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Paying Homage to the BMW M1

BMW celebrated the 30th anniversary of its legendary M1 sports car by creating the BMW M1 Homage concept, unveiled in April at the 2008 Concorso d'Eleganza Villa d'Este at Cernobbio, Italy. Here, some of the most beautiful classic cars from the 1920s-1970s rub shoulders with the latest concepts and prototypes.

Designed by Giorgio Giugiaro, the BMW M1 was uncompromisingly aimed at the race circuit. Crucial to its development was Paul Bracq's revolutionary BMW Turbo concept car, and BMW has taken inspiration for the M1 Homage design study from the blend of technology, design and passion embodied in these two vehicles, both so ahead of their time.

The BMW M1 Homage presents a contemporary take on the 1970s classic and gives a broad hint as to the direction the company could follow, should it decide to reintroduce a mid-engined supercar. The concept's heritage is immediately evident, the traditional black and orange M1 colour scheme given a new dimension in the iridescent Liquid Orange paintwork. That other characteristic M1 feature, the twin rear logos, is also present – indeed, BMW says that this element was agreed before the very first sketches were prepared.



Other distinctive M1 styling cues, such as the bonnet air vents and rear windscreen louvers, have been retained. The front end echoes the graphic design themes of the M1, with 'invisible' headlights squinting out from the recessed black cutline, and a small, double kidney-shaped grille. The wheelbase is slightly longer than the M1, but otherwise the exterior dimensions are very much those of the original. Unlike many mid-engined cars, the BMW M1 Homage has sensuous BMW proportions, rather than a wedge shape; BMW Group Design has incorporated the essence of the M1 within contemporary BMW styling but the car also has a certain retro feel.



As befits a 'successor' to the technologically advanced M1 and BMW Turbo, the M1 Homage is rich in cutting-edge technology. Aircraft-inspired air ducting is incorporated through the body, with the engine-cooling air routed via the black cutline – below the roofline, along the side of the car – behind the window graphic. And, taking inspiration from F1 monocoque chassis, the kidney grille also forms part of the front crash-box.

Adrian van Hooydonk, Design Director of BMW Automobiles, said: "The BMW M1 Homage clearly manifests the creativity and potential of the BMW Design team. A project such as this is a valuable source of inspiration for our day-to-day work."

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