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First 12-cylinder engine for the UK creates a new Audi super saloon



Britain's first ever 12-cylinder Audi - the new A8 6.0 L quattro - is to make its debut here next spring, powered by the very latest Audi W12 engine and featuring unique new frontal styling with a distinctive single frame radiator grille.

Subtle W12 badging will hint at the remarkable performance potential of the latest in a lengthy line of Audi super saloons, but it will be the striking new look which will really mark out the flagship from its V6 and V8-powered relatives. Its central element is the striking single-frame radiator grille, the outer chrome ring of which surrounds the painted grey fins of the grille with horizontal chrome strips.

The potent 6.0-litre W12, with a unique 'W' cylinder formation created through the fusion of two ultra-compact aluminium block V6 engines, delivers 450PS and a mighty 580Nm of torque from just 4,000rpm. More than 95 percent of the engine's peak torque is available between 2,300 and 5,300 rpm, making for unparalleled throttle response.



This exceptional output, combined with a lightweight aluminium bodyshell that is some 50 per cent lighter than the majority of competing luxury cars, and 60 per cent more rigid, ensures that the new A8 L 6.0 quattro will deliver some incredible performance figures. It will have the potential to power from rest to 62mph in just 5.2 seconds, from rest to 124mph (where conditions allow) in a mere 17.4 seconds and to an electronically limited 155mph top speed in around 30 seconds.

The exceptional space efficiency of the 6.0-litre W12 engine enables power to be transmitted to all four wheels, via the standard six-speed tiptronic gearbox with Sport program and the unique-in-segment quattro system, bringing obvious benefits in traction and composure.



Control over the formidable performance is further reinforced by the aluminium chassis with adaptive air suspension. Featuring continuously variable damping, the system minimises body movement at all times and delivers exactly the right ride and handling characteristic for every situation. The driver can choose between four predefined suspension settings via the Multi Media Interface (MMI).

Long wheelbase luxury

To create the ultimate luxury Audi, the W12 engine has been installed in the long wheelbase version of the A8, which is 130mm longer than the standard car and so provides rear seat passengers with outstanding comfort and space. Incredibly, the extension adds just 8kg to the overall weight of the bodyshell.



World first lighting technology

The 12-cylinder A8 is also the first car in the world to benefit from adaptive light technology with LED daytime driving lights, whose distinctive 5-star lighting elements also have a dual function as new design features for the vehicle's front end.

The new daytime driving lights have virtually no effect on fuel consumption, and bring great advantages in terms of safety as the car is more easily spotted whatever the light conditions. This advance has been made possible by the use of LED units, the energy consumption of which is only a fraction of that of conventional bulbs.

Picture Caption

A8's first twelve: The first ever 12-cylinder Audi for the UK, boasting 450PS and 580Nm of torque, will rank as one of the world's most powerful production saloon cars when it goes on sale in spring 2004. Capable of reaching 62mph in just 5.2 seconds, it will be unique in offering the added reassurance of quattro permanent four-wheel-drive.

Text & Photos: Audi

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