

CLASSIC DRIVER

Petrol in its veins



I feel guilty. As if I was carrying a loaded weapon or smuggling an exotic animal through customs. But I cannot turn my eyes away from the small magic switch that's white letters glow POWER. A quick look in the rear-view mirror: no cops. It's night time and completely black and starless, my finger is on the switch and my foot on the gas. The Head-Up windscreen display shows the engine revs and I push the gearlever forward...



With a five-litre V10 giving 507 HP and 520 Nm of torque at 8,250 rpm, the car can turn in acceleration figures of 0 - 100 km/h (62 mph) in 4.6 seconds. Formula 1 is the father of the current V10 M-Series, and the results of BMW's M GmbH Division can be seen in the sub-eight minute time at the Nürburgring Nordschleife. With 'Launch Control' activated the car will accelerate like lightning - with no wheelspin or sliding - with a foot firmly planted on the pedal. In everyday town driving of course you don't need this performance - hence the 'M' POWER button. And 'M' may well stand for 'multiple personality': the difference between Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde.



Some hours before. Leafy Copenhagen lies in an inhospitable soup of clouds and drizzle. Inconspicuous, the bronze BMW slides unnoticed into the Danish capital. With 'only' 400 HP to play with the seven-speed SMG sequential transmission works smoothly in automatic mode. I run my finger over the piano-lacquer central console and leather of the front seats. With 3D-Navigation, iDrive Multimedia System, full leather, a 450 litre capacity boot and adaptive headlamps the car may well be the ideal holiday coupé. "If all work could be as relaxed as this" I think.



The shape of the air intakes? Design of the wheel rims? Number of exhaust pipes? There can't be many men from Reykjavik and Thessaloniki who wouldn't recognise the iconic white and blue "genuine M" symbol. With the BMW M6 one can quickly see the difference between the regular 6-Series by virtue of the enormous front apron, double-spoke rims and impressive air intakes. In comparison with the M5 (that shares the same engine and basic technology), the M6 scores with its shorter wheelbase, more direct steering and carbon roof.



But back to the beginning, and the POWER button and Launch Control. The legend next to the gear lever tells me that I can set the engine and transmission dynamics as well, via the EDC and DSC buttons. Both switched off, the POWER button shines even brighter - 507 HP are now at your disposal. The traffic light turns to green. The xenon lights illuminate a drag strip in the form of a deserted motorway. I push the gear lever forward and press the accelerator. The ten-cylinder engine roars and power courses to the rear wheels, which seem glued to the tarmac. I am torn forward, like a Russian astronaut in the training centrifuge at Baikonur. The tail twitches like a wounded shark on a hook, and I have trouble keeping control. But my foot remains firmly on the gas.



And actually it's the perfect take-off. After 4.2 seconds the red speedo needle hits the white-lettered 100 km/h mark, and after 13 seconds the 200. Gearchanges take a fraction of a second, the induction roar increases with engine revs and the wind whistles past. At 250 km/h the electronic barrier arrests my progress, but the car is now at working temperature and wants more. I step smartly on to the brake pedal and use the paddles on the steering wheel to make short, double de-clutch, down-changes in order to carry out the acceleration test again.





Driving back, I slip into automatic mode. I go over in my mind the split personality of the M6. No other car can lead such a double life – from luxurious GT to red-blooded animal of a racing car. None can combine such engine performance with class-leading levels of comfort and sophistication. Now I know what the 'M' stands for: More style, More performance. 106,500 EURO is a fair price for the key to this unique ('M')otoring combination.



Text & Photos: [Jan Baedeker](#)

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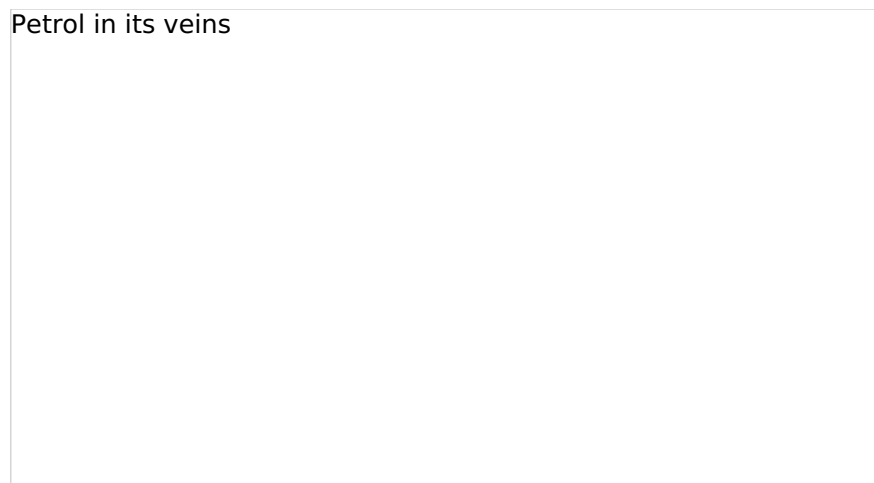
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