

# CLASSIC DRIVER

## News from Bentley



**Pebble Beach weekend 2005. Bentley Motors announced that the recent four-seater convertible show car will carry the evocative Azure name and goes on sale in Spring 2006. There will also be a US-market only Arnage 'Blue Train' saloon.**

### **Bentley revives Azure name for new flagship convertible**

The new Bentley Azure is an elegant four-seater convertible that provides a powerful and refined open-top driving experience while offering a unique blend of classic Bentley design and craftsmanship. The new Azure is the latest in a long line of much-admired Bentley convertibles, its design inspired by the 1955 Park Ward S1 Drophead Coupé and the original Azure introduced in 1995. Like its iconic predecessor, the new Azure becomes the flagship of the Bentley model range, reaffirming the company's status as the prime provider of four-seater convertibles at the very pinnacle of the market.

Customer reaction to the Los Angeles show car, unveiled with the project name of Arnage Drophead Coupé, demonstrated the overwhelming demand for a top of the range Bentley convertible.

"We have been inundated with demand for a new Azure virtually from the moment the original model ceased production," says Adrian Hallmark, member of the board, sales and marketing. "The exclusivity, style, luxury and performance of the new Bentley convertible flagship evoke the Riviera lifestyle like no other, fully justifying the revival of the Azure name."

Further details, including final technical specification, market availability and pricing, will be released in due course.

### **Bentley Celebrates a Famous Race**

Bentley Motors celebrated the 75th anniversary of the famous Blue Train race, with the launch of the Arnage Blue Train saloon at 'The Quail - A Motorsports Gathering' in California's Carmel Valley.

In March 1930, then Chairman of Bentley Motors, Woolf Barnato wagered 200 pounds Sterling that, driving his Bentley Speed Six, he could race Europe's fastest train, Le Train Bleu, from Cannes to London. Captain Barnato, his golfing partner Dale Bourn, and the Blue Train departed Cannes one night, and the history books recorded that Barnato pulled up outside his London club, just four minutes before the Blue Train reached its destination, the French port of Calais.

The event is just one of the thrilling and romantic episodes which make up the wonderful history and legends which surround the famous British marque. Over the past 86 years Bentley owners have included some of the world's richest, most famous and colorful personalities, a fact which is a major contributor to the marque's rich and fascinating identity.

To celebrate the 75th anniversary of the Blue Train race, Bentley Motors today announced it will release a limited number (of 30 only) Arnage Blue Train saloons to the North American market.

The Arnage Blue Train features the 6.75 liter, twin turbocharged 450hp V8 engine matched with features crafted by Bentley Mulliner, the company's bespoke engineering and personal commissioning division, including chromed 17 inch sports wheels.

The specification also includes features which evoke elements of the Speed Six which Captain Barnato drove from Cannes to London. Like the Speed Six there is a chromed radiator shell, side vents on the car's flanks, black instrument faces, a smaller rear backlight and a superbly hand-crafted interior. The MSRP is

USD\$241,990.

*Text: Classic Driver*

*Photos: Bentley Motors*

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