



LIFESTYLE

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Cars



Bentley and Jaguar: A Luxury Twin-Test Special

BENTLEY CONTINENTAL GT V8 S

It isn't very often that you get to drive a machine that you'll remember forever. For me, my week with the Bentley Continental GT V8 S was enough to be certain that the car will always burn an impression into my

grey matter.

Building on the success of the Continental GT V8, the new GT V8 S model features a more powerful version of Bentley's four-litre, twin-turbo V8 engine. It develops a mind-altering 521bhp, delivered via

an eight-speed automatic transmission.

The increased clout provides exhilarating high performance with breathtaking acceleration and syrupy-smooth power delivery. Switch into S mode →



FAST FACTS

- Max speed:** 192 mph
- 0-62 mph:** 4.5 secs
- Combined mpg:** 26.8
- Engine:** 4-litre twin-turbocharged direct injection V8
- Max. power (bhp):** 521
- Max. torque (lb.ft):** 502
- CO2:** 246 g/km
- Price:** £146,000



“THE GT V8 S COUPE DISPATCHES THE 0-62 MPH SPRINT IN JUST 4.5 SECONDS AND ONTO A TERRIFYING 192 MPH.”

via the gear selector and the V8 S rewards you with a razor sharp throttle response while gears are held for longer with quicker shifts.

All of this means the GT V8 S coupe dispatches the 0-62 mph sprint in just 4.5 seconds and onto a terrifying 192 mph. What's more, under acceleration, the character of the exhaust system changes spectacularly. The twin turbo-charged Bentley V8's soundtrack transforms from a purr into an emotive snarl.

The Bentley looks as good as it drives too. While the coachwork of the Continental GT is inspired by iconic Bentleys of the past, the

design of the GT V8 S takes a more dramatic direction and its enhanced road presence is clear before a wheel is turned.

The lowered suspension provides a sleek and resolute stance, complemented by lower-body styling. This includes a front splitter, discrete side sills and subtle rear diffuser finished in Beluga gloss. The black gloss radiator grille with single chrome divider bar and “figure of eight” exhaust tail pipes instantly signify the potent V8 engine.

The colossal 20-inch wheels are distinctive to the “S” model with an open-spoke design that reveals red-painted brake callipers. Subtle “V8

S” badges are applied to each front wing, and as with the other members of the Continental V8 family, the famous Bentley Wings emblems feature a red centre.

Of course, I can't write about this particular Bentley without mentioning the lush cabin that surrounds you when you're biting through the bitumen. The interior has soft-touch leathers, wood veneers, polished metals and deep-pile carpeting. Discreet “V8 S” badges are also displayed on each sill tread plate.

Can you see why a week behind the wheel of this car is now etched into my memory forever? →

PROS 'N' CONS

- Potent ✓
- Thrilling ✓
- Luxurious ✓
- Soundtrack ✓
- Expensive ✗

FAST FACTS

Max speed: 155 mph

0-62 mph: 6.4 secs

Combined mpg: 44.8

Engine: 2993cc, 24 valve
V6 twin turbo diesel

Max. power (bhp):
271 at 4000 rpm

Max. torque (lb.ft):
443 at 2000 rpm

CO2: 167 g/km

Price: £59,980
on the road





JAGUAR 3.0 V6 DIESEL LONG-WHEELBASE

Jaguars are well known for their elegant, sporting lines, and the latest Jaguar XJ, with its sinuous, contemporary style, doesn't disappoint.

Step inside the XJ long-wheelbase (LWB) model and you'll experience rear cabin luxury features which include "airline" style reclining seats with massage function, increased headroom and fold-out business tables.

The overriding impression is a sense of personal space – a feeling enhanced by the simple form of the leather-wrapped instrument panel sitting low across the vehicle.

Behind the wheel, you're greeted by the rotary control of the JaguarDrive selector, which, on

start-up, rises into your palm. Then 3D animations materialise in the virtual instrument cluster and on the central touch-screen.

Under the bonnet, the XJ oil-burner benefits from a powerful and efficient 3.0-litre V6 powertrain, coupled to an eight-speed automatic transmission. The lump, boosted by twin turbochargers, propels the car from 0-62mph in just 6.4 secs, then up to 155mph.

But it isn't all about muscle; on the move in the Midlands-made big cat, the low level of road-rumble means you can chat with your passengers without the need to shout. Even when you bury your right foot into the carpet there's not

much more than a low grunt from the twin exhaust pipes.

Indeed, the XJ LWB model makes every journey a special occasion, both for you and your passengers, but this level of sophistication doesn't come cut-price. You'll have to splash close to £60,000 for the Luxury 3.0 V6 Diesel version and you'll need to have even deeper pockets if you want to drive the higher up the range XJ Portfolio. ■

Tim is an experienced motoring writer with a background in radio and TV journalism. He puts his pedal to the metal each issue with his must-read car reviews. Tweet Tim Barnes-Clay @carwriteups www.carwriteups.co.uk.

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PROS 'N' CONS

- Very Attractive ✓
- Powerful ✓
- Refined ✓
- Expensive ✗

