

CLASSIC DRIVER

New Bentley Continental GTC



In line with changes made to the GT and four-door Flying Spur, Bentley has now completed the line-up with an extensively revised GTC. The big news is that the 'Speed' version is now available as a convertible, allowing a maximum of 195mph with the hood down...

Raise the electronically powered, insulated three-layer fabric roof (that will fold flat in 25 seconds) and the generous 2+2 has 200mph capability. That's just 2mph slower than its GT brother and mightily impressive.

Like the coupé and saloon, the latest GTC carries a more vertical radiator grille (with dark-tinted matrix grilles to upper and lower air intakes for the Speed), chrome headlamp bezels, retuned Servotronic power steering for improved feedback, and optional fade-resistant carbon ceramic brakes. These are only available with the 20in wheels, standard on the GTC Speed.



While the Speed has lowered (10mm front, 15mm rear) suspension and revised spring, anti-roll bar and damper settings, the standard car has new, low-friction dampers that are promised to give even better ride quality.

The GTC Speed's 600bhp W12 engine develops 9 per cent more power than the standard, 552bhp car. As always with the marque, it's the increase in torque (15 per cent) that really distinguishes the faster GTC. Now developing an output of 750Nm (553lb ft) from just 1700 to 5600rpm, the uprated engine endows the car with breathtaking performance and has already powered the GT coupé to a position of comparability with outright performance two-seaters from Ferrari, Aston Martin and Lamborghini.

With - it hardly needs saying - its user-friendly 'leave-it-in-Drive' six-speed automatic, ample passenger and luggage space and constant 4wd capability, the revised GTCs can double as relaxed tourers, commuters or exhilarating sports machines.

Dark-tinted grilles and 20in wheels apart, the Speed can be recognised by rifled exhaust pipes and a discreet spoiler on the trailing edge of the bootlid. This provides additional downforce and actually increases the top speed.



Sound good, don't they? We loved the [GT Speed coupé when we drove it last autumn](#), and Bentley has high hopes for the latest cars, expecting some two-thirds of GTC sales worldwide in its first year of production to be Speed GTCs.

Bentley Chairman and Chief Executive, Dr Franz-Josef Paefgen enthuses about the new car:

"The Continental GTC is an elegant Grand Touring convertible in the Bentley tradition, exciting the emotions with its distinctive blend of performance, luxury, craftsmanship and modernity. The GTC Speed completes the family of Continental Speed models and broadens the appeal of the GTC to customers who demand a more focused, open-top driving experience."

The Bentley Continental GTC Speed is priced from £146,100.00 (including VAT @ 15%) in the UK.



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Photos: Bentley Motors*

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