

CLASSIC DRIVER

Rolls-Royce Ghost for International Debut at Frankfurt



One drawback with endlessly ‘teasing’ a new car is that by the time its launch comes round, there’s an inevitable “yeah, well?” in the marketplace. Rolls-Royce will officially unveil its now named, ‘smaller’ limousine, the Ghost, later this month in Frankfurt.

And what a machine, as the just-released specification shows: a 6592cc, unique-to-the-car, twin-turbo V12; 0-60mph in 4.7 seconds; a (limited) top speed of 155mph, and the surprisingly reasonable fuel consumption figure of 20.8mpg (13.6l/100km). CO2 emissions are 317g/km – these could be a lot worse for a 2360kg luxury four-door.

Producing 563bhp at 5250rpm, and 575lb ft torque at 1500rpm, the new engine is the most powerful in the company’s range.

The 5399mm-long car sits on air-suspended, variable-damped suspension all round. The system is so sensitive that it can “sense the movement of a single rear passenger from one side of the seat to the other and compensate accordingly.” It will undoubtedly handle well; other ‘BMW’ Rolls are superb drivers’, as well as passengers’, machines.

The transmission is a super-smooth, 8-speed ZF ‘fly-by-wire’ automatic and – as with its bigger brothers – a dash-mounted ‘power reserve gauge’ on the dashboard replaces the rev-counter.



The Ghost may be smaller (in length) and less expensive than a Phantom, but it’s no less well put together. Painting is carried out in the same paintshop as the Phantom, with hand-sanding between each of its five layers and a five-hour manual polishing process at the final stage. Inside, drum-dyed, hand-stitched leather cossets the passengers in eight standard shades. A choice of veneers, deep-pile carpets and optional lambswool floor mats allows the Ghost customer to personalise their own car. Dimensions and price apart, the new car will feel little different from a Phantom.

Naturally enough, the Ghost carries the latest BMW-sourced safety and information technology equipment. Items such as optional rear, front-side and top-view cameras that can combine to give a fish-eye view at blind junctions, or provide ground images with obstacle recognition and reverse path prediction when

parking.



The driver still sits in an upright, authoritative position. That said, the Ghost is more likely to be a car driven by its owner and is more handling-focused than the bigger (albeit very impressive) cars. No specific prices have been mentioned, although the company does repeat its initial estimate of between “200,000 and 300,000 euros before tax”.

Text: Steve Wakefield

Photos: Rolls-Royce

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