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2025 BENTLEY CONTINENTAL GT

REDEFINING THE DEFINITIVE GRAND TOURER

2025 MASERATI GRANCABRIO FOLGORE

The First 100% Electric Convertible

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2025 BENTLEY CONTINENTAL GT REDEFINING THE DEFINITIVE GRAND TOURER

Bentley Motors is proud to reveal the fourth generation Continental GT Speed, following in the 21-year tradition of the Continental GT family by redefining the ultimate blend of supercar performance, handcrafted luxury and everyday usability.

A comprehensive exterior and interior redesign with clean modern detailing follow the new design DNA established by the coachbuilt Bentley Bacalar and Batur. Outstanding performance is brought by an all-new Ultra Performance Hybrid powertrain with 782 PS and 1,000 Nm, from a 4.0-litre V8 working in tandem with a 190 PS electric motor. 0-60 mph in 3.1 seconds is the result, with the benefit of 50 miles (81 km) of usable electric-only range (on the EU drive cycle) and a total range of 534 miles (859 km) – creating an everyday supercar.

The performance of the powertrain is matched by a new chassis system, with new two-chamber air springs paired with new dual-valve dampers, along with Bentley Dynamic Ride (48V active anti-roll control), eLSD and torque vectoring. Incredible body control and the best Continental GT ride comfort to date are the results, supported by a 49:51, rear-biased weight distribution for the first time in the car's history.

Under the skin, a suite of modern innovative technology delivers class-leading capability so that every journey is a seamless experience in terms of driver assistance, infotainment systems and connected car services.

The new exterior continues the design revolution for Bentley's future journey, with the biggest revision to the face of the Continental GT in two decades, and the first mainstream Bentley with single headlamps since the 1950s.

World-leading Bentley interior cabin design, materials, quality, and craftsmanship continue with the introduction of further wellness seat technology, new air ionisation, three-dimensional leather textures, new modern quilting, and technical finishes such as new dark chrome.

A completely new 400-volt electrical architecture enables the most advanced suite of powertrain technology to be offered by a luxury automotive brand today, delivering emissions of 29 g/km of CO2 and an electric range of 50 miles / 81 km on the WLTP drive cycle.

For the first time in the history of the Continental GT, the convertible Continental GTC is being launched concurrently with the coupe - providing ultimate flexibility for customers who appreciate both open topped and closed roof motoring.

Both coupe and convertible models will be crafted entirely by hand at Bentley's Dream Factory in Crewe, England. Production and deliveries are due to begin in Q3.

The Ultra Performance Hybrid

For the new Continental GT Speed, a brand-new Ultra Performance Hybrid powertrain has been

developed. The new powertrain combines a new 4.0 litre V8 engine capable of producing 600 PS (584 bhp) with a 190 PS (187 bhp) electric motor. Peak system output is 782 PS (771 bhp) – enough for a 0-60 mph sprint time of just 3.1 seconds and a top speed of 208 mph (335 km/h).

System torque is increased by over 11 per cent compared to the outgoing W12-powered Continental GT Speed, from 900 Nm = to 1000 Nm (738 lb ft). System power has also increased by 19 per cent, from 659 PS to 782 PS. This makes the new Continental GT Speed the most powerful Bentley ever, beyond the levels of the second-generation Supersports and the Batur.

The power is delivered via an eight-speed dual clutch transmission and an electronic limited slip differential (eLSD) to all four wheels, for exceptional power delivery and reliable traction in all conditions. The system uses active torque vectoring front to rear through a centre differential, and precision vectoring across each axle using the brakes.

There are three key powertrain system elements:

1. The new 600 PS, 800 Nm (590 lb ft) V8 engine – with no traditional vacuum system, and 350 bar fuel injection pressure (raised from 200 bar) provides cleaner combustion and improved emissions. With the e-motor negating turbo lag, twin single-scroll turbochargers have been used – which reduces complexity and allows them to run hotter, minimising emissions. Therefore, no cylinder deactivation hardware is required, as the engine can be switched off entirely when using the electric motor.

2. The 190 PS, 450 Nm (332 lb ft) electric motor within the transmission housing delivers torque-fill at low engine speed and does the same during gear shifts for extra smoothness.

3. The 25.9 kWh battery, which is mounted behind the rear axle. This helps achieve a perfect weight distribution and up to 85 per cent of the battery capacity is useable.

The system manages the energy flows dependent upon the mode chosen – with pure EV, electric boost, regenerative braking – and, most importantly for this new GT Speed – a charge mode, where the engine drives the wheels and charges the battery at the same time.

The new class-leading powertrain delivers extreme performance and sets the latest Continental GT apart from other competitors - with more horsepower, more torque and a significant drop in CO2 and fuel consumption figures to around one tenth of equivalent conventional petrol powertrains. In turn, this provides an extraordinary range of driving capability, from extreme performance to silent and effortless electric luxury.

Due to the combination of the V8 engine and electric power, Bentley's engineers have been able to deliver improved power and torque across the full rev range. This includes a vital boost from the electric motor for strong acceleration from low speeds and throughout the mid-range, combined with increased performance from the V8 engine at higher speeds too. A significant amount of development has also been invested in the exhaust note too, emphasising the cross-plane quality – and without the use of artificial, electronic enhancement.

Equally impressive are the electric modes, allowing customers to enjoy silent and seamless motoring. In full electric mode, the electric motor alone can deliver 190 PS and 450 Nm, more than enough to keep up with the traffic in most situations. Full electric mode can be

deployed at speeds of up to 87 mph / 140 km/h, with throttle applications of up to 75 per cent. The battery can be fully replenished in as little as 2¾ hours thanks to significant improvements in charger and battery capacity, with 11 kW peak charging power.

The Performance Active Chassis

The new Continental GT Speed and GTC Speed models both benefit from the new Bentley Performance Active Chassis. This includes Active All Wheel Drive, an electronic limited slip differential, all wheel steering, torque vectoring (front to rear and across the axles), Bentley Dynamic Ride active anti roll system, and a new generation of ESC control software. In addition, the car is fitted with a new dual valve damper system and dual chamber air springs, which enables more sophisticated tuning options. The result is that the new cars can achieve an even more impressive combination of performance, handling, and comfort.

The new twin-valve damping brings a number of benefits. The system allows increased force spread between soft and firm settings – the result is reduced compromise between road surface isolation and body control. The damper control ECU now has complete control over independent compression and rebound damping delivering better body control during compression/rebound directional changes.

Overall dynamic ability, and steering feel, have both been improved by the car's now perfect weight distribution of 49:51, achieved thanks to the intelligent positioning of the hybrid battery. The weight split brings a car that is inherently balanced during dynamic driving, and permits a range of driving styles to be accessed. With the car's advanced ESC system fully engaged, the new Continental GT Speed is completely planted and controls traction to inhibit oversteer. In Dynamic Mode, the car allows some rear axle slip, allowing the driver to control the cornering attitude of the car whilst maintaining a safety net to bring the car back in-line if required. The ESC system can also be completely turned off, at which point the Continental GT Speed's cornering stance can be balanced on-throttle by the driver for the most dynamic Bentley driving experience yet.

2025 MASERATI GRANCABRIO FOLGORE

THE FIRST 100% ELECTRIC CONVERTIBLE ON THE LUXURY SEGMENT MARKET

Highlights

- Maserati GranCabrio Folgore is the first 100% electric convertible on the luxury segment market
- Maserati GranCabrio Folgore is the fastest 100% electric convertible on the market
- Maserati GranCabrio Folgore adopts a 100% electric battery-based powertrain
- The Folgore system is based on 800V technology and has been developed with cutting-edge technical solutions derived from Formula E. It offers superb performance, combined with the comfort and elegance typical of the Trident, made possible by the three powerful 300-kW permanent magnet motors.
- Like its GranTurismo twin, the Maserati Gran Cabrio combines the high performance of a sports car with comfort suitable for long distances
- Maserati GranCabrio provides four real seats with the comfort needed, even for long journeys
- The soft top offers reduced dimensions, providing space for four people's luggage
- The roof can also be operated on the move at speeds of up to 50 km/h and opens in just 14 seconds. The controls on the centre display can also be operated with a single finger, with no need to take your eyes off the road
- The neck warmer makes it possible to travel with the top down, even when the temperature drops; the wind stopper reduces turbulence inside the passenger compartment
- Even out in the open air, GranCabrio guarantees exceptional acoustic and thermal comfort
- Like the GranTurismo's, the technical architecture of the GranCabrio is the result of an innovative project that makes extensive use of lightweight materials such as aluminium and magnesium, together with high-performance steel. This multi-material approach required new manufacturing processes to be created, resulting in best-in-class weight levels.
- A key feature of the GranCabrio is the Atlantis High electrical/electronic architecture, previously seen in the GranTurismo. Based on high-speed canFD messages, the system comes with advanced cyber-security and flash-over-the-air features. The fulcrum is the Vehicle Domain Control Module (VDCM) master controller, with 100% Maserati-designed software that provides 360° control of all the most important car systems, for the best driving experience in all conditions
- The GranCabrio cabin is equipped with Innovative systems, including the Maserati Intelligent Assistant (MIA) multimedia system, the latest infotainment, a Comfort display that brings together the main functions in an integrated touchscreen interface, a Digital Clock and the Heads-up Display (available as an option)
- An all-round sound experience is guaranteed by the iconic signature sound of the Maserati engine, even in the electric version thanks to innovative work by engineers at the Maserati Innovation Lab. The sound experience is completed by the immersive Sonus faber 3D sound system.

Maserati continues to race towards an electric future, without neglecting its history. Introducing the GranCabrio Folgore, the first full-electric convertible in its segment to hit the market. The Gran Cabrio Folgore, with its top speed of 290 km/h, is also the fastest electric convertible on the road.

Following in the footsteps of the GranTurismo, the open-top variant also offers an electric motor, the Folgore version, which maintains all the brand's typical characteristics by combining luxury with performance, driving comfort with sportiness, refined power with a new electrified elegance and modern technology.

With a fabric roof that does not take up too much space when stored in the boot, GranCabrio was created to share the pleasure of open-air travel with four passengers. It is an authentic four-seater that makes it possible to travel with family and friends, enjoying the performance and luxury of the car with its fine materials, immersed in a drive that imposes no limits.

GranCabrio lets you share the thrill of a journey in a unique car, a symbol of Italian elegance, combined with the technology that a current Maserati can offer in all its forms.

Even with the top down, GranCabrio guarantees exceptional thermal and acoustic comfort.

An illustrious history of successes

A Maserati convertible immediately puts you in touch with the elegance of the car, not concealed under the roof and behind the windows. An open-top Maserati looks even more elegant and offers full enjoyment of the engine's roar. These cars place the driver in contact with the road and the landscape that surrounds them; they provide the full experience by combining the emotions of driving with those of the world through which we are all travelling.

The first open-top Maseratis date back to the company's origins, when two cars born to race – the 1931 4CS and the 1932 8CM – were adapted for road use. This inaugurated a history of great success, of the Maserati convertibles, long known in the House of the Trident's language as "spyders", with a 'y'. The story began in the 1930s, then continued with the rare A6/G 2000 Spyders bodied by Frua, successors of the first Maserati road car launched by the Maserati brothers before they left the company. Only small numbers were produced at this point, as collector's items.

In the late 1940s, Maserati started visiting international motor shows to unveil its cars, still designed and given form by the great Italian coachbuilders of the time. The story of the Maserati convertible was truly starting to take shape. In 1957, when Juan Manuel Fangio brought the Formula 1 World Championship to the Trident with the legendary 250F, the 3500 GT was presented in Geneva as the first mass-produced road-going sports car. This was also the first Maserati to cross the Atlantic to the US.

Two years later, at the 1959 Geneva Motor Show, the 3500 GT Convertibile was launched, designed by

Giovanni Michelotti and built by Vignale around a 3.5-litre engine that could deliver 235 horsepower. A car destined to leave a mark for its style, so much so that the Italian press called it "a work of art in motion". Journalists at the UK's Autocar magazine wrote: "the impeccable deployment of horsepower and brilliant road holding immediately convinced us". It had a steel body, but the doors, bonnet and tailgate were made of light alloy with a slightly angular and geometric grille.

The 1960s marked a historic turning point: Maserati abandoned the acronyms it used for its cars and began to name them after winds. The first of these was the Mistral, for the strong northerly wind that blows over the Mediterranean. Designed by the Frua coachbuilder, the Mistral was unveiled in 1964 in a spyder version, an elegant reinterpretation of the fastback coupé, with an enormous amount of space for luggage. Fitted with a powerful 3.5 or 4.0-litre six-cylinder engine, it offered exhilarating performance with the wind in your hair.

Legend has it that when his people asked him why he insisted on keeping a Maserati Ghibli in his garage, Henry Ford II replied: "It's staying there until you produce just as beautiful a Ford". A car of such great beauty had to have a spyder version, created by the prodigious hand of Giorgetto Giugiaro. One of the most expensive cars of its time, it was equipped with a 4.7-litre V8 engine, or more rarely with a 335-hp 4.9-litre in the Spyder SS version.

In the 1980s, Maserati introduced the turbocharged engine with the 180-hp twin-turbo V6, with a top speed of over 215 km/h. The Biturbo Spyder was developed by Zagato, which transformed it into a two-seater (with two fold-down seats in the rear) by reducing its original wheelbase by 2400 mm. The Biturbo Spyder was launched in 1984 and continued to evolve until 1994, selling more than 3000 cars in a decade.

Under the protective wing of Ferrari at the turn of the millennium, Maserati restarted its production of convertible cars with the Maserati Spyder, a basic name to reconnect to the history of the Mistral and Ghibli, the basis for many important pages written by fans of the genre. The Maserati Spyder – also known as the 4200 GT Spyder – arrived in 2001 and was presented as a sleek and modern car, with a luxurious interior and a powerful 4244-cc V8 engine that could deliver 390 hp and a top speed of 283 km/h. A luxurious car with a great rush of technology, such as the "Cambiocorsa" steering wheel gearbox inspired by Formula 1.

We then come to the 21st century, by which point Maserati still believed in open-top models, launching the GranCabrio in 2009. Designed by Pininfarina, it embodied the essence of Italian style and elegance by offering a powerful V8 engine and cutting-edge technology, a new symbol of Maserati's commitment to combining driving pleasure with uncompromising performance.

And here we are with the present-day GranCabrio, the direct successor to the GranTurismo, a luxury car that then as now continues to turn heads and ruffle hair in the wind. In the Folgore version, it is the first full-electric open-top car in its class. Another step towards the future.

Pillars of GranCabrio

The characteristics of GranCabrio can be summed up in four basic concepts that condense the enormous potential of Maserati's latest product:

- Open-top elegance. Passion for detail, luxurious materials and extraordinary quality to create an unrivalled outdoor experience in a convertible, as the epitome of the Maserati spirit
- Performance. Driving pleasure, a powerful and muscular car on the track as well as on the road, ideal for travelling long distances in company
- Cutting-edge technology. GranCabrio incorporates state-of-the-art technology, from the infotainment system to driver aids, to improve performance, safety and entertainment
- Iconic design. A unique style, designed alongside the coupé version, to interpret the transition from a hard roof to a retractable top in the best possible way

Fabric roof

Maserati GranCabrio stands out for its unparalleled "open-air experience", to enjoy the road as you travel down it. The canvas roof, available in five colours – Black, Blue Marine, Titan Grey, Greige, Granata – offers an impeccable driving experience when closed in a coupé form, whereas the excellent aerodynamics and great comfort are maintained even when driving it as a convertible.

The canvas soft top can be operated when driving at speeds of up to 50 km/h (31 mph). It opens in 14 seconds and closes in 16 seconds. The roof can be opened or closed at any time via a touch button on the comfort display.

To provide enough space for the folded top in the boot, a cargo space is available, which can also be put away (horizontally in the boot) if you decide to travel with the roof closed, to increase the boot capacity.

The Cabrio menu includes the option to open and close the soft top, either by gesture control or by pressing and holding the button. By swiping and holding a finger to the left, the user can close the soft top, or can swipe and hold right to open it. The movement can be stopped/resumed at any time by lifting the finger from the screen as the roof closes or opens, giving the user complete control of the mechanism.

Neck warmer and wind stopper

Comfort in the passenger compartment, even with the top down, is ensured by the neck warmer, which envelops the driver and passenger by blowing warm air directly from the newly designed seats. As standard on all models, it can be activated via a dedicated button on the comfort display, which can also be used to adjust the intensity of the air to any of the three speeds available.

One of the optional extras is a wind stopper that can be folded up in the boot. When fitted behind the front seats, it prevents the formation of turbulence in the passenger compartment when the top is down.

Naturally, this option is only available when two people are travelling, to optimise the aerodynamics even with the top down.

The wind stopper comes with a protective bag, for easy storage in the boot.

Design

Iconic design and open-top elegance

The new GranCabrio was created in parallel with the GranTurismo and follows the understatement and elegance of its lines, reaffirming the concept expressed by the coupé version with the optimal balance between aesthetic approach and unostentatious functionality. Just like in the GranTurismo, a union that has created a natural beauty and a design unaffected by fads, always remain timeless.

With undeniably unique and immediately recognisable lines, Maserati has created a sculpted technology: a pure shape suitable to cover best-in-class mechanics, emphasising the purity of its forms and its refined design cues.

The classic proportions of the brand's cars have been maintained, with the long bonnet and the central body intersected by the four fenders; proportions even further highlighted in such a sporty model, just like the GranTurismo. The fabric roof maintains the clean line when closed and highlights the luxury of the passenger compartment when open, maintaining the cleanliness of the lines.

Again for the GranCabrio, a decision was made to maintain continuity with the design of the previous generation, widely appreciated among customers. The simultaneously elegant and decisive profile gives the surfaces a pleasantly dynamic appearance, the lines are sinuous, the volumes are gentle, with specific characterisation in the wheel arches to highlight the transition between the refinement of the design and the technical aspects of the car.

Exterior

Unique front and eye-catching rear light clusters

As with all new Maserati models, starting with the MC20 halo car, the front of the GranCabrio also features vertical lights, bringing back what has become a new lighting signature for the brand. This stylistic decision gives the car a fresh, sporty look.

Conversely, the front grille includes the iconic 3D Trident logo.

The rear features the taillights launched in the GranTurismo, a mix between the classic boomerang form from many Maserati models in the past and a harpoon. Illuminated by Full LED technology, this shape also gives the GranCabrio an unmistakable, very assertive signature at the rear. GranCabrio offers the driver and their passengers an exclusive welcome, featuring an interior and exterior lighting strategy, triggered based on how far the key is away. The system uses interior and exterior lights to provide a greater sense of welcome and security when the user gets into the vehicle in the dark. The lights turn on as you approach and move away.

The feature also supports locking and unlocking the doors and tailgate, based on how close the key fob is to the vehicle. Customers can choose to unlock the doors when approaching the vehicle (Approach Unlock) and lock the doors when they move away from the vehicle (Walkaway Lock)*

2025 AUDI A6 e-tron SETS STANDARDS IN DESIGN AND RANGE

The exterior: elegant and progressive

The body's clean design focuses on dynamism, progressiveness, and elegance. The front is simultaneously harmonious and expressive. The slim design of the daytime running lights and the wide grille make the A6 e-tron12 appear flat and wide on the road.

A black mask surrounds the closed and inverted single frame, reflecting the distinct design language of the e-tron models. The main headlights and other functional elements, such as the Advanced Driver Assistance System (ADAS) sensors and the air intakes, are integrated into the dark mask, making them almost invisible.

The dynamic roofline of the A6 e-tron12 rests on a powerful foundation with a low ride height. The quattro blisters are those contours that emphasize the quattro drive with their sculptural and muscular shape. They are a core element of the Audi design DNA. As the heart of the car, the battery is emphasized by a black insert in the sill area. The insert gives the car a flat, slim, and dynamic appearance from the side. It extends to the rear and integrates the reflectors, giving the A6 e-tron12 a visually stretched appearance. The Avant is also characterized by a very flat roofline, with the D-pillar sloping steeply forward. An aluminum-look trim piece from the A-pillar to the roof spoiler is a new, distinctive feature of the A6 Avant e-tron2 and creates a high recognizability.

The rear conveys a mixture of sporty elegance and full power. The clean architecture, combined with the continuous and three-dimensional light strip, gives the new A6 e-tron12 clarity and aplomb. A striking spoiler lip finishes off the rear of the Sportback, and the eye-catching rear diffuser further emphasizes the sporty and dynamic look of the rear.

Best in class: outstanding aerodynamics

Superior aerodynamics is a core component of the long history of successes for Audi. The aerodynamic heroes of the past, such as the Audi 100 (C3) and the Audi 80 (B3), also belong to the mid-size segment.

The legendary cw value of the third-generation Audi 100 meant it was called the "aerodynamics world champion of all classes". With a cw -value of 0.30, Audi outclassed its competitors in 1982 – and continued to do so for many years. Today, the Audi A6 e-tron12 is writing a new chapter in this success story.

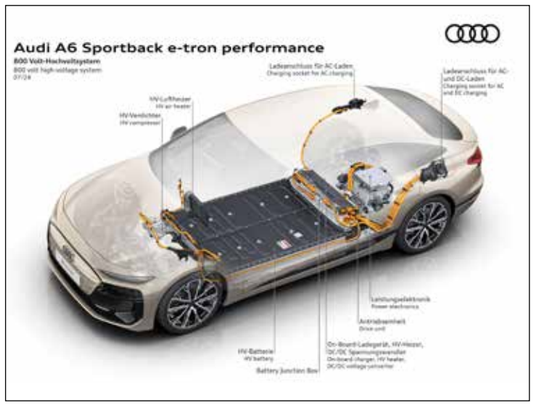
Innovative lighting technology

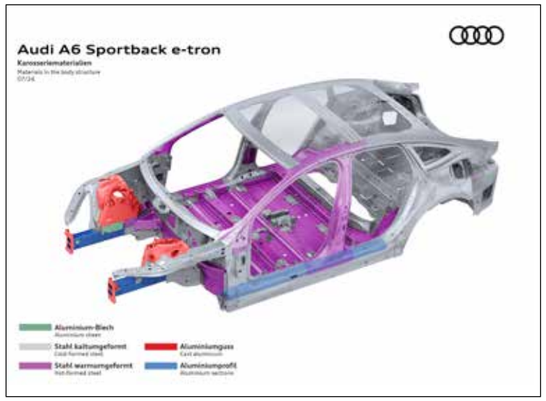
With the new Audi A6 e-tron12, Audi is underlining its leading role in lighting design and technology - an essential part of the Audi DNA. The headlights and rear lights have a three-dimensional design and offer digital light signatures, bringing the physical and digital worlds together. At the front, the Audi A6 e-tron family offers digital daytime running lights with LED technology as an option as well as second-generation digital OLED rear lights.

With around 45 segments per digital OLED panel, the A6 e-tron12 enables car-to-x communication and increases road safety. Light appears more vivid and intelligent on the new Audi A6 e-tron12 thanks to the perfect symbiosis between the lighting design and the new technology. Turning to the second-generation digital OLED rear lights, ten OLED panels with 450 segments use a specially developed algorithm to generate a new image several times per second. The active digital light signature also points the way to the future of Audi lighting technology. A software module in one of the five domain computers of the Audi A6 e-tron12 makes this light signature possible. At the front, the active digital light signature is created by the algorithm's interaction with twelve dimmable segments. At the rear, all digital OLED segments are used for this purpose. The individual light segments interact in such a way that the overall luminous intensity of the light signature does not vary.

Interior and MMI panoramic display

The interior of the Audi A6 e-tron12 is consistently geared towards the users' needs. The three-dimensional and high-contrast design deliberately places elements in the foreground or background, creating a spatial architecture tailored to the occupants in terms of design and





ergonomics. The MMI panoramic display, with its curved design and OLED technology, consists of the 11.9-inch Audi virtual cockpit and the 14.5-inch MMI touch display and, together with the 10.9-inch MMI front passenger display, forms a digital stage with visually clear design.

A smart panoramic glass roof with switchable transparency

An optional innovative panoramic glass roof further enhances the vehicles. In contrast to previous types, the panoramic roof's smart glass minimizes direct sunlight and becomes opaque at the touch of a button. This works with PDLC technology (polymer-dispersed liquid crystal), which can switch from transparent to opaque. Electrically switchable glass components contain two PDLC film elements, between which the liquid crystals giving them their name float. If no voltage is applied, the crystals form an opaque layer, making the glass roof non-transparent. If voltage is applied, the crystals align so the roof becomes transparent. It can be individually controlled like a "digital curtain" via a button in the roof module; customers can choose from four presets.

Infotainment - integrating the digital world of customers

The infotainment system uses Android Automotive OS as its operating system. The A6 e-tron12 updates its content via over-the-air updates. Therefore, the latest Audi connect services and the enhanced e-tron route planner, which comes as standard, are always up to date. Apps such as YouTube are available via the Audi Application Store for third-party apps, which is integrated directly into the MMI and does not require a smartphone to use.

The store gives customers access to a wide range of apps. At the A6 e-tron12 launch, various applications will be available from categories including: Music, Video, Gaming, Navigation, Parking and Charging, Productivity, Weather, and News Services. The store is constantly expanding, and the app portfolio is market-specific.

In addition to the improved and more intuitive touch operation, the new display and operating concept addresses global trends toward interaction. For example, voice control has been significantly expanded and now plays a key role. The vehicle's self-learning voice assistant, the Audi assistant, can control numerous vehicle functions.

The Audi assistant has access to additional online content, such as weather and general knowledge. Via a connection to ChatGPT (provided via Microsoft Azure OpenAI Servic

SHAPING TOMORROW: THE MIDDLE EAST AND UAE'S ROLE IN SHOWCASING AUDI'S AUTOMOTIVE INNOVATIONS

In its third year, the partnership between Audi Middle East and the Museum of the Future continues to thrive, marked by the latest introduction of the final futuristic sphere concept model to the region for the first time. This collaboration not only highlights Audi's commitment to innovation and advanced technology but also aligns with the UAE's aspirations for future mobility.

Driving Change: UAE and Middle East at the Forefront of Automotive Innovation

The Middle East, particularly the UAE, is rapidly emerging as a hub for the future of the automotive industry. The region's strategic location, robust infrastructure, and forward-thinking policies create an ideal environment for automotive innovation. The UAE's commitment to sustainability and smart mobility aligns seamlessly with Audi's vision for the future, making it a prime market for the brand's cutting-edge electric vehicles.

Middle East: The Exclusive Host of All Sphere Cars

With the arrival of the grandsphere, Audi has now showcased all four of its sphere concept cars— activesphere, urbansphere, skysphere and grandsphere—in the Middle East, making it the only region in the world to host the complete sphere series. This unique distinction underscores Audi's commitment to meeting the unique demands of Middle Eastern consumers and highlights the strategic importance of the region for the brand. The presence of these concept cars in the region highlights Audi's dedication to offering its latest innovations and forward-thinking designs to Middle Eastern consumers, who are known for their appreciation of luxury, technology, and sustainability.

The grandsphere: A Testament to Innovation and Sustainability

The arrival of the grandsphere concept car stands as a testament to the importance of the Middle East market. With its luxurious design, advanced autonomous features, and sustainable electric mobility, the grandsphere aligns perfectly with the region's vision for the future. The vehicle's spacious, first-class lounge interior, combined with its Level 4 automated driving capabilities, offers viewers and visitors a snippet of what the automotive industry is gearing towards—an unparalleled quest for exclusivity and cutting-edge innovation. This luxury electric saloon epitomises the future of mobility, marking a significant milestone in Audi's journey towards innovation, sustainability, and advanced automotive technology.

The grandsphere, with its blend of luxury, advanced technology, and sustainable design, serves as a showcase of Audi's future mobility solutions. This concept car represents a significant step towards Audi's goal of creating an integrated, sustainable driving experience that exceeds expectations.

A Strategic Partnership Driving Innovation

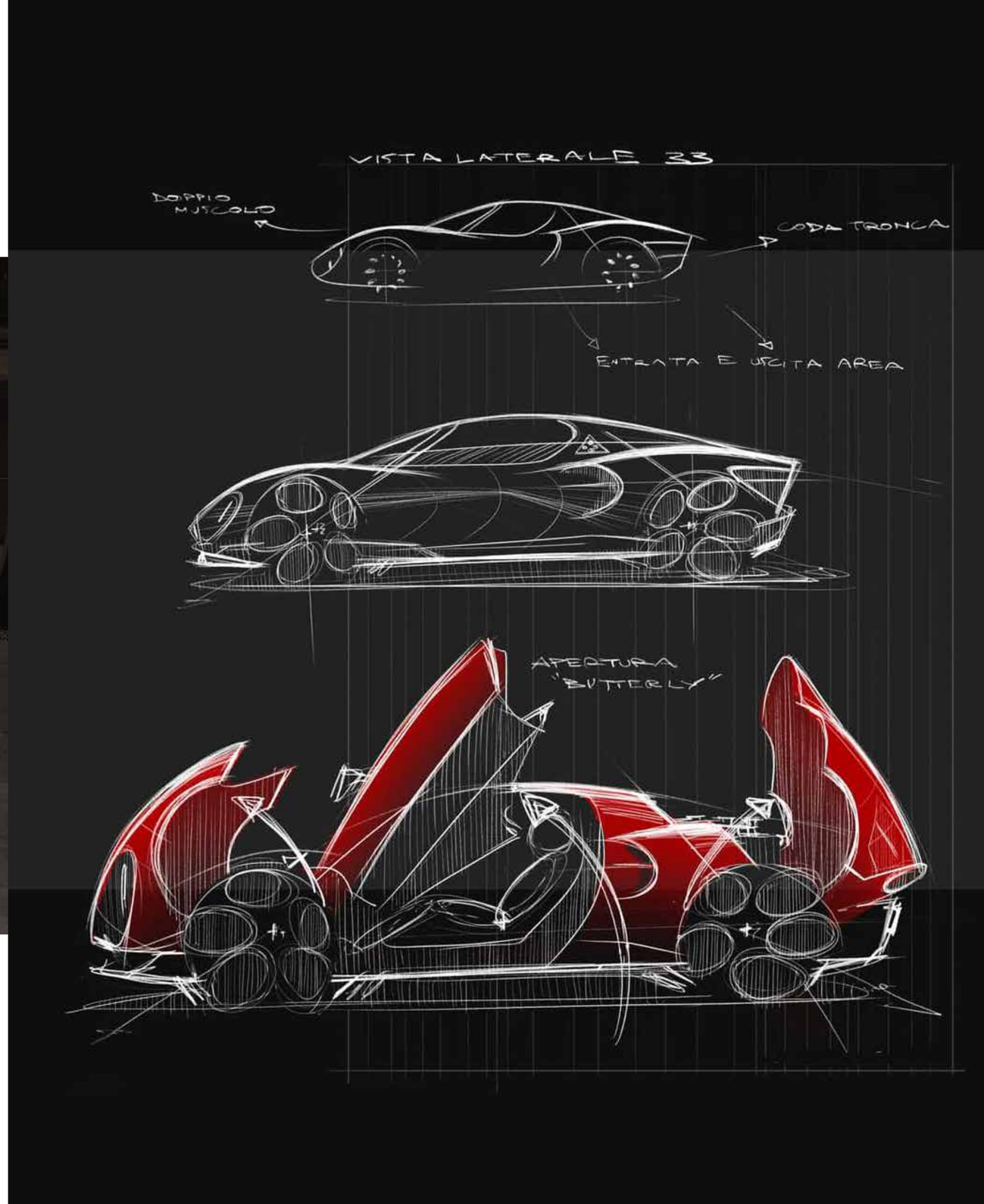
In conclusion, the Middle East's significance to Audi extends beyond mere market potential; it embodies a strategic partnership that drives innovation and sets new standards in the automotive industry. The arrival of the grandsphere concept car in the region underscores Audi's dedication to pioneering future mobility solutions and highlights the brand's dedication to automotive excellence, as the Middle East remains at the forefront, playing a pivotal role in the brand's journey towards a sustainable and technologically advanced future.

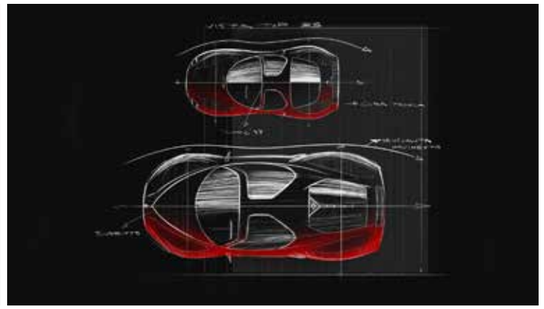
ALFA ROMEO 33 STRADALE THIS IS ITS ‘ROAR.’

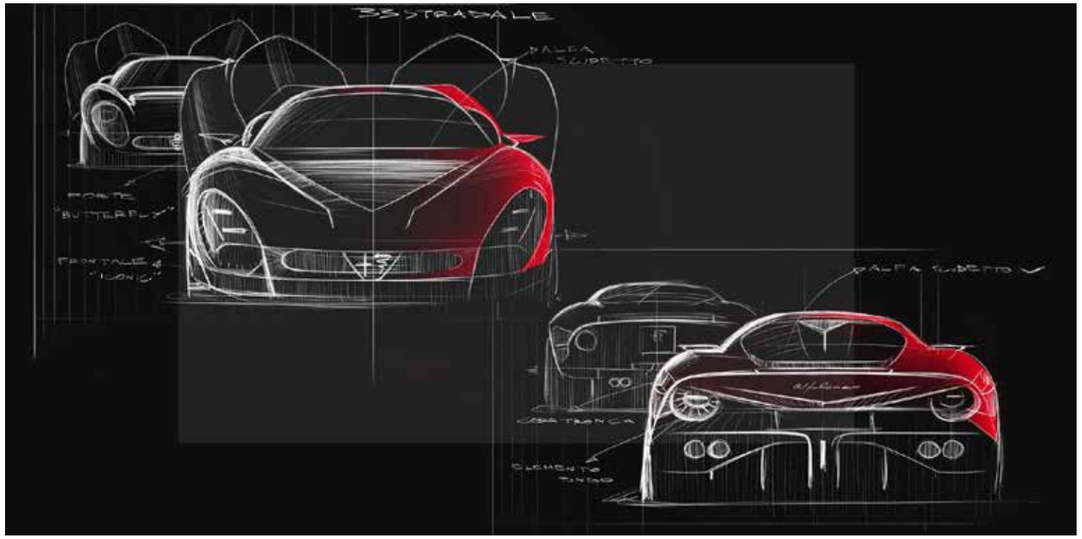
- **Alfa Romeo unveils to the brand’s fans the ‘roar’ of the new 33 Stradale.**
- **Dynamic development led by the Alfa Romeo engineering team is going ahead as planned; hence the opportunity to capture its recognizably Alfa Romeo ‘roar.’**
- **A singular parallel with the elegant, harmonic and sophisticated melodies of classical music. A recognizably Alfa Romeo sound, a soundtrack of power and precision, the result of mechanical mastery and Italian passion.**
- **In the meantime, the style prototype presented almost a year ago at the Alfa Romeo Museum in Arese continues its international tour by taking part in the biggest automotive events around the world.**

To date, those who have had the opportunity to see the style prototype of the new 33 Stradale up close and personal have been able to appreciate – static only so far – the unique design that scrupulously and respectfully revisits the stylistic features of the 1967 33 Stradale. Enthusiasts can now enjoy the typical Alfa Romeo roar of the version fitted with the twin-turbo V6 engine that delivers over 620 hp. Almost a year after its presentation at the Arese Museum, the Alfa Romeo engineering team has focused on the dynamic development of the Fuoriserie: limited to just 33 units, it has the dual ambition of offering excellent performance on the track, without compromising on comfort and ease of use, including for everyday driving.

The Alfa Romeo 33 Stradale, first introduced in 1967, is an iconic blend of engineering excellence and Italian artistry. This mid-engine sports car is often celebrated for its breathtaking design, penned by Franco Scaglione, and its impressive performance capabilities. The Stradale’s flowing curves and aerodynamic lines not only give it an unmistakable silhouette but also highlight its purpose as a high-performance machine.







Under the hood, the 33 Stradale is powered by a 2.0-liter V8 engine, derived from Alfa Romeo's Tipo 33 race car, producing approximately 230 horsepower. This engine is paired with a six-speed manual transmission, enabling the car to sprint from 0 to 60 mph in just under six seconds, which was extraordinary for its time. The car's chassis and suspension were crafted with lightweight materials, ensuring agile handling and a thrilling driving experience.

One of the most captivating features of the 33 Stradale is its engine's roar. The high-revving V8 produces a distinctive sound that is both raw and melodic, resonating with a primal energy that captures the essence of Alfa Romeo's racing pedigree. This auditory experience, combined with the car's visual allure and performance, makes the Alfa Romeo 33 Stradale a true masterpiece of automotive history.

The Alfa Romeo 33 Stradale is a rare gem in the automotive world, with only 18 units ever produced, making it a highly sought-after collector's item. Its rarity and historical significance contribute to its legendary status among car enthusiasts and collectors alike. Each Stradale was handcrafted, resulting in subtle variations that make every car unique.

The interior of the 33 Stradale reflects its racing heritage, with minimalistic design elements focused on the driver's experience. The seats are positioned low to the ground, enhancing the connection between the driver and the road. The cockpit features a simple dashboard with essential gauges, emphasizing functionality over luxury.

Driving the 33 Stradale is an exhilarating experience. The car's lightweight construction, combined with its powerful engine, allows for remarkable speed and agility. The steering is precise, and the suspension is finely tuned, providing exceptional handling on both the track and the road. The Stradale's ability to deliver such a visceral driving experience while maintaining its aesthetic beauty is a testament to Alfa Romeo's dedication to creating cars that are not only fast but also works of art. The 33 Stradale remains an enduring symbol of the brand's commitment to excellence and innovation.

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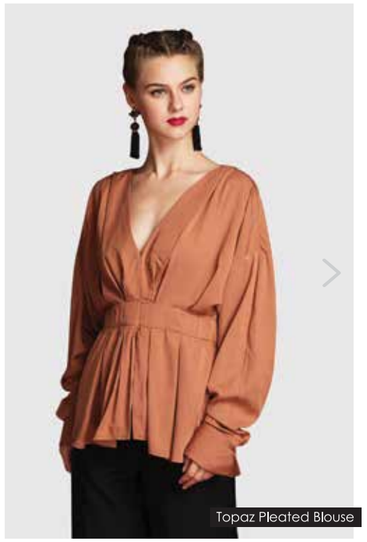
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2025 MCLAREN ARTURA SPIDER NEXT-GENERATION SUPERCAR EXHILARATION

- New Artura Spider revealed as McLaren's first-ever High-Performance Hybrid convertible; adds thrilling new dimension to Artura and McLaren supercar range
- New Spider has significant upgrades over original Artura, including more power, more performance and even greater driver engagement
- New Artura coupe benefits from the same improvements, further enhancing its next-generation supercar performance
- New Spider and new coupe designated 2025 model year; both available to order now, for delivery from mid-2024 (depending on region)
- Advanced 3.0-litre V6 and E-motor powertrain now produces a combined 700PS (690bhp)* – with petrol engine output in excess of 200PS/litre
- Artura Spider is the lightest convertible supercar in its class, bettering rivals by as much as 83kg
- Artura Spider's outstanding power-to-weight ratio of 480PS/tonne at lightest dry weight of 1,457kg enables thrilling levels of performance
- Maximum powertrain torque 720Nm (531lb ft); E-motor delivers transient torque of up to 225Nm, ensuring instant throttle response
- Artura Spider's ferocious acceleration almost indistinguishable from coupe: 0-100km/h (0-62mph) in 3.0 seconds; 0-200km/h (124mph) in 8.4 seconds; 0-300km/h in 21.6 seconds; maximum speed of 330km/h (205mph)
- Revised transmission calibration and new pre-fill feature deliver 25% faster gearshifts
- New powertrain mount design enhances dynamic agility and precision
- Manual gear-shifting and McLaren dynamic modes settings all accessible without taking hands off the steering wheel
- Response rates of Proactive Damping Control suspension system increased by up to 90%, improving reaction to driver input and changes in road surface
- Greater braking power and consistency at high speeds, with new brake cooling ducts improving thermal management
- Crescendo of sound from redesigned exhaust envelops driver, especially with roof or rear window lowered
- Artura Spider's retractable one-piece hard-top operates electrically in just 11 seconds, at speeds of up to 50km/h (31mph); electrochromic roof panel optionally available
- Aerothermal efficiency optimised on Artura Spider with four separate ducting systems to increase engine cooling airflow and heat extraction while reducing occupant buffeting
- Artura Spider is the most fuel-efficient McLaren convertible ever (108g/km CO2/ 4.8l/100km/58.9mpg in combined EU WLTP) with increased EV range of 33km/21miles
- HD touchscreen infotainment system facilitates configuration of advanced driver assistance systems (ADAS); smartphone mirroring to support Apple CarPlay® is standard and wireless charging for enabled mobile devices available as an option
- Blindspot Monitoring and Cross-Traffic Detection newly available; Road Sign Recognition and Lane Departure Warning now fitted as standard
- New exterior paint colours; new 'Stealth' black badging (silver optional)
- 5-year vehicle warranty; 6-year battery warranty; 10-year body perforation corrosion warranty; 3-year service plan
- 20PS power upgrade to a combined 700PS available for earlier Artura coupes** free-of-charge

McLaren reveals the new Artura Spider, its first-ever convertible with a high-performance hybrid powertrain and the second Artura model. The new Spider is introduced with significant upgrades to power, performance and driver engagement, which combine with the sensory pleasures of open-top driving to add a remarkable new dimension to the Artura.

Further elevating the Artura's next-generation supercar performance, the enhancements engineered for the Spider have also been incorporated into the Artura coupe, with a new model introduced simultaneously. Both new Spider and new coupe deliver the highest levels of dynamic performance – up to and including outstanding circuit ability – as well as meeting the requirements of regular driving and offering the near-silent electric-drive so beneficial in urban environments.

The new Artura Spider was designed and developed to ambitious targets across the board, with particular focus on driver engagement, performance, agility, refinement, efficiency and quality. The additional attraction of a retractable hard-top that operates electrically in just 11 seconds to provide a full convertible experience, ensures intoxicating supercar exhilaration.

The new Artura Spider and new Artura coupe – which are both designated 2025 model year ('MY25') – are available to order now, with first deliveries from mid-year depending on region.

"The new Artura is absolutely the complete next-generation supercar, whichever model you choose. We have upgraded the powertrain and the chassis systems to deliver more power, more dynamic performance and even higher levels of connection with the driver – without any compromise in everyday driving. And now alongside the new Artura coupe we have the Artura Spider, a new convertible that has all of these improvements and brings another dimension of open-air McLaren supercar exhilaration to our range."

Michael Leiters, CEO, McLaren Automotive

McLaren's relentless focus on its super-lightweight engineering philosophy is key to delivering the advantages that enable delivery of the exceptional dynamic characteristics and performance – with driver engagement to match – demanded of any its cars.

The new Artura Spider has a dry lightest weight of just 1,457kg, with kerbweight (DIN) of only 1,560kg - just 62kg more than the Artura coupe. These figures position the new Spider as easily the lightest among convertible competition, enjoying an advantage of up to 83kg.

More importantly, in combination with the 700PS of the high-performance hybrid powertrain, this gives a power-to-weight ratio of 480PS/tonne at lightest dry weight, which perfectly positions the Artura Spider to optimise every aspect of supercar high-performance, including exploiting its mid-mounted engine, rear-wheel drive chassis layout to the full.

The McLaren Carbon Lightweight Architecture (MCLA) at the heart of the Artura provides a secure platform with no loss of rigidity when the fixed roof is removed – the majority of the 62kg difference between Spider and coupe is accounted for by the electrically-operated Retractable Hard Top (RHT) mechanism.

Beyond the core carbon fibre monocoque, MCLA incorporates aluminium impact structures and a rear structure that houses the hybrid powertrain. An innovative ethernet electrical architecture is also part of MCLA, reducing cabling by 25% and with that proportional weight. The electrical architecture was optimised in the development process for the new Spider to increase data capacity and transfer speeds.

McLaren's high-performance hybrid powertrain has been recalibrated, with an additional 20PS from the V6 combustion engine* on the MY25 Artura, increasing overall power to 700PS. The additional power is focused from 4,000rpm to the redline at 8,500rpm, providing a marked 'crescendo' in performance. Peak torque value remains at a muscular 720Nm, its delivery optimised by minor changes to electronic mapping. This engine recalibration will also be made available free-of-charge to existing Artura owners** via their McLaren Retailer.

The 3.0-litre M630 dry-sump aluminium petrol engine, which now achieves in excess of 200PS per litre, is extremely compact and lightweight – at just 160kg it weighs 50kg less than a McLaren V8 and is significantly shorter, enhancing packaging efficiency. The dimensions are made possible by a 120-degree V angle design that also aids a low centre of gravity. The engine design reduces pressure losses through the exhaust system as well as allowing for a stiffer crankshaft and in turn a rev limit of 8,500rpm. The free-revving nature of the V6 engine is supported by the twin-turbochargers being located within the 'hot vee', positioning that enables them to spin more rapidly, improving throttle response.

The soundtrack of the engine has also been enhanced, with a revised valved exhaust system incorporating a tuned resonator and upward conical shape to the tailpipes to further refine the engine note at the middle and higher points of the rev range. This provides a 'cleaner' sound that envelops the occupants. An optional sports exhaust system is available, offering an enhanced, clearer tone overall and even greater driver engagement through an exhaust symposer that channels authentic sound waves from the tailpipe into the cabin.

The response and power of the Artura's V6 is complemented by an extremely compact axial flux E-motor. Located within the transmission bell housing, it generates 95PS and 225Nm and boasts a power density per kilogramme 33% greater than the system used in the iconic McLaren P1™ hypercar.

The E-motor is powered by a battery pack comprising five lithium-ion modules, offering a usable energy capacity of 7.4kWh and an increased EV range of 33km (21miles). The battery is refrigerant cooled using cooling rails, and the assembly – including a power distribution unit which transfers battery power from the rear of the vehicle to the ancillaries in the front – is mounted on a structural carbon fibre floor. This assembly is then bolted onto the rear base of the monocoque, optimising stiffness, weight distribution and crash protection.

Overall, the Artura's compact hybrid componentry – including the 88kg battery pack and 15.4kg E-motor - adds just 130kg to overall weight, an achievement that is instrumental in the new Spider achieving its best-in-class weight figures.

The instant torque delivery provided by the E-motor and the 605PS of the twin-turbocharged V6 engine give the Artura razor-sharp throttle response and acceleration across the board, whether in-gear or through the gears. The Artura Spider's official figures of 0-100km/h (0-62mph) in 3.0 seconds, 0-200km/h (0-124mph) in 8.4 seconds and 0-300km/h (0-186mph) in 21.6 seconds highlight the levels of supercar performance available, all the way up to a maximum speed limited to 330km/h (205mph).

A Launch Control system for optimised performance on track is standard, as is a new 'Spinning Wheel Pull-Away' feature. Activated by disengaging Electronic Stability Control by pressing the ESC button on the driver binnacle, this allows dramatic wheelspin when accelerating from standstill with a large throttle load.

New powertrain mounts developed for the MY25 Artura bring clear benefits to dynamic characteristics. The new mounts are tuned to improve control of the powertrain within the chassis. This limits powertrain movement, especially when under load and in turn improves stability, steering feel and overall vehicle agility, delivering a more precise – and more involving – drive.

In addition to the dynamic benefits provided by new engine mounts, the increase in stiffness means the driver is more aware of the powertrain itself as being integral to the overall engagement they experience, adding greater theatre and emotion throughout.

The Artura's rear suspension pairs a top upper wishbone with two lower links and a tie rod in front of the wheel centre, to maximise vehicle stability and precision and reduces understeer out of a corner while accelerating. The rear suspension concept combines with a bespoke version of McLaren's Proactive Damping Control system – supplied by Official Intelligent Suspension Partner, Monroe – that further supports exceptional ride and handling characteristics.
Ride and handling is revised for the MY25 Artura with revised damper valving offering greater responsiveness. Performance of the Domain Control Units (DCU) in the ethernet architecture has also been enhanced, supporting damping and handling response rates and increasing them by up to 90%, which improves reaction to driver input and changes in the road surface.

There are three dynamic handling modes, each activating increased levels of body control through damper adjustment. 'Comfort' is the default mode, with Sport and Track offering more supportive settings. The required mode is selected using one of the two rocker controls on the top of the instrument binnacle.

The degree of Electronic Stability Control (ESC) intervention can also be adjusted, to suit driver preference and weather and road conditions. Operated by a button in the handling mode control, the selectable settings are fully on; ESC DYN, which allows more freedom and also gives the option to activate Variable Drift Control; or OFF, which removes electronic intervention.

Dynamic precision is additionally enhanced by Pirelli CyberTMTyre technology. Comprising hardware and software integrated with the Artura's electronic systems and featuring an electronic sensor inside each tyre, Pirelli CyberTMTyre generates real-time data that allows drivers to adjust tyre pressure limits, fully exploiting the potential of the fitted tyres. Pirelli's Noise Cancelling System (PNCS), which uses a sound absorbing device on the inside of the tyre wall to reduce vibration and noise, also features.

The P ZERO™ tyre fitted as standard features an asymmetric tread pattern that improves braking and enhances handling and control across a wide range of road conditions, with particular focus on wet weather performance. The optional P ZERO™ CORSA tyre is designed for use on both road and track and features racing-type compounds and unique tread patterns, achieving higher grip levels as well as improved braking and traction. A P ZERO™ WINTER tyre is also available.

Braking performance is also exceptional. The MY25 Artura utilises carbon ceramic discs, enhanced lightweight aluminium calipers and new brake cooling ducts. The braking system works in combination with rear-axle kinematics and revised engine and vehicle damping response rates to deliver even better high-speed braking power and stability, also extending disc and pad life in track driving conditions. With revised ABS calibration, braking distances for the Spider and new coupe are 31m to standstill from 100kmh (62mph) and an improved 124m from 200km/h (124mph).

The advanced eight-speed transmission designed specifically for the Artura's high-performance hybrid powertrain integrates the E-motor yet is still very compact; despite having an extra gear over the seven-speed transmission on McLaren's V8-powered vehicles, the length of the gear cluster has been reduced by 40mm, helped by use of a nested clutch rather than a parallel clutch.

Gearbox calibration has been revised for the MY25 Artura. The eight-gear close-ratio gearbox now has a new pre-fill feature that provides even faster gearchanges, with shift speeds increased by 25%. This is made possible by pressurising the hydraulic fluid in the gearbox to the threshold required to enact a shift (the 'kiss point'), so that when the driver selects a gear (or an automatic shift is requested), shift time is minimised.

Power is transmitted to the rear wheels via a lightweight and compact electronically controlled differential (E-diff). Located within the transmission, the E-diff delivers variable differential preload to optimise stability and agility.

The Artura has four powertrain drive modes: Comfort, Sport and Track, plus the electric only, emissions-free E-mode. Comfort mode combines electric and hybrid drive for extended stop and start driving with the combustion engine shut off at low speeds and redeployed when speeds or acceleration inputs demand. Sport and Track modes use the electric motor in an increasingly aggressive manner for low-end response and acceleration ('torque infill') and incorporate sharper gearshift strategies. Track mode delivers the highest high-voltage battery recharge rate. E-mode – which is the default 'start' mode – has been refined to provide greater emissions-free driving range.

The process of switching from Electric to Comfort, Sport or Track drive modes has been improved on MY25 Arturas. The engine conditioning process that reduces vehicle emissions by warming the catalytic converter before engaging drive to the combustion engine, has been recalibrated for driver convenience and is now up to 90% faster *** when first selected on startup.

The visual design and architecture of the new Spider make it immediately recognisable as an Artura, despite the integration of the Retractable Hard Top (RHT) and the changes this brings. The 'shrink-wrapped', sculpted bodywork; signature 'hammerhead' nose; integrated front fender louvres; and headlight air intakes are all familiar yet still striking – as too are the dihedral doors that open close to the body to allow easy access and egress in tight parking spaces.

But as a convertible, the new Spider is unquestionably a supercar with a visual identity all of its own, and the requirements of the RHT system are central to this. All-new buttresses – which incorporate the rollover structure – include a glazed section to aid rear visibility that also doubles as a channel for airflow into the engine bay area. A heated rear screen, which raises or lowers at the touch of a button either to optimise comfort with the roof lowered or to allow exhaust sound into the cabin for additional driver engagement when it is raised, is located between the buttresses.

Powertrain cooling vents, including the 'hot vee' chimney, are situated further to the rear of the car compared to the coupe, in order to accommodate the RHT mechanism and tonneau cover. Raising and then relocating when the roof is operated either up or down, the tonneau cover has a lightweight carbon composite structure and can be finished at extra cost in gloss carbon fibre if desired.

The Retractable Hard Top itself is a carbon fibre and composite panel but can also be configured with an Electrochromic glass panel, which can either brighten the cabin - or block more than 99% of sunlight - at the touch of a button. McLaren has adopted advanced Suspended Particle (SPD) technology for this feature on the Artura Spider, to further reduce heat transfer into the cabin when in the darkest mode – more than 96% of solar energy is blocked - helping to keep air temperature as cool as possible.

The RHT system is actuated in near silence by eight electric motors. Two motors fold the roof panel, two raise and lower the rear tonneau cover, and two control the aerodynamic covers on the leading edge of the tonneau buttresses. A further motor is responsible for rear window operation, another for the RHT latching mechanism. The roof is operated by an overhead control inside the cabin or from the vehicle key when the car is stationary, allowing it to be opened or closed from outside the vehicle.

THE HEART OF E-MOBILITY AT THE BMW GROUP

BMW Group Plant 02.20 celebrates 10 years of electric powertrain component production

Since the first production lines went on-stream ten years ago, BMW Group Component Plant 02.20 in Dingolfing has built more than 1.5 million electric motors, one million high-voltage batteries and ten million battery modules. The site in Lower Bavaria continues to blaze a trail for the ramp-up of electromobility. Today, the BMW Group has a higher percentage of total sales from electrified vehicles than any other German automotive manufacturer. “Our Plant 02.20 in Dingolfing plays a crucial part in this,” explains Stefan Kasperowski, Vice President High-Voltage Battery production at Bavarian plants. “We provide the BMW Group’s vehicle plants with a reliable and flexible supply of e-drive components for our electrified vehicles.”

State-of-the-art site with long history

Plant 02.20 is a prime example of successful transformation, having been in operation for more than half a century. For many years, it was home to the BMW Group’s central spare parts warehouse. It was only in the early 2010s that aftersales logistics was relocated, making room for electromobility. There were initially about 200 employees producing electric motors and high-voltage batteries for the BMW Group’s first plug-in hybrids and, later, its fully-electric models. The current fifth generation of electric motors and high-voltage batteries began rolling off the production line in 2020. Since 2015, the BMW Group has invested more than one billion euros in transforming Plant 02.20 into the company’s “heart” and Competence Centre for E-Drive Production, establishing around 15 production lines for battery modules, electric motors and high-voltage batteries. Over time, the number of BMW Group employees has gradually increased and production volumes have risen. Today, more than 2,500 people work in e-drive production at Plant 02.20. The majority of these employees previously worked in other areas of vehicle production.

Ten years ago, Markus Fallböhmer, current Senior Vice President Battery Production at the BMW Group, was responsible for planning and production of electric drive systems in Dingolfing and Landshut. “Redesigning and transforming Plant 02.20 plant at this record pace was certainly quite a feat,” he recalls. “We managed construction work, commissioning of systems and series production virtually simultaneously. This enabled us to meet growing demand for electrified models and successfully implement the transition to e-mobility.” As Fallböhmer points out, the high quality of e-components, economical production methods and stable supplies to vehicle plants are all crucial. Today, Plant 02.20 consistently operates at a high level, supplying the production network with components for electrification. “Dingolfing is the heart of the e-drive at the BMW Group,” says Klaus von Moltke, Senior Vice President Engine Production at the BMW Group. “About 80 percent of all our electric motors are currently produced in Dingolfing.” The figure for high-voltage batteries is around 60 percent.

Close links between battery factory and vehicle production

To continue to meet growing demand for electrified models in the coming years, the BMW Group has created a global network for e-drive production, with additional locations in Leipzig, Regensburg, Spartanburg (USA) and Shenyang (China) for the current generation of high-voltage batteries. For the new sixth generation, which will be used from 2025 onwards in the models of the Neue Klasse, locations are being established around the world in the US, Mexico, China and Hungary, as well as in Irlbach-Straßkirchen in Lower Bavaria. In line with its “local for local” principle, these sites are located as close as possible to BMW Group vehicle plants.

Production network benefits from Dingolfing expertise

As the nucleus of electrification at the BMW Group, Plant 02.20 will continue to play a key role in the future, supporting development of new facilities in a variety of different ways. Comprehensive skills development for the new plant in Debrecen is currently underway. Some of the employees will also be deployed to the new high-voltage battery facility in Irlbach-Straßkirchen. The BMW Group engine plant in Steyr, Austria, which will build the upcoming generation of electric motors for the Neue Klasse, will also benefit from Dingolfing’s expertise in electric motor production, while the housing will be supplied by Plant Landshut. Looking ahead, Kasperowski says: “Both the capacity of the Dingolfing location and its employees’ skills will continue to be in demand.” Fallböhmer confirms: “We are reaping huge benefits from having navigated the learning curve for e-component production ahead of others. The whole production network is now harnessing this knowledge to continue the success and bolster the growth of e-mobility at the BMW Group.”

MERCEDES-BENZ ECAMPUS: CONCENTRATED EXPERTISE IN BATTERY TECHNOLOGIES WITH "MERCEDES-BENZ DNA"

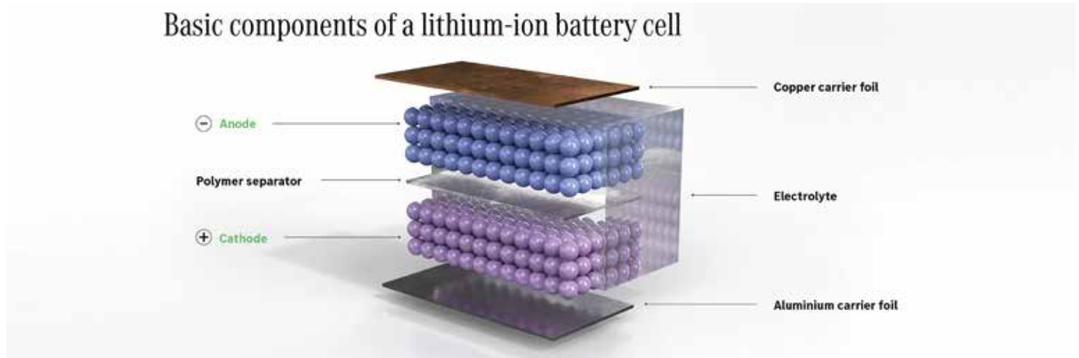
- New competence centre for development of innovative, high-performance battery cells and new manufacturing processes
- Ola Källenius: "Our goal is to reduce battery costs by more than 30 percent in the coming years"
- In 2024, Mercedes-Benz will invest 14 billion euros in research and development and in its plants - a significant proportion will be channelled into the development of batteries and electric drive systems
- New "Industrial Cell Lab" covers the entire product and process chain of cell development and production, and enables the development of expertise for an economical manufacturing process
- Investments in the three-digit million range strengthen Stuttgart-Untertürkheim as a high-tech location for drive technologies
- Sustainable building concept: recycled concrete, green roof including photovoltaics

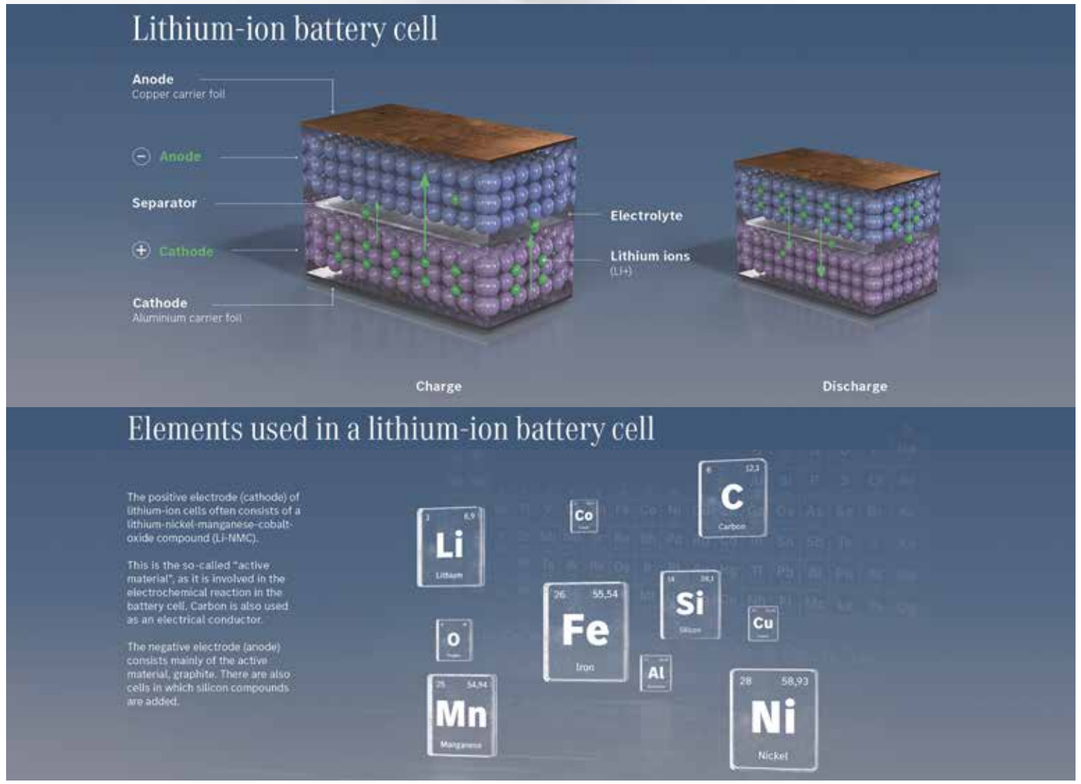
Mercedes-Benz is significantly strengthening its development activities in battery technology. In a ceremony attended by the German Federal Minister of Economic Affairs Robert Habeck, Baden Württemberg's Minister-President Winfried Kretschmann and other high-ranking guests, Mercedes Benz opened the eCampus at the heart of its headquarters in Stuttgart-Untertürkheim. It is the competence centre for the development of cells and batteries for the future electric vehicles of the brand with the star. The aim is to develop innovative chemical compositions and optimised production processes for high-performance cells with "Mercedes-Benz DNA" and reduce battery costs by more than 30 percent in the coming years. The Mercedes-Benz eCampus covers the entire field of battery and cell technology. It ranges from the development and evaluation of new cell chemistries and industrial-scale cell production to the testing and certification of complete battery units.

"The opening of the Mercedes-Benz eCampus marks an important step in our sustainable business strategy. It is our ambition to also play a leading technological role in electric mobility. The eCampus brings us closer to this goal. The work carried out here will help to reduce battery costs by more than 30 percent in the coming years. By locating the eCampus at the heart of our centre for research and development of drive systems, it signifies a clear commitment to a more sustainable future and to the long heritage of our Stuttgart-Untertürkheim location."

Ola Källenius, Chairman of the Board of Management of Mercedes-Benz Group AG

Mercedes-Benz is developing various forms of cell chemistry. Among other things, the company is working on lithium-ion cells with high-energy anodes based on silicon composites and innovative cobalt-free cathode chemistries, as well





as on solid-state battery technology. The aim is to develop the best possible cells with "Mercedes-Benz DNA" for high energy density, fast-charging capability and performance and to build up expertise for their industrialisation. Specifically, the energy density can be increased to up to 900 Wh/l through the use of new technologies such as high-silicon anodes or solid electrolytes. The only way to scale up production effectively is through comprehensive knowledge of cell chemistry and design. The knowledge gained flows into series production of battery cells at partner companies – for use in future generations of Mercedes-Benz batteries. The importance of mastering cell chemistry for the development of future products has been demonstrated by the VISION EQXX technology programme, for example. Thanks to a powerful battery with pioneering cell chemistry,

this vehicle has set distance and efficiency records for electric vehicles on several journeys.

Operations at the new competence centre for battery technologies in the heart of the Stuttgart-Untertürkheim plant will start in two stages. The approximately 10,000-square-metre factory for the industrial production of battery cells has started operations after a construction period of around two years. State-of-the-art production facilities in the "Industrial Cell Lab" make it possible to manufacture and test battery cells with different chemistries on an industrial scale. Several tens of thousands of cells can be produced here every year for the development of future battery generations. The production process consists of a series of automated and manual steps. It covers all battery cell manufacturing steps from electrode production to cell assembly including electrolyte filling, forming with the first charging and discharging processes and finishing.

The cell production process has a major influence on the quality of the battery. Mercedes-Benz has therefore the ambition to not only master the chemical composition of the cells, but also the industrial manufacturing process. The new Industrial Cell Lab enables the company to gain expertise in the economical production of cells with "Mercedes-Benz DNA". It thus complements the two existing cell laboratories: Novel cell chemistries and advanced cell designs are developed and evaluated in the "Chemistry Lab". In the "Flexible Cell Lab", the new developments are produced and tested in automotive pouch cells.

The new building for the second stage is due to be completed by the end of this year. Among other things, this state-of-the-art test and proving centre will house a battery ramp-up factory for product and process development as well as maturity assurance for large-scale industrial production. Various functions of the test centre at the Nabern site will be transferred to the eCampus in Untertürkheim for this purpose. State-of-the-art test benches are being built on an area of around 20,000 square metres to comprehensively test and prove the safety and service life of batteries.

The new Mercedes-Benz eCampus building is located on the site of the former buildings 132/1 and 132/2 in the centre of the Stuttgart-Untertürkheim plant, which looks back on a long and eventful history. The original building 132/1 was built back in 1907 and in its early years housed the production of camshafts and crankshafts. These were used in numerous generations of Mercedes-Benz combustion engines. Over the years, a number of different capabilities were added. These included tool calibration, the central inspection area, the production inspection area for crankshafts and connecting rods and production management for engines. As a competence centre for future drive technologies, the new eCampus plays a key role in the transformation of the plant with a heritage spanning 120 years.

120 years of Mercedes-Benz Untertürkheim

With the new eCampus, Mercedes-Benz is consolidating the role of the largest powertrain facility within its global network, which is celebrating its 120th anniversary this year. Investments in the three-digit million-euro range will strengthen Untertürkheim's role as a high-tech facility for drive technologies – a clear commitment to the workforce and to Baden-Württemberg as a centre of automotive competence.

Founded in 1904, the Mercedes-Benz Stuttgart-Untertürkheim plant spans several sub-sites in the Neckar valley and set the course for e-mobility some time ago. The plant already produces flexible drive systems for both fully electric and electrified vehicles. Untertürkheim is responsible for the production of drive components. The forge is also located there. Furthermore, the Untertürkheim site is home to a large part of the Group's drivetrain research and development, with a test track for vehicle testing as well as the new Mercedes-Benz eCampus. The central van division and its research and development is also located here. And Untertürkheim is home to the Mercedes-Benz Group AG headquarters. In total, more than 23,000 employees work there, including sub-sites – around 14,100 of them in production. From 2024, the ramp-up of production of electric drive units for fully electric Mercedes-Benz vehicles will begin at Untertürkheim.

Highly efficient engines are produced in Bad Cannstatt. Axle production for all drivetrains and the foundry are both located in Mettingen. Parts for electric drive units will be manufactured and assembled into electric axles here from 2024. Transmission production is at the Hedelfingen plant. Battery systems for the all-electric EQS and EQE models have also been produced here since 2021. This year will also see the start of production of parts for electric drive units. Flexible production is located in Sirnau and training is based in Brühl. Since 2022, the Brühl plant has been home to a battery factory producing systems for Mercedes-Benz plug-in hybrid models. The ramp-up of production for batteries for all-electric models starts here in 2024.

Closing the battery loop

The opening of the eCampus marks an important step in Mercedes-Benz's sustainable business strategy. By 2039, the company aims for its fleet of new vehicles to be net carbon neutral over their entire lifecycle. In addition to decarbonisation, one of the most important levers for this is the establishment of a truly circular economy in order to conserve primary resources. Mercedes-Benz is pursuing a holistic approach to batteries, focussing on three core issues: circular design, value retention and closing the loop.

The eCampus activities form the starting point of Mercedes-Benz's circular concept. With the "Design for Circularity" approach, the company considers the entire value chain of battery technology from the very beginning. From development of new cell chemistries to the testing of battery cells and production in small quantities for the development, the company designs battery cells with "Mercedes-Benz DNA". The findings flow into the series production of battery cells at partner companies

Production of batteries for electric Mercedes-Benz vehicles is net carbon neutral1 at battery factories on three continents – including at the two Untertürkheim plants in Brühl and Hedelfingen. Local battery production is a key success factor for the Mercedes-Benz sustainable business strategy.

eCampus with sustainable building concept

The building concept for the new eCampus in Stuttgart-Untertürkheim, which covers more than 30,000 square metres, also meets Mercedes-Benz's sustainability criteria. Its foundations contain recycled concrete made from demolition materials. More than 75 percent of the usable roof area of the state-of-the-art test and proving centre is equipped with photovoltaic systems and supply the facilities with renewable energy. The entire roof area is also being greened. Reversible heat pumps and cold accumulators enable a sustainable heat supply and air conditioning for the hall. Hybrid cooling towers increase the efficiency of the water supply.

Mercedes-Benz's own production sites have been net carbon neutral[1] since 2022. By 2030, the plan is to cover more than 70 percent of production energy requirements with renewable energy. This will be achieved through the expansion of solar and wind energy at the sites and the conclusion of further corresponding power purchase agreements. The goal for all Mercedes-Benz production plants worldwide is to operate with 100 percent renewable energy by 2039.

NISSAN DEMONSTRATES AUTONOMOUS-DRIVE MOBILITY SERVICES PROGRESS ON PUBLIC ROADS

Nissan has commenced demonstrations of a prototype vehicle equipped with its in-house-developed, autonomous drive technologies - showcasing progress in its goal towards rolling out autonomous mobility services within fiscal year 2027.

The Nissan LEAF prototype vehicle incorporates 14 cameras, 10 radars and 6 LIDAR sensors. It demonstrates Nissan's progress in the field of autonomous driving, particularly within complex urban environments. Compared to earlier prototypes the company has demonstrated, the latest test vehicle features an array of roof-mounted sensors, significantly expanding the detection area and enabling more accurate detection of its surroundings.

As a result, recognition performance, behavioral prediction, and judgment functions, as well as control functions have been enhanced, delivering smooth operation in a variety of complex scenarios. Around the busy streets of Yokohama, close to Nissan's global headquarters in Japan, the LEAF prototype is able to smoothly demonstrate its ability to predict the behavior of pedestrians, conduct lane changes when merging, and judge when to safely enter intersections.

Nissan has been studying business models for future mobility services since fiscal year 2017. While the current demonstration is being conducted at SAE Level 2 equivalent with a safety driver present, the company aims to continue to expand functionality and to begin offering autonomous-drive mobility services within Japan, starting in fiscal year 2027*, working with third parties such as local authorities and transport operators.

In the fourth quarter of this fiscal year, Nissan aims to begin trials in the Minato Mirai area, and plans to progress to service demonstration tests within fiscal year 2025. During the trials, the level of autonomous driving functionality will be gradually increased while assessing customer acceptance, with the aim to provide driverless services.

This initiative is being conducted in close cooperation with the Japanese Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry; Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism; and other central ministries. The ministries will also promote initiatives to realize new autonomous mobility services at the Level 4 Mobility Acceleration Committee that they organize.

Nissan's long-term vision is to empower mobility by solving transportation service issues faced by local communities. Local communities, particularly within Japan have been facing several mobility challenges, such as driver shortages, which are a result of an ageing population. Supporting a resolution to this challenge, Nissan will provide a broad range of new services that enable free movement.

ADAMAS MOTOR GROUP CELEBRATES SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION OF BEST OF BRITISH CHARITY AUCTION

- **Adamas Motor Group proudly concluded its highly successful Best of British Auction**
- **Five bespoke prints auctioned to mark the arrival of Morgan brand in the GCC region and celebrate British craftsmanship**
- **All proceeds donated to Emirates Red Crescent during a ceremony attended by Edward Hobart, His Majesty's Ambassador to United Arab Emirates**

Adamas Motor Group is proud to announce the successful conclusion of its Best of British Charity Auction, held in conjunction with the recent regional debut of the Morgan Plus Four. The auction featured five bespoke prints, each inspired by Morgan's rich history and meticulously crafted by British artist Jim Wheat. Collectively, these prints raised a remarkable sum of AED 126,500, which has been wholly donated to Emirates Red Crescent to support orphans in need across the region.

The handover ceremony, held at Adamas Motor Group's prestigious showroom in Dubai, was attended by key representatives from Emirates Red Crescent, along with Edward Hobart, His Majesty's Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates. The leadership team from Adamas Motor Group, was also present to underscore the company's dedication to corporate social responsibility.

"We are thrilled and humbled with the outcome of this auction, as well as the overwhelming support received from our owners and partners here in the UAE. In addition to celebrating the rich manufacturing heritage of British motoring, exemplified by Morgan, this small gesture underscores our long-standing commitment to making a positive impact on our community."

Karl Hamer, CEO, Adamas Motor Group

"The Best of British Charity Auction has been a wonderful showcase of the enduring spirit of British generosity and the exquisite craftsmanship that defines many successful British businesses. I am delighted to see Adamas Motor Group supporting such a noble cause and commend their efforts in celebrating British motoring heritage while aiding those most in need."

Edward Hobart, His Majesty's Ambassador to United Arab Emirates

DUBAI DUTY FREE SHERGAR CUP ATTRACTS TOP INTERNATIONAL LINE-UP

The Ladies Team won the Dubai Duty Free Shergar Cup last year

The Dubai Duty Free Shergar Cup, the world's premier international jockeys' competition, has again attracted top talent from around the globe. Multiple Classic winner Seamie Heffernan, teenage sensation Billy Loughnane, and French Group 1 winner Marie Vélon are among the 12 jockeys confirmed to ride in the Dubai Duty Free Shergar Cup at Ascot Racecourse, UK on Saturday, 10th August. Vélon, the first French female jockey to win a Group 1 in her home country will join the Ladies' team captained by the legendary Hayley Turner, making a record-extending 17th appearance in the competition. The team is completed by Saffie Osborne whose final race heroics secured the title for the Ladies last year.

The Rest of the World team will be captained by Australian-based five-time Group 1 winner Rachel King and will also feature Japanese rider Nanako Fujita who made her Dubai Duty Free Shergar Cup debut in 2019. South African jockey Rachel Venniker, successful in over 250 races already at the age of just 23, completes the line-up.

Bauryzhan Murzabayev, from Kazakhstan and a four-time champion Flat jockey in Germany, captains the European team and will be joined by Italian Alberto Sanna, who has ridden more that 400 winners, including the 2000 Guineas in his native Italy twice in 2021 and 2022. Classic-winning Spaniard Jose-Luis Borrego, who has ridden almost 500 winners, also makes his debut in the competition. The Great Britain & Ireland team, led by Dubai World Cup-winning jockey Tadgh O'Shea, will see Loughnane make his Dubai Duty Free Shergar Cup debut as the 18-year-old's meteoric rise continued with his first two victories at Royal Ascot in June. Loughnane's youth will be combined with Heffernan's experience, the 52-year-old bringing over 1,000 career victories, including both the Derby and the Oaks at Epsom.

In all nine countries will be represented by the jockeys across the four teams while new ground is broken this year with an equal number of male and female riders for the first time in the history of the Dubai Duty Free Shergar Cup.

Dubai Duty Free's Managing Director Ramesh Cidambi said, "We are delighted that the Dubai Duty Free Shergar Cup continues to be an aspirational event for many of the world's top jockeys, and we congratulate Ascot on once again bringing together a star-studded international line-up." A record GBP 500,000 will be on offer across the six race programme with prize money paid down to tenth place in each race. GBP 25,000 in stable bonuses is also available split between the three leading yards.

After racing, Sugababes will headline a concert line-up which also includes Ministry of Sound Ibiza Anthems ft. Ellie Sax, Scouting For Girls, and a DJ set from Denise Van Outen.

THRILLING FINALE CAPS MEMORABLE DUBAI DUTY FREE SHERGAR CUP

Dubai Duty Free Managing Director Ramesh Cidambi presents the Dubai Duty Free Shergar Cup to the Ladies Team accompanied by (L-R) Alpana Cidambi, Breeda McLoughlin, former Executive Vice Chairman & CEO Colm McLoughlin, Sinead El Sibai and Anna Khan.

A crowd of more than 27,500, the biggest outside of the Royal Meeting, flocked to Ascot Racecourse, UK, to see the Ladies' Team successfully defend their Dubai Duty Free Shergar Cup title for a second consecutive year on Saturday, 10 August.

The unique concept and record prize money of GBP 500,000 across the event's six races ensured the support of many of the sports leading owners and trainers and drew a star-studded line-up of domestic and international riders. Four teams contested the world's premier international jockeys' competition which for the first time featured an equal representation of male and female riders with the Rest of the World team made up of international women jockeys from Australia, Japan and South Africa. They faced the formidable Ladies Team, and two teams of three riders each representing Europe and Great Britain & Ireland.

There were so many stars, perhaps the brightest being Ladies' Team captain, Hayley Turner, who last month racked up her 1000th winner and ahead of the 2024 renewal, already acknowledged as the event's most successful participant leading the tables for most winners and most points scored in the sixteen years she has taken part.

The opener, the five furlong Dubai Duty Free Shergar Cup Dash, went to South Africa's only professional female rider and Dubai Duty Free Shergar Cup debutante Rachel Venniker. Holkham Bay was her first ride in the UK though she had been getting acquainted with scene riding out for leading trainer William Haggas in Newmarket. And with Japan's Nanako Fujita finishing fourth on Adaay In Devon the Rest of the World were off to a flying start.

Venniker was joined at the head of the table after the next race, the longest of the day the Dubai Duty Free Shergar Cup Stayers over two miles when Hayley Turner added to her totals with a dynamic ride on Ranch Hand. He would normally wear the Mill Reef black and yellow colours of the Kingsclere Racing Club – here it was the pink and black of the Ladies Team. Ranch Hand's trainer, Andrew Balding, who took over at Kingsclere from his father Ian, was full of praise for Turner's ride. "She comes down every week to ride work and I've found a good few opportunities for her to ride the lighter weights. Ranch Hand was carrying the burden of 9st 11lbs – but it's hard to stop Hayley at this meeting," he said.

Alpana Cidambi presents the Dubai Duty Free Ride of the Day Trophy to Rachel King with (l-r) Ramesh Cidambi, Breeda McLoughlin, Colm McLoughlin and Senior Vice President – Marketing, Sinead El Sibai.

It was victory for the yellow and black of the Rest of the World team, sported by yet another female rider, Rachel King on Insanity in the next race, the Dubai Duty Free Shergar Cup Challenge, a performance which was to earn her the Dubai Duty Free Ride of the Day. Rachel King was riding for trainer Alan King and though they are not related she took her early experience of riding for Alan to Australia where her career has blossomed.

17TH DUBAI DUTY FREE IRISH DERBY AT THE CURRAGH RACECOURSE

Dubai Duty Free Managing Director Ramesh Cidambi, recently retired Executive Vice Chairman and CEO of Dubai Duty Free, Colm McLoughlin and Senior Vice President of Marketing, Sinead El Sibai along with H.E. Mohammed Homod Ahmad Al Shamsi, UAE Ambassador to Ireland with the winning connections of Los Angeles, winner of the 2024 Dubai Duty Free Irish Derby.

The 17th Dubai Duty Free Irish Derby took place at the Curragh Racecourse, Co. Kildare (Ireland) yesterday, Sunday, 30th of June and was won by Los Angeles to give trainer Aidan O›Brien a record-extending 16th triumph in the race. Ridden by jockey Ryan Moore, Los Angeles finished three-quarters of a length clear of Sunway in second place and a further half-length in front of the 6-4 favourite Ambiente Friendly.

The Dubai Duty Free Irish Derby is the feature event of the festival of high-octane racing, where the best horses, jockeys and trainers in the world take each other on for derby glory. The festival and day, which is sponsored by Dubai Duty Free, was a great success, filled with fantastic racing, fashion, and fun.

H.E. Mohammed Homod Ahmad Al Shamsi, UAE Ambassador to Ireland and his wife Alia with Ramesh and Alpana Cidambi and Colm McLoughlin

The newly appointed Managing Director of Dubai Duty Free, Ramesh Cidambi, together with his wife Alpana hosted 130 guests for lunch, as the company sponsored six of the nine races on the card. The recently retired Executive Vice Chairman and CEO of Dubai Duty Free, Colm McLoughlin, and his wife Breeda were also in attendance along with Sinead El Sibai, Senior Vice President of Marketing of Dubai Duty Free and her husband, Jihad. Guests enjoyed a wonderful day of racing, fine food and fabulous fashion and entertainment in the spectacular St. Leger Suite which offers panoramic views across the Curragh plains and has a bird's eye view of the winning post and parade ring.

Speaking after the race, Ramesh Cidambi said, "I would like to offer my congratulations to the winning connections and also to compliment The Curragh Racecourse on another hugely successful festival."

The Dubai Duty Free Best Dressed Competition was a hotly contested affair with some serious style on display at the track. The fashion judges on the day included Lisa Hogan of the popular Amazon Prime show, 'Clarkson's Farm', Alpana Cidambi, Breeda McLoughlin and fashion writer, Bairbre Power.

Liz Maher winner of Best Dressed competition with the fashion judges comprising of Lisa Hogan, Alpana Cidambi, Breeda McLoughlin and Bairbre Power

Liz Maher from Bagenalstown, County Carlow, was crowned Best Dressed and took home the Dubai Duty Free Best Dressed prize. Liz looked very elegant in a white suit which she said is a trusty piece in her wardrobe and has had several days out at the races over the years. Liz's look was a celebration of Irish fashion with her headpiece from Caithriona King Millinery and her suit was by designer, Julie Caulfield in Kilmore Quay in Wexford.

As well as her Best Dressed title, Liz was over the moon with her fabulous array of prizes including return flights for two to Dubai with five glorious nights in Dubai Duty Free's own five-star hotel, The Jumeirah Creekside, and €1,000 spending money at the award-winning airport retailer.

The winning team of Noel Murphy, John Cahill, James Wall and Neil Mullarkey

The full week of activities included activities both on and off the track including a golf classic at The K Club where 20 teams of four played the Palmer South Course and later enjoyed a barbeque and traditional music.

The Dubai Duty Free officials with Barretstown Childrens Charity CEO Dee Ahearn receiving the ceremonial cheque for Euro 20,000 as donation from Dubai Duty Free

On Derby Day the Executive Team also presented Barretstown Children's Foundation CEO, Dee Ahearn with a donation of €20,000 to support the great work the foundation does for seriously ill children. Worldwide viewership of the Dubai Duty Free Irish Derby was significantly enhanced again this year as the full day of racing is part of the Tote World Pool whereby global tote operators operate a single pool on several major international race meetings.

MB&F AND ARTIST SAGE VAUGHN READY TO MAKE A STRONG STATEMENT AT ONLY WATCH

There is a butterfly trapped in the movement of the latest watch to emerge from MB&F (Maximilian Büsser & Friends). And it has no hope of escaping, because the complicated movement is wrapped in barbed wire. This emotionally charged piece, a one-of-a-kind interpretation of MB&F's Horological Machine No2, is signed by the American artist Sage Vaughn. It will be auctioned at Only Watch, the charity auction to benefit research into Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy to be held in Monaco on 24 September 2009 under the patronage of HSH Prince Albert II.

The auction is held every two years and brings together the cream of Switzerland's haute horlogerie watchmakers. Each contributes a unique watch, or the number one from a limited series, to be auctioned without a reserve price. All the proceeds from Only Watch go to enabling the Monegasque Association against Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy (AMM) to support international research projects into that disease – a field in which the Association has been actively involved since 2005.

Joining the battle to save children from muscular dystrophy

Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy is a serious genetic disorder that affects one in every 3,500 boys. It is characterised by a progressive weakening of the muscles, resulting in respiratory and cardiac problems that become fatal as the child gets older. In Europe there are around 30,000 sufferers of the disease. As yet there is no cure for the disease, but considerable progress is being made. One of the most important breakthroughs is the development of Saut d'Exon – a surgical technique that enables the cellular machinery to "forget" to read that part of the gene that carries the abnormality of the illness. This technique was developed by Luis Garcia, Head of Research at CNRS, and his team. Mr Garcia is a key player in the field of Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy. He and his group are among the 20 research teams that have benefited from AMM's financial support.

The role of childhood in MB&F's creations

Maximilian Büsser knew that he would participate the moment he spoke to Luc Pettavino, the President of AMM. "At my age," he says, (he is 42), "if I contract a serious illness I can say that I have already lived a full life, but for a child just starting out, it is a tragedy". Whilst he would never claim to understand the suffering of a child with this disease, childhood holds a special importance for him. For all their sophistication, the lovingly crafted time machines that he dreams up and creates with his Friends have their roots in his earliest years. The case of Horological Machine No2 is the most complex case in the history of watchmaking, but its modular structure is inspired by the meccano model kits that were his toys. The 22-karat gold automatic rotor has the jewel-like hand-finish reserved for the elite of traditional watch movements, but it owes its iconic sickle shape to the double-headed battleaxe wielded by his childhood comic hero, Grendizer. All the great sci-fi TV series – Star Trek, Thunderbird, Dr Who and Star Wars – have played a role in MB&F's creations. It is the tension between fascination with that imaginary world and a love of high-end horology at its purest that gives the machines their vitality.

The inspiration for the watch

Büsser and his team were, as he says, "shocked into" creating a piece of horology for the Only Watch event, and were determined that their timepiece should convey that emotion. But horology has its limits. How could it be used to express the beauty and vulnerability of childhood, and the valiant struggle of a child who may well be in a wheelchair before he is twelve? There are no coincidences in life, and at the time, a new gallery in Geneva was given over entirely to the work of Sage Vaughn, an American painter and former graffiti artist whose solo show in New York last summer had been one of the art world's most talked-about events. This young artist has fought and conquered his own demon – a seven-year heroin addiction – and the pain of that struggle is felt in the emotional power of his work. The images of gaily-dressed children or bright birds or butterflies putting on a brave front against bleak urban backgrounds had haunted Max Büsser. He had bought one of the art works, a baseball bat adorned with a collage of butterflies, pinned down by nails. Here was the tension between light-hearted innocence and something darker that he was seeking.

The result

A trip to the US proved him right. Sage Vaughn understood the mission at once and immediately proposed to donate his time and talent. Max Büsser came back with the initial sketch for the watch, and the result is faithful to it. The entire upper face of the watch – the surface of the rectangular case and the two projecting portholes – is crafted in sapphire crystal, revealing the HM2's complex engine. The hundreds of minute components display the meticulous hand finish that is MB&F's hallmark. But they are imprisoned in barbed wire. A blue butterfly struggles to escape from the same fate, but its wings are clipped. In the finished work, the barbed wire is handcrafted in blackened gold and the butterfly in blued gold. But the scene has all the emotional power of the first rough by Sage Vaughn – a pencil sketch of the movement criss-crossed by barbed wire drawn in red pencil. The watch is a unique interpretation of Horological Machine No2, launched as limited series in 2008. HM2 typifies the radical approach to high-end horology taken by Max Büsser and his Friends. It is a high-tech time machine of the twenty-first century and an incredibly sophisticated micromechanical work of art. It houses the world's first mechanical movement – "engine" in MB&F language – to offer an instantaneous jumping hour, concentric retrograde minutes, retrograde date hand, a bi-hemisphere moon phase and automatic winding. The case alone contains more than 100 parts – more than many complete movements – and is the most complex case in watchmaking history. Altogether the watch has over 450 components.

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