SEPTEMBER 2006

Harry Metcalfe, at the time **evo's** editorial director, buys a Zonda S. C12 UFO will regularly star in Fast Fleet over the next six-and-a-half years, rising in value by £208k during that time.



# 0 7 4

# **DECEMBER 2005**

Zonda S meets the recently launched Zonda Roadster on a fast, quiet road beside the snow-topped Gran Sasso d'Italia. Gus Gregory's camera captures this quintessential **evo** moment.



# 134

# SEPTEMBER 2009

John Barker catches a ride round the *Top Gear* circuit in the £1.4m, 739bhp track-only Zonda R. It shares just 10 per cent of its components with the regular Zonda, and will be one of the fastest cars to ever lap the track.



# **OCTOBER 2009**

The Zonda, represented by the 641bhp Roadster F, tops our 100 Greatest Drivers' Cars countdown. 'It's a truly, wonderfully fabulous drivers' car,' we say.



As Zonda production winds down, **evo** tests the 760RS (right), one of a small run of bespoke 750bhp cars that also includes the 760LH, built for Lewis Hamilton.



# DECEMBER 2009

We sample the 669bhp Cinque. The most hardcore road-going Zonda to date, it costs some £1.3million – over six times more than the original C12. Just five will be made. Oh, and five Cinque Roadsters too.

# READER'S **DIGEST**

We invited our longest-ever subscriber to join us for the 'This is evo' test. Here he recalls his experience, and names his favourite moments from 200 issues of evo

> I'VE READ EVO SINCE THE beginning - and subscribed as soon as I'd finished the first issue - because it's different to other car magazines. It's not just about how the car feels, but how it makes you feel.

> I love what evo tests and where it tests it. It's the mixture of new stuff and wonderful old iconic stuff, and the combination of cars to aspire to as well as those like the smaller hot hatches that you can actually go out and buy. And the long-termers are such fun to read: the trials and tribulations of real life with cars we'd all love to buy. I've had soft spots for Harry's Maseratis and Barker's bonkers Capri.

> Features-wise, the Ferrari group test with the 288 GTO, F40, F50 and Enzo (evo 064) still stands out for me. That was amazing. Of all the photographs that have stuck in my mind it's the four of them lined up at the petrol station. That article was brilliant graphically and just a fabulous piece of writing.

> In an ideal world we'd all drive cars like the ones on the 'This is evo' test! It's an incredible group of cars. I've obviously read about them all over the years but being able to experience them up close is truly amazing. Meeting the people behind the words and pictures has been fascinating, too. It's been phenomenal to see the amount of effort put in by everybody and there are some amazing characters. I've built up feelings about people from their writing. For instance, when Dickie Meaden is describing a car I get a picture of how it feels and almost how it looks as he's driving it, and when he

took me out in the Porsche Carrera GT it was actually just like I imagined: small movements, efficiency, no drama. Like espresso, his driving is neat, tight and effective, with no froth.

The photographers are a particularly interesting bunch. That isn't as evident in the magazine - their pictures are great but they can't exactly convey their personas. They are a strong personality group! And so much thought and effort goes into getting each picture. Realising quite how long it takes to get those lovely tracking shots has been amazing, and closely following a GT3 RS with Gus Gregory hanging out the window of a Discovery is something I'll always remember!

If I had to pick one car from the test it would be the Carrera GT. It's the last of the analogue

# Tve read about all of these cars, but being able to experience them up close is truly amazing'

manual supercars. There aren't going to be any more like that. The Mégane R26.R is amazing too and it's £15k. For the money, it's absolutely brilliant. The philosophy of 'let's get rid

of lots of unnecessary stuff' is really nice, and I have a Caterham itch that I must scratch. Some people say you have to have an Alfa Romeo to be a car enthusiast; I think you need a Caterham.



Dr Will Backen evo reader



































# THE EVO

Introducing the **evo** ultracar, the car that combines the best bits of all the models we've driven in the course of 200 issues – from the Lotus Elise's exquisite steering to the Pagani Zonda's wonderfully bonkers quad exhausts

by RICHARD PORTER

# ULTRA CAR

S

was founded 16 years ago, evo has driven hundreds of cars and found

a great many of them to be good. Some of them even achieved true greatness. But no car is perfect. Some cars that drive beautifully look awful. Some cars that could be filed under 'stylish' are hopeless to drive. It's rare to find a machine that gets every single detail right and that's where this part of the **evo** 200th issue celebrat-a-thon comes in. What if you could have a car that melded the best bits of all the models this magazine has driven in the course of making it to the double century?

Gearlever

#### HONDA CIVIC TYPE-R

Proving that Honda knows its stuff in matters gearboxular (see also Gearchange, below) the short, stubby and particularly well-positioned lever from Honda's last crack at a hot hatch clinched things when talk turned to actual knobs

Seats

# RENAULTSPORT CLIO

If proof were needed that **evo** isn't all about mega-priced exotica, lavishly trimmed in tiger scrotum, the humble chairs from a French hot hatch absolutely romped home in the voting, being described by lan Eveleigh as 'just perfect'.

As an aside, Henry Catchpole made up his own category, 'best seating position' and voted the McLaren 12C his winner. So our ultracar features hatchback seats at a supercar height.

Engine

## **MERCEDES AMG M159**

Almost taken by the Porsche Carrera GT's V10, this prestigious category was just clinched by the thunderous V8 from the Mercedes SLS Black which, as Stephen Dobie noted, 'rewards you for revving the knackers off it but doesn't require you to'.

Engine noise

## **PORSCHE CARRERA GT**

There were votes for Italian V8s and British V12s, but the clear winner was this rare-groove German V10. This one isn't annotated because, erm, you can't really label a noise.

Gearchange

# HONDA S2000

The good people of **evo** kept it old-school in the gearchange category, largely voting for manual shifts with just a couple of nods to paddleshifts. And the overwhelming winner was the snickety shift from Honda's curate's egg roadster.

Armed with this idea, a brains trust of **evo** staffers and contributors was asked to vote for everything from their favourite engine and toppermost chassis to their best-loved headlights and the finest seats they've encountered. The only rule was that each detail had to be from a car that was (or is) on sale during **evo**'s lifetime.

The result is the mythical beast you see here; a glorious automotive chimera that combines the very best from the best, as nominated by the good people of this mag and confounding the suspicion that such a contest would simply lead to a big drawing of a Porsche 911. Instead we have this wondrous basilisk. Behold, the **evo** ULTRACAR.

Dashboard

#### PAGANI ZONDA

When the votes were totted up, subtlety and restraint lost out to flamboyance and theatre as Pagani's spangly and sensational leather and metal fest won through. 'It appeals to my inner tart,' noted lan Eveleigh. He didn't say what flavour.

Instruments

# LEXUS LFA

Slidey screens! Changing colours! Some back-story about how an analogue rev-counter wouldn't be able to keep up with the engine's bramble-sharp reactions! In light of all this, the LFA's tricksy TFT display walked it.

Interior detail

# **LEXUS LFA COLUMN STALKS**

Another victory for the limited-run Lexus. Less emphatic than its win in the instruments category but these slender stalks of excellence still wooed enough **evo** writers to secure victory here.

Steering

#### **LOTUS ELISE**

A slew of votes for the little Lotus, though evo-ist opinion varied on the exact model. Richard Meaden, for example, went for the Elise Sport 135, summing up its steering as 'light, unassisted, detailed feel and a rate of response perfectly matched to the car'.

Chassis

#### **PORSCHE CAYMAN**

As if to confirm the tutting suspicions of internet critics, almost everyone voted for a Porsche of some sort in the chassis category. The current Cayman clinched it, described by Stephen Dobie as 'exciting and expressive yet friendly and foolproof'.

Steering wheel

#### **PORSCHE 997 GT3**

A narrow win for the wheel from the lastgen GT3 when dressed in Alcantara. Earned extra points for shunning flat-bottomed shenanigans and therefore 'being round'.







# AUDI RS6

The steroidal arches of RS Audis did well in the voting but the adjudicators gave the nod to the C6-shape RS6 since it refs the box-arched glory of the original Quattro, thereby sneaking in a detail from a car too old to meet ultracar competition rules. Ha!

# PORSCHE 991 GT3

An easy majority for the elegant but meaty deca-spoked wonders from the current GT3 and in particular, as Dan Prosser put it, 'that rear dish'.

Colour

## **PORSCHE RIVIERA BLUE**

Nick Trott instinctively went for Aston's Onyx Black and then, wondering aloud if black is even a colour, hedged his bets with Porsche's Riviera Blue. And he wasn't alone as this strident signature colour beat allcomers to envelop the ultracar.

PORSCHE 997 GT3 RS

A variety of votes here but grunty Porsches seemed to be a theme and the adjudication panel finally gave the nod to the industrial chic of the much-loved 997 GT3 RS. Honourable mention to the 996.1 GT3 wing which Dan Prosser said is 'folded over organically, like a swan's wing, and calls to mind the transcendence of great cars as more than just machines'. Although he undermined the Brian Sewell effect by then calling himself a bellend.

Door handles

## **ASTON MARTIN**

Aston's signature pop-out lozenges romped home in this category, even if voters acknowledged them as 'a bit fiddly'. Nick Trott was a rare dissenting voice, going for the very similar items on the Jaguar F-type. Either way, a good result for designer Ian Callum.

ASTON MARTIN **CARBON CERAMICS** 

A category foolishly omitted from the original voting list but wisely and uniquely remembered by lofty deceleration enthusiast Henry Catchpole, who anchored his vote to these feelful, faderesistant stoppers.

Tail-lights

# MASERATI 3200GT

Where headlights split the vote, back lights suffered no such trouble and the much-loved 'boomerang' lamps from the early-gen Maser took it with ease. As lan Eveleigh lamented, 'Why the hell did they get rid of them?

## LOTUS ESPRIT

A category in which consensus was hard to find. So when Catchpole said 'anything pop-up', the overseeing committee unilaterally decided the Esprit must take it, if only for the additional and probably rare thrill of seeing both sides working in unison.

# LAMBORGHINI AVENTADOR

Lamborghini featured heavily in the voting for this category, but it was the company's current V12 sex-wedge that secured the most votes for reasons best summed up by Richard Meaden: 'Just look at it!'

Exterior detail

## **PAGANI ZONDA EXHAUSTS**

Little can touch the theatre, the spectacle and the faint absurdity of the 2x2 quads poking from the blunt end of every Zonda. A glorious baboon's arse of a detail, in the good sense of the expression.













#### AS YOU EMERGE BLINKING FROM THE

Evrotunnel (nice wide carriages), the sight that greets you confirms that the travel agent wasn't merely spouting Carlsberg hyperbole when they said this would be the greatest driving holiday ever. On this varied (very varied...) island of

automotive dreams lies everything you could need, including exactly 200 miles of the best roads recreated from around the world. You're free to drive the main loop in whichever direction you like (special left-hand-drive and one-way weekends are run throughout the year), but for our introductory tour we're heading clockwise.

Accelerating down the famous Lime Avenue you've got a lot to concentrate on in the first 1.16 miles. Soon after the second corner, Goodwood House flashes past on your left-hand side and if you manage not to go straight on at Molecomb or clip the flint wall then you'll find yourself rushing across the finish line straight into the hairpin at Saint-Estève, Provence. This marks the start of Mont Ventoux, or at least the interesting last 9.7 miles where eCoty was held in 2008. The contrast between the steep but fast section through the dense trees with the barren white heights above Chalet Reynard is dramatic. But not quite as dramatic as the sight of Pikes Peak rising on up into the clouds above. Yup, just as you round the

# The roads

## MAIN ROUTE

1	Goodwood hill climb, England Mont Ventoux, France	1.16 miles 9.7 miles
3		12.4 miles
	Pikes Peak, USA	7.5 miles
4	Gran Sasso, Italy	
5	Sölden toll road, Austria	4.2 miles
6	Serra do Rio do Rastro, Brazil	10.3 miles
7	N85 Route Napoléon, Digne-les-Bains to Castellane. France	30.8 miles
8	Two sides of the <b>evo</b> Triangle, Wales	15 miles
9	Ramsey Hairpin to Creg-ny-Baa,	10 miles
9	Isle of Man	10 ITIIIes
10	'Gypsy Bends', Cambridgeshire	0.6 miles
11	Chalet Raticosa, Italy	5.4 miles
12	Grimsel Pass, Guttannen to Gletsch, Switzerland	14.5 miles
13	Stelvio Pass to Bormio, Italy	12.1 miles
14	A830 Mallaig Road, alongside Loch Eilt	9 miles
14	between Glenfinnan and Lochailort	91111163
	stations, Scotland	
15	Transalpina, Romania	13.4 miles
16	Highway 1, south of Bixby Bridge	11.94 miles
.5	and Big Sur, USA	
17	Autobahn, Germany	10 miles

# **DETOURS**

Α	Col de Turini (La Bollène-Vésubie side),	6.5 miles
	France	
В	Cap Formentor, Majorca, Spain	4 miles
С	Sa Calobra, Majorca, Spain	4.8 miles
D	Jebel Hafeet, United Arab Emirates	6.7 miles

final steep switchback on Ventoux, you head into the lower reaches of the Pikes Peak International Hill Climb and, on Richard Meaden's insistence, evo Island has the proper half-tarmac, half-gravel version of the iconic 12.4 miles. For the full Ari Vatanen experience, we suggest driving it in early evening so that you get the sun in your eyes near the big drops at the top and have to steer one-handed.

The air is rare on the summit of our ultimate hill climb section but you won't find yourself descending straight away, because as you cross the finish line of Pikes Peak you'll see the magical plateau of the Gran Sasso stretching out in front of you. This is the road where Gus Gregory so memorably photographed not one but two Zondas for evo 074. There is more to the Gran Sasso than just that breathtaking straight, however, as the road tumbles down from the mountains through a bleached and rocky landscape. It's quite a start to the descent, but Italy quickly gives way to Austria as you pass the glacier above Sölden and head steeply down the 4.2 miles of spectacular toll road (no need to pay here of course) that we used when red 991 GT3 met red GT-R in evo 187.

The beauty of evo Island is that in the space of a single corner the road can transport you halfway across the world... to Brazil. Dropping into the huge green valley that seems to have been slashed into the landscape like a gangrenous wound is spectacular in the day, but you'll want to come back at night to drive the 10.3 miles of the Serra do Rio do Rastro. After sunset its hairpins are beautifully







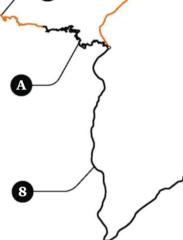
























lit, so that from above it looks like a slender silver river snaking down into the darkness.

After the rise and then fall of the first 45 miles we settle into the longest continuous stretch on the island. This is the 30.8-mile strop from Digne-les-Bains to Castellane along the N85 in France – better known as the Route Napoléon. If there's a better bit of road on which to stretch the legs of a supercar then it's probably elsewhere on the evo Island, but after numerous early-morning and late-night eCoty strops over the years this is our choice. At the roundabout on the outskirts of Castellane (we've actually inserted one of the roundabouts from the A509 in Milton Keynes because we think it's better) you'll need to slacken your dampers as you enter a sustained 25.6-mile British section of the journey. It should be quite a test, starting with the two interesting sides of the evo Triangle in north Wales, then flowing into the Snaefell mountain road from Ramsey to Creg-ny-Baa on the Isle of Man and finishing with a half-mile jaunt through the 'Gypsy Bends' in Cambridgeshire – a location just off the B660 that has been used for more evo cornering shots than we care to remember.

If we had to pick our Italian equivalent of the B660, then it would be the roads around Chalet Raticosa. Given a few hours with any of the vehicles produced in the supercar suburbs surrounding Modena, we have invariably headed to this one idyllic patch, so it would have been wrong to leave it out. It also marks the start of our mountain passes section and as the Apennines give way to the Alps we head from Guttannen to Gletsch over the glorious Grimsel Pass with no need to worry about strict Swiss policemen. Then it's back into Italy for the Stelvio, but not the hilariously hairpinned side, rather the 12.1-mile stretch down into Bormio that's actually good to drive.

Once down in the valley you'll find yourself winding along the shores of Loch Eilt. We couldn't leave out Scotland, and the A830 towards Mallaig was a particular request from Peter Tomalin after a blissful few days there during McCoty in 2003. We've picked the 9-mile portion between Glenfinnan and Lochailort stations, where Tomalin informs us that the Hogwarts Express is occasionally to be

> Right: the toll road above Sölden in Austria offers straight blasts and tight turns. Below: Route Napoléon adds Gallic flair to the route



## 'If we had to pick our Italian equivalent of the B660, then it would be the roads around Chalet Raticosa'

seen on the tracks that run parallel to the road (presumably there will be a Ford Anglia flying in the skies overhead too...). As Scotland ends, so Romania almost seamlessly begins. The Transalpina (or 67C) is the road that I happen to think is even better than the Transfagarasan highway and it has more than a frisson of the Highlands about it. I feel you'll particularly enjoy the exposed run down the ridgeline, which might even challenge Pikes Peak for the title of 'scariest section on the island'.

As a little light relief, Dickie suggested that we add in some pleasantly sweeping coastal curves from the Pacific Coast Highway. An 11.94-mile stretch of Highway 1 around Bixby Bridge and Big Sur seemed to fit the bill. After cruising around California (and passing the evo office, which has relocated here, for obvious reasons), it's onto the home straight – all 10 miles of it. You might think that one stretch of Autobahn is much like any other, but the A5 between Frankfurt and Darmstadt is where Caracciola and Rosemeyer did battle in 1938, so for pure historical significance that's the gallop we've chosen. If you want to go old-school with your high-speed run, you could of course take to the beach that's to your left. Either way, just remember to get it all slowed down before the first corner on Lord March's driveway...

Anyone trying to keep count will be frantically stabbing their calculator at this point, because we're still 22 miles short of the magical 200. There is a reason. The main loop is wide enough for pretty much any sort of car. However, we decided there should also be a separate 'hot hatch run'. It's not restricted to GTIs of course, but the Col de Turini (La Bollène-Vésubie side) is narrow enough to make you think twice before taking an Aventador along it. After the iconic rally stage comes the beautiful but similarly nadgety cliff-top run out to the Cap Formentor lighthouse on Majorca.

Still 11.5 miles short of our total, we've added in one more inland stretch that provides a sort of ultimate brief blast if you want to bed in a new set of tyres or try a new chassis set-up. Possibly the wiggliest stretch of tarmac on the island first takes you up the relentless curves of Sa Calobra (Majorca again) before, at Nick Trott's request, ascending the almost Disney bends of the Jebel Hafeet mountain road. And at the end, we've taken the liberty of replacing the hotel with the memorabilia-filled Pistenklause, home of steak on a stone.

And that's it: a tour of the greatest collective 200 miles from around the world. One mile for every issue of evo so far. And if you happen to get bored of the road during your week, you could always hire an appropriate (five-star) car and investigate the rest of the island - rumour has it that there are salt flats, a go-kart track, the Ouninpohja rally stage nestled in one of the forests and a permanent ice lake somewhere in the mountains...





# **CAR INDUSTRY**

by ANDREW ENGLISH

We profile the men and women responsible for shaping the present and future of driving thrills – from politicians to Ring Taxi drivers, via football managers...





President, General Motors

Groomed as The General's 'car guy' by wily spin doctor Tony Cervone, Ammann was over in Europe recently giving hacks lifts up the Goodwood Festival of Speed hill climb. This likeable ex-Morgan Stanley banker admits 'doing stuff' is so much better than banking and is now in charge of GM's finances as well as GM Europe. So if the engineers want to uprate the dampers on the new Corsa, for example, then Ammann's the man they have to convince of the investment.

# WOLFGANG

Chief executive, Bentley and Bugatti

Massively experienced, abrasive, opinionated and (some say) an egotist, this former head of R&D at BMW and Porsche and head of BMW's motorcycle division has a mighty job at VW's 'B' brands. After an unsuccessful period with

> Audi, Dürheimer is back at Bentley hybridise drivelines and launch the EXP 9F, the luxury

SUV first seen in 2012 and slated for 2016. He might rub people up the wrong way, but

there's no denying he gets things done.

# MATT TAYLOR

Vehicle dynamics expert

Forget fuel consumption or self-driving cars, for evo readers, steering feel and control feedback are some of the most contentious issues in the automotive world. Some suppliers maintain this sort of control feedback doesn't matter to a new generation of drivers raised on computer driving games. Taylor, former Prodrive head of dynamics and currently a contractor for JLR, thinks the opposite.



Chief engineer, vehicle integrity, Jaguar Land Rover

Mike's legendary department (which includes John Barker, formerly of this parish) has proved itself superbly competent at uniquely suiting their cars for driving on UK roads rather than racetracks. With the arrival of a new generation of small Jaguars spearheaded by next year's XE and a new series of Land Rovers based around the Discovery badge, the pressure will be on as never before.

Chief executive, Motor Sports Association

Recognised as UK motorsport's governing body by its worldwide equivalent, Fédération Internationale l'Automobile, the blazer brigade of racing administrators is headed by British Touring Car Championship chief Gow. But with most parts of the sport in decline and some seeing the FIA and MSA as being undemocratic and self-serving, can the Australian, a forthright fixer with a proven track record, turn things around?

# **ANDY PALMER**

Chief planning officer, Nissan Motor Company

As a member of the executive board of management, Palmer holds Nissan's levers of power. He reports directly to Renault-Nissan alliance chief Carlos Ghosn, who must like his direct-speaking

style even though it gets him into hot water at times. Palmer's view on Nissan's Le Mans effort this year - 'our intention is to win' might have been widely misquoted, but it still looked like hubris to us.

# FRANCO

Technical director, Ferrari

He bridges the gap between old-school, big-banger Ferraris and the modern era where the Prancing Horse is moving into a new world of hybrids and turbocharged engines. Cimatti's leadership and wisdom will be vital to ensure the cars from Maranello still drive as they should.



## ATT BECKER

Chief engineer, test and development, Lotus

This could also have been Becker's colleague Gavan Kershaw, but either man is pretty much the Yoda of steering feel and feedback, while also being amazingly handy behind the wheel. And while Lotus is a tiny company without a product spread to challenge others, its influence on vehicle dynamics spreads far and wide.

# PAUL HOWSE

Lead exterior designer, McLaren

With his disarmingly straightforward manner and chief stoker's hair. Howse is a refreshing change from the normally super-preened world of Ron Dennis. He's also the bloke who designed the P1. With a whole model list to fill at the Woking carmaker, Howse might find he needs another felt-tip set.

# CARSTEN **BREITFEI N**

i project head, BMW

Forget the old M Sport department, this is where the future counts as BMW slowly incorporates the lessons of its i range of

cars into the mainstream.



# **THOMAS**

Board member responsible for research and development, Daimler

Weber is the man responsible for how all Mercedes go, stop and turn. That they've improved so much in this respect in recent years is largely down to him. He might also be responsible for the future of Aston Martin if and when its cars are fitted with AMG engines and transmissions. Important job...



# OBIAS MOERS

Chief executive, AMG

Having worked for AMG since 1994, Moers has come up through the ranks and is now the guiding light at Affalterbach. He's a tough, hard-driving, straight-speaking man with a clear idea of what AMG is and (almost as importantly) what it isn't. That sense might be sorely tested in the coming years as Mercedes demands downsized AMG models.

Product development director, Aston Martin

Minards formerly worked at Jaguar, but moved to 'The Aston' in 1997. In all his positions, Minards has never lost his friendly and approachable manner, or incisive grasp of what an Aston should be. As the company goes through a period of unsettled ownership, with Ulrich Bez, Dave Richards, Investment Dar, Investindustrial and Mercedes-Benz all squabbling, the old marque needs its wise heads like Minards.

# SIIM KALLAS

Vice-president of the European Commission responsible for transport

This fonctionnaire keeps Europe on the move and his department is responsible for how our trunk roads line up, whether

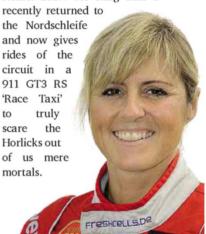
vou get stuck behind a lorry in France or Kent, how soon it will be before we have hydrogen-fuelled, self-driving cars on our roads and how long you'll still be allowed to buy a V8-engined car for.



# **SABINE**

Racing driver, TV commentator and 'Race Taxi' driver

We know women can drive just as well as men, but Schmitz is simply a phenomenon. This race driver, TV commentator and former BMW M5 Ring Taxi driver has





# GORDON

Designer/engineer; chairman, Gordon Murray Design

Are the best days of this epochal vehicle designer and engineer now behind us? Murray's McLaren F1 has proved itself as one of the all-time great supercars, but these days its creator's focus is on his low cost, light materials, low cradle-to-grave CO2 'iStream' car manufacturing model. It was embraced by Yamaha's Motiv concept at last year's Tokyo motor show, but will it progress from show car to production? Time will tell...



# **HARRY** REDKNAPP

Manager, Queens Park Rangers FC

Not an obvious connection to evo, it's true, but as manager of a QPR side now back in the Premier League, Harry's going to need to spend a lot of money on players, which might impact upon the finances of club majority shareholder, Tony Fernandes, who also used to own the Caterham Formula 1 team and still owns Caterham Cars, makers of the Seven. Can you see where we're going here?

Vehicle performance director, Opel

Vauxhall/Opel's chief set-up man has been in place since 2010, but has recently allowed cars to be tuned on British roads with unique UK steering settings. If the recently revised Corsa is any guide then there's a new fluency behind the griffin badge which, rather than aping the darty Ford Fiesta, is distinctly Vauxhall/Opel, building on good ride comfort with a more relaxed but still sporting dynamic.



Two-time world rally champion; senior test driver, Porsche

After an amazing career in rallying where he heroically took on and beat the early Audi Quattro threat in a two-wheeldrive Opel Ascona, Röhrl has ended up at the Stuttgart sports car and SUV maker, Porsche. Never less than searingly honest about the cars, he retains laserlike analytical skills and awe-inspiring virtuosity at the wheel. Nice guy, too.

# BARB SAMARDZICH

Chief operating officer, Ford of Europe

Samardzich was formerly head of global product development and vehicle engineering, so when it comes to greathandling cars, she knows her onions. She now helps control budgets to determine how much engineering

and development time Ford's engineers get to refine ride handling. and We all know they can do it. but Samardzich helps determine whether they get a chance to do so.

# CHRIS PORRITT

Vice-president of vehicle engineering, Tesla

After a distinguished career with Aston Martin, Porritt was poached by Elon Musk's electric carmaker last year. Porritt is the perfect man to further refine the iconoclastic Tesla Model S (he could start by calming the light-switch traction control...), while his experience will also be needed as the firm moves into more affordable cars and SUVs.

# CARSTEN

Joint managing director, Nürburgring

The website says he is a 'restructuring expert'. With most carmakers now testing their vehicles' 'road' handling at the Ring, the track is so crucial in the development of great-handling cars that we all hold our breath when the term 'restructuring' is used anywhere near it. What Schumacher, only appointed earlier this year, brings to the party, we wait to see...

# **LAWRENCE** TOMLINSON

Chairman, Ginetta

This qualified engineer and founding chairman of the LNT Group is one of the richest men in Britain and has indulged his passion for racing cars by creating a viable and thriving race car maker out of the Walklett brothers' legacy. Tomlinson has ploughed money back into racing, creating various championships and driver academies.



Chief executive, PSA Peugeot Citroën

This former Renault-Nissan executive has got the poisoned chalice of getting PSA back on the financial rails. A keen amateur racer, he's determined that PSA is 'back in the race again', which as any race driver will tell you is virtually impossible. How he manages the now partly Chinese-owned French carmaker out of the crisis will be a bigger test of mettle than anything he's faced before.

Stands to reason, really: you pay our wages and hopefully like what you get in return. And as the world of driving becomes a minefield of legislation, politics, pollution and congestion, it's sometimes hard to retain that wide-eyed sense of wonder and awe at the sight and sound of a great car on the road. Our aim is to continue to put you in the driving seat of those cars.

## WHAT'S CHANGED IN 200 ISSUES?

The performance car landscape of 2014 is a very different one to that when **evo** first hit newsagents' shelves in 1998. We analyse exactly what's different and why it's changed over the last 16 years

by STEPHEN DOBIE and RICHARD MEADEN

#### **SUPERCARS**





	2 <del>7</del>		
	FERRARI F355 F1	LAMBORGHINI DIABLO SV	PORSCHE 911 TURBO (993)
CAPACITY	3496cc	5705cc	3600cc
POWER	374bhp	530bhp	408bhp
TORQUE	268lb ft	450lb ft	398lb ft
WEIGHT	1350kg	1575kg (dry)	1502kg
POWER-TO-WEIGHT	281bhp/ton	342bhp/ton	276bhp/ton
0-60MPH	4.7sec	4.0sec	3.7sec
TOP SPEED	183mph	207mph	180mph
MPG	16.7mpg	11.1mpg	19.4mpg
PRICE NEW	£110,000	£133,950	£97,980

THEN

NOW		
FERRARI 458 ITALIA	LAMBORGHINI AVENTADOR	PORSCHE 911 TURBO (991)
4497cc	6498cc	3800cc
562bhp	690bhp	513bhp
398lb ft	509lb ft	524lb ft
1485kg	1575kg (dry)	1595kg
384bhp/ton	445bhp/ton	327bhp/ton
3.2sec	2.9sec	3.4sec
202mph	217mph	195mph
20.6mpg	17.7mpg	29.1mpg
£178,526	£260,040	£118,349

#### THE INSIDER'S VIEW

'The 911 Turbo has always been a pioneer in improving fuel economy,' says Eberhard Mössle, director of the 911 Turbo's development. 'Since the launch of the 930 Turbo in 1975, we have more than doubled the engine power while reducing fuel consumption by nearly 50 per cent.' But why has fuel economy been such a pivotal focus area for a premier-league supercar? 'An important key to the success of Porsche sports cars has always been their versatility. suitability of a car for everyday use is not least determined by its fuel economy, especially in the context of social acceptance in different markets.' Among the Turbo's economy-stretching additions have been Variable Turbine Geometry in the 997 (2006), the introduction of direct injection for the 997's 2010 update, plus the curious 'virtual' gears between the seven traditional ratios of the 991 Turbo's PDK gearbox.

#### **MEADEN'S VIEW**

It's hard to believe the Pagani Zonda, for example, began life with less than 400bhp and a £200k asking price, but the supercar market has been skewed beyond recognition to the point a new name has been coined – hypercar.

The Porsche 911 Turbo has always been a rocketship, but with PDK, torque vectoring and other electrickery it has stretched the boundaries reliable. accessible performance to the point where you can nip to Tesco in a car capable of leaving a McLaren F1 in the dust.



Left: Diablo looks thirsty compared to modern supercars. Right: 991 Turbo blends extreme performance with everyday practicality



#### ANALYSIS

Think benchmark supercars and a V8 Ferrari, big-power Lamborghini and a 911 Turbo are probably the three that come to mind. Happily, they remain poster cars 16 years after evo's launch and have every chance of holding on to that honour for the next 16, providing there's still enough petrol for them...

For comparison purposes we've used the paddleshift-equipped F355, for it's the closest model to the current 458. The price increase may be shocking but it's not far beyond inflation, though performance has taken a much starker leap - the 'baby' Ferrari supercar is now a member of the 200mph club.

The Lambo has progressed similarly, but it's the 911 that perhaps displays the biggest change, with the focus on how little weight it's gained and its hugely impressive mpg figure, which in restrained daily driving is more than attainable. It is also £30,000 cheaper than if the 993's figure had followed inflation.



#### HOT HATCHES

THEN





	PEU( 106
CAPACITY	1587
POWER	120b
TORQUE	109lb
WEIGHT	950k
POWER-TO-WEIGHT	128b
0-60MPH	7.4se
TOP SPEED	124m
MPG	34.9r
PRICE NEW	£13,1

GEOT GTI	PEUGEOT 306 GTI-6	VW GOLF GTI (MK4)
СС	1998cc	1781cc
hp	167bhp	150bhp
b ft	142lb ft	155lb ft
(g	1215kg	1279kg
hp/ton	139bhp/ton	119bhp/ton
ec	7.6sec	8.5sec
nph	130mph	131mph
mpg	30.1mpg	36.2mpg
120	£18,670	£18,190

100000		
NOW		
FORD FIESTA ST	RENAULT MÉGANE 265	VW GOLF R (MK7)
1596cc	1998сс	1984cc

FORD FIESTA ST	RENAULT MÉGANE 265	VW GOLF R (MK7)
1596cc	1998cc	1984cc
179bhp	261bhp	297bhp
214lb ft	265lb ft	280lb ft
1088kg	1387kg	1476kg
167bhp/ton	191bhp/ton	204bhp/ton
6.9sec	6.0sec	5.1sec
139mph	158mph	155mph
47.9mpg	37.7mpg	40.9mpg
£17,250	£26,930	£29,900

#### THE INSIDER'S VIEW

'Their chassis dynamics were great and gave you high confidence to speed in corners, to brake late and to use full throttle very early! Their light weights played a part in the nimbleness,' says Pierre Budar, road car manager of Peugeot Sport, referring to the GTI magic of the 106 and 306. He continues: 'In the 1990s, it was possible to fully enjoy your hot hatch on open roads, with a rally spirit. Today our customers have to visit a trackday to use the full potential of their car. This has to be considered when we tune our new models.'

He also explains why those GTIs' fly weights didn't carry over to their successors, 'Hot hatches are based on popular cars with high sales volumes. To be competitive in mass production, improvements regarding safety, quality, reliability and comfort were needed, increasing weight. But we fight to save weight on our new models and it is possible to come back to 1990s weights.'









#### ANALYSIS

While the 1990s lacked a surfeit of great hot hatchbacks, 2014 is bursting at the seams. Though Peugeot is a long way from ruling the roost like it did in issue 001...

At the titchy end, power has climbed considerably - the Fiesta ST nearly 60bhp stockier than the 106 - though its weight hasn't shot up by the same proportion, meaning the Ford offers a much better power-to-weight ratio and thus greater claimed performance,

despite the Pug's fly weight.

Much greater differences are seen comparing 306 to Mégane - these are hot hatches that sit in the same segment of the market, vet with turbocharging now de rigueur, the Renault's peak outputs and acceleration figures are in another world. Amusingly, in 1998 the Pug's £18,670 was declared 'a lot'. With inflation, the Mégane's price is on par, yet is seemingly accepted.

The Mk4 Golf GTI was nothing short of a dud, and is here merely for context (the higher-rated Nissan Almera GTI would have seemed an irrelevance). We could have compared it directly to the current Mk7 GTI, but putting the latest Golf R here - our current class leader - exemplifies the extreme level hot hatch performance has reached. A 5.1sec 0-60mph time puts it ahead of the 1998 Ferrari 456M GTA.

#### **MEADEN'S VIEW**

Smaller, lighter and much edgier to drive to their limits, cars like the 306 GTI or Clio 172 were more mature than their predecessors, but they still really needed driving, especially in wet conditions. Engine outputs look tame compared with today's 250plus bhp machines, but you were guaranteed an effervescent experience that encompassed every aspect of driving for fun.

Today it's common to find hot hatches that offer performance that not so long ago would have been the preserve of an M3, but it's rare to find hot hatches with genuine exuberance. It's great that we still have cars like the Mégane Trophy-R, but it's a shame that the general trend is for more power, sophistication and complexity, which in turn dilutes the driving experience into something more generic.

### **COUPES**



**NISSAN GT-R** (R33)

2568cc

276bhp

271lb ft

1540kg

5.4sec

155mph

22mpg

£50,000

182bhp/ton



	BMW M3 (E36)	PORSCHE 9 CARRERA (
CAPACITY	3201cc	3397cc
POWER	321bhp	300bhp
TORQUE	258lb ft	258lb ft
WEIGHT	1460kg	1320kg
POWER-TO-WEIGHT	223bhp/ton	230bhp/to
0-60MPH	5.5sec	4.6sec
TOP SPEED	155mph	173mph
MPG	25.7mpg	28mpg
PRICE NEW	£38,445	£64,825

THEN

BMW M4 (F30)	PORSCHE 911 CARRERA (991)	NISSAN GT-R (R35, 2014M)
2979сс	3436cc	3799сс
425bhp	345bhp	542bhp
406lb ft	288lb ft	466lb ft
1537kg	1380kg	1740kg
281bhp/ton	254bhp/ton	316bhp/ton
4.1sec	4.7sec	2.8sec
155mph	179mph	196mph
32.1mpg	31.4mpg	24mpg
£56,635	£73,413	£78,020

#### THE INSIDER'S VIEW

The BMW M4 is a different machine to the E36 M3. BMW M engineering chief Albert Biermann explains how life has changed for the division's core model: 'The variety of customers and their expectations have grown by entering new markets, especially in Asia. The number of homologation requirements for different markets has increased significantly, and it is our key challenge to provide the ultimate driving machine in more and more restricted markets; even with a manual transmission if requested by the customer.'

Have the car's benchmarks changed since the E36? 'The toughest benchmark for the nextgeneration M3 typically is its predecessor. This time we also looked closely at the M3 GTS, and the new M3 and M4 got very, very close to it. I always keep an eye on the Porsche 911 - recently more and more often in the rearview mirror.'





Above: R35 GT-R is a world away from the R33 of the late '90s (left). Right: 996 Carrera was pricey in its time



#### ANALYSIS

Skim the figures for the 911s and it's evident this is a model that thrives on evolution rather than revolution. Each of its key figures has risen so incrementally that the main differentiators between the base 911s of 1998 and now are mpg (specifically how much more achievable the newer figure is) and price: the 991's £73,413 looks like a giveaway when inflation swells the 996's RRP to £99,610, which is essentially what the current GT3

costs. The increases seen by the other cars here are just a couple of per cent above inflation.

A drop in displacement from E36 M3 to the F30 M4 is the result of the new car's eco-conscious twin-turbocharging; had we conducted the comparison before the E92 M3 bowed out, we'd be looking at a considerable rise to 3999cc. A 104bhp hike means the M4 belies its heftier kerb weight with a 1.4sec quicker 0-60 sprint.

There's a monumental rise in performance between the GT-R's R33 and R35 generations, the new car almost doubling its forebear's power figure, with predictably dramatic effects on power-to-weight and acceleration. It is, however, a comparison that's artificially afflicted by the spurious 276bhp figure claimed by all Japanese performance flagships of the 1990s. Owners reckon 320bhp+ is more realistic.

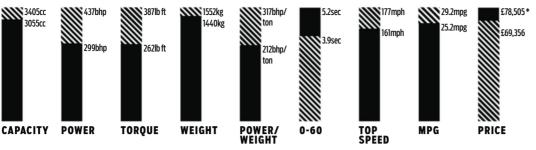
#### **MEADEN'S VIEW**

The defining coupe evo's time is the BMW M3, though it always suffers from comparison with its predecessors. The E36 still carries the stigma of not being the E30; likewise the E90 V8 because it strayed from the 'magical' straight-six era the E36 was derided for ushering in. Now we've gone back to six-cylinder power, but with turbocharging, which has given naysayers something new to malign.

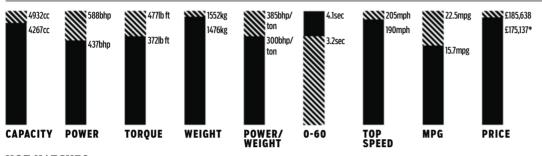
Regardless, there reassuring continuity between the E36 M3 and today's M4. There's always been a dynamic integrity about these M-cars that satisfies on all levels, be it functioning as an everyday car or enjoying near-911 levels of performance for considerably less money. It's an enduring recipe, one BMW still understands better than anyone.

#### THEN AND NOW: AVERAGE FIGURES FROM EACH GROUP OF CARS ANALYSED

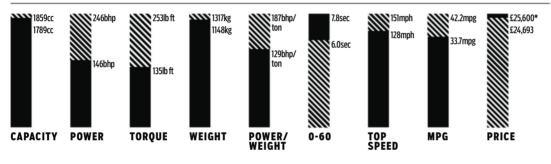
#### COUPES



#### **SUPERCARS**



#### **HOT HATCHES**



#### ANALYSIS

With the numbers from our trios crunched into averages, there's some wonderful news: while cars have got faster, more powerful and more economical, they also - with 1998 prices adjusted for inflation - appear no more expensive, at least in the case of our coupes and hot hatches. Despite vast improvements in safety, deeper development processes and all the standard equipment now on offer, most of these cars are essentially cheaper than ever.

Away from the bald figures, the cars we hold in highest regard have also benefitted from carefully measured progress. And there can be no greater exemplar of this than the Porsche 911.

Its product director, August Achleitner, says: 'In the early years the pace of development may have been determined by the availability of financial resources,

but in the past 25 years the gradual evolution of the 911 has been a deliberate strategy. Our dedication to steady evolutionary development has helped us turn all former weaknesses of the vehicle concept into clear advantages.' The dynamics of its rear-engine layout are a key example.

Porsche seems the best place to look for clues of the great performance cars of the next 16 years too, not least for how well the 918 Spyder (above) implements its hybrid set-up.

It's comforting because CO2 legislation is only going to tighten. 'The two electric motors in the 918 Spyder not only improve fuel consumption in real-world driving cycles but actually define the character of the futuristic super sports car', 918 project chief Frank-Stefan Walliser tells us. 'The future of sports cars will be partly - electric.'

#### KEY







NB: 1998 prices adjusted for inflation

#### **MEADEN'S VIEW**

evo is fortunate to have grown during a time of vast change. Cars have always got faster, but we're now seeing a trend towards lighter, more intelligent engineering. Cars are becoming more efficient, though to what degree is hard to say with any certainty as actual mpg figures rarely come close to those generated in the fantasyland EU combined cycle. They're definitely safer, though, increasingly thanks to effective (and less intrusive) electronic driver aids and sophisticated active safety systems to protect occupants and pedestrians. If only we could point to the same improvements in the condition of our roads - and driving standards.

What will the next 200 issues bring? Short-term we'll see even faster, more powerful and more exploitable highperformance cars as the internal combustion its zenith. We'll reaches also see more hybrid and electric technology, which we now know is something to embrace, not fear. What causes me some distress is the certainty we'll be the generation to witness the rise of GPS-controlled speed limits, autonomous cars and perhaps even the marginalisation of driving as a recreational pastime.

I hope I'm proved wrong about that last statement, but on the off-chance I'm correct, might I suggest you take the time to go for a gratuitous drive this weekend, or simply take the long way home from work. Circumstances might dictate the thrill of driving becomes harder for us to enjoy, but I believe it'll remain ours for the taking if we can be bothered to chase it.

# Hyper Sonic Sonic

And so to the icing on the cake of our 200th issue celebration: McLaren's P1 finally goes head to head with Porsche's 918 Spyder. Which comes out on top in the battle of the hybrid hypercars? Place your bets

by DAVID VIVIAN
PHOTOGRAPHY by
DEAN SMITH



IT'S 7.00PM. THE DAY'S muggy heat and glaring light are softening to the balm of a dreamy dusk and the duelling sounds of a fully lit McLaren P1, driven by Jethro Bovingdon,

and a chasing Mercedes SLS Black Series with a GoPro video camera clamped to its improbably long bonnet - and Dickie Meaden, seated some way behind, clamped to its chunky, Alcantaratrimmed steering wheel. The Merc's brutally loud, hammering aural assault on its surroundings all but masks the high-revving McLaren's harderedged and thinner-sounding twin-turbo V8. Eyes closed and cars unknown, it would be easy to imagine the deep, dark, percussive bellow has the better of the argument.

But in hybrid hypercar world, torque-filling electricity is the silent assassin and the deep purple McLaren's imperious command of the space between itself and the overstretched SLS on Anglesey's technically challenging but ridiculously pretty Coastal Circuit has unhinged even seasoned observers' jaws. This place has witnessed plenty of road car dramas in its time, but the sight of 6.2 litres and 621bhp of prime AMG beef being made to look no more potent than a vigorously twirled rubber band is something new.

Meanwhile, in the 903bhp P1, Jethro's giving the new paradigm some old-school attitude, hotshifting through the intermediate cogs to prolong the drifts while gobs and wristband-sized slivers of P Zero Corsa burst out of the billowing smoketrail as the heavily burdened nearside-rear tyre gradually delaminates. Fortunately, with the P1 this sideways, the SLS can get close enough to record the Ken Block-style 'rubber death' finale to the session. The big car's customary thunder has sounded as heroic as ever, but the lightning has been nicked by a genuine four-wheeled phenomenon.

If things were running exactly to plan, the gullwinged German supercar wouldn't be the victim of advanced hybrid technology and an £866,000 price tag. More than a few of us are nervously checking and re-checking our watches. The reason the P1 is here isn't to humiliate elements of the 'This is evo' group test that think they're 'ard enough - we're all assembled at the same venue for logistic convenience - but to keep a date with destiny where the outcome is far less certain.

In short, it's here to pick a fight with a car of roughly its own size and similarly other-worldly powers that should have been here seven hours ago to fulfil video chores as a prelude to the showdown of the decade on the roads of north Wales. All we know is that no-one knows where the lorry and its precious cargo from Zuffenhausen actually is. Its driver could have checked into Wes Anderson's mythical Grand Budapest Hotel for tea and a Mendl's Courtesan au Chocolat and we'd be none the wiser.

The clock is ticking and the sun is setting. It's

too late for the mother of all track battles today but the weight of expectation only grows as yet more eyes focus on the service road for signs of a smart-looking German truck rumbling and bobbing towards the paddock parking area. And finally in the fading light, two long days after setting off from Porscheplatz 1, it rolls up. The paperwork and decanting will have to wait for the morning but we can't resist copping a peek before heading back to the hotel. It's white with Martini stripes and racing roundels on the doors, the same iconic livery as Porsche's Le Mans-conquering 917 of 1971, and bears the number 23. Not so subtle, then. Neither is the implication.

I HAVE BREAKFAST with former editorial director Harry Metcalfe and chat about Jaguars, special ops and life with the red Lamborghini Espada he drove up in the previous evening. Naturally, as one of the first people to get under the skin of the Porsche 918 Spyder as a (somewhat unresolved) prototype (evo 176), he's as keen as I am to see how the finished product fares against the mightiest McLaren - the only other hypercar so far to have completed a lap of the Nordschleife in under seven minutes, though by how much an uncharacteristically shy McLaren still isn't saying.

Outside, in the hotel car park, the 918 is still sitting in the back of the lorry. The German delivery driver, who speaks even less English than I do German, points towards me and then his immaculate 853,155 euro (c£675,000) payload and dangles the stylishly fashioned Porsche's key from an outstretched arm. It's clear that he, at least, isn't going anywhere near the ignition lock with it. This isn't the introduction to the world's first and most technically sophisticated hybrid hypercar I was hoping for.

Somehow I manage to insert myself between the lorry's side panel and the 918's bodywork before sliding through the minimally crackedopen door and flopping into the uncompromising embrace of the racing bucket seat. With Harry articulating a half-remembered cabin road map from the sidelines and the wrap-around techfest of a facia slowly emerging from the gloom, I fumble the key into the ignition barrel (no starter button, how refreshing), twist it, and the dash lights up to an accompanying melange of whirrs, hums, clicks and beeps. Electric-only start-up should be an ally in my glacial rearward progress down the ramps and into the sunshine, but I'm so nervous my right foot is oscillating like drummer Carl Palmer's kick-drum thumper mid-solo (Isle of Wight Festival, 1970). Fortunately, the first inch of throttle travel in electric mode doesn't seem to do much, so the car's relatively smooth movement doesn't betray my twitchiness.

Finally unloaded and parked, the 918 looks rather magnificent and immediately becomes a megapixel magnet for anyone with a camera or a smartphone, me included. It may not have





'IN HYBRID **HYPERCAR** WORLD, TORQUE-FILLING **ELECTRICITY** IS THE SILENT ASSASSIN'



Left: PI's tyres bear the scars of some Anglesey track action. Above: 918's optional body wrap pays homage to Porsche's early-70s sports-prototypes.
Right: 918's rotary dial switches between E-power, Hybrid, Sport Hybrid and Race Hybrid modes, while the red button activates the red button activates Hot Lap mode for those Ring record-breaking runs













the dangerously alien, almost HR Giger-esque curves of the P1 with its hydraulically ramped up mega-wing, but as a modern reboot of the design ideas first expressed in the Carrera GT it works well. It looks even more enticing with the twin carbon roof panels removed to reveal the bold architecture and exquisitely resolved detailing of

'The quality just shines through, doesn't it?' remarks Jethro, who also thinks it shares the Carrera GT's car-as-art execution and consequently looks more expensive than the McLaren, despite costing around £200k less. Henry Catchpole, who's just rolled up in the P1 but wastes no time trying the Porsche on for size, is just as impressed: 'The depth of quality is palpable in everything you touch, and that big sweeping arc of a centre console with its incredibly legible Kindle-like infotainment display makes the P1's effort - quite sculptural in isolation – look a bit puny. I love the seats and the way bare pieces of carbonfibre seem to hold them together at hip level.' So do I.

Henry's less made up with the Martini wrap, which is a no-cost option on cars fitted with the weight-shaving Weissach Package. And he doesn't much like the sound of the other choice, a red and white 'Salzburg' livery referencing the first Porsche Le Mans win in 1970 in a similarly coloured 917. Apparently his father once told him that if you've been racing, you should always remove the numbers before driving home on the road. In principle, I'd like to side with Henry and his dad but, by the end of the day - and what a day - the stripes will feel like a bit of a celebration.

Besides, the racing aesthetic is no idle boast. The 918 Spyder is built around a full carbon chassis and its high-revving 4.6-litre V8 is derived from Porsche's LMP2 programme, albeit re-engineered for durability and tractability. Red-lined at 9150rpm, it develops 600bhp at 8700rpm. The hybrid electric motors contribute a further 281bhp, and the maximum combined power output is 875bhp at 8500rpm. That, and some 944lb ft of torque are distributed to all four wheels, the petrol motor driving the rear axle and the pair of electric motors the front and rear axles. (The P1, conversely, sends everything to the rear.) The latest-generation PDK transmission offers a range of shift times depending on where you point the rotary 'Map' switch on the steering wheel, from pretty gentle in E-power mode, progressively faster through the Hybrid, Sport Hybrid and Race Hybrid modes, and down to a scintillating 0.05sec if you press the Hot Lap button in the centre of the rotary control. Each clockwise turn of the dial sharpens the throttle maps, too, but also liberates more of the battery power more of the time. Apart from anything else it looks like a brilliant piece of ergonomic design that makes switching between modes as easy as adjusting the volume on the fearsomely powerful Burmester stereo.

Our car's Weissach Package shaves 41kg from the regular car's weight by adopting magnesium wheels and a body wrap instead of paint. Even so, 1634kg is nothing to write home about by hypercar standards; the P1 weighs just 1395kg dry. The McLaren's monster rear wing also helps it develop considerably more downforce than the 918, but then the Porsche doesn't have Race mode ride height adjustment either. Which isn't to say the aero package is in any way lacking. It has been configured to generate downforce and also reduce drag to increase efficiency. Intakes open and close automatically and the rear wing dynamically lifts, lowers and alters its angle of attack.

It all seems to square with Porsche's contention that the 918 Spyder is a complete all-weather, allpurpose car you could use every day. Even in pure electric mode it has a 20-mile range (compared with the P1's six miles) and enough silent shove to hit 62mph from rest in under seven seconds. With all the motors singing, it's a giddying 2.6 seconds – a couple of tenths quicker than the P1. After that, the lighter and more powerful McLaren increasingly has the upper hand. That's what it says on paper, anyway.

HAVING BEEN SO patient extracting the 918 from its high-tech horse box, I elect to stick with it for the run over the Llanberis Pass to the **evo** Triangle - where else? Harry jumps in for the ride, and on the way we pull into a car park with a valley view so Dean can nab a few beauty shots. As we position the cars, a couple of bleary-eyed women emerge from a lone Ford Fiesta where they tell us they've spent the night and had a close encounter

with a UFO. With a yawn and a stretch, they climb back in and drive off as uninterested in the P1 and 918 as if we'd all turned up in Dean's dusty Skoda Superb Estate. Can't win 'em all.

With the summer season traffic dictating the pace for most of the run to Betws-y-Coed, a few things about the Porsche begin to gel. First, it's a blast to drive slowly. Forget Teslas, forget the BMW i8: the 918 is the world's best electric car when it wants to be because, well, it's a 918 (obviously) and the electric mode is so slickly integrated and so useable that you find yourself rolling along with only the aromas of the countryside and the wind in your hair for company far more frequently than you'd ever imagine. Then there's the deep sense of satisfaction to be had in confounding the expectations of those ready to shake their fists at a car so clearly capable of shattering the peace and stripping the leaves from trees in its slipstream. And when I eventually do – either by twirling the Map control or simply planting the throttle - the termination of tranquillity is so sudden, so visceral and so violent even Harry's shotgun commentary hits the buffers.

What ensues on the Triangle leaves us both speechless. And the reason is that it's the P1 that sets the benchmark. Awesomely rubberdestroying and seemingly invincible on track at Anglesey, I can't help wondering if the McLaren will simply be too much for our favourite rollercoaster ribbon of Welsh tarmac. As its dihedral door drops shut, the P1's cabin feels smaller, snugger and more intimate than the Porsche's, a

'I CAN'T HELP **WONDERING IF** THE McLAREN **WILL BE TOO** MUCH FOR OUR **FAVOURITE** RIBBON OF WELSH TARMAC'







Above: P1's controls include twin dials for handling (H) and powertrain (P); both have Normal, Sport and Track settings. Above left: IPAS button gives an extra shot of power for those tricky overtakes

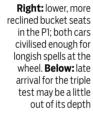






**'THE PORSCHE** DOESN'T JUST **MATCH THE** McLAREN'S **ACCELERATIVE** PUNCH, IT FEELS HALF AS EXCITING AGAIN'











perfectly functional cocoon of exposed carbon with lower, more reclined bucket seats and a finely crafted driving position, though the switchgear is more scattered and less intuitive than the Porsche's. The rear haunches look intriguingly thin and angular in the rear-view mirror, 'a bit like Angelina Jolie's Maleficent cheekbones,' Henry later remarks. Transparent panels in the roof lighten what would otherwise be a rather sombre aesthetic, but I'm left in no doubt that this is a place in which to experience extraordinary things.

Like the 918, the P1 has its softer side and, with its more benign settings engaged, exhibits a level of comfort and docility no passenger would object to. But Harry's wandered off into the undergrowth to make some business calls, so a little way down the road I stop, dial everything up to one short of full suspension-drop Race mode (technically illegal on the public highway anyway), find a suitably long straight and prepare to pin it. I reckon I have an advantage here. I know what the P1 is capable of in the hands of someone who knows the P1 better than any of us. In fact, McLaren's tame test driver, Chris Goodwin, knows the P1 better than anyone on earth. And the memory of that incredible day sitting next to Chris for a hot lap of the Nordschleife (evo 190) will never leave me.

After one lap of the Triangle, though, I have to conclude that, denied its track-optimised ride height, massively stiffened suspension and full 600kg of downforce, the P1 is a somewhat different proposition. By any standard, its sense of purpose is unparalleled, its afterburner-like thrust overwhelming and addictive. It knows the theatre of speed: the animalistic aggression, the all-too audible respiratory snorts, chuffs and wheezes of its twin-turbo plumbing, the way its rear wheels always seem to be overspeeding, tearing lumps from the road. It's fury incarnate and exciting in a way its smaller brother, the 650S, can only dream of. That slightly old-school vibe Jethro exploited at Anglesey is apparent on the road, too. He likened its hugely turbocharged power delivery to that of a Ferrari F40 (a demented F40, admittedly) and I know what he means. Of course, there's far less lag - the electric torque-fill sees to that - but, rather strangely, it sounds as if it's still there.

The steering strikes an unusual deal between lightness and genuine feel which is a little disconcerting at first but you quickly learn to trust the mighty turn-in grip, then revel in the way the cornering balance can dance to your tune by lifting off or, more satisfyingly, leaning on the vast power reserves. Use too liberally and your driving licence will disappear faster than the treads on those fat rear P Zero Corsas. But with a judicious approach on the right road, the P1's speed and agility will stun on demand when the opportunity presents.

I'm haunted by a mild sense of 'game over' as I climb back into the 918. Whatever points advantage the Porsche has accumulated thus far as an object of desire and technological marvel will surely be undone in the only test that really matters. But the good folk of Zuffenhausen clearly haven't read the script.

What transpires is this: on these exacting Welsh roads, the 918 Spyder has the P1's number. In a straight line, the Porsche doesn't just match the McLaren's accelerative punch, it feels half as exciting again with a feral top-end race-car scream that animates neck-hair like a field of wheat in a stiff breeze and simply ferocious torque-gorged push from what seems like zero revs. When Henry gets to sample it, he's as blown away as Harry and me, declaring the 918 'monstrously quick with gearshifts that are so fast you feel they might not even have happened'.

Moreover, the Porsche feels so planted, so calm and so secure on the Triangle, you can exploit its unhinged violence more frequently and for longer. The steering is much heavier than the P1's and feels a little less alert about the straight-ahead. But it has great feel and precision on lock and lets you know exactly what the front end's doing which, in turn, engenders a feeling of absolute confidence the P1 never quite nails.

The sheer coherence of the chassis – the way the damping and brakes (with built-in regen but

fine pedal feel) support the astonishing drivetrain - is almost spooky. Jethro's a huge fan of the P1 but concedes that, for road driving at least, the 918 Spyder's appeal is irresistible: 'It feels so, so fast - faster than the P1 more of the time, perhaps because the higher electrical capacity does a better job of boosting low and mid-range response. Even in terms of outright pace it feels a match for the P1, especially when you find that last few millimetres of throttle travel. With all that instant power you can feel the four-wheel drive working to dig you out of corners, with maybe just the suggestion of oversteer. The gearbox is also stunning, and it doesn't have that annoying surge between shifts that some DCTs do during full-bore shifts. It's another area where it beats the P1, and soon you start to realise that these little elements are beginning to stack up in the Porsche's favour.'

Truth is, despite their comparable technologies and performance, the McLaren P1 and Porsche 918 Spyder are the products of very different ideologies – the P1 at its absolute, mind-bending best on track, where the full weight of McLaren's F1 know-how and experience coalesce to shattering effect; Porsche attempting to pull off a perhaps even more ambitious fusion of race-bred powertrain and real-world competence wrapped up in a modern-day reinvention of the sublime Carrera GT. It may have turned up late, but the Porsche leaves with the laurels.

'DESPITE THEIR COMPARABLE TECHNOLOGIES, THE P1 AND 918 ARE THE PRODUCTS OF VERY DIFFERENT IDEOLOGIES'





If today were a manicured McLaren launch, I'd slowly ramp up through all of the P1's driving modes, culminating in this fully unleashed, fully unhinged Race setting. But it's not and I'm rather glad. I want that shock and awe to come out of nowhere, to rush headlong into this new experience and let it engulf me with all of its

cars is coming fills my chest with adrenalin.

This is it.

steering and the resolute ride. It feels low, wide and angry. There's also something animalistic about it... More old-school monster remastered than clinical F1-inspired weapon, in fact.

Pin the throttle and the P1 draws breath – another shock after all the 'torque fill' stuff I've heard – and then punches forward, shift lights streaming left to right along the top of the dash display. A pull of the cool matt carbonfibre

super-agile but very stable and, unbelievably, supremely friendly.

The balance is so rewarding. There's a shade of understeer in slower corners and the electric torque boost can't balance it until the turbos hit boost, but then the car pulls itself neutral and adopts a small, effective angle of oversteer on corner exit. Of course with this much grunt it's easy to make that transition much more abrupt,





and when the outside-rear wheel hits an exit kerb you can get a wicked stab of extra angle... But the P1 has 903bhp; it *should* bare its teeth if you take liberties. It never bites, though. It's intuitive, forgiving and staggeringly entertaining. Once confident you can literally throw upshifts at it mid-slide and the power just keeps on spinning those P Zero Corsas.

Stop playing for the cameras and the P1's finely tuned reactions to throttle inputs and the massive performance gives endless options. It's an absolute riot, a mad cocktail of flames, grip, slip and tyre smoke. Absorbing in every detail. But that sense that the P1 is so far beyond everything else I've ever driven just doesn't materialise. Oh, it's amazing, don't get me wrong, but it feels like a natural progression from the likes of the 458 Speciale and the high-speed grip doesn't have that weird, magical feel of a high-downforce car. It's like the tyres can't cash the cheques that the chassis and aero are writing. It's very easily upset on the kerbs, too.

Crazy fast, intoxicating but not invincible.

The Porsche is heavier and feels it. The steering requires much more force, it's slightly more reluctant on the way into turns and it just doesn't quite have the P1's freakish levels of response. But the engine. Wow, the engine. The 4.6-litre V8 is so sharp at the top end but with the electrical boost it feels like a 10 litre in the mid-range. The throttle response is stunning and the instant, precise, scalpel-sharp power is of such quality. The P1 has terrifying theatre but the 918's drivetrain is more polished and gives an even greater sense of urgency.

The gearbox adds to that ultra-precise feel. It's so fast and the paddles feel more like microswitches, yet somehow the process feels mechanical. Of course the 918 is four-wheel drive and to a certain extent it loses and scores over the P1 where you might expect: there's a little more turn-in understeer and a little more traction to lean on. However, that sells this immensely stable yet hugely adjustable car a

million miles short. Like the P1, its greatest trick is to make close to 900bhp feel just about right. It never feels overwhelmed but neither do you feel any in-built fudge to protect you from the power. It gives you everything clean and true, and you can exploit every joule without fear. The four-wheel drive, the torque vectoring, the electrical assistance... it's almost invisible. You just drive, pushing beyond a little understeer here, provoking oversteer there, playing with the 918 like you might a Boxster S.

If you want a hypercar to take to trackdays, buy the P1. It's lighter, more responsive and kinder to its tyres (amazingly so). But don't for a second think it outmanoeuvres the Porsche. The 918 has more mechanical grip in lower-speed corners and, incredibly, it carries just as much speed through the quickest corners here, too. It's also massive fun. They both are. It's great to know that the pursuit of extreme performance isn't at the expense of simple enjoyment. The new world is like the old world. Only faster.

# THE ULTIMATE IN \*\*\* \* LUXURY

# A five star location for a fantastic driving holiday...



Stay where EVO stay right on the doorstep of the famous 'EVO triangle' and the epic 'Anglesey Circuit' to experience some of the greatest roads in the UK. We have a real passion for cars here at Brynteg and want to share that while we look after you and your family when you relax at our 5 star Holiday Park. Our facilities include a fabulous restaurant and bar, indoor heated pool, SPA & Beauty Salon plus plenty of activities to entertain your family whilst you indulge in the great roads of Snowdonia and North Wales.

Call us for some great offers exclusive to EVO readers for September and October and choose from one of our Luxury Holiday homes or Lodges with a hot tub for a weekend or mid-week break.

[ comfort zone ] SKIN SCIENCE SOUL





Call us on 01286 873100 or email enquiries@brynteg.co.uk and quote "EVO OFFER 2014"

www.brynteg.co.uk

Llanrug, Nr. Caernarfon, Gwynedd LL55 4RF



## Your bumper gift package includes

- The next 5 issues of evo magazine
- Autoglym High Definition Cleanser
- Two Autoglym High Definition Applicators
- Autoglym Hi-Tech Finishing Cloth
- Limited-edition 'EVO Triangle' sticker
- evo cap



#### **AVAILABLE IN...**

#### **PRINT**

Quote offer code **D1410P** 

when you call or order online

Order 5 issues for £5, then continue for just £23.99 every 6 issues by Direct Debit



#### **PRINT + DIGITAL**

Quote offer code

**D1410B** 

when you call or order online

Order 5 issues for £5, then continue your subscription for just £28.99 every 6 issues by Direct Debit



For credit card payment options, visit www.dennismags.co.uk/evo

Gifts limited to the first 50 subscriptions. Please allow 28 days for delivery. Gift available to UK only. Alternative may be supplied.

# SPECIAL EVO 200" ISSUE SUBSCRIPTION OFFER



Subscribe today and receive 5 issues for £5 plus our 200<sup>th</sup> issue bumper gift package!



dennismags.co.uk/evo

OR CALL 08448440039

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 D1410P for print only edition or quoting D1410B for Print+Digital edition



From GTI to GT-Four, evo's Fast Fleet is the biggest and most comprehensive long-term section in the business. This month...

## FORD FIESTA ST NEW by Henry Catchpole

Features editor

We love it so much, we've added one to the fleet. But will that love endure long-term? Catchpole will be finding out.



#### McLAREN 12Cs by SSO

Contributor

The Secret Supercar Owner's garage clear-out continues as this month he says farewell to not one, but two 12Cs.



#### VAUXHALL CORSA VXR by Dan Prosser

Road tester

Prosser fulfils a long-held ambition to drive competitively by taking his feisty hot hatch hill climbing



#### FORD FOCUS ST by Dean Smith

Contributing photographer

As one fast Ford arrives (see far left), another departs.
Photographer Smith looks back on 11 months with the big ST.



#### **JAGUAR F-TYPE V6 S** by Stephen Dobie

Staff writer

The drop-top Jag has a new rival in the appealingly retro shape of the 991-gen 911 Targa. Dobie compares the two.



#### **AUDI R8 V10 PLUS** by Richard Meaden

Contributing editor

Ours isn't going back for a while yet, but Meaden finds himself in a reflective mood about Audi's first supercar



#### **SEAT LEON CUPRA** by Ian Eveleigh

Production editor

Eveleigh's been driving another Cupra 280 this month, with two distinct differences – one big, one small.



#### **KIA PROCEED GT** by Nick Trott

Editor

Is Kia 'doing an Alfa Romeo' – but better? With its first-ever hot hatch, Trott reckons it could well be.



#### **BMW 2002** by Will Beaumont

Designer

What's gold and seven inches wide? Yup, the bespoke wheels Beaumont's had made for his classic Reemer



#### VW GOLF GTI by Sam Riley

Film-maker

Scotland's a long trek for Riley, but easy work in the Golf – and it provided the venue for the drive of a lifetime.



#### TOYOTA GT-FOUR by Matthew Hayward

Staff writer (website)

Electrical problems solved and new rubber fitted, it's time for Hayward to get his rare Celica on track at last.



#### Also on the evo fleet:

Porsche 996 Carrera. Mazda MX-5 Mk2, Lamborghini Murciélago, Renault Clio Williams, Ferrari 430 Scuderia. Ford Escort RS2000, Ferrari 458 Italia, Porsche 911 3.0 SC, Nissan GT-R, Peugeot 106 Rallye, Ferrari F40









🕽 fastfleet@evo.co.uk 🕒 @evomagazine f www.facebook.com/evomagazine



MORE THAN ONCE, I'm sure, I've described a Christmas morning-esque feeling when relating the tingling anticipation of the launch of a new car. The suspicions and hopes as to what it will be like, the wonder or deflation as we see and sit in it for the first time. Then we get to play with the new toy for a few hours, and sometimes this extends into Boxing Day, but then it is taken away. There isn't much of a chance for the batteries to run out or the initial interest to wane.

Now, clearly it's a road tester's job to try to be objective and look beyond the euphoria of an initial introduction, but sometimes you just fall for a car. The current Fiesta ST has been like that for me. I grouptested it for issue 184 and loved it. I tried the 212bhp Mountune version

(evo 188) and adored it. I drove the latter again in the knockout round of eCoty 2013 (190) and wanted to put it through. But these were fleeting acquaintances. I imagined the ST, even in basic 179bhp form, would be fantastic to live with day in, day out. There was only one way to find out.

So, here it is: EJ14 URN, my companion for the next year. As an ST-3 (£19,250) it has various things over and above an ST-2 (£18,250), including cruise control, climate control, auto lights, auto wipers, an auto-dimming mirror, keyless entry, powerfold door mirrors and satnav. To be honest, I could happily have done without all of these things. Indeed, as a DAB radio comes as standard in an ST-1 (£17,250), I could probably have stopped at that, but as we neglected to spec and try the Ford satnav in Dean's Focus ST

(page 140) it was deemed necessary to give it a go in the Fiesta...

There was, however, only one choice of colour as far as I was concerned. Spirit Blue Metallic paint might be a £495 option, but its lustrous hue is worth every penny. Its richness and near iridescence makes it catch the eye almost as much as a neon green or yellow, yet it doesn't offend with their brightness. I also added the ST Style Pack (£275), which paints the alloys in Rado Grey, daubs some red on the brake calipers and illuminates the scuff plates in a particularly titillating way. In short I've thrown the kitchen sink at this ST and it's come in at £20,020. That's £2770 above a basic ST-1 but around £2000 less than a similarly specified Mini Cooper S. Looking online there are certainly some deals to be done,

too, with some outlets offering over £2000 off a new ST-3.

With just 131 miles on the clock when it arrived it's been a running-in sort of month so far. The chassis has still made it fun, however, and a weekend to-ing and fro-ing from the Goodwood Festival of Speed soon piled on the miles. The little ST even did duties as a chauffeur car to the ball at Goodwood House. Unlike its rather scruffy driver, I thought URN fitted in impeccably amongst all the Bentleys and LWB A8s. I'll wear a suit and a hat next time.

Henry Catchpole (@HenryCatchpole)

Date acquired	July 2014
Total mileage	1282
Mileage this month	131
Costs this month	£0
mpg this month	37.8





# The SSO's supercar cull continues apace as two 12Cs are moved on

Date acquired May 2013 (Spider)

iviay 2013 (Spider),
Feb 2014 (Coupe)
12 months (Spider)
4 months (Coupe)
3560 (Spider),
2650 (Coupe)
18.0
£3265 (Spider,
service and IRIS
upgrade),
£0 (Coupe)
alot
about £50,000

for the pair less

Depreciation about £50,000

AS I MENTIONED last month, I will be moving to the US for at least several years very shortly. The change of domicile has happened quite quickly and is leading to a massive clean-out of the garage. Following the F50's departure, the two McLaren 12Cs were next on the chopping block. Fortunately, both went very quickly and smoothly.

As the initial departure date was beginning to loom, my first call on the 12C Spider was to McLaren London to see if it had an interest in buying the car back. The immediate response was positive and after negotiation, we reached a fair agreement. Two days later, the black McLaren transporter arrived at my gates and, shortly after, the 12C

# 'This is the first spider I have owned that is not compromised compared to the coupe version'

Spider disappeared into its bowels.

In parallel to the discussion on the Spider, I also reached out to McLaren Stuttgart to gauge its interest in buying the left-hand-drive 12C Coupe. As it had just taken in several 12Cs as part-exchanges on 650Ss, the level of enthusiasm was considerably less. It did offer to handle the deal on a sale or return basis and I was set to send the car back across the Channel when a friend suggested putting it up for sale on a couple of UK sites. This generated quite a few enquiries and a deal was agreed while I was sitting

on the tarmac at Heathrow in a delayed British Airways 747. Overall it took about three weeks to part with both the Coupe and the Spider.

Over the years I have owned six mid-engined eight-cylinder supercars. Of the six, the only one I would definitely acquire again is a 12C. Two others are 'possibles', but only if the right car came along at the right price. This leaves the questions of why the 12C and which one. The answer to 'why' is fairly easy: nothing else combines such a wide range of abilities in one package and excels at all. On track the 12C destroys

for the pair



Above: Coupe was sold just four months after the SSO acquired it. **Below:** Spider was free from the usual convertible drawbacks



everything else in its class. Take a 12C up to the wilds of Scotland and it is completely dialled in, eager to be pushed. Drive a 12C on the highway and it cruises at speed calmly and comfortably. Build quality on the two that I owned was excellent, too, with only the first-gen IRIS system letting the side down. Neither 12C ever left me stranded and the number of warning messages that popped up on the dash was a fraction of what I'd experienced with other supercars.

In terms of soul, both 12Cs had plenty. Unlike their highly strung southern European rivals, they have a deeper, more refined soul that takes time to learn and understand. The 12C is not necessarily a car you instantly bond with excitedly and then grow tired of shortly thereafter, but one you grow a warm, strong, lasting bond with over time as you better understand its immense abilities. Regarding which model I'd buy again, it would definitely be the Spider. Performance-wise, this is the first spider I have owned that is not compromised compared to the coupe version. The Spider offers plenty of upside with no negatives.

One final note on my McLaren ownership experience to date: one of the reasons it has been so positive has been the great relationships with both the dealerships and McLaren Automotive. Everyone I have had the pleasure of dealing with has been incredibly helpful, fair and responsive.

Secret Supercar Owner (@SupercarOwner)

### Vauxhall Corsa VXR Clubsport

Prosser scratches a long-standing itch to use a daily driver in competition

SINCE I STARTED running around in the Corsa VXR I've become more and more intrigued by the few forms of competitive motorsport that are open to standard road cars. To someone who has longed to go racing for more than a decade but has never had the means to make it happen, the notion of turning up to an autotest or hill climb in a vaguely sporting daily car just makes so much sense – it's motorsport without the prohibitive financial commitment. I bet there are loads of you out there with a hot hatch, an Elise, a Caterham or whatever who are quite taken by the idea of running your car against the clock, too.

Gurston Down Speed Hillclimb, near Salisbury, runs a school day for £165, which is the perfect introduction to the discipline. The course is unique in the UK for being partly downhill. From the start line the single-width track drops gently for a couple of hundred metres into a fast, double-apex left-hander. The downhill approach means that in a car with the performance of the VXR, that first corner is really quite grown-up. The turn-in point is right at the top of fourth gear, which feels pretty serious on such a narrow course, and in 15 attempts I never did quite persuade my right foot to keep itself pinned to the carpet. I'd spot the corner entry point, run out of courage, lift ever so slightly, turn in and immediately realise that the corner is flat. Every single time.

After the second apex, the run towards a tight, second-gear uphill right-hander is very short, leaving little time to brake and change down two gears. After another couple of tight corners the course opens out with a flat-out run to the line.

I didn't really know what to expect of hill climbing, frankly. I certainly didn't think it would require quite so much commitment, that it would be as ballsy as it was. What brilliant fun. The Corsa was fantastic, too. Once again, it was the differential that stood out, giving the car so much cornering speed and agility that every instructor, without exception. mentioned how quick it looked.

Dan Prosser (@TheDanProsser)

April 2014
4531
525
£0
29.1







# Ford Focus ST Estate

After nearly a year of hard graft as snapper Smith's camera car, the Blue Oval wagon has left the fleet

Above: Focus frequently travelled abroad. **Below** left: hot ride at Spa was a highlight. **Below:** capacious rear came in handy at Smith's wedding; 160mph on the Autobahn







Ford Focus ST Estate **Jaguar** F-type V6 S

WHEN EJ13 LPO arrived 11 months and 27,550 miles ago, I was still mourning the loss of a £62,995 V8-engined Audi RS4 Avant. Back then I promised, no matter how ridiculous it seemed, that I'd compare it to the Focus ST Estate that replaced it.

As you'd expect for less than half the price of the RS4, the ownership experience wasn't quite as spectacular. Whilst the Ford gained many admirers on petrol station forecourts and at McDonald's drive-thrus, I never found myself looking back when walking away from it. Which might go some way to explaining why it was always so horribly dirty. After a long day of lying in puddles at the side of the road on a Welsh mountain, watching journalists having fun ragging supercars up and down, the ST never once lifted my mood.

The fussy, over-designed dash with a million buttons let the interior down a little, but there were no thin scratchy plastics and the build quality was certainly good enough. And whilst it wasn't to my tastes. many that sat in the passenger seat praised the design of the cabin. The best feature had to be the fabulous Recaro seats; both supportive and comfy, they were only lacking by not having adjustable lumbar supports. The Sony media system, meanwhile, remained unfathomable - it was a daily nuisance and it still makes my teeth itch just thinking about it.

Thankfully, things were much better in the engine bay. The 2-litre, 247bhp EcoBoost engine was surprisingly strong and sounded pretty exciting too, thanks to the clever 'sound symposer', which filtered noise through to the cabin. It didn't, however, have the same appeal as the previous-generation model's five-cylinder, which I always thought sounded like half a Lamborghini Gallardo's V10, and it wasn't the most economical engine out there either, despite its naming. But across a typical British B-road I never found myself wanting more go. The crowd of 45mph-everywhere types could be dispatched with ease, although a heavy right foot when doing so would cause monumental torquesteer and often make me back off the throttle momentarily.

I'd argue that what Ford has here is the most involving front-wheeldrive estate car ever made (although the old ST170 Estate deserves a mention too). Ours was a hoot to throw down a B-road, with oodles of punch down the straights, fabulous adjustability into and through the corners and a manual gearshift to put you right in the action.

I'm not the only one that appreciated the ST's dynamics, either. I met a chap at Spa a few weeks back and rumour had it that he set the first-ever fully electric lap time at the Le Mans 24 Hours. He was my personal chauffeur for an hour whilst I was doing some trackside photography, and once I'd finished at Eau Rouge we headed back to the paddock using the circuit. I told my new mate not to hold back as he was running late he obliged and I got my very own hot lap with him... in my own car! He was genuinely impressed by how fast the Focus was, commenting on how much grip it had and how he wished he had a family car like it.

My last trip in LPO was home from the Nürburgring via the Autobahns. The sun was shining and the traffic played ball, allowing me to max out the ST. It took a while to reach V-max (an indicated 160mph) but once it was there, it felt just as stable as it did at 90mph.

Running costs were reasonable, with 28.3mpg on average and the only costs being £543 for a service plus new tyres and brake pads. But all in all, I didn't particularly enjoy ST ownership. It's not that it's a bad car - far from it, in fact. It's just that I'm not a fast Ford guy. If you are, though, you would love one of these. It stays true to its heritage and with this one worth £17k at trade-in, a used one is a bargain.

**Dean Smith** (@evoDeanSmith)

Date acquired	August 2013	
Duration of test	: 11 months	
Total test mileage	27,550	
Average mpg	28.3	
Total costs	£543	
Purchase price	£27,570	
Trade-in value	£17,000	
Depreciation	£10 570	



### **Jaguar** F-type V6 S

Dobie samples the soft-top Jag and compares it to Porsche's new 911 Targa



WHEN THE F-TYPE launched last year, no one could agree on whether

Jaguar's crosshairs were trained on Porsche's 911 Cabriolet or the Boxster: its price and performance leant towards the former but its roadster ethos echoed the latter. Now to further muddy the waters, a new 911 Targa has just gone on sale.

As far back as I can recall, the Targa's naffness has always made it the most easily disregarded 911. But Porsche has plundered its enviable back catalogue to dig up some evocative styling cues that ensure the 991 flip-lid far better honours its glamorous '60s and '70s ancestors.

As an object, it's a far more beguiling F-type foe than Porsche's other convertibles as there's real presence, though it's a credit to the Jag that, to my eyes, the F-type still looks most like it means business, its hot rod proportions still impactful after nearly 18 months on sale.

After spending a week in Jethro's Jag, the Targa proves a curious thing to drive. At £86,377, the entry-level Targa 4 is a whole hot hatch away from the £67,535 of a basic F-type V6 S, yet its 345bhp flat-six is 30bhp

down on the F. However, its depth of engineering is tangible from both its better-resolved damping and more natural steering responses. This 911 moves and reacts with a precision the Jag can't match, but it feels slow in comparison. Its naturally aspirated engine may be more gratifying to rev out, but it's geared like a Polo BlueMotion, so opportunities to do so are limited.

Conversely, you can flick through the F-type's invitingly short ratios at whim, and the way it rips through its first five gears (alongside its exuberant cornering attitude) provides a level of excitement absent from the 911. That the F-type plays the role of a drop-top far better – the Targa's interior is almost unbearably blustery above 50mph also strengthens its case.

So which convertible would I buy? I'd head to a Porsche dealer. And spend 53 grand on a Boxster GTS. **Stephen Dobie** (@evoStephenDobie)

Date acquired	September 2013
Total mileage	15,511
Mileage this month	950
Costs this month	£0
mpg this month	23.5



## **Audi** R8 V10 Plus

Life with the 542bhp Plus is so rosy for Meaden that it's got him thinking about getting another R8 in the future



'I feel that only now is the true significance of the R8 being appreciated'



AFTER LAST MONTH'S succession of big overseas missions it's been a

relatively quiet few weeks for the R8. Short everyday trips punctuated by a few airport runs have underlined the ease with which this hassle-free supercar slots into your life, so long as you're sometimes prepared to use the passenger seat as an extension of the luggage compartment. And when you're just driving for the hell of it, well, it's absolutely mighty.

I'm not sure about you, but I feel that only now that this first-generation model is facing replacement is the true significance of the R8 being appreciated. How good a job Audi does of the next-gen car is critical, because only then will we know whether the original was a freakish anomaly, or if there's an instinctive understanding of those qualities that set the R8 apart, and make it so good as a result.

The R8 could so easily have been Audi's NSX: a game-changing car that won many plaudits but never made sense in the context of the brand. By slowly and surely evolving the car, with the Spyder, a V10, and

the V10 Plus, Audi has helped the R8 sidestep fashion or fads. Motorsport success in GT3 racing most recently victory in this year's Nürburgring 24 Hours – has given it an added strand of credibility, even if there isn't a true race-inspired model to rival the 991 GT3.

It's not often a long-term test car leads me to explore full-time ownership possibilities, but I'd be lying if I said I hadn't been looking at prices of early launch-year R8 V8 manuals. Impressively - and rather annoyingly - they still appear to be some way north of £40k. That's testament to their rarity, desirability and star quality. both as a thing to covet and a car to drive the socks off. This might be the first time I've lived with an R8. but something tells me it won't be the last.

#### Richard Meaden (@DickieMeaden)

Date acquired	March 2014
Total mileage	8184
Mileage this month	673
Costs this month	£0
mpg this month	18.9

■ SEAT Leon Cupra 280

### **SEAT** Leon Cupra 280

To DSG or not to DSG? That's a tough question...

MANUAL OR TWIN-clutch? In some respects, it's a nice dilemma to have. Manual gearboxes are no longer offered on numerous performance models, but SEAT still gives you the choice on the new Cupra. Our long-termer has the DSG 'box, but this month I tried another five-door 280, this one a manual. The perfect opportunity, then, to find out which I prefer.

With three pedals in the footwell, it only takes a couple of miles to notice how well positioned they are for heel and toeing, with the Cupra's free-revving engine making for easy and enjoyable rev-matching on downshifts. That's a skill you don't require with the DSG 'box, of course, but one that many of us still enjoy putting into practice.

The gearshift action is good, too - quick enough and not too long of throw - although inevitably I found I made fewer gearchanges with the manual 'box. This ultimately makes for fractionally slower progress, but by working the engine more you do tend to have a greater appreciation for its range and character.

So this is where you expect me to take the traditional evo stance and say I prefer the manual gearbox, right? Well, not quite. Even after 300 miles in the manual car, I really, truly cannot identify which of the two transmissions is my favourite to use. The extra interaction you get with the manual definitely has its appeal, but, conversely, the DSG suits the Cupra well when you're really working the car to its limits (which it thoroughly encourages), allowing super-quick last-minute shifts while only lifting a finger from the wheel.

That said, if I were buying a new



Cupra, I would choose a manual for two reasons: because DSG costs an extra £1355, and because it makes sense to me to enjoy a manual while they're still available.

In other news, I noticed that the manual car had a little '280' flash beneath the Cupra flag badge on

Left: Cupra can be had with a manual. Below: '280' strip is missing from our long-termer



Date acquired	March 2014
Total mileage	5731
Mileage this month	1249
Costs this month	£0
mpg this month	31.0

its rear. This is absent from our car, which appears to sport the badge from the lesser, 261bhp Cupra which, just to add to the confusion, can't be had in five-door form. That should have any Cupra spotters out there scratching their heads.

Ian Eveleigh



# **TWETED®**

# INTELLIGENTLY BUILT AROUND YOU

Like your life, there is nothing standard about a Twisted Editions Defender. Whatever you do, wherever you go, when you're in a vehicle that has been meticulously designed around every detail of your lifestyle, your journey is enhanced beyond measure. Experience the definitive collection of customised-to-order Land Rovers, and change the way you think about driving forever. **Visit www.twistedautomotive.com or call +44 (0)1845 574 990.** 

# YEARS FREE SERVICING YEARS WARRANTY MODELS TO CHOOSE FROM



All three Lotus models now come with three years free servicing and three years warranty included\*

FIND OUT MORE ON LOTUSOFFERS.COM



Official fuel consumption for the range in mpg (l/100km): Urban 19.5-34.0 (14.5-8.3), Extra Urban 37.2-56.0 (7.6-5.0), Combined 28.0-45.0 (10.1-6.3).  $CO_2$  emissions: 236-149 g/km.

MPG figures are obtained from laboratory testing and may not reflect real driving results. Published MPG figures and performance results are intended for comparisons between vehicles only. Verification of performance results should not be attempted on public roads. Lotus recommends that all local speed and safety laws must be obeyed and safety belts worn at all times. On the road price includes VAT, delivery, number plates, 12 months road fund licence and first registration fee. \*On cars ordered between 1st July and 30th September 2014 only. See local dealer for details.

### Fast Fleet

### **Kia** Proceed GT

Trott wonders if Kia could be the new Alfa Romeo

IS KIA BETTER at being Alfa Romeo than Alfa Romeo? I think so. Let me explain...

What should an Alfa Romeo be? Cool? Comfortable? Strong engines? Well, the Kia meets all those criteria. What else? Value? Alfas have traditionally matched style and performance to an affordable list price, and the Kia does the same. £20k buys you a standard Proceed GT, albeit with not-so-standard features such as a TFT display, Bluetooth music streaming, Recaros and reversing sensors. And what about style? Aside from the slightly fussy ice-cube driving lights, I believe the Proceed GT is the most cleverly styled and attractive three-door hatch on sale. The tiger-nose grille in particular is a very clever and very distinctive motif.

Like a car costing many times more, it offers true attention to detail in the surfacing and looks fresh and cohesive from any angle. It makes modern Alfas look like what they are – a conflict between nostalgic styling features and modern hard points.

As you can tell, it's fair to say that I'm developing a very strong bond with the Kia and I'm wondering what it means longer-term for brands like Alfa. The Kia feels exactly like the car it was engineered to be – a credible, stylish alternative to not only Fords and Vauxhalls but also the products from perceived premium carmakers such as VW and Alfa Romeo. 

Nick Trott (@evoNickTrott)



Date acquired May 2014

Total mileage 2188

Mileage this month £0

mpg this month 34.1



SOLELY BASED ON its name, you'd be forgiven for thinking that Image Wheels specialises in the kind of oversized, overly shiny wheels you'd find on a 'bagged' (air suspended) and stanced VW Tiguan. But you'd be wrong: Image makes bespoke wheels for road and competition cars. Improvements in performance and weight are the firm's specialities, but it's not all function – it also makes some very good-looking wheels.

A set of gold split-rim eight-spokes caught my eye on the Image stand at a show recently. They looked like they belonged on an early-'70s F1 car and would, I thought, look great on my BMW. Priced at £230 plus VAT each, they were available in 13-inch diameter – great – and could be any width or offset I desired thanks to them being made to order. They were designed for Caterham-style cars or single-seaters, but could be altered to make them strong enough for a heavier car like the 2002. Perfect.

So while I was in the workshop painting a cam cover wrinkle-finish black (not as easy as it sounds)

I took the chance to measure every distance I could find around the 2002's brakes, steering arms, suspension and dampers to send to Image so my new wheels wouldn't rub. The only measurement I didn't take was the distance to the arches: I wanted the wheels to be 7 inches wide, which will be a tricky fit, but as I'm having the car painted I know I can roll and pull the arches as required without worrying about ruining the paint.

Date acquired	July 2008
Total mileage	146,050-ish
Mileage this month	
Costs this month	£1104 (wheels)
mpg this month	n/a

# 'The wheels looked like they belonged on an early-'70s F1 car'

Now I have the wheels, not only do I think the beefier spokes look even better than the ones I saw at the show, but they also fit so perfectly around the brakes that they look like they were made for the car. I now have the unenviable task of finding some performance rubber – but not semi-slick trackday tyres – in a 185/60 13 or thereabouts. Any recommendations?

Will Beaumont (@WillBeaumont)





# **VW**Golf GTI

A long-distance trek and a run down the Old Military Road leave Riley suitably impressed



l'VE HAD A busy month this month, including attending a launch up in Scotland and also filming a road test of a different car, the Aston Martin Vantage N430, while up there. Given the length of the trip and the quality of the driving roads north of Hadrian's Wall, I saw this as an ideal opportunity to give the Golf a real long-distance workout and attempt to explore its full potential.

All in all, I covered more than 1000 miles getting there, whizzing around and then driving home. Considering the GTI's sporting credentials,

and the fact that it's not exactly a grand tourer (despite what the first two letters of its famous badge supposedly stand for), it was truly, perhaps even surprisingly impressive in the comfort stakes. And not just in the front seats – the few hours' kip I grabbed in the back while parked up in a service station on the M74 on the way home wasn't as uncomfortable as you might think.

The N430 drive took place on the A93, commonly known as the Old Military Road. Henry Catchpole, who was driving the Aston, had waxed lyrical about this road for ages,

especially after he took an Aston V12 Zagato there (**evo** 181). I was a little sceptical, but I can now honestly say that it is the best, most beautiful road I've ever seen in Britain.

The N430 test was a hectic day for me, to say the least, but after the sun had dipped behind the Cairngorms I had a chance for one last run, purely for fun. Following the Aston, flat-out on a moonlit, empty road, I had my best-ever drive in the GTI. Its direction changes, body control and adhesion to the road all blew me away. The ability to feed in the 227bhp exactly when I needed

it and the fantastic six-speed manual gearbox only added to the excitement. In fact it was only on the straighter bits of road that the Aston left me trailing...

This was by far my ultimate 'thrill of driving' moment, and on that day, there wasn't another car that I'd rather have been in.

Sam Riley (@samgriley)

Date acquired	January 2014
Total mileage	9741
Mileage this month	4138
Costs this month	£0.50 (air in tyres)
mpg this month	33.2

■ **Toyota** Celica GT-Four WRC

### Toyota Celica GT-Four WRC

Armed with new tyres, Hayward heads for the track



HAVING OWNED THE GT-Four for nearly a year, I started to think about my track time with it, or more precisely the lack thereof. I had been putting this down to its set of ditch-finder tyres and my worrying about the boomy exhaust not getting through the noise limits at the Bedford Autodrome. But with fresh rubber fitted and a day planned at Blyton Park – where the noise limits are more relaxed than at most places – I had no more excuses.

After pulling the car out of hibernation, and getting it running once again (see **evo** 199), an easy cruise up the AI gave me the chance to check that everything was working well. Arriving at a cold, windy and slightly damp Blyton, I wasted little time in getting out on track. On cold tyres, the Celica's back end still felt surprisingly happy to slide with

the help of some left-foot braking. As the Yokohamas warmed up and the track dried, however, it settled down to a more neutral balance with a surplus of grip.

On the whole I was impressed with how well it behaved on track. The brakes remained strong, the tyres mighty and the quick steering effective. The only real shortcoming was the worn synchro on third gear, which made downshifts a slow, crunchy affair. Double-declutch and take your time and it will slot in cleanly, but at maximum attack on track it does rather ruin the flow.

Matthew Hayward (@evoMatthew)

Date acquired	August 2013
Total mileage	47,351
Mileage this month	201
Costs this month	£0
mpg this month	22-ish

### UNLEASH THE POTENTIAL



Engine tuning packages from only £295+vat. Worldwide service and dealer network. Find out more by visiting us online, or just give us a call. Feel the difference, Feel Alive!







### Market Watch

Knowledge

*Insights into the used-car market* 



### MORGAN AEROMAX

### Distinctive British-made GT is an excellent buy – if you can find one

TRULY RADICAL, LIMITED-edition, hand-built sports cars with near-bulletproof mechanicals, genuinely exciting performance and at least a touch of practicality don't come along often – and British ones even less so. Which is why anyone with £100,000 should consider a Morgan AeroMax.

The hard-top grand touring version of the Aero 8 roadster was originally a one-off for Prince Eric Sturdza, president of the Swiss branch of Barings Bank and a major Morgan fan. He wanted a high-performance two-seater with decent luggage capacity and continent-crossing ability – and that's what Morgan gave him, complete with 'gullwing' boot openings and a special load platform to hold custom-built Schedoni luggage.

But no sooner had the AeroMax concept been revealed in 2007 than the world and his wife suddenly realised that they, too, wanted such a machine. So, with the Prince's blessing, Morgan built a strictly limited run of 100 examples between 2008 and 2009 – leaving most of the world still wanting.

For £110,000 (£47,500 more than the roofless Aero 8) buyers got an all-aluminium coupe weighing 1180kg and powered by the 362bhp, 4.8-litre BMW V8 more commonly found in the twice-as-heavy E70 X5. Most cars had six-speed automatic transmissions, with a handful getting six-speed manual gearboxes. And of the 100 made, only 19 were right-hand drive.

Inevitably, the edition sold out swiftly, mainly

to people rich enough to buy such a car on a whim to add to a collection – meaning that those that appear for sale are invariably low-mileage examples. Rowan Atkinson was among the original owners, as was Richard Hammond, who subsequently sold his AeroMax to Australian ex-MotoGP racer Chris Vermeulen (who also decided to part with it earlier this year).

In 2012, Morgan announced the non-limited Aero SuperSports, with a removeable aluminium roof panel and a price tag of £126,900. This was followed last year by the Aero Coupe. Similar, but the original AeroMax is still the one to go for...

Simon de Burton

### In the classifieds



### 2010 Morgan AeroMax £POA

bigboystoys.nl

Metallic black, silver roof, dark tan hide. LHD. automatic. 1750km



### 2009 Morgan AeroMax £99,950

tomhartley.com

Spa Silver, red leather, silver piping, RHD, automatic, 1400 miles



### 2009 Morgan AeroMax £89.970

lawtonbrook.co.uk

Porsche GTS Red, Sahara leather, RHD, automatic, 950 miles

### Or consider...

### **Morgan Aero Coupe**

For around the same money you can have a brand-new Aero Coupe, which evolved from the SuperSports but doesn't have the looks or cachet of the AeroMax.

#### **Bentley Continental GT Supersports**

Racier, stripped-out, high-performance version of the Conti GT. Cheaper, more refined, more comfortable and quicker than the AeroMax – but common by comparison.

#### Wiesmann GT

Less radical looking, but similar in concept. Twin-turbo engine nears 200mph – but for nearly €200,000.

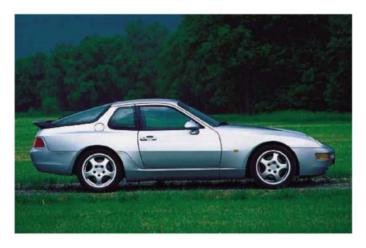
### Market Watch

Knowledge

Insights into the used-car market

### Ask the expert

Your buying questions answered





I currently drive an A3 oilburner, but I'd like something more exciting. As I have kids and my age starts with a

four, not a two, I'm looking for refinement and practicality, but also a car that can be fun for a trackday or B-road blast now and again. I have a budget of around £17k and my top choices just now are an Audi \$3 (261bhp) or SEAT Leon Cupra R. I know the Leon is a good bit cheaper than the \$3, but do I get what I pay for?

#### Paul Milne, Edinburgh



You do get what you pay for, but the SEAT is still a great car. Your main problem will be faster deprecation and

you'll also find it more difficult than the Audi to sell on for a decent price, especially in a part-exchange situation. My recommendation might not be what you were expecting – and could be slightly dependent on the age/size/ number of your children – but I'd take your £17,000 and go hunting for a superb Parscha 968

The holy grail of 968s, especially if you enjoy a fine-handling car (which I think you probably do) and you're intending to take part in trackdays is, of course, the lightweight Club Sport. Sadly it would be no good to you due to the lack of rear seats, so aim for the Sport version, which was available only in the UK. Apart from being a bit more luxurious than the CS, it sold in far greater numbers than the standard 968. That said, it's still quite a rarity and I doubt you'll lose money on one. Just be sure to buy a good example; there are plenty of internet forums detailing potential flaws. SdB

Email your question to experts@evo.co.uk

### Just looking

The pick of the classifieds this month



Corvette ZO6 £37,990 Nick Whale Sports Cars Direct, Warwickshire nickwhalesportscarsdirect.co.uk 01926 840 254 The new seventh-generation Corvette has recently arrived in Britain. If you can ignore the rather large swelling of its price tag as it's shipped across the pond, its £61,520 RRP marks it out as particularly good value against a comparable 911 or F-type.

But how about a shiny nearly new Vette? This Z06 may be wearing a 2008 number plate, but with a scant 13,000 miles and one owner to its name, it's barely run in. And while the new Stingray is the entry-level Corvette, the old Z06 represents the breed's peak of excitement: its aluminium frame endows it with a kerb weight lower than a base C6 Vette, while its thunderous 505bhp 7-litre naturally aspirated V8 is about as wild as standard crate engines get. The result? An 8.5-second 0-100mphrun...

**Stephen Dobie** (@evoStephenDobie)



Porsche 964 Carrera 4 £17,995 RPM Technik, Hertfordshire rpmtechnik.co.uk 01296 663824 Have you seen 964 RS prices lately? An example of the hardest-cored version of the early-'90s 911 broke the £200,000 barrier at a recent auction, leaving many market experts scratching their heads.

With a similar aesthetic but more everyday-friendly dynamics, this Carrera 4 at RPM Technik could therefore be a wise buy. It wears RPM's 'Project Porsche' tag, a scheme offering cars a little short of perfect at an attainable price. They come with a year's MOT and a full report to make you aware of what work may be desirable, effectively being a good-quality car with the potential for rolling restoration.

In eye-catching Amethyst Pearl Metallic and with a full service history for its 114,000 miles, this car currently sits at the lower end of 964 values, and at new Fiesta ST money. Though not for long, perhaps. **SD** 

### Trader chat

### Graeme Hunt graemehunt.com

During a career in the motor trade that has spanned more than 25 years, Graeme Hunt has established a reputation for anticipating buying trends in the fields of both traditional and more modern classics. Here, the firm's sales manager, Louis Roche, tells us about the cars that are proving especially popular with visitors to its attractive showrooms in Kensington's Radley Mews.

'We have become quite well known as a supplier and restorer of classic Range Rovers, and the demand for







really good examples doesn't seem to be tailing off – especially for the rare CSK limited editions, which now fetch up to £70,000. Even Land Rovers have soared in value, partly as a result of the imminent end of Defender production, and we recently sold a Series III for around £40,000 – but they have to be truly exceptional to make that sort of money.

'In fact, it is the more modern cars which seem to represent the best value at the moment. We have just found a buyer for a Ferrari 612 Scaglietti at around £65,000, which seems incredible value for a car that cost £200,000 when it was new. Likewise, £55,000-60,000 will get you an Aston Vanquish. It really is a buyer's market for these right now, but I think they've bottomed out.

'Our customer base is now truly international, and that means we're not only dealing with buyers from throughout Europe, but from America, Australia and, increasingly, mainland China. It is partly this huge spread of buyers that is keeping the market so buoyant.'



### www.MarlowCars.co.uk

























Aston Martin V8 Vantage, 2006, 31,500miles, Meteorite Grey, Iorn Ore, Sat Nav	£36,999
Bentley Continental Flying Spur, Choice of three stunning cars in stock from	
Bentley GTC Choice of five motorcars in stock from	
Mercedes ML63 AMG Choice, Both Black/Black, from	
Maybach 57 and 62, both motorcars are massive spec from	£84,999

Over 60 vehicles in stock Viewings by appointment only Your Car Wanted

Email: sales@marlowcars.co.uk | Tel: 01628 822259 | Mob: 07810 515048

### Market Watch

Knowledge

Insights into the used-car market

### **Auction watch**

### Rebuilt Murciélago and off-beat Alfa to go under the hammer at Brooklands







HISTORICS AT BROOKLANDS' next big sale is on August 30. It features a wide range of cars, with an increasing number of more modern performance models sneaking into the catalogue.

First up is a 2005 Lamborghini Murciélago (pictured top).

This car was a Category C write-off but has subsequently been rebuilt by UK tuning firm Prindiville. You might also notice that it has been subject to a few modifications. That's because the company used it as a test and development car for its upgrades. Prindiville actually built five of these special models, this one being the first. The bodykit includes a carbonfibre roof, side skirts, air vents and bumpers, while the engine has been given a performance upgrade. There's no information on exactly what has been done, but the high-performance stainless steel exhaust is obvious. During the rebuild, the Murciélago was also resprayed in pearl white.

Its current estimate puts it at £65,000-85,000, which would make it one of the cheaper Murciélagos on the market. Obviously the modifications and crash history are likely to put some buyers off, meaning this could represent quite a bargain for the right buyer.

Meanwhile, if you're after something a little quirky and with one of the best engines ever made, how about an Alfa Romeo GTV  $3.0\,V6$ ? This year-2000 example (above left) looks the part wearing 156 GTA wheels and has had a few subtle Autodelta upgrades. It has an estimate of £4000-6000.

Other cars of note include a 1970 Lotus Europa S2 (£7000-10,000; pictured above right) painted in 'Gold Leaf' colours, a 1996 Mercedes SL 500 (£4000-6000) and a Mk1 Lotus Cortina (£19,000-24,000).

Matthew Hayward (@evoMatthew)

### Auction results



#### Bonhams Mercedes-Benzsale, Stuttgart

1955 Mercedes 300SL Gullwing

€1,380,000

2005 Mercedes C-class DTM racer

€460,000 **2003 Mercedes CL63** 

AMG

€35,650

1989 Mercedes 190E 2.5-16 Evo €25 300

H&H, Rockingham

1991 Alfa Romeo Spider S4

£8064

1965 Marcos Mini £5600

1993 Bentley Continental R

£24.080

**1970 Maserati Indy 4.2** £42,375

1971 Range Rover

Classic

£11,200

**1973 BMW 3.0 CSL** (pictured) £14,560

Anglia Car Auctions,

King's Lynn 1986 Audi Quattro

£15,592 2000 Alpina B3 3.3 2000 BMW Z3 M Coupe

1987 Ford Escort RS Turbo

£2520 **1989 Lotus Excel 2.2 SE** 

£3780

**1992** Peugeot 205 Rallye £2100

#### Barons, Sandown Park

2004 Bentley Continental GT £25,500

1987 BMW 635 CSi

£3400

1990 Jaguar XJS Le Mans V12 Coupe

£4400

### Auction calendar

#### August 14-16

Mecum Monterey, USA mecum.com

### August 14-16

Russo & Steele Monterey, USA russoandsteele.com

#### August 14-17

Rick Cole Auctions Monterey, USA rickcole.com

#### August 15

£5040

Bonhams Carmel, USA bonhams.com

### August 16-17

Gooding & Co Pebble Beach, USA goodingco.com

#### August 23

Anglia Car Auctions King's Lynn angliacarauctions.co.uk

#### September 2

Barons Sandown Park, Surrey barons-auctions.com

### September 4

Silverstone Auctions Salon Prive, Syon House silverstoneauctions.com

### September 6

Bonhams Beaulieu, Hampshire bonhams.com

### Fantasy garage

Three cars to take hill climbing for a fictional £85,000. All can be found amongst the ads at forsale.evo.co.uk



### Westfield SEight £14,995

It would be hard to frighten more for so little money than with this V8powered Westfield. It has covered just 1440 miles from new. Wonder why?



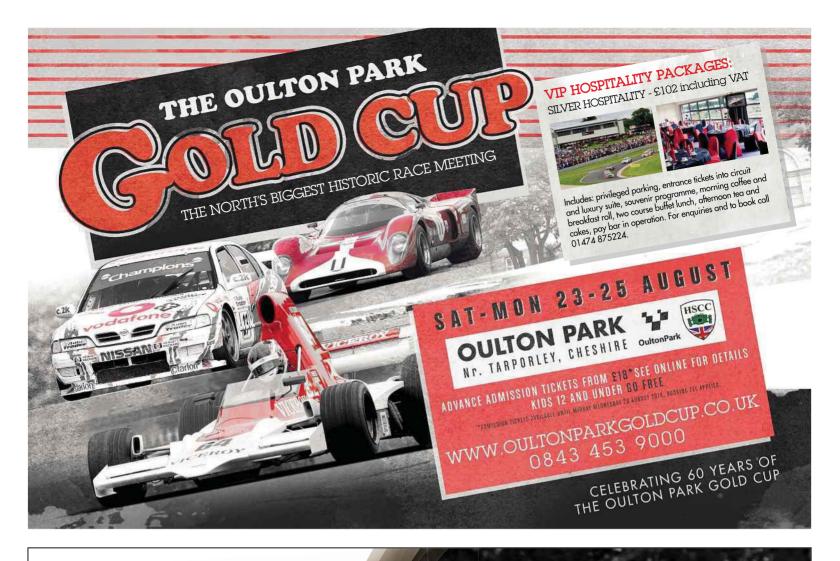
### Radical SR8 RS £39.995

Radicals are so good that they can make even the most ham-fisted look professional. This one was lightened and modified at the works.



### Ginetta G4 Coupe £29,995

This is a rare example of the 'continuations' of the '60s classic that started in the mid-'90s. There's a heavily tweaked 2-litre Zetec under the bonnet.









Lamborghini Diablo

Magnesium Wheels Jota Edition Unique Limited
Edition 21,875 miles 1996 £300,000



Lamborghini Murcielago V12 Roadster Colour Sat Nav Egear 10,000 miles 2005 £124,990



Lamborghini Gallardo Qcuitura Stitching Full Electric Heated Seats Reverse Camera 13,000 miles 2008 £72,990



Lamborghini Gallardo LP560 Lifting Gear Reverse Carnera Black Calisto Alloys 3,000 miles 2011 £119,990



Porsche Carrera GT
Carbon Racing Seats Ceramic Brakes Full Carbon
Fibre ootion 16,000 miles 2004 £299,990



Lamborghini Murcielago LP640 LHD Titanium Hercules Alloys Yellow Brake Calipers Lifting Gear 10,000 miles 2008 £134,990



Lamborghini Murcielago V12 Coupe HIGH SPEC Hercules Alloys Egear Lifting Gear 17,000 miles 2005 £109,990



Lamborghini stock wanted
Best prices paid
Collection from anywhere in Europe



Lamborghini Murcielago LP640 Hemera Alloys Full Carbon Interior Egear 12,000 miles 2007 £139,990



Rolls-Royce Phantom Starlight Option Front and rear cameras 21 Inch alloys 7,000 miles 2009 £149,990



Lamborghini Diablo
VT Wheels, SE30 limited edition 24,000 miles
1996 £129,990



Lamborghini Gallardo LP 550-2 Lifting Gear Colour SatNav Branding Pack 9,000 miles 2011 £102,990



Lamborghini Gallardo V10 Coupe LHD HIGH SPEC Lifting Gear, Clear Engine Bay Cover, Yellow Brake Calipers, 14,000 miles, 2005, £59,990



Lamborghini Gallardo Lifting Gear Reverse Camera Egear 21,000 miles 2008 £79,990



Ferrari 599 HGTE Alloy Wheels Ceramic Brakes Bose 27,000 miles 2007 £85,990

### **BUYING OR SELLING LAMBORGHINI AUTOMOBILE'S**

EQUITY RELEASE

REFINANCE AVAILABLE

# THE UK'S NO.1 FUNDER FOR PRESTIGE CARS



**GET THE FINANCE RATE YOU DESERVE!** 

Proud to be a Patron of The Prince's Trust Prince



THE ALTERNATIVE TO DEALER FINANCE... GET A FREE QUOTATION TODAY

08450 944 997 ORACLE® WWW.ORACLEFINANCE.CO.UK

Please contact us for an individual finance quotation on any prestige or sports car and we will detail the full benefits of our finance plan and terms and conditions. Finance & terms are subject to status. UK residents only. Oracle Asset Finance Limited is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority for the sale of consumer credit.

# YEARS FREE SERVICING YEARS WARRANTY MODELS TO CHOOSE FROM



All three Lotus models now come with three years free servicing and three years warranty included\*

LOTUS EXIGE
LOTUS EXIGE



2014 Lotus Elise CR

Solar Yellow, Manual, Petrol, 10 miles

£29,995



2014 Lotus Elise S CR VVTL-i

Formula Red, Manual, Petrol, 37 miles

£38,995



2014 Lotus Exige LF1

Motor Sport Black, Manual, Petrol, 10 miles

£62,900



**LOTUS EVORA** 

2014 Lotus Evora V6 S +2 Sports Racer V6 VVT-i

Chrome Orange, Manual, Petrol, 10 miles

£65,900



### **LOTUS HEDGE END**

Snows House, Botley Road, Hedge End, Southampton, Hampshire S030 2RA Tel 01489 775045

Call Ken Morgan on 07500 047855 WWW.SNOWSGROUP.CO.UK

Official fuel consumption for Lotus Exige S in mpg (l/100km): Urban 19.5 (14.5), Extra Urban 37.2 (7.6), Combined 28.0 (10.1).  $CO_2$  emissions: 236 g/km. Lotus Elise in mpg (l/100km): Urban 34.0 (8.3), Extra Urban 56.0 (5.0), Combined 45.0 (6.3).  $CO_2$  emissions: 149 g/km. Lotus Evora in mpg (l/100km): Urban 21.5 (13.2), Extra Urban 39.6 (7.1), Combined 30.3 (9.3).  $CO_2$  emissions: 217 g/km.

MPG figures are obtained from laboratory testing and may not reflect real driving results. Published MPG figures and performance results are intended for comparisons between vehicles only. Verification of performance results should not be attempted on public roads. Lotus recommends that all local speed and safety laws must be obeyed and safety belts worn at all times. On the road price includes VAT, delivery, number plates, 12 months road fund licence and first registration fee. \*On cars ordered between 1st July and 30th September 2014 only. See local dealer for details.





OFFICIAL FERRARI DEALER

### Meridien Modena

### Ferrari 575 Superamerica F1 – 2006/06

16,000 miles, Nero Daytona Metallic with Bordeaux Leather Interior, Electric Daytona Seats, HGTC Handling Package, 19" Modular Alloy Wheels with Red Brake Callipers, Electronic Suspension, Classiche Certified, 1 of 10 Produced for the UK and 2012 National Concours Winner.

£224,995

#### 430 Scuderia F1 - 2008/58

16,300 miles, Nero Daytona Metallic with Nero and Tessuto Giallo Alcantara Interior, 19" Alloy Wheels with Yellow Brake Callipers, Non Standard Giallo NART Racing Stripe, Large Racing Seats, Legal Roll Bar, 4 Point Safety Harness, Carbon Fibre Steering Wheel and LEDs, Electronic Suspension.

£159,995

#### 360 Challenge Stradale - 2003/53

16,000 miles, Rosso Scuderia with Rosso Leather Interior, 19" Alloy Wheels with Black Brake Callipers, Electronic Suspension, DSC, Medium Carbon Fibre Racing Seats, Coloured Steering Wheel, Xenon Headlights, Airbags, Three Coloured Racing Stripe and Stereo System with CD Player.

£179,995

### 360 Challenge Stradale - 2004/04

19,000 miles, Rosso Scuderia with Rosso and Nero Interior, Nero Dashboard, 19" Alloy Wheels with Rosso Brake Callipers, Electronic Suspension, CST, Sports Seats, Xenon Headlights, Airbags, Three Coloured Racing Stripe and Stereo System with CD Player. £174,995

#### 355 Spider F1 - 1998 / S

26,000 miles, Rosso Corsa with Nero Leather Interior, Nero Dashboard, Bordeaux Carpets and Stitching, Climate Control Air Conditioning, Electronic Suspension, Power Hood, Red Brake Calipers & Cross-Drill Brake Discs, Twin Airbags and Stereo System. £69,995

Meridien Modena 77 High Street, Lyndhurst, Hampshire, SO43 7PB Telephone: 02380 283 404 www.lyndhurst.ferraridealers.com

# **Buying Guide**

Knowledge

Your indispensable resource when buying used

### Maserati 3200GT/4200GT 1998-2007



**evo**'s first-ever cover car is now seriously affordable, with prices starting at just £8k. Here's what to look out for **Words:** Peter Tomalin

IT'S HARD NOW to remember just how far Maserati's stock had fallen by the late 1990s, but the marque's renaissance began when Fiat bosses placed Maserati under Ferrari's wing and the latter invested £35million in its erstwhile rival's dated works. First fruit of the Ferrari takeover was the 3200GT, released in the spring of 1999 – and the cover star of the very first issue of **evo**.

With a name that harked back to the classic 3500GT, striking styling by Giorgetto Giugiaro's Italdesign, a twin-turbo 370bhp V8 (a revised version of the unit from the Shamal and Quattroporte IV) offering 170mph+ and 0-62mph in a smidge over 5sec, and four proper seats plus a decent boot, the 3200GT was warmly welcomed. It came with a conventional six-speed manual or (from 2000) an equally conventional four-speed automatic, while the abundant power was harnessed by a limited-slip diff and three-stage switchable ASR traction control. For 2001 there was a limited-edition Assetto Corsa ('Racing Spec') variant with lower, stiffer suspension, stickier tyres on bigger 18in wheels, uprated brakes and quicker steering. Just 75 reached the UK.

The big changes, though, came for 2002MY. For the 4200GT, out went the biturbo engine and in came a Ferrari-developed 4.2-litre naturally aspirated V8, good for 385bhp and mated to a version of Ferrari's F1 paddleshift automated manual gearbox, branded Cambiocorsa (Italian for 'racing gearbox') in the Maser. Another change was the option of 'Skyhook' electronically controlled 'adaptive' damping. Last but not least, there was now also a fully convertible Spyder as well as the Coupe. Gone, though, were the 3200's distinctive LED 'boomerang' rear lights.

The new engine was fab; the early versions of the Cambiocorsa 'box and Skyhook damping less so, though 2004MY saw a number of software improvements to both – and other detail changes – that realised more of the 4200's potential. Best of all was the 395bhp GranSport, introduced in late '04. Fast and furious, if a little flawed, these Masers are serious bargains – but only if you buy carefully.

### **Checkpoints**

### **Engine &** transmission

Andy Heywood of McGrath Maserati is a fan of both 3200 and 4200 but says the latter is an easier ownership proposition, chiefly because its Ferrari-derived V8 can happily go 100,000 miles with just regular oil changes. The 3200 needs a cambelt change every 24,000 miles/four years (the tappets need adjusting at the same service) and it also has a cam chain at the rear of the V8 that needs replacing at c70k miles.

In manual 3200s the action of the clutch wears the crankshaft thrust washers (the dreaded crank end-float) which can eventually necessitate an engine rebuild, which will cost c£10k. A specialist should be able to spot if this is imminent, and for that reason alone a pre-purchase inspection is vital.

The 3200 auto 'box is robust (just check for oil leaks), as is the rarer manual. Clutches can last up to 50k miles, but around town can wear out in as little as 15k, and you're looking at well over £2000 for a replacement. Likewise, on the 4200, both the manual and semi-auto 'boxes are essentially trouble-free, but Cambiocorsa clutches can be similarly short-lived and costly to replace. Diagnostics can tell how much life is left

# Suspension, steering & brakes

Both 3200 and 4200 have aluminium wishbones all round, and they tend to wear their ball-joints quickly, especially the 3200 – usually every 20,000-25,000 miles. Problem is, you have to buy the whole arm, which costs up to £500 for the part alone. Listen for knocks on a test drive. Another wear item is the rose joint in the rear suspension track control link – failure can lead to particularly lairy handling! The brakes are strong but expensive, and these cars are also heavy on tyres. You have been warned!

### Body, interior & electrics

You may find rust on the rear arches, but Heywood hasn't yet seen structural corrosion. The potentiometers in the flyby-wire throttle can fail; the one at the engine end costs £2200 from Maserati, though you can get a contactless version for c£400. Ensure the LEDs are working in the boomerang lights – it's £1k for a new unit. With the Spyder, check for smooth hood operation and look for oil on the right-hand rear wing – a clue to hydraulic problems ahead.



1: 4200GT's V8 was naturally asiprated. 2: cabin improved on earlier Maseratis'. 3: Cambiocorsa paddleshift an option on 4200





### What we said



#### 3200GT first drive

'Slide into the leather-swathed cockpit and the first thing you notice is the Maser's much-improved driving position: it's now for humans rather than simians. It's tasteful, too, a big departure from the riot of leather, gaudy veneers and antique carriage clocks that Maserati was infamous for.

'Your first point of contact is the steering, and it's great to discover it has a very Ferrari-like feel. In fact the tautness and structural togetherness of the 3200 are reminiscent of the Ferrari Maranello. Much of this can be put down to the speed-sensitive power steering and the sophisticated electronically controlled dampers.

'Guiding the GT at speed is an instinctive act. You hit a great rhythm very easily, flick-flacking through esses with a satisfying economy of movement... the Maser's almost as wieldy as a 911, some achievement given it weighs a ton and a half. It's this speed. accuracy and agility that give you the confidence to switch off the Bosch traction control. Letting your right foot balance a rampaging 370bhp might sound an act of bravado, but the 3200GT is progressive, not predatory, on and over the limit.' (evo 001)



**Above:** square styling of the '80s Maseratis was firmly dropped under Ferrari ownership



**Above:** 4200 lost the 3200's 'boomerang' tail lights in favour of more conventional items

### 'I bought one' Phil Carroll

'I'd had an obsession with the 3200 ever since it was released in 1998, but I didn't get round to buying one until a year ago – a low-mileage, manual car in Grigio Touring [silver]. In the last 12 months I've discovered just how much passion these cars inspire. Sure, they've had their problems, but they're well documented on the forums, and a lot of parts are shared with Fiat/Alfa, making sourcing cheaper components very easy.

'Mine has needed a fair bit of money to bring it back up to scratch, including a cambelt change, a major service and an upgrade to a contactless throttle body. It is well worth having an independent inspection done on these cars as they could be hiding some very big bills.

'I would say don't be put off by the dreaded "end-float" issues that these cars suffer from, as most of them have been rectified by now. And don't be put off by a higher mileage, as like most cars they like to be used and the more you drive them the better they get.

'I've done around 3000 miles in mine in the last year. The interior is a very special place to be and can genuinely seat four adults. The turbocharged V8 sounds purposeful and once it's on boost it really does give you a kick in the back – the power and torque delivery is extremely addictive!'

### In the classifieds



### 2000 3200GT

■ 84,000 miles ■ Auto ■ Nero Carbonio/beige ■ Skyhook ■ 20,000-mile

Assetto Corsa engine ■ FSH ■ richardgracecars.co.uk

£11,950



### 2000 3200GT

■ 26,000 miles ■ Sebring Blue/Grigio Chiaro ■ Manual

 ■ Skyhook ■ Ex-Meridien Modena demo ■ newcaruk.co.uk

£14,995



### 2002 4200GT

■ 30,900 miles ■ Grigio Alfieri/burgundy Cambiocorsa semi-auto

■ Full service history ■ christopherjacksonItd.com

£16,995

### The rivals

#### **Jaguar XKR**

£10k buys a well-specced early-2000s XKR. Fast (400bhp, 0-60 in 5.2sec) and polished, but slightly lacking involvement.

#### **Aston Martin DB7**

DB7s dip as low as £16k but, like the Maser, they're potential money pits, so buy with care. £20k should get a decent one.

#### Porsche 911 (996)

You can find 996s for £8k, but £12k is more realistic for a good one. Regular Carrera offers 296bhp, 0-60 in c5sec.

### **Specification**

### Maserati 3200GT (4200GT in brackets)

Engine V8. 3217cc. twin-turbo (V8. 4244cc)

Max power 370bhp @ 6250rpm (385bhp @ 7000rpm)

Max torque 362lb ft @ 4500rpm (333lb ft @ 4500rpm)

Transmission Six-speed manual/ four-speed auto, rear drive (Six-speed manual/six-speed semi-auto)

Weight 1586kg (1680kg) Power-to-weight 237bhp/ton (233)

**0-62mph** 5.1sec (claimed) (4.9) Top speed 174mph (claimed) (177)

Price new £60,575 (£61,000 Coupe, £66,800 Spyder)

### **Parts prices**

(Prices from mcgrathmaserati. co.uk. Tyre price from blackcircles. com. All prices include VAT but exclude fitting charges)

Tyres (each) £136.13 front, £163.38 rear (Michelin Pilot Sport 3)

Front pads (set) £302 Front discs (pair) £544

Damper £816.36 Clutch kit £912 Rear silencers £780 (stainless, each)

Headlamp £599.82

### Servicing

(Prices from mcgrathmaserati. co.uk, including VAT)

Annual service £615.63 Second year service £1045.48 Fourth year service £1893.02 Brake service (every second year) £252

### What to pay

It's possible to find a 3200GT for as little as £8k, but c£10k is a realistic starting point for a privately advertised early 3200 with average miles and that allimportant service history. Good cars from dealers start at around £12k, while £13k-15k gives you the pick of the best cars. Expect to pay a premium for the Assetto Corsa. £14k-15k is also where you'll find the first 4200 Coupes, while early Spyders start at around £20k. At the top end, a GranSport Spyder starts at £30k, with the very best fetching up to £40k.

### **Useful contacts**

maseraticlub.co.uk (events, cars for sale)

maseratiforum.co.uk (advice, events)

sportsmaserati.co.uk (forums, advice)

mcgrathmaserati.co.uk (service, parts)

meridien.co.uk (service, sales)

■ shiltechperformancecars.com (service parts)

frichardgracecars.co.uk (sales)











Hollybrook Sports Cars Ltd - Run by enthusiasts for enthusiasts

office 028 9445 9446 office 028 9445 9578 Matt 077 6314 1996



Porsche 997 Carrera 2S 2006 - Low mileage, excellent throughout



Ferrari F430 2006 -Scuderia Red with Tan leather interior



Porsche Cayman R 2011 - High Spec; PDK



BMW 330d M Sport

We are looking for Good clean low mileage examples, with a full service history, all colours considered. VW Golf R32; Nissan 350Z; Ford Focus RS; VW Gti's; BMW 135; all Porsche 911 models; all BMW M3 models



Audi RS4 4.2 2007 - Excellent condition all round - 2 available



TVR Griffith 5.0 1994 - recent refrub completed



Vauxhall Astra VXR 2012 - An excellent low mileage example



Mazda MX5 Sport 2008 - only 1 owner from new

This is a small selection of our stock, for a full listing please visit our website.

www.hollybrooksportscars.com



### **Sports and Prestige Vehicles**

Meadowhall Riverside Meadowhall Road, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, S9 1BW Tel: +44 (0)114 2565040 Fax: +44 (0)114 2565049 Out of hours: +44 (0)7973 676959



### see the difference

Our family run business was established in the late sixties. We have an enviable reputation for supplying the highest quality sports and prestige used vehicles for sale worldwide.





### realise your dreams

Our team of professional buyers purchase around 150 quality, luxury & prestige vehicles a month from main dealer groups around the UK, which are finely checked over and then we hand select the very best examples to retail.

### find out more

We now have over twenty two thousand square feet of indoor display area and have even more sports and prestige vehicles for sale than ever before. We are always working hard to make sure our customers only have the very best cars, motorbikes and other vehicles to choose from.



The phrase going above and beyond doesn't really do John Holland Sales Justice
Richard – London

All of our vehicles are rigorously prepared to the highest standards and displayed undercover in our prestigious showroom within our privately owned Business Park.











johnhollandsales.co.uk







As a specialist service and restoration workshop, we have a passion for modern and classic Ferrari, Maserati and Aston Martin motor cars. All of our customers can be confident that their car will be handled with the most competent levels of care. Our factory trained staff are qualified to Diagnostic Technician level. We welcome all models produced by these iconic marques for servicing, repair or restoration in our state of the art facilities.











The Old Tourist Trophy Workshops, Units 4 & 5 Romans Business Park, East Street Farnham, Surrey GU9 7SX

01252 711 746 information@spellboundcars.com www.spellboundcars.com











### Essentials

Knowledge

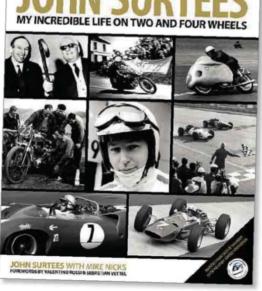
The best books, models, clothing, gadgets, tools and tuning gear











### MODEL

### LaFerrari

£22.99 revell.de

This 1:24-scale kit comprises 139 parts and offers a chance for amateur model builders to get to know the intimate details of Ferrari's hypercar in a slightly unconventional manner. Produced by German manufacturer Revell, it includes a fully detailed interior and engine bay.

#### воок

### The Complete Book of Corvette

£35 qbookshopuk.co.uk

Covering every single version of the Corvette made by General Motors – from the very first model released in 1953 right through to the new Stingray – this recently updated book is full of photos of design flourishes and manufacturing processes, and includes full spec info on every major Vette.

### TECHNOLOGY Mio MiVue 568 Touch

### £179.99 eu.mio.com

This range-topping dashcam features full 1080p video recording, high-sensitivity GPS tracking and safety camera alerts, all displayed through a 2.5-inch touchscreen. The device can also be switched to photo mode to allow for close-up shots of accident damage and the like.

### **ACCESSORY**

### Osomount Push NFC

### £24.99 osomount.com

This phone-holder features near-field communication (NFC) technology. If you've got an NFC-compatible smartphone it can be set to open the app of your choice as soon as you put it in the mount. So, for example, with one movement your phone could be mounted with the satnay running.

### воок

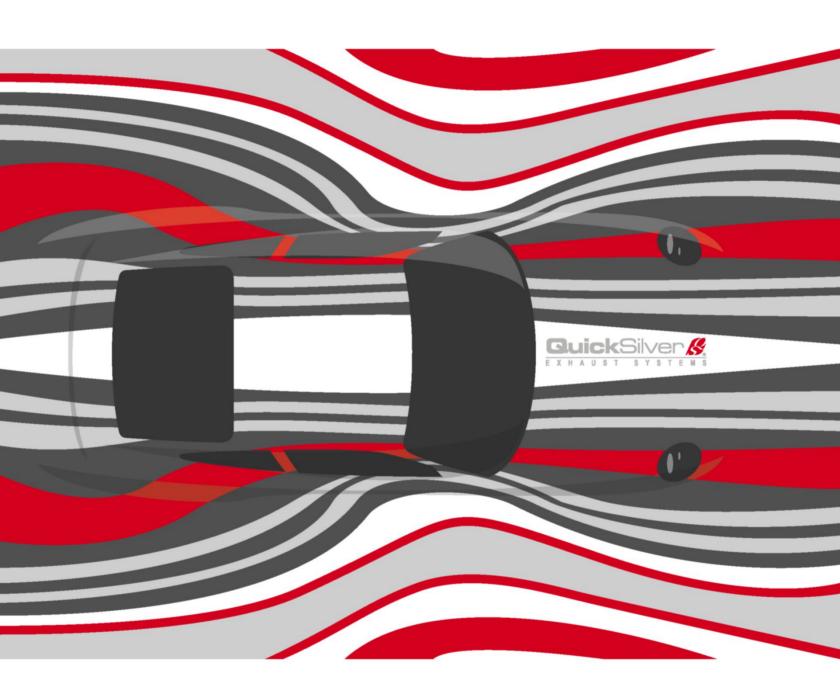
### John Surtees: My Incredible Life on Two and Four Wheels

£50 evropublishing.com

This picture-heavy book is an excellent photo diary of a British racing hero, whose feat of winning world titles on two wheels and four remains unequalled. The book contains all of surface race results as well as a section dedicated to his son Henry, who died in a Formula 2 race at Brands Hatch in 2009.



# NEW COLLECTION



## **OUT NOW**

www.quicksilverexhausts.com



### Sales:

Call us on 01332 840272 / 844000 e-mail us info@benzbavarian.com

### Service:

Call us on 01332 843756 e-mail us service@benzbavarian.com



Benz Bavarian Ltd was established in 1987 by owner Felix Frixou. Initially as a service centre based in Duffield. Over the next few years with an ever expanding satisfied customer base and a reputation for quality and value, this site increased in size and evolved into the Service and MOT centre it is today, maintaining vehicles to a full approved standard offering up to 50% savings on main dealer prices and still maintaining your service history to the full extent.

### JUST A **FEW** OF THE CARS CURRENTLY AVAILABLE



SPYKER C8 SPIDER

4.2 MANUAL, RUBY RED LEATHER, EXCLUSIVE

Price £164,995



**2004 BENTLEY CONTINENTAL GT** 

TITAN 6.0 W12. SAT NAV. AUTO. LEATHER.FSH

Price £66,995



2006 ASTON MARTIN VANTAGE

4.3 V8 Coupe 2d, SAT NAV, XENON LIGHTS

Price £34.995



2008 MASERATI QUATTROPORTE

4.2 SPT GT SALOON AUTO, NAV BT, CREMA LTR

Price £49.995

### **EXCLUSIVE TO BENZ BAVARIAN: PROJECT TITAN**







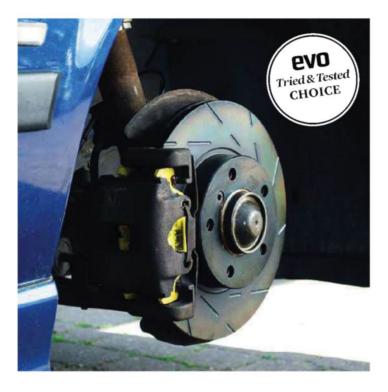




### Tried & Tested

### Knowledge

The best motoring products, put through their paces by the **evo** team



### EBC GD Sport brake discs & Yellowstuff pads

### £292 (discs), £112 (pads) (for E36 BMW) ebcbrakesdirect.com

BBK (big brake kit) is an initialism I frequently search for online. I could spend hours staring at big, eight-piston calipers gripping massive drilled, grooved and vented discs coquettishly peeking through the spokes of a well-turned wheel. It's the calipers I like the most, but inevitably they are hugely expensive. So, for a smaller budget, is there any point fitting fancy discs if you're still making do with measly single-piston standard-fitment sliding calipers?

EBC's grooved and slotted discs aren't particularly cheap for a set of four, but by comparison to a full-on BBK they're a snip. They come with a black finish and when you pull them out of the box they look brilliant. But other than just looking good immediately, the coating will stop corrosion on any surface where braking isn't taking place, so the discs will look cool throughout their life. The grooves also look great and remove water and dirt from the braking area. EBC recommends using a pad that is designed to work with a grooved disc, such as its Yellowstuff pads.

Having tested some Yellowstuff pads before (**evo** 194) and been remarkably impressed with them, that would be my recommendation too.

So they look good, but are they any good for actual braking? Fitted to my BMW 318is, initial bite is brilliant but not so harsh that it makes braking while heel-and-toeing jerky. After the initial effectiveness, they lose a bit of eagerness but still pull the car up significantly stronger than standard replacement pads and discs. There is notably more feel from the brakes too, especially when braking hard and approaching the ABS.

Unfortunately this extra feel exposes the lack of braided brake lines on my car, the pedal getting much spongier towards the bottom of its travel as the rubber hoses flex, whereas with the standard discs and pads the entire travel felt spongy. Overall, though, I'm not only very impressed with the ability of the discs, but also with how they have tempered my lust for a BBK.

Will Beaumont (@WillBeaumont)

### **Headrest Mount**

### £120 headrestmount.co.uk

The name says it all. The Headrest Mount allows you to attach a GoPro or small video camera to the headrest of a car seat to capture onboard footage from as close to the driver's eyes as possible.

It's astonishingly simple in its design. A straight metal bar is joined to a grooved bar with a hinge; the two bars clamp together to grip the headrest support, while at one end there is a second clamp, onto which you can screw any standard camera mount. This clamp can be moved to any of seven holes, depending on whether you want the camera to be closer to or further away from the driver.

We tested this with our usual GoPro

hardware on typically broken British roads and were suitably impressed with its ease of use. The mount remains rock-solidly in place during motion, to the point where the only movement is that of the car seat itself. We also tried it out with a larger piece of equipment (namely a digital SLR), but found that it shook around too much to make for truly outstanding shots, possibly due to the shift in centre of gravity from having a large lens attached.

If you're a trackday enthusiast who's already happy to shell out the money for a GoPro, then £120 for one of these is a very worthwhile investment.

Sam Riley (@samgriley)





### £32.50 amazon.co.uk

Quentin Spurring's 'Official History' series reaches its fifth book, covering the decade in which my curiosity for the world's most famous race began.

Being a toddler when the 1990s began, I was more of an armchair (or indeed playmat) Le Mans fan. I revelled in the cool and varied machinery – fascinated by the gravity-defying Mercedes CLR and mortified by Tiff Needell daring to race a Newcastle United-liveried Lister Storm – without feverishly following the timesheets.

I'm happy to concede I'm still no motorsport aficionado; I enjoy its pomp and drama but it would be far from my chosen subject on *Mastermind*. This book treads a perfect line, though, offering in-depth reportage and analysis that is broken up into very accessible sections. There's a chapter for each year, with the race summarised over a couple of pages before its key stories and competitors get more focused attention in the pages that follow.

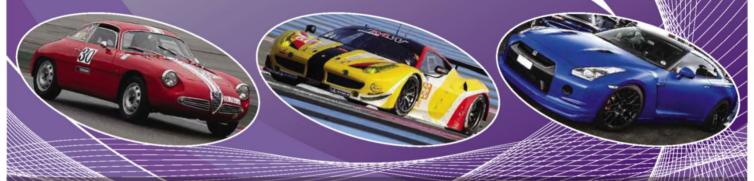
There's fun to be had simply ogling some of the more curious cars that have lapped La Sarthe – the quirky Renault Safrane-engined Helem V6, the fantastically unsuccessful MiG M100 and a marvellous bunch of Ferrari F40 GT Evos are some of the highlights – while if you're so inclined there are oodles of graphs, tables and pie charts to pore over. Much like actually attending the LM24, this book caters for all levels of commitment to following the race itself. **Stephen Dobie** (@evoStephenDobie)

### Protect with Zircotec



Protect against higher temperatures on road or track using Zircotec's coatings and advanced heat shield materials

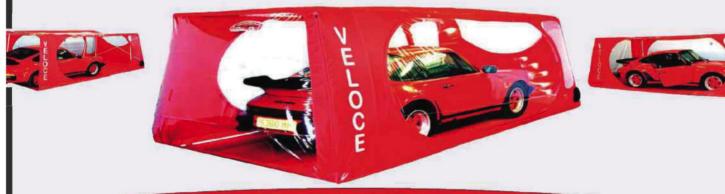
ThermoHold® ceramic thermal barrier coatings for exhausts and composites ZircoFlex® advanced heatshields for protecting heat sensitive components, bodywork and cockpit



Zircotec offers durable, lightweight, fit and forget. Applied to exhausts, turbos, manifolds, heat shields, body parts and composites, Zircotec protects.

Unrivalled Carcoon Active Airflow System now with a DRIVE IN OPTION





### VELOCE



Call Us: 01295 758739

ENGINE TUNING • DPF RESOLUTIONS • PERFORMANCE UPGRADES Fantastic performance for Diesel, Petrol, turbo and non turbo.

### **Professional Automotive Engineering Solutions Since 1985**



Angel Tuning have worked through most of the various

tuning phases from the mid-80s. We pride ourselves in being specialists on ECU remapping/chip tuning on vehicles. Over the years, we have also honed our expertise in a wide range of technical work, from performance brakes to full race engine manufacture.

£100 Discount For Two Cars!

Book in two or more cars at the same time and receive £50 discount off each vehicle.

Fully mobile. **Nationwide** 

DPF Resolutions: Replacements, Cleaning & Remanufacture

Improve the driveability of your vehicle and reduce the

0-60 time through increasing BHP, torque and MPG.

REMAPPING FROM £199 INC VAT

www.angeltuning.co.uk

### Angel Tuning

Snap up last minute, next day and cancellation slots from £199.

Call NOW on 01295 758739 For Availability...



### CLASSIC CAR FINANCE



The purchase of a classic car can be the achievement of a life-long dream but is increasingly seen as an enjoyable investment.

Prestige Car Finance has been used for over 10 years by individuals, collectors, dealers and professional investors to secure finance on these appreciating assets. We have access to a number of specialist lenders and provide bespoke finance solutions for each one of our customers.

In addition, we can offer refinancing for single vehicles or collections already owned. If you are looking to finance a classic car whether it is purchased from an auction, dealer or private source, we would be happy to explain the options open to you.

DON'T MISS OUT ON YOUR DREAM CLASSIC...

WWW.PRESTIGECARFINANCE.COM CHARLES MCLEOD OR CHRIS HERRIOTT: 0203 435 8230



# GIVE YOUR CAR THE BEST

SUPERIOR AIRFLOW, SUPERIOR POWER

### Designed

to Improve Engine Power

Cotton - brought to you by Mother Nature and used for filtration by K&N, the leader in washable performance air filters. Cotton breathes easier than paper and that can help improve engine performance by reducing airflow restriction. Another natural feature of cotton is its durability. It can be washed again and again. That means a K&N stock replacement air filter can last for the life of your car reducing waste and saving money.



**Lifetime Product** 













**OVER 45 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE** MILLION MILE LIMITED WARRANTY

WWW.KNFILTERS.CO.UK® | TEL.: 01925 636 950



# Taking Sat Navs To The Next Level

### The first 3-in-1 Snooper Sat Nav

Our latest portable sat nav, Snooper SC5700 DVR, takes satellite navigation to the next level with a built-in DVR (On-board Camera), My Speed XL and Speed Trap Detector\*. This fantastic, all-in-one unit allows drivers to capture any driving misdemeanors through the built-in DVR, providing vital video evidence against false insurance claims and proving the accident wasn't your fault.

Not only will Snooper SC5700 DVR navigate you quickly and safely but displays your speed and all local  $\frac{1}{2}$ speed limits for the roads you are driving. Plus by subscribing to our Aura™ Speed Trap database your Snooper will alert you to any high risk zones across Europe.

Driving a regular route and don't need navigation? No problem, the smart SC5700 can be turned into a speed trap detector with MY Speed XL. This displays the speed limit, your speed and alerts you to speed cameras in a large, full screen format, helping you keep within the limit and become a safer driver.

Snooper; delivering the smartest route to your destination with the least amount of fuss.









#### **Features**

- 5"LCD Touch screen
- Built-in DVR (on board camera)
- My Speed XL
- Aura™ Speed Trap Locations\*
- Free Premium Traffic Information
- Market Leading Here™ Maps for Life UK or European Navigation

From RRP £249.99 For more information visit www.snooper.co.uk, call 0333 240 1000 or visit any authorised reseller.

Performance Products Ltd, Cleaver House, Sarus Court, Manor Park, Runcorn, WA7 1UL

omotion at anytime. Lifetime Map Updates are available on new purchases only, pu







# Trips & Travel

In association with



Knowledge

The best destinations to visit in your car



NO DOUBT, DEAR reader, you turn gleefully to this page before any other in the magazine and as such, it is my great pleasure to announce that this is the 200th issue of evo. Yes, the double century is up, bats are being waved at the pavilion and somewhere a party popper is causing a minor police incident. So, to celebrate this milestone, I thought that Trips & Travel should have a wistful look back at the very first drive story that evo ever undertook...

Amazingly, after trawling through the early issues on my desk, I discovered that a proper drive story didn't come along until issue 012. There were tests in Scotland and Italy and even Le Mans, but they were all incidental backdrops. The first time a car went somewhere with a mission was when John Barker and snapper Richard Newton took a 996.1911 GT3 to France to watch a total eclipse of the sun from the old circuit at Reims.

It's an easy pilgrimage to add into a longer trip abroad, because if you're heading to the south of France or the Alps, then you simply need to hop off the A26/E17 autoroute at junction 16.1. From there you need to head briefly towards the centre of Reims before heading back out on the N31/ E46. You'll cross back over the A26, then you need to turn left towards Gueux at the first roundabout you meet, which will lead you onto the start/finish straight of the old circuit (in the correct direction too).

Thankfully, Barker's fear 15 years ago that 'it surely won't be long before the eerily atmospheric pits buildings with their faded and peeling advertising murals are condemned and pulled down' has proved

unfounded. In fact there has been quite a bit of renovation over the last few years. and although not all of it is for the best in my opinion, it does at least look like the hauntingly impressive buildings will remain for another 200 issues of evo.

> **Henry Catchpole** Features editor



### **K** Circuit layouts

There were three different clockwise layouts used at Reims. The shortest, 4.3-mile version (the bold loop below) was only used in anger in 1952 but is the one used in historic events today. The longer, 4.9-mile configuration (extend the loop to include the short dashes) was used between 1926 and 1951. Finally, the longest, 5.2-mile layout (bold loop plus long dashes) was used from 1953 until 1969. Sadly you can't drive the whole of this last layout because the return route to the N31 has been dug up and peters out into a field



#### Start/finish Distance: 4.3 miles (solid line layout)

### Watch out for

Time: 10 minutes

There are various Banksy-like signs around saving 'Memoire des pilotes, respect du site'. which you don't need me to translate. To get into the grandstands, walk behind the pits and then go through the tunnel under the road. It's easy to park on the wide sides of the road, just don't get too caught up in the moment and wander into the road without looking

### Reader road trip

### Murciélago in Italy

How do you convince your partner to spend ten days and nearly 3000 miles in a Murciélago? Well, the promise of sun, just a 'few' hours in the car each day, her choice of the nicest hotels and plenty of good food and wine seems to do the trick!

Starting at a fabulous chateau on the outskirts of Arras with a gorgeous restaurant lulled her into a false sense of security. Day two shattered that with the long drive to Lucerne, while day three took us over gorgeous mountain roads to the Italian South Tyrol town of Merano. The Stelvio Pass was closed due to snow but the Flüela Pass made up for it, and a nice meal with the Dolomites in the background settled her back down! We then



had an epic circle back round to Verbania avoiding the autostrada and doing nine long hours over awesome mountain and lakeside routes. A couple of days were then spent by Lake Maggiore – but without any sunshine.

A stop at the Lamborghini factory gave her an hour and a half of sunbathing on the grass outside while I went round the museum. Then it was off to a medieval castle just outside Perugia. The next day was spent watching the Mille Miglia coming through Spoletto plaza, with glasses of wine and scrummy Italian food.

The following day was the real highlight, heading west to pick up the MM cars, diving behind competing cars and following them into villages to calls of 'infiltrator'! The drive through the Tuscan hills and the passes at Raticosa and Futal driving with but not getting in the way of some of the world's greatest cars, only broadened the smiles on our faces.

#### Gareth Richardson

Email your story to henryc@evo.co.uk

### PROMOTION

### Michelin tyre recommendations

Like all great Porsche 911s, the 996 GT3 (see 'Great drives', left) deserves a set of tyres that are in tune with the car's deft handling balance. Michelin offers the Pilot Sport 2 in the correct sizes, boasting an extremely stable tread pattern and a clever variable contact natch which increases the tread contact with the road as cornering force increases. The PS2 has the all-important 'N3' rating, which means it has been approved for use by Porsche. Of course if you were planning a trip during winter, a set of Pilot Alpin tyres developed specifically for performance cars - would be a wise alternative.



### Database

e = 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). Call 0844 844 0039 to order a back issue. Price is on-the-road including VAT and delivery charges. Engine is the car's main motor only – additional hybrid tech isn't shown. Weight is the car's kerb weight as quoted by the manufacturer. bhp/Ycm is the power-to-weight ratio based on manufacturer's kerb weight. O-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	Max mph	CO2g/km	EC mpg	<b>evo</b> rating	
Abarth Punto Supersport		£17,805	4/1368	178/5750	199/2750	1225kg	148	7.5	-	134	142	46.3	+ Attractive and fun - Needs more power	***
Abarth 595 Competizione	196 D	£18,960	4/1368	158/5500	170/3000	1035kg	155	7.4	-	130	155	43.5	+ Spirited engine, still looks great - Favours fun over finesse	****
Alfa Romeo Mito Cloverleaf	149 R	£18,870	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 QV	199 D	£28,120	4/1742	237/5750	251/2000	1320kg	182	6.0	-	151	162	40.3	+ Still looks good, and now it's got the 4C's engine - Pricey, and it has more rewarding rivals	***
Alfa Romeo Giulietta Cloverleaf	144 D	'10-'14	4/1742	232/5500	251/1900	1320kg	179	6.8	-	150	177	37.2	+ Shows signs of deep talentbut 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 S1	197 D	£24,900	4/1984	228/6000	273/1600	1315kg	176	5.8	-	155	162	40.4	+ Compliant and engaging chassis; quick, too - Looks dull without options	****
Audi A1 quattro	181 R	'13	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	£30,640	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	£26,020	4/1997	218/5000	228/1350	1420kg	156	6.4	-	155	154	42.8	+ Performance, price, running costs - Dull four-pot soundtrack	****
BMW M135i	195 R	£30,835	6/2979	316/5800	332/1300	1425kg	225	4.8	12.9	155	188	35.3	+ Powertrain, noise, chassis, price - M235i looks nicer, and has an LSD on its options list	****
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	£8095+	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 VTS	020 R	'97-'03	4/1587	120/6600	107/5200	935kg	130	7.6	22.6	127	-	34.9		***
Citroën AX GT	195 R	'87-'92	4/1360	85/6400	86/4000	722kg	120	9.2	-	110	-	-	+ Makes terrific use of 85bhp - Feels like it's made from paper	***
Citroën DS3 1.6 THP	142 R	£17,475	4/1598	154/6000	177/1400	1240kg	126	7.2	-	133	155	42.2		****
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		****
Fiat Punto Evo Sporting	141 D	£13,355	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 ST	196 D	£17.250	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	195 R	£17,894	4/1596	212/6000	236/2750	1088kg	198	6.6	-	140	138	- 41.5	+ 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		****
Ford Fiesta Zetec S Mountune	132 R	'08-'13	4/1596	138/6750	125/4250	1043kg	130	7.9		120	134	48.7		****
Ford Fiesta ST	075 D	'05-'08	4/1999	148/6000	140/4500	1137kg	132	7.9		129	134	38.2		***
Ford Fiesta ST185 Mountune	115 R	'08	4/1999	185/6700	147/3500	1137kg	165	6.9	-	129	-	30.2	+ Fiesta ST gets the power it always needed - OTT exhaust note	****
Ford Focus 1.6T Zetec S	165 D	£20,595	4/1596	179/5700	199/1900	1333kg	136	7.8	-	138	139	47.1		
Ford Focus ST	188 R	£21,995	4/1999	247/5500	265/1750	1362kg	184	6.5	16.8	154	169	47.1	+ The fastest, keenest Mk3 Focus yet - The Mk1's sparkle is still absent, though	***
									10.8			-	+ 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	16.8	154+	169		+ Great value upgrade - Steering still not as feelsome as that of some rivals	****
Ford Focus ST	119 R	'05-'10 '08-'11	5/2522	222/6000	236/1600	1392kg	162	6.7		150	224	30.4	+ Value, performance, integrity - Big engine compromises handling	***
Ford Focus ST Mountune	137 R		5/2522	256/5500	295/2500	1392kg	187	5.8	14.3	155	224	20.5	+ ST takes extra power in its stride - You probably still want an RS	****
Ford Focus RS (Mk2)	195 R	'09-'11	5/2522	300/6500	324/2300	1467kg	208	5.9	14.2	163	225		+ Huge performance, highly capable FWD chassis - Body control is occasionally clumsy	****
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 (Mk1)	195 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	-		+ 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		****
Ford Racing Puma	128 R	'00-'01	4/1679	153/7000	119/4500	1174kg	132	7.8	23.2	137	-	34.7		****
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 Champ'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	195 R	'09-'11	4/1998	237/8300	157/6250	1233kg	195	5.9	-	155	-	-	+ Fantastic on road and track - There's only 20, and they're 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	143	7.4	-	143	171	38.2	+ Good chassis, appealing price - Thrashy engine	***
Lancia Delta Integrale	194 R	'88-'93	4/1995	207/5750	220/3500	1300kg	162	5.7	-	137	-	23.9	+ One of the finest cars ever built - Demands love, LHD only	****
Mazda 21.5 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	'06-'13	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	£29,355	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	194 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	***
MG3 Style	190 D	£9999	4/1498	104/6000	101/4750	1155kg	91	10.4	-	108	136	48.7	+ Decent chassis, performance and price - Thrashy engine, cheap cabin	***
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 Cooper (F56)	194 D	£15,300	4/1499	134/4500	162/1250	1085kg	125	7.9	-	130	105	62.8	+ Punchy three-cylinder engine, good chassis - Tubby styling	****
Mini Cooper S (F56)	196 D	£18,665	4/1998	189/4700	206/1250	1160kg	166	6.8	-	146	133	49.6	+ Still has that Mini DNA - Expensive with options; naff dash displays	****
Mini John Cooper Works Coupe (R58)	164 R	£23,805	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 Cooper (R56)	185 F	'09-'14	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 (R56)	149 R	'06-'14	4/1598	181/5500	177/1600	1140kg	161	7.0	-	142	136	48.7		****
Mini Cooper SD (R56)	158 D	711-714	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 (R56)	184 R	'08-'14	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 GP (R56)	195 R	13-14	4/1598	215/6000	206/2000	1160kg	188	6.3	-	150	165	39.8		****
Mini Cooper S (R50)	077R	'02-'06	4/1598	168/6000	155/4000	1140kg	143	7.8	19.9	135	-	33.6		****
Mini Cooper S Works GP (R50)	144 R	'06	4/1598	215/7100	184/4600	1090kg	200	6.5	-	149	-	32.8	+ Storming engine, agility - Tacky styling 'enhancements'	****
Mitsubishi Colt Ralliart	132 R	'08-'13	4/1468	147/6000	155/3500	1060kg	141	7.4	-	131	161	40.9		****
Nissan Juke Nismo	184 R	£20,495	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	****
		,	1010				.50							



Finance subject to status. 5.9% finance available on all V40 models, \*at participating dealers registered by 30th September 2014. At the end of the Personal Contract Purchase there are three options (i) pay the GFV (Guaranteed Future Value/Optional Final Payment) to own the vehicle (ii) part exchange the vehicle, where equity is available; (iii) return the vehicle. Further charges may be made subject to the condition of the vehicle. Terms and conditions apply. 18s or over. Guarantee/indemnity may be required. Volvo Car Credit RH1 1SR. You will own the vehicle when all payments are made.



★ Thrill-free zone ★★ Tepid ★★★ Interesting ★★★★ Seriously good ★★★★★ A truly great car



**Our Choice**Volkswagen Golf R. A flagship Golf to get *really* excited about, the new R offers immense pace and a truly engaging driving experience in a compromise-free package with class and quality aplenty. Cake both possessed and consumed.



Best of the Rest
BMW's M135i is an enticing rear-drive alternative to the Golf R, although the Mégane 265 Cup pips both for absolute tactility and involvement. The Fiesta ST (left), meanwhile, is the default affordable hot hatch choice. We'd have ours Mountuned.

### Superminis / Hot Hatches

Car	ssue no.	Price	Engine cyl/cc	bhp/rpm	lb ft/rpm	Weight	bhp/ton	0-60mph	0-100mph	Max mph	CO2g/km	EC mpg	<b>evo</b> rating	
Nissan Sunny GTi-R		'92-'93	4/1998	220/6400	197/4800	1269kg	176	6.1	I .	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	195 R	'88-'91	4/1905	130/6000	119/4750	910kg	145	7.9	- 11.9	124	-	36.7		****
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	020 R	'98-'99	4/1998	167/6500	142/5500	1199kg	142	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	19.2	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	195 R	'09-'13	4/1998	197/7100	159/5400	1204kg	166	6.6	16.7	141	190	34.5	+ The hot Clio at its best - They don't make it anymore	****
Renaultsport Clio 197 Cup	115 R	'07-'09	4/1998	194/7250	158/5550	1240kg	161	6.9	- 10.7	134	-	33.6		***
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	195 R	'05-'06	4/1998	180/6500	148/5250	1090kg	168	6.6	17.3	140	-	34.9	+ The most funyou can have on three (sometimes two) 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	255/7150	221/4650	1400kg	182	5.8	-	153	-	23.0		****
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	195 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	****
Renault 5 GT Turbo	195 R	'87-'91	4/1397	118/5750	122/3000		140	7.3	20.0	120	-	28.4		
	195 R	£25,990	4/1998	261/5500	265/3000	855kg 1387kg	191	6.4	14.8	158	190		+ Clio Williams' grand-daddy - Few unmodified ones left	****
Renaultsport Mégane 265 Cup										156		34.4	+ A hot hatch benchmark - Not a lot	****
Renaultsport Mégane 250 Cup	139 R 119 R	'09-'12 '07-'09	4/1998 4/1995	247/5500 173/3750	251/3000 265/2000	1387kg	181 119	6.1 8.3	14.6 23.5	137	190	34.4 43.5		****
Renaultsport Mégane dCi 175 Cup						1470kg								***
Renaultsport Mégane Trophy	087R	'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 F1 Team R26	195 R	'07-'09	4/1998	227/5500	229/3000	1345kg	171	6.2	16.0	147	-	-	+ The car the R26.R is based on - F1 Team stickers in dubious taste	****
Renaultsport Mégane R26.R	195 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	£17,445	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	£18,765	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	£22,255	4/1968	181/4000	280/1750	1350kg	136	7.5	-	142	112	64.2	+ Performance, sweet chassis, economy, comfort - Boorish engine	***
SEAT Leon Cupra 280	195 R	£26,940	4/1984	276/6000	258/1750	1320kg	212	5.8	-	155	149	44.1	+ Serious pace and ability for Golf GTI money - The Mk7 Golf R	****
SEAT Leon FR+	163 D	71-72	4/1984	208/5300	206/1700	1334kg	158	7.2	-	145	170	38.7	+ As quick as a Golf GTI five-door but lots 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	067R	'03-'06	4/1781	222/5900	206/2200	1376kg	164	6.9	-	150	- 1/0	32.1	+ Cross-country pace, practicality, value - Not as thrilling as some	****
Skoda Fabia vRS (Mk2)	146 D	£17,150	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	£23,260	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 calipers?	****
Smart Fortwo Brabus	110 D	£15,375	3/999	97/5500	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 WRXS	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 STIbut not better	***
Suzuki Swift Sport (Mk2)	175 R	£13,749	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	£18,995	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	71-73	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 VXR (Mk2)	195 R	£27,260	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		***
VW Up/SEAT Mii/Skoda Citigo	171 R	£7990+	3/999	59/5000	70/3000	854kg	70	14.1	-	99	105	62.8	+ Accomplished city car is dynamically soundbut predictably slow	***
VW Polo GTI	154 R	£19,730	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	£25,565	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)	195 R	£26,125	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 R (Mk7)	195 R	£29,900	4/1984	297/5500	280/1800	1476kg	204	5.1	-	155	165	40.9	+ Time to take the R brand seriously - Mégane 265 just edges 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	70-73	4/1984	266/6000	258/2500	1521kg	178	5.5	-	155	199	33.2		****
VW Golf GTI (Mk5)	195 R	'04-'09	4/1984	197/5100	207/1800	1336kg	150	6.7	17.9	145	-	-	+ Character and ability: the GTI's return to form - 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		***
VW Golf R32 (Mk4)	053 R	'02-'04	6/3189	237/6250	236/2800	1477kg	163	6.4	16.3	154	-	24.6		***
VW Golf GTI 16v (Mk2)	195 R	'88-'92	4/1781	139/6100	124/4600	960kg	147	7.9	-	129	-	26.6	+ Still feels everyday useable - Very hard to find a standard one	****
VW Golf GTI (Mk1, 1.8)	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	****

- Adaptive Digital Display
- R-Design Sports Upholstery with perforated leather
- 5 spoke diamond cut 17" Ixion alloy wheels
- Up to 53.3 MPG (Combined figure)

#### **SEARCH VOLVO V40**

Representative APR	5.9% APF
Excess mileage charge	14.9p per mile
Mileage per annum	8000
Duration of agreement (months)	37
Finance Deposit Contribution	£500.00
Final Payment	£10,284.50
Total amount payable	£21,747.50
Interest charges	£2,414.25
Total amount of credit	£16,834.25
Customer deposit	£1,999.00
On the road price (after Dealer discount')	£19,333.25
36 monthly payments	£249.00



Official fuel consumption for the Volvo V40 T2 R-Design (manual) in MPG (I/100km): Urban 41.5 (6.8), Extra Urban 62.8 (4.5), Combined 53.3 (5.3). CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions 124g/km. MPG figures are obtained from laboratory testing intended for comparisons between vehicles and may not reflect real driving results.





★ Thrill-free zone ★★ Tepid ★★★ Interesting ★★★★ Seriously good ★★★★★ A truly great car



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. Jaguar's showy XFR-S (left) has a particularly impressive chassis, while the latest Alpina D3 Biturbo is not only the world's fastest diesel production car, but a great handler too.

### Saloons / Estates / 4x4s

Car	Issue no.	Price	Engine cyl/cc	bhp/rpm	lb ft/rpm	Weight	bhp/ton	0-60mph	0-100mph	Max mph	CO2g/km	EC mpg	<b>evo</b> 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	****
Alpina D3 Biturbo (F30)	192 D	£46,950	6/2993	345/4000	516/1500	1510kg	232	4.6	-	173	139	53.3	+ 173mph from a 3-litre diesel! Brilliant chassis, too - Auto only	****
Alpina B3 Biturbo (F30)	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	****
Alpina 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 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	£146,035	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 S3 Saloon	192 D	£33,240	4/1984	296/5500	280/1800	1430kg	210	5.3	-	155	162	26.4	+ On paper a match for the original S4 - In reality much less interesting	****
Audi S4 (B8)	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 (B7)	073 D	'05-'08	8/4163	339/7000	302/3500	1700kg	206	5.4	-	155	-	-	+ Effortless V8, agile handling - Lacks ultimate finesse of class leaders	****
Audi RS4 Avant (B8)	192 R	£56,525	8/4163	444/8250	317/4000	1795kg	251	4.5	10.5	174	249	26.4	+ Looks and sounds the part, thunderously fast - Harsh ride, unnatural steering	****
Audi RS4 (B7)	088 R	'06-'08	8/4163	414/7800	317/5500	1650kg	255	4.5	10.9	155	-	-	+ 414bhp at 7800rpm! And there's an estate version too - Busy under braking	****
Audi RS4 (B5)	192 R	'00-'02	6/2671	375/6100	325/2500	1620kg	236	4.8	12.1	170	-	17.0	+ Effortless pace- Not the last word in agility. 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	091D	'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 (C7)	193 D	£76,985	8/3993	552/5700	516/1750	1935kg	290	3.6	8.2	155	229	28.8	+ Performance, foolproof powertrain, looks - Torque converter gearbox, gloopy steering	****
Audi RS6 Avant (C6)	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 (C5)	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	190 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	£79,900	8/3993	513/5800	479/1700	1975kg	264	4.1	-	155	237	27.7	+ Quicker and much more economical than before - But still underwhelming to drive	****
Audi RS Q3	194 R	£43,000	5/2480	306/5200	310/1500	1655kg	188	5.5	-	155	206	32.1	+ More enjoyable than many RS Audis - Used Cayennes and ML63s are similar money	****
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	£150,900	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 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 (F30)	168 R	£28,775	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 (F30)	165 D	£29,765	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 (F30)	180 D	£36.975	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 (F10)	164 D	£36.565	4/1997	242/5000	258/1250	1710kg	144	6.2	-	155	152	41.5	+ Four-pot 528 is downsizing near its best - You'll miss the straight-six sound effects	****
BMW 535i (F10)	141 D	£44.555	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	£73.940	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	****
	105 R	'07-'10	10/4999	500/7750	383/6100	1780kg	285	4.8	-	155	- 232	19.3		****
BMW M5 Touring (E60) BMW M5 (E60)	129 R	'04-'10	10/4999	500/7750	384/6100	1755kg	289	4.0	10.4	155	-	19.5	+ Brilliant at ten tenths - Feels slightly clumsy when pottering	
	129 R	'99-'03	8/4941	394/6600	369/3800	1795kg	209	4.7	11.5	155	-	19.0	+ Close to being the ultimate supersaloon - SMG gearbox feels old-tech + Magnificent V8-engined supersaloon - We'd be nit-picking	****
BMW M5 (E39)	110 R	'92-'96	6/3795	340/6900	295/4750	1653kg	209	5.9	13.6	155	-	-		****
BMW M5 (E34)		'86-'88	6/3453				209		13.0	151	-	-	+ The Godfather of supersaloons - The family can come too	****
BMW M5 (E28)	182 R			282/6500	251/4500	1431kg		6.2	-				+ The original storming saloon - Understated looks	****
BMW M6 Gran Coupe	190 D	£98,125	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 X5 M50d	191 D	£63,715	6/2993	376/4000	546/2000	2190kg	155	5.3	-	155	177	42.2	+ Straight-line pace - Driving experience identical to standard X5, despite the M badge	****
BMW X6 xDrive 50i	118 D	£58,880	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	£86,680	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	£71,505	8/4395	449/5500	480/2000	2020kg	226	4.7	-	155	199	-	+ Well specced, impressively refined - Lags far behind the Mercedes S-class	***
Brabus Bullit	119 R	c£330,000		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	****
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 repmobile image	****
Ford Sierra RS Cosworth 4x4	141 R	'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 racecar - 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 Q50S Hybrid	195 D	£40,000	6/3498	359/6800	402/5000	1750kg	208	5.1	-	155	144	45.6	+ Good powertrain, promising chassis - Lacklustre steering, strong rivals	***
Jaguar XF 3.0 V6 Diesel S	145 D	£46,610	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	<b>**</b> **
Jaguar XF Sportbrake 3.0 V6 Diesel S	177 D	£49,110	6/2993	271/4000	443/2000	1695kg	153	6.1	-	155	163	46.3	+ Looks and drives better than the saloon - There's now a Sportbrake R	<b>**</b> **
Jaguar XF 3.0 V6 Supercharged	178 D	£48,495	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	****

























For full details, flick to our ad in your copy of Evo - Just look for Quentin!









### 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 XFR-S Sportbrake	198 D	£82,495	8/5000	542/6500	502/2500	1967kg	280	4.6	-	186	297	22.2	+ Looks fantastic, huge performance, nice balance - Not as sharp as the saloon	****
Jaguar XJ 3.0 V6 Diesel	148 D	£56,865	6/2993	271/4000	442/2000	1700kg	162	6.0	-	155	167	46.3	+ A great Jaguar - But not as great as the XJR	***
Jaguar XJR	191 D	£92,370	8/5000	542/6500	502/2500	1805kg	302	4.4	-	174	270	24.4	+ Hot-rod vibe, fine cabin - 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	****
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 Ghibli	186 D	£52,290	6/2979	325/5000	406/1750	1810kg	182	5.6	-	163	223	29.4	+ Bursting with character; good value compared to Quattroporte - It's still a big car	***
Maserati Ghibli S	198 D	£63,435	6/2979	404/5500	406/4500	1810kg	227	5.0	-	177	242	27.2	+ Stands out from the crowd; sounds good too - Chassis lacks finesse, engine lacks reach	
Maserati Quattroporte S	184 D	£80,095	6/2979	404/5500	406/1750	1860kg	221	5.1	-	177	244	26.9	+ Tempting alternative to V8 - Feel-free steering, secondary ride lacks decorum	****
Maserati Quattroporte GTS	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 Maserati Quattroporte Sport GTS	085 R 113 D	'04-'08 '07-'08	8/4244 8/4244	394/7000 396/7000	333/4500 339/4250	1930kg 1930kg	207 208	5.1 5.5	-	171 167	-	17.9	+ Redefines big-car dynamics - Don't use auto mode + 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 CLA45 AMG	186 D	£42,265	4/1991	355/6000	332/2250	1510kg	239	4.6	-	155	161	31.0	+ Strong performance, classy cabin - Pricey compared to A45 AMG hatchback	***
Mercedes-Benz C63 AMG	151 R	£57,275	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	£74,095	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	711-713	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		-	21.9	+ M5-humbling grunt, cosseting ride - Speed limits	****
Mercedes-Benz S63 AMG L	191 D	£119,575	8/5461	577/5500	664/2250	1995kg	294	4.4	-	155	237	27.9	+ Monster pace - Average steering feel	***
Mercedes-Benz S63 AMG	148 D	70-73	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	'06-'13	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 S	199 D	£86,500	8/5461	577/5500	590/1750	1795kg	327	4.1	-	155	231	28.5	+ Remains quick and characterful - Dated gearbox, no four-wheel drive option in the UK	****
Mercedes-Benz CLS63 AMG	178 R	71-74	8/5461	518/5250	516/1700	1795kg	293	4.2	-	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	£84,125	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	£123,975	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 everabout 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	£93,175	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	£107,903	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	711-713	8/4806	542/6000	590/2250	1995kg	276	3.7	-	190	270	24.6	+ Pace, excellent ergonomics - Steering feel, ride	***
Porsche Macan S	198 R	£43,300	6/2997	335/5500	339/1450	1865kg	183	5.4	-	157	204	31.4	+ No less compelling than the Turbo - Although lacks its ultimate speed and agility	***
Porsche Macan Turbo	194 R	£59,300	6/3604	394/6000	406/1350	1925kg	208	4.8	-	165		30.7	+ Doesn't feel like an SUV - Still looks like one	***
Porsche Cayenne GTS (Mk2)	173 D	£68,117	8/4806	414/6500	380/3500	2085kg	202	5.6		162	251 270	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 542/6000	516/2250	2170kg	231	4.7	-	173		24.6 24.6	+ Greener, faster, better - Odd rear styling, numb steering	***
Porsche Cayenne Turbo S (Mk2)	184 D	£107,784	8/4806 4/1999	237/6000	553/2250	2215kg	249 144	4.5 7.0	-	175 135	270 199	24.0	+ Near-identical power and torque to a Zonda C12S - In an SUV + Striking looks, sporting dynamics - Hefty price, and petrol version is auto-only	***
Range Rover Evoque Coupe Si4 Range Rover Sport V8 Supercharged	160 D 186 D	£46,650 £81,550	8/4999	503/6000	251/1900 460/2500	1670kg 2335kg	219	5.0	-	155	298	22.1	+ Deceptively quick and capable sports SUV - It's still got a weight problem	****
Range Rover SDV8	180 D	£78,120	8/4367	334/3500	516/1750	2350kg 2360kg	144	6.5	-	140	229	32.5	+ Lighter, more capable, even more luxurious - Diesel V6 model feels more alert	****
Rolls-Royce Ghost	186 D	£170,250	12/6592	563/5250	575/1500	2360kg	242	4.7	-	155		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	197 D	£28,995	4/2457	296/6000	300/4000	1534kg	196	5.2	-	159	242	27.2	+ Fast Subaru saloon returns (again) - Without a power increase	***
Subaru WRX STI	151 D	70-73	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 WIX GB270 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		148	-	-	+ A Subaru with real edge - Bit too edgy in the wet	***
Subaru STi Type RA Spec C *	067R	'03-'05	4/1994	335/7000	280/3750	1380kg	247	4.3	11.1	160	-	-	+ Best Impreza since the P1 - Lost its throbby flat-four voice	***
Subaru Impreza WR1	067R	'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		-	27.2	+ Destined for classic status - Thirsty	***
Subaru Impreza P1	067R	'00-'01	4/1994	276/6500	260/4000	1283kg	219	4.9	13.3		-	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		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	***
Tesla Model S Performance	196 R	£69,080	310kW	416	442/0	2100kg	201	4.2	-	130	0	n/a	+ Intoxicating performance, soothing refinement - Generic styling, charging limitations	***
Vauxhall Insignia VXR SuperSport	189 D	£29,749	6/2792	321/5250	321/5250	1825kg	179	5.6	-	170	249	26.6	+ A 170mph Vauxhall - Should be a more engaging steer	***
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 GTS	187 D	£54,499	8/6162	576/6150	545/3850	1881kg	311	4.2	-	155	363	18.5	+ Brawn, pace, character - Frustrating chassis settings; it's nearly C63 money	****
Vauxhall VXR8 GTS	160 R	71-73	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 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	-	155	231	28.5	+ Capable of swift, smooth progress - Swift and smooth doesn't mean fun	***
		£49,775	6/2953	345/5250	369/3000	1759kg	199	5.0	-	155	237	27.7	+ First Volvo to get a full Polestar makeover - Still a close relative of the standard V60	***



#### Vauxhall VX220

Years 2000-2005 Engine In-line 4-cyl, 2198cc Power 145bhp @ 5800rpm Torque 150lb ft @ 4000rpm O-60mph 5.6sec Top speed 136mph (spec is for non-Turbo VX220)



#### WHY WOULD YOU?

It's an Elise in a sharper set of clothes, with added rarity and power. The naturally aspirated model produces 145bhp to the contemporary Elise's 118bhp, while the Turbo (2003 on) puts out 197bhp. The 2004 VXR220 (pictured) has 220bhp.

#### WHAT TO PAY

 $\pounds 7k$  is a realistic entry point for a decent naturally aspirated VX220; Turbos fetch slightly more.

### WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR

Both the NA car's 2.2-litre engine and the Turbo's 2.0 are robust. Check early cars have had the water ingress kit fitted, else misfires may be a problem. Turbo heat shields can break and engine mounts may need replacing – listen for knocking when accelerating. Rear toe links rust and eventually snap. Vibration through the steering could be worn outer wishbone joints. (Full guide, **evo** 195.)

### **SECOND TIME ROUND**

Specializing in Rolex for 20 years!

(020) 7499 7442

Grays, 58 Davies St. London W1K 5LP



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





★ Thrill-free zone ★★ Tepid ★★★ Interesting ★★★★ Seriously good ★★★★★ A truly great car



#### **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 Exige S Roadster counters with a more focused driving experience. Jaguar's F-type also impresses in both 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	CO2g/km	EC mpg	<b>evo</b> 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 - Boot is useless for touring	****
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 3.5R	198 R	£64,800	4/1998	350/8400	243/6100	550kg	647	2.6	-	155	-	-	+ Remarkable balance, poise and pace - Pricey	****
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 ripplelike Clarkson's	****
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 engineis 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	- 227	-	+ 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	189 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 GT V8 Convertible	168 R	£136,250	8/3993	500/6000	487/1700	2470kg	207	4.9	-	187	254	25.9	+ One of the world's best topless GTs - Still no sports car	****
Bentley Continental GT V8 S Convertible	194 D	£152,900	8/3993	521/6000	502/1700	2470kg	214	4.5	-	191	254	25.9	+ A true drivers' Bentley - Excessively heavy, feels like it could give more	***
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	147D	'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 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	-	155 155	-	23.3 25.4	+ Exhilarating and characterful, that engine - Stiff suspension	***
BMW M Roadster	002 R	'98-'02 £45,970	6/3246	325/7400 302/5800	258/4900	1375kg	240	5.3	-	155	190		+ Fresh-air M3, that motor, hunky looks - M Coupe drives better	***
BMW 435i Convertible BMW M3 Convertible (E93)	194 D 119 D	'08-13	6/2979 8/3999	414/8300	295/1200 295/3900	1740kg 1810kg	176 232	5.6 5.3	-	155	297	34.8 22.2	+ Impressive chassis, smart looks, neat roof - Extra weight, not as composed as coupe + MDCT 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	297	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		****
BMW Z8	096 D	'00-10	8/4941	400/6600	369/3800	1585kg	256	4.8	11.1	155	-	14.4	+ Composure, grip, power, comfort - Steering lacks feel at low speed + M5-powered super-sportster - M5's more fun to drive	****
Caterham Seven 160	198 R	£17,995	4/660	80/7000	79/3400	490kg	166	6.5	- 11.1	100	-	14.4	+ The fabulous Seven formula at its most basic - Gets pricey with options	***
Caterham Seven 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 Seven 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 Seven 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 Seven 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 Seven 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 Seven 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 Seven 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 Seven 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 Levante	131 R	'09-'10	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 Seven 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 Seven 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 Seven 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 Seven 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 Seven 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	****
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 T	198 D	£154,490	8/3855	552/7500	557/4750	1729kg	324	3.6	-	196	250	26.9	+ Turbocharged engine is a triumph - Still places daily useability above outright thrills	****
Ferrari California	171 D	'08-'14	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 Convertible	186 R	£58.520	6/2995	335/6500	332/3500	1597kg	213	5.3	-	161	205	32.1	+ Beautiful, enjoyable, responsive - Noticeably junior to the V6 S	****
Jaguar F-type S Convertible	183 R	£67,520	6/2995	375/6500	339/3500	1614kg	236	4.9	-	171	209	32.1	+ Better-damped and more rounded than the V8 S - A Boxster S is £20k cheaper	****
Jaguar F-type V8 S Convertible	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 powerbut 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 - Overwrought 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	c£74,000	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	***

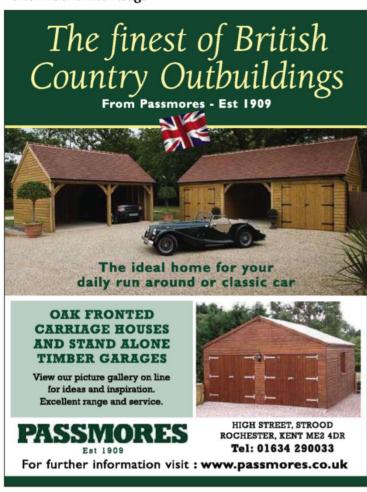
#### Aston Martin Vantage 600 Issue 001, November 1998

John Barker was the first journalist in the world to test the 600bhp, 200mph, £236k supercharged Aston

'For a succinct sum-up of the incredible flexibility of the blown V8, chew on this: in fourth gear 30 to 50mph takes 4.5sec - and so does 110 to 130mph. The sound starts off as a heavy pulse, rich enough to slice, and finishes up a confident howl overlaid by the scream of the superchargers. Yum. 'Best not get carried away on damp B-roads, though. An

unsubtle prod of the throttle will set the rear tyres fizzing whether you're in second, third or fourth gear. It's a sound you quickly learn to spot because it's often followed by the sensation of the back end heading for the hedgerow. Riding out a two-ton tail-slide isn't exactly a doddle -Northamptonshire doesn't feel big enough.'











#### 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	<b>evo</b> 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 <i>and</i> 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 pricey for a stripped-out Elise	****
Lotus Elise S	172 R	£37,150	4/1798	217/6800	184/4600	924kg	239	4.2	-	145	175	37.5	+ New supercharged Elise boasts epic grip and pace -£37K before (pricey) options	****
Lotus Elise S Club Racer	189 D	£35,600	4/1798	217/6800	184/4600	905kg	244	4.2	-	145	175	37.5	+ Purist approach intensifies ability - Lightest, option-free spec requires commitment	****
Lotus Exige S Roadster	186 R 068 R	£52,900 '04-'11	6/3456 4/1796	345/7000 189/7800	295/4500 133/6800	1166kg	301 223	4.0 <b>5.6</b>	13.9	145 150	236 196	28.0 34.4	+ Like the hard-top Exige S, but more road-friendly - Boxster S is a better all-rounder + Most thrillsome Elise yet - Blaring engine note	****
Lotus Elise R Lotus Elise SC	131 R	'08-'11	4/1794	218/8000	156/5000	860kg 870kg	254	4.5	11.4	148	190	33.2	+ MOSt tririlisome Elise yet - Biaring engine note + 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	199	37.2	+ Brilliant entry-level Elise - Precious little	****
Lotus Elise 3 1.0	049R	'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 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 Sport 190	044 R	'03	4/1796	190/7800	128/5000	710kg	272	4.7	12.1	135	-	-	+ Fabulous trackday tool - Pricey	****
Lotus Elise (S1)	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 - Pricey 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-racerthat 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	£111,710	8/4691	454/7000	383/4750	1973kg	234	4.9	-	179	337	19.5	+ Most powerful GranCabrio yet - The GranCabrio is starting to show its age	****
Mazda MX-51.8i SE (Mk3.5)		£18,495	4/1798	124/6500	123/4500	1075kg	117	9.9	-	121	167	39.8	+ Basic MX-5 offers plenty of fun - But you'll probably want the 2.0's power	****
Mazda MX-5 R'ster Coupe 2.0i (Mk3.5)	170 R	£23,095	4/1999	158/7000	139/5000	1173kg	137	7.9	-	136	181	36.2	+ Handles brilliantly again - Less than macho image; no soft-top option with 2-litre engin	
Mazda MX-51.8i (Mk3)	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; dubious handling	****
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-51.6 (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	087R	'05-'10	8/5439	355/5750	376/4000	1575kg	229	4.9	- 11.2	155	-	23.5	+ Superb engine, responsive chassis - No manual option, ESP spoils fun	****
Mercedes-Benz SLK55 AMG Black	110 R 169 D	'07-'08	8/5439	394/5750 429/5250	383/3750	1495kg	268 255	4.9	11.2	<i>174</i> 155	212	21.0	+ AMG gets serious - Dull-witted 7G-Tronic auto box, uneven dynamics	****
Mercedes-Benz SL500 Mercedes-Benz SL63 AMG	171 D	£83,490 £110,785	8/4663 8/5461	530/5500	516/1800 590/2000	1710kg 1770kg	304	4.6	-	155	231	31.0	+ Wafty performance, beautifully engineered - Lacks ultimate sports car feel  + Monster performance, lighter than before - Still heavy, steering lacks consistency	****
Mercedes-Benz SL65 AMG	183 D	£168.285	12/5980	621/4800	737/2300	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	-	20.0	+ As fast as a Murciélago - 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 JCW Convertible (R57)	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 hatchwhich is still better	****
Morgan 3 Wheeler	198 R	£31,000	2/1976	82/5250	103/3250	525kg	159	6.0	-	115	215	30.3	+ Quirky, characterful, brilliant - Can become a two-wheeler if you push too hard	****
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	****
Porsche Boxster (981)	172 R	£38,810	6/2706	261/6700	206/4500	1310kg	202	5.4	-	164	192	34.5	+ Goes & looks better; cleanest Boxster ever - Steering now electric to help cut CO2	****
Porsche Boxster S (981)	186 R	£47,035	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 electric steering	****
Porsche Boxster GTS (981)	198 F	£52,879	6/3436	325/6700	273/4500	1345kg	246	5.0	-	175	211	31.4	+ Essentially a Boxster S with the greatest hits from the options list - Tinted rear lights	****
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 911s	****
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	185kW	248/4500	273/0	1283kg	196	5.0	14.3	120	0	n/a	+ 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 TVR Tuscan Convertible	070 R	'01-'07 '05-'07	6/3605 6/3996	350/7200 365/6800	290/5500 315/6000	1050kg	338 337	4.5	8.1	160 195+	-	-	+ Well-sorted soft-top TVR - Awkward styling + Spirit of the Griff reborn - Over 195mph? Really?	****
TVR Chimaera 5.0	091 R 007 R	'93-'03	8/4988	365/6800	315/6000	1100kg 1060kg	337	3.8 4.6	0.1	195+	-	26.4		****
I VIN CITIITIDEI d J.U	007 R	'93-03	8/4988	280/5500	320/3/50	1060kg	268	4.8	11.2	148	-	20.4	+ Gorgeous noise, tarmac-rippling grunt - Details + The car that made TVR. Cult status - Mere details	****
TVP Griffith /, 3	UUOK	92-93												
TVR Griffith 4.3		'03 '01	8///000	320/5500	320/2750	10606		/, 0				771	+ Gruff diamond - A few rough edges	
TVR Griffith 4.3 TVR Griffith 500 Vauxhall VX220	009 R 023 R	'93-'01 '00-'04	8/4988 4/2198	320/5500 145/5800	320/3750 150/4000	1060kg 875kg	307 168	<b>4.8</b> 5.6	11.2	167 136	-	22.1 34.4	+ Gruff diamond - A few rough edges + Absurdly good Vauxhall - The badge?	****













Our Choice Porsche 911 GT3. You might think the GT3's win at evo Car of the Year 2013 was a foregone conclusion, but neither of the last two GT3s (the 997.2 and 997.1) claimed an eCoty title. Yet the 991 managed it, and in a vintage year too (Ferrari F12, Merc SLS Black). Yes, it really is that good.



**Best of the Rest**Aston's V12 Vantage S (left) is a deeply well-sorted drivers' car. Porsche's second-gen Cayman S is a truly great all-rounder, or for similar money the Lotus Exige S is a proper road racer and was our joint 2012 Car of the Year. BMW's M4 and Jaguar's F-type S Coupe would both make great everyday propositions.

#### Coupes / GTs

Car	Issue no.	Price	Engine cyl/cc	bhp/rpm	lb ft/rpm	Weight	bhp/ton	0-60mph	0-100mph	Max mph	CO2g/km	EC mpg	<b>evo</b> 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 4C	190 R	£45.000	4/1742	237/6000	258/2200	895kg	269	4.5		160	157	41.5	+ Carbonfibre tub, mini-supercar looks - Hot hatch engine, clunky gearbox	***
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	'12-'13	6/2979	402/6000	398/4500	1535kg	266	4.4	-	186	224	-	+ Alpina's M3 GTS alternative - Auto gearbox frustrates when pressing on	***
Aston Martin V8 Vantage	169 D	£86,080	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	£96,080	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 S	190 R	£138,000	12/5935	565/6750	457/5750	1665kg	345	3.7	-	205	-	-	+ The best car Aston Martin currently makes - Old-school automated 'box	***
Aston Martin V12 Vantage	146 R	'09-'13	12/5935	510/6500	420/5750	1680kg	308	4.4	9.7	190	388	17.3	+ The car we hoped the V8 Vantage would be - Erm, a tad thirsty?	***
Aston Martin V12 Zagato	181 F	73	12/5935	510/6500	420/5750	1680kg	308	4.2	-	190	388	17.3	+ The looks, the noise, the way it drives - It's several times the price of a V12 Vantage	***
Aston Martin DB9	178 R	£133,080	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	£27,700	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	***
AudiTTS	193 R	£36,045	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	***
AudiTTRS	158 R	£46,300	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 TTRS Plus	185 D	£49,385	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)	081D	'05-'06	4/1781	237/5700	236/2300	1390kg	173	5.7	_	155		30.3	+ Deliciously purposeful interior, crisp chassis - Numb steering	***
Audi S5	189 D	£43,395	6/2995	328/5500	325/2900	1675kg	199	4.9	-	155	190	34.9	+ Supercharged V6 makes S5 cleaner and faster - Poor body control	***
Audi RS5	168 R	£59,350	8/4163	444/8250 424/7900	317/4000	1715kg	245 276	4.5	-	155 188	246 332	26.9	+ Brilliant engine and improved chassis - Still not as exciting as you'd hope	***
Audi R8 V8		£93,710	8/4163	518/8000	317/4500	1560kg	325	4.1	9.9	194		10.0	+ Finally, a true 911 alternative - Exclusivity comes at a price	***
Audi R8 V10 Audi R8 V10 Plus	181 D 190 R	£114,810 £126.810	10/5204	542/8000	391/6500 398/6500	1620kg 1570kg	351	<b>3.9</b> 3.8	8.4	194	346 346	19.0 19.0	+ Real supercar feel - The V8 is £20k less, and still superb + 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	1570kg	369	3.6	-	190	340	19.0	+ Everything we love about the R8 - Not as hardcore as we wanted	****
Audi Quattro 20v	194 R	'90-'91	5/2226	220/5900	228/1950	1329kg	168	6.2	18.2	143	-	19.1	+ Modern classic - The game has moved on	****
Bentley Continental GT V8	178 R	£123,850	8/3993	500/6000	487/1700	2295kg	221	4.6	- 10.2	188	246	27.0	+ A proper drivers' Bentley with decent economy - W12 suddenly seems pointless	
Bentley Continental GT	152 D	£135,760	12/5998	567/6000	516/1700	2293kg 2320kg	248	4.6	-	198	384	17.1	+ 200mph in utter comfort - Weight, thirst	****
Bentley Continental GT Speed	177 D	£151,100	12/5998	616/6000	590/2000	2320kg	258	4.0	-	205	338	19.5	+ 205mph in utter comfort - Feels nose-heavy in slow corners	****
BMW 1-series M Coupe	188 R	111-112	6/2979	335/5900	369/1500	1495kg	228	4.8	-	155	224	- 19.3	+ Character, turbo pace and great looks - Came and went too quick	***
BMW 135i M Sport	113 R	'08-'12	6/2979	302/5800	295/1300	1455kg	211	5.3		155	198	33.2	+ Fast, fun, lots cheaper than an M3 - You really want the 1-series M Coupe	****
BMW M235i Coupe	196 R	£34,250	6/2979	321/5800	332/1300	1455kg	224	5.0	-	155	189	34.9	+ Powertrain, chassis, looks, size - Limited-slip diff is an option, not standard	***
BMW 435i M Sport Coupe	189 D	£41,435	6/2979	302/5800	295/1200	1510kg	203	5.4	-	155	169	35.8	+ Better balance than 3-series saloon - Can feel characterless at lower speeds	***
BMW 435d xDrive M Sport Coupe	195 D	£45.040	6/2993	309/4400	465/1500	1625kg	193	4.7	-	155	146	50.4	+ Pace, grip, economy - Not the sharpest steer; slow-responding gearbox	***
BMW M4	199 R	£56,650	6/2979	425/5500	406/1850	1497kg	288	4.3	-	155	204	32.1	+ Ferociously fast - Only really sparkles when you're on or over the limit	***
BMW M3 (E92)	196 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 GTS (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	097R	'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	£63,125	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)	191 D	£94,605	8/4395	552/6000	501/1500	1850kg	303	4.2	-	155	232	28.5	+ Mighty ability, pace, technology - You'll want the Competition Package upgrade too	***
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	***
BMW i8	197 D	£99,895	3/1500	357/5800	420/3700	1485kg	244	4.4	-	155	49	134.5	+ Brilliantly executed concept; sci-fi looks - Safe dynamic set-up	***
Chevrolet Camaro	148 R	£35,320	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 Stingray Z51 (C7)	197 R	£61,520	8/6162	460/6000	465/4600	1539kg	304	4.2	-	180	279	23.5	+ Performance, chassis balance, supple ride - Body control could be better	***
Chevrolet Corvette (C6)	116 D	'05-'13	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	'05-'13	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	c£60,000	8/5812	662/6500	631/4000	1747kg	385	3.5	-	202	-	-	+ Huge performance for the money - Putting it to use takes nerve	***
Ginetta G40R	165 R	£29,950	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	£68,000	6/3721	310/6500	288/4500	1080kg	292	4.9	-	165	-	-	+ Reborn Farbio GTS boasts great engine and good looks - The ride still needs work	***
Honda CR-Z GT	144 R	£23,275	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 NSX	188 R	'90-'05	6/3179	276/7300	224/5300	1410kg	196	5.5	-	168	-	22.8	+ 'The useable supercar' - 270bhp sounds a bit weedy today	***
Honda NSX-R *	051R	'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	£21,995	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	'09-'13	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 F-type S Coupe	197 R	£60,250	6/2995	375/6500	339/3500	1594kg	239	4.9	-	171	209	32.1	+ Exquisite style, more rewarding (and affordable) than roadster - Scrappy on the limit	***
Jaguar XK	130 D	£65,465	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	£78,965	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	£97,465	8/5000	542/6000	502/2500	1678kg	328	4.2	-	186	292	23.0	+ Faster and wilder than regular XKR - The F-type R Coupe	***
Jaguar XKR-S GT	193 R	£135,000	8/5000	542/6000	502/2500	1638kg	336	3.9	-	186	292	23.0	+ The most exciting XKR ever - It's £135,000, and a very limited edition	****
Lotus Exige S (V6)	171 R	£53,850	6/3456	345/7000	295/4500	1176kg	298	3.8	-	170	236	-	+ Breathtaking road-racer; our joint 2012 Car of the Year - Gearshift not the sweetest	***

#### POCKET buying guide

#### Mercedes CLK63 AMG

Years 2006-09 Engine V8, 6208cc Power 481bhp @ 6800rpm Torque 464lb ft @ 5000rpm 0-62mph 4.6sec Top speed 155mph



#### WHY WOULD YOU?

Because it has a naturally aspirated 6.2-litre  $V8\ producing\ a\ walloping\ 481bhp\ and\ 464lb\ ft.$ Subtle visual clues make the performance (0-62mph in 4.6sec) all the more pleasing. The more devilish Black Series ('07-'09) has 500bhp.

#### WHAT TO PAY

£20,000 is the realistic entry point; top money is c£30k. The scarcer Black Series starts at £60k.

#### WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR

Snapped head bolts result in coolant in the  $combustion\, chambers, while\, sticking\, hydraulic$ lifters (listen for a tappety noise when the engine is warm) can lead to premature wear to the cam lobes. Many cars will have had these issues sorted under warranty. The brakes are carbonceramic, so budget around £2k for front discs and pads. (Full guide, evo 196.)

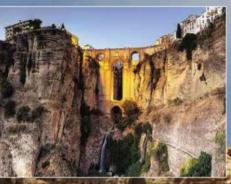
# **Premium RSRIberia Event**

# **Ascari Race Resort Circuit Portimao**





**19th - 23rd November 201** 









Experience Circuit Portimao and Ascari Race resort first hand with the **RSRIberia premium Event** from the 19th - 23rd of November 2014.

Spend 4 sunny days on track with your own car, or hire one of our specially prepared fleet, with options from RenaultSport Megane RS265 to Porsche 991 GT3 PDK, McLaren MP4-12C and much more!

Packages start from €2995, so enquire today! More information available at: www.RSRIberia.com

# **BOOK TODAY!**

Tel: +49 2691 931 952

**Email: sales@RSRIberia.com** 





#### Coupes / GTs

Car	Issue no.	Price	Engine cyl/cc	bhp/rpm	lb ft/rpm	Weight	bhp/ton	0-60mph	0-100mph	Max mph	C02 g/km	EC mpg	evo rating	
Lotus Exige V6 Cup	191 R	£62,994	6/3456	345/7000	295/4500	1110kg	316	3.7	-	170	-	-	+ Half a roll-cage short of being a race car - Regular Exige S is better for road work	***
Lotus Exige S (S2)	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 (S2)	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 (S2)	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	****
Lotus Exige (S1)	067D	'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 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	£82,255	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	£90,785	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 GranTurismo MC Stradale	193 R	£110,110	8/4691	454/7000	383/4750	1800kg	256	4.5	-	188	337	19.5	+ Brilliant blend of road racer and GT - Gearbox takes a little getting used to	***
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	£58,475	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	'12-'13	8/6208	510/6800	457/5200	1635kg	317	4.2	-	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	£118,865	8/5461	536/5500	590/2000	2010kg	271	4.5	-	155	244	26.9	+ Presence, pace, monster engine - Stiff ride, stiff competition	***
Morgan AeroMax	120 R	'08-'09	8/4799	362/6300	370/3600	1180kg	312	4.1	-	170	-	-	+ Weird and utterly wonderful - Only 100 were made	***
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	193 R	£36,995	6/3696	339/7400	274/5200	1535kg	224	5.2	-	155	248	26.6	+ 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/2014MY)	199 R	£78,020	6/3799	542/6400	466/3200	1740kg	316	3.2	7.5	196	275	24.0	+ GT-R is quicker and better than ever - But costs over £20K more than its launch price	***
Nissan GT-R Nismo	199 R	£125,000	6/3799	592/6800	481/3200	1720kg	350	2.6	-	196	275	24.0	+ Manages to make regular GT-R feel imprecise - Compromised by super-firm suspension	
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)	196R	'99-'02	6/2568	276/7000	289/4400	1560kg	180	4.7	12.5	165	-	20.1	+ Big, brutal, and great fun - Needs more than the standard 276bhp	***
Nissan Skyline GT-R (R33)	196 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 Tweeks interior	***
Peugeot RCZ 1.6 THP 200	155 R	£26,895	4/1598	197/5500	202/1700	1421kg	141	7.3	18.1	147	155	42.1	+ Distinctive looks, highly capable handling - Could be a bit more exciting	***
Peugeot RCZ R	193 R	£31,995	4/1598	266/6000	243/1900	1355kg	199	5.9	-	155	145	44.8	+ The best RCZ yet - 1.6-litre engine needs to be worked hard	***
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)	190 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 GTS (981)	197 D	£55,397	6/3436	335/7400	280/4750	1345kg	253	4.9	-	177	211	31.4	+ Tweaks improve an already sublime package - Slightly 'aftermarket' looks	***
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)	199 R	£73,509	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)	197 R	£83,545	6/3800	394/7400	324/5600	1395kg	287	4.5	-	188	224	29.7	+ As above, but with supercar pace - Electric steering robs it of some tactility	***
Porsche 911 Carrera 4 (991)	177 D	£78,269	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	£88,304	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 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 (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)	198 R	£100,540	6/3799	468/8250	324/6250	1430kg	332	3.5	-	196	289	23.0	+ evo Car of the Year 2013 - At its best at licence-troubling speeds	***
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	-	+ evo Car of the Year 2010 - 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	-	+ evo Car of the Year 2011 - 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	+ evo 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	****
Rolls-Royce Wraith	189 D	£237,111	12/6592	624/5600	590/1500	2360kg	269	4.4	-	155	327	20.2	+ Brilliant at wafting; quicker than you'd expect - Not the most engaging drivers' car	***
Subaru BRZ	170 R	£24,995	4/1998	197/7000	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	197/7000	151/6400	1275kg	157	7.6	-	140	181	36.2		***
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 Sagaris	097R	'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	004R	'98-'04	6/3996	350/6800	330/5000	1130kg	315	5.0	11.4	160+	-	-	+ Accomplished and desirable - Check chassis for corrosion	****
VW Scirocco GT 2.0 TSI	155 R	£26,760	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	£31.985	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	***

# carsforsale.evo.co.uk

Search for a car...

Search

Our system understands the finer points of performance motoring. Try 'E46 BMW', '997 GT3', 'V8 coupes' or just 'old Ferraris'



# SOLUTIONS

FOR EVERY DEMAND



#### THE PERFECT SUSPENSION FOR EVERY PURPOSE.

KW automotive UK Ltd Phone: 0870 990 7536 Fax: 0845 021 2548 eMail: info@KWautomotive.co.uk







★ Thrill-free zone ★★ Tepid ★★★ Interesting ★★★★ Seriously good ★★★★★ A truly great car



Our Choice
Ferrari 458 Speciale. The regular 458 Italia is amazing enough in itself – in fact it used to occupy this very space – but the Speciale follows in the tradition of the 360 Challenge Stradale and 430 Scuderia and makes the car it is based as a way many well expecial. The superrar to buy is based on even more, well, special. The supercar to buy.



**Best of the Rest**Pagani's Huayra (left) was our joint Car of the Year in 2012, while Lamborghini's Aventador offers true supercar drama. And if you're wondering which is best out of the LaFerrari/McLaren Pi/Porsche 918 hybrid hypracrar triumverate, well, we really used to get them together to make a call there. really need to get them together to make a call there...

#### 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	<b>evo</b> rating	
9ff GT9R	127 D	c£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	457/5500	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 239/5000	1740kg	438	3.7	-	220+	-	-	+ The engine, the looks, the drama - Gearbox hates manoeuvring; only 77 were made	****
BMW M1 Bugatti Veyron Super Sport	110 R 151 R	'78-'81 c£2.0m	6/3500 16/7993	277/6500 1183/6400	1106/3000	1303kg 1838kg	216 654	5.8 2.5	-	<i>161</i> 268	539	12.2	+ Early supercar icon - A bit under-endowed these days + The world's fastest supercar - Limited to 258mph for us mere mortals	****
Bugatti Veyron Grand Sport Vitesse	185 R	c£1.7m	16/7993	1183/6400	1106/3000	1990kg	604	2.5	-	254	539	12.2	+ The world's fastest supercal - Limited to 256mph for us mere mortals	****
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 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	'09-'13	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	8/4497	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	8/4497	562/9000	398/6000	1530kg	373	3.3	-	198	275	23.9	+ A 458 that sounds and feels more organic - Er, 4mph slower than the Italia?	****
Ferrari 458 Speciale	198 R 163 R	£208,000 '04-'10	8/4497 8/4308	597/9000 483/8500	398/6000 343/5250	1395kg 1449kg	435 339	3.0 4.0	-	202+ 196	275	23.9 18.6	+ Makes the regular 458 feel outmoded - If you don't own a regular 458, nothing	****
Ferrari F430 Ferrari 430 Scuderia	121 R	'07-'10	8/4308	503/8500	343/3230	1350kg	378	3.5	7.7	198	-	15.7	+ Just brilliant - Didn't you read the plus point? + Successful F1 technology transplant - Likes to shout about it	****
Ferrari Scuderia Spider 16M	133 D	'09	8/4308	503/8500	347/5250	1440kg	355	3.7	-	196	360	18.0	+ A hardcore soft-top Ferrari - Earplugs recommended	****
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	190 R	£239,736	12/6262	730/8250	509/6000	1630kg	455	3.1	-	211	350		+ 730bhp isn't too much power for the road - Super-quick steering is an acquired taste	****
Ferrari 599 GTB Fiorano	101 R	'06-'12	12/5999	611/7600	448/5600	1688kg	368	3.5	7.4	205	415		+ 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	-	- 12.2	+ One of the truly great Ferraris - Erm, the air con isn't very good	****
Ferrari 575M Fiorano Handling Pack Ferrari 550 Maranello	169 R 169 R	'02-'06 '97-'02	12/5748 12/5474	508/7250 485/7000	434/5250 415/5000	1730kg 1716kg	298 287	<b>4.2</b> 4.3	<b>9.6</b> 10.0	202 199	-	12.3 12.3	+ Fiorano pack makes 575 truly great - It should have been standard + Everything - Nothing	****
Ferrari FF	194 R	£227,142	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 LaFerrari	197 R	c£1m	12/6262	950/9000	664/6750	1255kg	769	3.0	-	217+	330	-	+ Perhaps the greatest Ferrari ever - Brakes lack the ultimate precision of the P1's	****
Ferrari Enzo	156 R	'02-'04	12/5998	651/7800	485/5500	1365kg	485	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	-	-	+ A better drivers' Ferrari than the 288, F40 or Enzo - Not better looking, though	****
Ferrari F40	199 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 288 GTO	064 R	'84-'85	8/2855	394/7000	366/3800	1160kg	345	4.9	-	189	-	-	+ Painfully beautiful, rarer than the F40 - You are joking?	****
Ford GT Gumpert Apollo	188 R 110 R	'04-'06 £275.000	8/5409 8/4163	550/6500 690/6300	500/3750 675/4000	1583kg 1200kg	<i>353</i> 584	3.7 3.0	-	<i>205</i> 220+	-	-	+ Our 2005 Car of the Year - JC had one. Reckoned it didn't handle	****
Hennessey Venom GT	180 R	£900,000	8/7000	1244/6500	1155/4000	1244kg	1016	2.5	-	270	-	-	+ Stupendous perfomance, 'Apollo' - High price, 'Gumpert' + 0-200mph in 14.5sec, and it 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 supercaruntil McLaren built the F1	****
Koenigsegg Agera R	180 R	c£1.09m	8/5032	1124/7100	885/2700	1435kg	796	2.8	-	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	245+	-	-	+ 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	-	250+	-	-	+ One of the world's fastest cars - Spikey power delivery	****
Lamborghini Huracán LP610-4	197 R	£186,760	10/5204	602/8250	413/6500	1532kg	399	3.2	-	202+	290	22.6	+ Rare depth of character and ability - Takes work to find its sweet-spot	****
Lamborghini Gallardo LP560-4	180 D	'08-'13	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	'10-'13	10/5204	562/8000	398/6500	1340kg	426	3.5	-	202	325	20.6	+ Less weight and more power than original Superleggera - LP560-4 runs it very close	****
Lamborghini Gallardo Lamborghini Gallardo Superleggera	094 R 104 R	'06-'08 '07-'08	10/4961 10/4961	513/8000 522/8000	376/4250 376/4250	1520kg 1420kg	343 373	<b>4.3</b> 3.8	9.4	196 196	-	-	+ On a full-bore start it spins all four wheels. Cool - Slightly clunky e-gear + Lighter, more agile - Grabby carbon brakes, clunky e-gear	***** ****
Lamborghini Aventador LP700-4	194 R	£260.040	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 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	184R 161 R	'88-'91 '10-'12	12/5167	455/7000	369/5200	1488kg 1480kg	311 379	<b>4.2</b> 3.7	10.0	182 202	-	13.7	+ Still the definitive supercar- Visibility, pract- oh hell, who cares?	****
Lexus LFA/LFA Nürburgring Maserati MC12	079 R	10-12	10/4805 12/5998	552/8700 621/7500	354/6800 481/5500	1480kg	437	3.8	-	202	-	-	+ Absurd and compelling supercar - Badge and price don't quite match + Rarer than an Enzo - The Ferrari's better	***** ****
McLaren 650S	196 R	£195,250	8/3799	641/7500	500/3000	1330kg	490	3.0	-	207	275	24.2	+ Better brakes, balance and looks than 12C; more power too - Costs an extra £19k	****
McLaren 12C	187 R	71-74	8/3799	616/7500	442/3000	1434kg	435	3.1	-	207	279	24.2	+ Staggering performance, refinement - Engine noise can be grating	****
McLaren P1	194 R	£866,000	8/3799	903/7500	664/4000	1395kg	658	2.8	-	217	194	34.0	+ Freakish breadth of ability - We don't know its exact Nürburgring lap time	****
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 (gullwing doors too!) - Slightly tardy gearbox	****
Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG Black	190 R	£229,985	8/6208	622/7400	468/5500	1550kg	408	3.6	-	196	321		+ 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	c£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 Pagani Zonda 760RS	185 R 170 R	c£1m £1.5m	12/5980 12/7291	720/5800 750/6300	737/2250 575/4500	1350kg 1210kg	542 630	3.3	-	224 217+	-	-	+ Our joint 2012 Car of the Year - Engine isn't as nape-prickling as the Zonda's + One of the most extreme Zondas ever - One of the last Zondas ever (probably)	****
Pagani Zonda S 7.3	096 R	'02-'05	12/7291	555/5900	553/4050	1210kg 1250kg	451	3.6	-	197	-	-	+ evo Car of the Year 2001 (in earlier 7.0 form) - Values have gone up a fair bit since then	****
Pagani Zonda F	186 R	'05-'06	12/7291	602/6150	575/4000	1230kg	497	3.6	-	214	-	-	+ Everything an Italian supercar ought to be - Looks a bit blingy next to a Carrera GT	****
Pagani Zonda Cinque Roadster	147D	'09-'10	12/7291	669/6200	575/4000	1400kg	485	3.4	-	217+	-	-	+ The best Zonda ever - Doesn't come up in the classifieds often	****
Porsche 911 Turbo (991)	194 R	£118,349	6/3800	513/6000	524/2100	1595kg	327	3.4	-	195	227	29.1	+ Incredible pace, whatever the weather - More involvement would't go amiss	****
Porsche 911 Turbo S (991)	188 R	£140,852	6/3800	552/6500	553/2200	1605kg	349	3.1	-	197	227	29.1	+ Still unrivalled as an everyday supercar - At times disguises the thrills it can offer	****
Porsche 911 Turbo (997.2)	140 R	'09-'13	6/3800	493/6000	479/1950	1570kg	319	3.2	7.3	193	272	24.4	+ The Turbo at the very top of its game - The GT3's cheaper	****
Porsche 911 GT2 RS (997.2)	157R	70-73	6/3600	611/6500	516/2250	1370kg	453	3.5	-	205	284	-	+ More powerful than a Carrera GT. Handles, too - Erm	****
Porsche 911 Turbo (997.1)	094 R	'06-'09	6/3600	472/6000	457/1950	1585kg	303		8.7	193	-	22.1	+ Monster cornering ability - A bit woolly on its standard settings	****
Porsche 911 Turbo (996)	017 R	'00-'06	6/3600	420/6000	413/4600	1540kg	272	4.1	10.0	189	-	21.0	+ evo Car of the year 2000; the 911 for all seasons - We can't find any reasons	****
Porsche 911 GT2 (996)	072 R	'04-'06	6/3600	475/5700	457/3500	1420kg	339	4.0	-	198	-	- 10 /	+ Later revisions made it even more of a star - Care still required	****
Porsche 911 Turbo (993) Porsche 911 GT2 (993)	066 R 003 R	'95-'98 '96-'99	6/3600 6/3600	408/5750 430/5700	398/4500 398/4500	1502kg 1290kg	276 339	3.7 3.9	-	180 184	-	19.4	+ Stupendous all-weather supercar - It doesn't rain enough + Hairy-arsed homologation special - Only 57 were made	****
Porsche 918 Spyder	192 R	c£649,000	8/4593	875/8500	944/6600	1290kg 1674kg	531	2.6	-	214	72	91.1	+ Hairy-arsed normologation special - Only 57 were made + Blistering performance; sophisticated hybrid tech - Added weight and complexity	****
Porsche Carrera GT	192 R	'04-'06	10/5733	604/8000	435/5750	1380kg	445		7.6	205	-	- 91.1	+ Still feels ahead of its time - Needs modern tyres to tame its spikiness	****
Porsche 959	192 R	'87-'90	6/2850	444/6500	369/5000	1450kg	311	3.7	-	197	-	-	+ Tech showcase, still a great drive - Limited choice of colours?	****
Ruf Rt 12	097R	c£155,000	6/3746	641/7000	641/3500	1530kg	426	3.3	-	219	-	-	+ Beautifully executed car with truly immense power - Needs care	****
Ruf CTR3	126 R	c£357,000	6/3746	691/7600	656/4000	1400kg	501	3.2	-	235	-	-	+ The best 911 that Porsche never made - But not the best looking	****
	097R	'87-'89	6/3366	469/5950	408/5100	1170kg	345		-	211	-	-	+ A true legend - We can't all drive like Stefan Roser	****

#### Track Times



Car	Lap time	Peak mph	issue no.	Condition
Radical SR8LM (fastest car) Caparo T1 (fastest supercar)	1:13.6 1:14.8	127.8 130.9	138 131	Dry 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
amborghini 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
Mercedes-Benz SL63 AMG	1:23.9	-	YouTube	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
Caterham 7 Supersport	1:24.8	101.6	YouTube	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
laguar F-type V8 S	1:25.2	111.2	183	Dry
Audi RS5	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	100.6	183	Dry
BMW M5 (F10) (fastest saloon)	1:25.7	112.0	165	Dry
Jaguar XKR-S	1:25.7	-	YouTube	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	107.2	143	Dry
Porsche Panamera Turbo	1:26.5	109.3	137	
	1:26.5	109.2	YouTube	Dry <b>Dry</b>
Audi RS6 Avant (C7) (fastest estate) BMW M135i	1:26.6		YouTube	
		- 111.7		Dry
Jaguar XJ220	1:26.7	111.7	131 VouTubo	Dry
Porsche Cayenne Turbo S (fastest 4x4)	1:26.8	106.1	YouTube	Dry
Mercedes-Benz E63 AMG	1:26.8	104.9	165	Dry
Porsche Cayenne Turbo		107.4 104.2	158	Dry
Lotus Evora	1:27.1		145	Dry
Vissan 370Z	1:27.1	104.0	158 VouTubo	Dry
laguar F-type V6 S	1:27.2	105.0	YouTube	Dry
Porsche Panamera S	1:27.3	102.4	165 VouTubo	Dry
Renaultsport Mégane 265 Cup	1:27.3	111.0	YouTube	Dry
Mercedes-Benz C63 AMG Coupe	1:27.7	111.0	162	Dry
Lotus Elise SC	1:27.7	104.6	131	Dry
Audi S3	1:27.7	1061	YouTube	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 (C6) (fastest estate)	1:27.9	111.0	121	Dry
Jaguar XFR	1:27.9	108.1	137	Dry
SEAT Leon Cupra 280	1:28.0	-	YouTube	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
Vauxhall VXR8 Clubsport Tourer	1:29.9	-	YouTube	Dry
Honda NSX	1:30.1	101.3	145	Dry
Nissan 370Z Roadster	1:30.3	100.1	173	Dry
		98.9	155	Dry
VW Scirocco 2.0 TSI	1:30.4	30.3		
VW Scirocco 2.0 TSI Ford Fiesta ST	1:30.4	97.1	YouTube	Dry



#### **West Circuit facts**

■ Location Bedford Autodrome ■ Opened 1999

■ Length 1.85 miles (2.98 kilometres)

- Direction Anti-clockwise Left turns 9
- Right turns 6





#### **CARS · VANS · TRACTORS · MOTORHOMES**



- 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)

for further information contact sales: Tel: 01207 299 538 email: sales@diesel-performance.co.uk

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\*

www.diesel-performance.co.uk



#### **Protect yourself from the Asteriod Belt**

Generation 2 Self Healing Protection has Arrived.

Having brought the first Generation of Self Healing Film to the UK two years ago, our Technicians have added the latest Second Generation self healing Protective technology to our Inventory.

In your intergalactic travels protecting yourself from those micro meteor impacts has never been more important. We all know respraying your ship in some far off location is a bit of a pain, much better to not have to. Best of all though wear and tear from scratches picked up in your travels is very disconcerting to the Locals; abductions go much easier when you have a scratch free shiny ship when visiting Earth.

For the best paint protection in the Galaxy drop in to planet earth and contact our specialists on 01733 390777, or fire up the Intergalactic net and warp to www.paintshield.co.uk and they will get you protected and on your way in next to no time (theory of relativity applies). 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

t 01733 390777t 01733 390778

- e: info@paintshield.co.uk
- w: www.paintshield.co.uk





#### AS CLOSE AS YOU CAN GET WITHOUT ACTUALLY BEING THERE

The greatest magazine news, first drives and features, brought to life with stunning video, mind-blowing engine sounds and beautiful images.

#### NO NEED TO WAIT FOR THE MONTHLY ISSUE

The digital edition is updated throughout the week, ensuring you are always the first to know **evo**'s view on the latest launch or group test.

#### **OVER 2,500 IMAGES, 750 ARTICLES AND 80 VIDEOS**

A searchable archive at your fingertips allowing you to access **evo**'s back catalogue of content wherever you are, whenever you want it. And we're adding to it every week.



**DOWNLOAD YOUR FREE 7 DAY TRIAL NOW**AND EXPERIENCE THE
RIDE OF YOUR LIFE







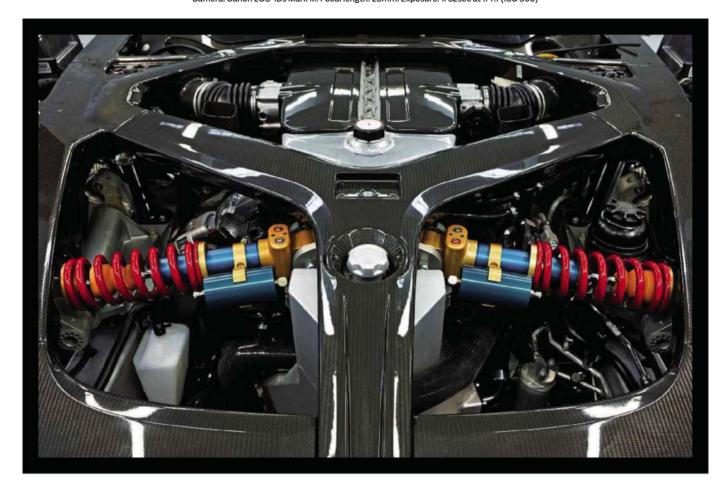
1: FLAME ON!





# **Art** of speed

Camera: Canon EOS-1Ds Mark III. Focal length: 28mm. Exposure: 1/32sec at f/7.1 (ISO 500)



### Aston Martin One-77 carbonfibre chassis

by DAVID VIVIAN



#### ASTON MARTIN MAKES BEAUTIFUL CARS. THE WHOLE

world knows that. If they all look much the same, Aston would argue that this is the way it has to be. That its distinctive, slowly evolving design is too precious and loved too much to throw away. And that, besides, it can be adapted to serve even the

loftiest expectations and ideals of the emerging hypercar market.

That last claim would have been hard to take seriously until the emergence of the One-77 in 2009. Fabulously expensive (£1.2million), exquisitely detailed, obsessively bespoke, stunningly beautiful, it was still undeniably created from the same gene pool as the Vantage, DB9 and Vanquish. This rarest, fastest and most ambitious of Astons was the company's extravagant nod to the passing of what it saw as the golden age of performance motoring – a mission to distil the company's purest essence into one vehicle while simultaneously establishing a new high water mark for the nearly century-old brand.

Chief engineer Chris Porritt admitted it was intentionally built before the environmental lobby could make it even harder to produce so 'politically incorrect' a vehicle: 'We wanted to give our best shot at delivering the most exclusive, exciting and highest performance Aston Martin we could ever build.'

The result is a car that simply can't be cherrypicked for one outstanding component. From skin to core, it is the complete and coherent expression of the art of speed. If it can be split at all, it's only into two. Stripped of bodywork, the One-77's naked rolling chassis is as perfect an engineering sculpture as you could ever hope to see. After standing back to admire the carbon marvel, one customer at the Geneva show famously asked to buy two of the 77 to be produced - a whole car to drive and an unskinned version to park in his living room.

The carbonfibre monocogue chassis, worth roughly half the value of the car, weighed just 180kg, was incredibly stiff and involved a hugely demanding and delicate manufacturing process that took six workers three weeks to complete. Each step - cutting, laying, curing and autoclaving - had to be flawless. If it wasn't, the build was aborted and the entire process started again.

Producing the aluminium bodywork was a comparable labour of love. Each extraordinarily beautiful front wing, made from a single sheet of aluminium, took one man three weeks to shape and perfect. Think about that. Yet it seemed only right that Aston's ultimate road car should honour the incredible artistry of the men who hammered and smoothed aluminium at Newport Pagnell for many an uncertain year. A carbonfibre body just wouldn't have been the same.

**EVO** NEXT MONTH

ON SALE WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 10

Lamborghini

Huracán in the UK

■ BMW i8 group test

RS Mégane Trophy

■ Lola T70 reborn

# HAS YOUR CAR WARRANTY EXPIRED?

If your car is over 3 years old, chances are your car warranty will have expired. Why risk wallet busting car repair bills?

Protect your motor with my award-winning car warranty from Warrantywise.

I've designed it to offer the UK's highest level of car warranty protection - bar none!

Call or go online for a quote and get total peace of mind for any car up to 12 years old\*.















#### THEO PAPHITIS IS WARRANTY WISE

Warrantywise are delighted that Theo has done the wise thing and protected his jaw-dropping Maybach with a Warrantywise warranty.

Read the full article at: www.warrantywise.co.uk/theo



## QUENTIN WILLSON'S GUIDE TO BEING WARRANTY WISE

Watch as motoring expert and consumer champion, Quentin Willson, explains the benefits of a used car warranty from Warrantywise.

Watch Quentin's Guide warrantywise.co.uk/guide



\*Not exceeding 120,000 miles. Terms and conditions apply. Accurate at the time of printing.











The UK's Best Used Car Warrantv



#### With £1,000 towards your deposit<sup>†</sup>

FOLLOW US ON: SEAT.CO.UK

Official fuel consumption for the SEAT Leon in mpg (litres per 100km); urban 32.5 (8.7) - 72.4 (3.9); extra-urban 49.6 (5.7) - 91.1 (3.1); combined 42.8 (6.6) - 85.6 (3.3). CO<sub>2</sub> emissions 154 - 87 g/km.

Standard EU Test figures for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results. Model shown is the Leon 5DR SE 1.2 TSI 110PS at £17,235 RRP with optional metallic paint at £530 RRP, electric sunroof at £765 RRP, 17" Dynamic alloy wheels at £380 RRP and full LED headlights at £1000 RRP. Offer may be varied or withdrawn at any time. Retail Sales only, 'Deposit contribution available to customers who purchase their vehicle with Hire Purchase from SEAT Finance only.\*Hire Purchase agreement with £8,775 initial deposit. Indemnities may be required. Subject to status. Offer available until 30th September. Participating Dealers only. Over 18s. Offer may be varied or withdrawn at any time. T&Cs apply. Freepost SEAT Finance. £1,930 RRP refers to optional specification if priced individually.

