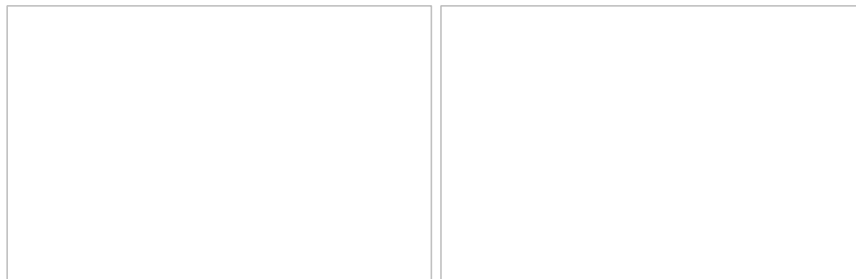


CLASSIC DRIVER

Bentley at Detroit 2004 - New Arnage T-24 and RL Mulliner announced



Detroit January, 2004. Bentley Motors announces a limited run of special Bentley Arnage Ts - the T24 - to commemorate Bentley's historic sixth win in the Le Mans 24-hours. In addition, its new flagship, the Arnage RL by Mulliner, is launched, a car the company claims is a 'sumptuously appointed sporting saloon without equal'.



Bentley Arnage T-24 Mulliner

Bentley Motors is pleased to announce a limited run of special Bentley Arnage Ts to commemorate Bentley's historic sixth win in the Le Mans 24-hours. Just 24 of these cars will be offered for sale in the US, while a handful will be built for the UK and Continental Europe. With extensive use of carbon-fibre and the replacement of much brightwork with body-coloured panels, the T-24 will have a unique appearance and be the most sporting-looking saloon ever to be designed at Crewe.

The brief handed down to the stylists at Bentley Mulliner, the personal commissioning wing of the company that is responsible for the Arnage T-24 Mulliner, was to augment the T's already uncompromisingly sporting style still further. The aim was to create a car that was not only as thrilling to look at as to drive but one that also made clear visual links to the victorious Bentley Speed 8s which recorded the most dominant win in the modern history of Le Mans last June.

Most notable as you approach the car are the vents in the front wings. Designed to recall the distinctive louvres over the front wings of the Speed 8, they give the Arnage T an animal quality and are reminiscent of a shark's gills. Above these vents sits a simple Union Flag badge with the number '24', in the same style as the 24 used on the Le Mans-winners' trophy. Also noticeable are the split rim 19in alloy wheels. Though these have the same basic design as the optional 19in wheels available on the Arnage T, not only are they standard on the T-24 Mulliner, they are also highly polished to give a much deeper shine.

As you move around the car, you'll notice that the lamp bezels at the front and rear have their chrome removed to be replaced by body-coloured inserts. The T-24 can also be clearly identified from the rear, courtesy of its unique and dominant quartet of exhaust pipe finishers. These exude purpose and sit beneath a redesigned rear bumper.

Changes to the standard specification are just as extensive inside the T-24 Mulliner. The dominant theme is carbon-fibre, the same material from which the chassis and body of the Speed 8 Le Mans winner is built. Carbon fibre inserts are used in lieu of aluminium for both the waistrails and facia while the rear picnic tables are also covered in carbon fibre.

Other changes include kickplates beneath the doors that now say 'T-24 Mulliner' instead of the standard 'Arnage' legend while the demister ducts and interior mirror surround now both carry the same colour as the

hide.

Exceptionally rare, even by Arnage standards, individually numbered and recalling the greatest sporting moment in Bentley's recent history, the Arnage T-24 Mulliner is bound to become one of the most coveted Bentleys of the modern era.



Bentley Arnage RL by Mulliner

Detroit, 4th January 2004... Bentley Motors is delighted to announce its new flagship, a sumptuously appointed sporting saloon without equal, which heads the legendary Arnage family. Designed to showcase Bentley's unrivalled handcraftsmanship talents and the skills of its Personal Commissioning department, it is the Bentley Arnage RL by Mulliner. And its specification is certain to whet the appetites of technophiles and aesthetes alike, introducing the very latest technologies into a genuinely bespoke interior.

Easily identified by its subtle Mulliner badge on the front wing, it is only when you open the doors that you see the transformation of the cabin, that brings a level of opulence and technical sophistication beyond even that of the luxurious Arnage RL.

Most notable perhaps are the two 13.1 in. screens, one in each seat back. These are both DVD and television monitors and are fed from a six seat DVD stacker in the boot. The satellite navigation screen in the front also receives the television and DVD images, but only when the car is stationary. Sound is taken care of by an Alpine combined tuner, CD and MP3 player which plays through twin amplifiers to JL speakers, incorporating twin sub-woofers in the rear parcel shelf.



When the time for recreation is over, the Arnage RL by Mulliner proves itself to be an equally capable office thanks to a computer system boasting a 1GHz Pentium processor, a 20GB hard drive, USB ports, an infra-red keyboard and both Internet and e-mail facilities. Dual-band installations for Nokia mobile telephones are included front and rear. In addition there is document storage available in each seat back, and walnut-veneered writing tables.

Having proved itself equally adept as a cinema and as an office, the Arnage RL by Mulliner spends the rest of its time as a mobile drawing room. Features particular to this car include a veneered cocktail cabinet to the rear centre cushion, a wine cooler, a solid wood gear lever in burr walnut and Bentley marque emblems to the seat facings.

The Bentley Arnage RL by Mulliner is more than just the head of the Arnage range of sporting, luxurious saloons. It also reinforces Bentley's position as the only manufacturer of truly bespoke cars. While others may offer extensive option lists or a limited level of customer choice, for Bentley the only limit is defined by the imagination and resources of the customer. He or she can come to Bentley Mulliner at Crewe, see the vast scope for creating a unique car and discuss their exact requirements with our engineers, designers and craftsmen and women. Bentley Mulliner's sphere of operation extends from one tiny modification to an otherwise standard car, such as the embroidery of the owner's initials in the upholstery, to the design, commission and execution of a new State limousine for Her Majesty, The Queen. In between lies an effectively infinite number of arrangements and permutations - actually there are more than a trillion ways to build a Bentley!

Once, all luxury cars were coachbuilt, but today it is an almost lost art. But at Bentley all the old skills remain in practice everyday, creating cars of a quality and with a character found nowhere else in the automotive industry. The Arnage range in general and the Arnage RL by Mulliner in particular are the ultimate expressions of this art.

The Arnage was first announced in 1998 and will be remembered as the car that led to the regeneration of the company, and the one whose success paved the way for this year's introduction of the 198mph Continental GT coupe. Without its instant credibility in the market place and appeal to Bentley's heartland customer base, all the things that have since been achieved, from the Continental GT to winning Le Mans, would not have been possible.

Two years ago the range was subject to a range of revisions so extensive that the resulting Series Two Arnage could legitimately be thought of as an entirely new car. Since then, the range has become

synonymous with speed, luxury and refinement.

These are precisely the qualities that Bentley's engineers have designed into the three mainstays of the Arnage family, each one performing well in all three disciplines, but honed to excel at one in particular.

The first is the Arnage R, a car whose role in life is to offer the discerning customer a conspicuously refined ride in a beautiful, sporting saloon. With a 400bhp engine its effortless pace is more than adequate for most tastes yet it is at its absolute best when wafting at sustained high speed over long distances in virtual silence.

The Arnage T is for those who want a supercar, but need to have the flexibility of four doors and a capacious boot. And in all these regards, the extraordinary, 170mph Arnage T is a masterpiece. Quick enough to dispatch most cars to a tiny dot in the mirror in just a few seconds, rewarding enough to offer real thrills to the discerning driver, yet still possessing a full complement of Grand Touring credentials, the Arnage T is the extrovert of the range.

At the opposite end of this spectrum is the Arnage RL. Still dynamic and fun to drive, its true calling is that of the limousine. But this is no normal luxury saloon. All Bentleys benefit from the craft skills handed down through generations at Crewe, but the RL takes the next step where the wood and leather, instead of merely contributing to the atmosphere within the car, become its focal point and defining feature.

WO Bentley saw no conflict between crafting overtly sporting cars and luxury limousines from the same raw materials. He knew that so long as the essential design was right, excellence could be achieved in both fields. It is a philosophy that remains relevant and in practice at Crewe today, never better expressed than in the Arnage range from the exhilaration in the T, through to the pure refinement and ambience of the RL.

Text/Photos - Bentley Motors

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