

# CLASSIC DRIVER

## New Bentley Continental GT - the Wraps Come Off



**Due to appear at the Paris Motor Show on 2-17 October, the wraps have come off Bentley's new Continental GT four-seater coupé - a car which aims to build on the success of its 2003 predecessor.**

The current 6-litre, **twin-turbocharged W12** engine now has a raised power output of **567bhp**, plus **700Nm (516lb ft)** of torque, mated to a new **Quickshift** transmission allowing double downshifts. Thanks to advanced **FlexFuel** technology, the engine can run on either standard unleaded petrol or sustainable bioethanol (up to E85), or any mix of the two.

The big news, however, is that late 2011 will see the introduction of an **all-new, high-output V8 engine**, promising a 40 per cent reduction in emissions compared with the W12, along with a class-leading CO2 emissions-to-power ratio.



Both the W12 and V8 engines will be coupled to an all-wheel drive system with a 40:60 rear-torque bias (compared with the 50:50 bias of the original **Continental GT**), minimising understeer in hard cornering and increasing the driver's pleasure.

In styling terms, as we said when we saw the brief, online 'teaser' video a few short weeks ago, the new car strongly resembles the outgoing model, rather than being a complete redesign. However, the track is wider, while advanced techniques such as aluminium '**Super Forming**' (in which a single aluminium sheet is heated to almost 500 degrees C before shaping with air pressure, and hence requiring no seams or welding) are used to give the body a more sharply sculpted appearance, with crisp, highly defined feature lines. It is also more aerodynamic, with the coefficient of drag reduced to 0.33Cd.



Meanwhile, the classic **Bentley** matrix radiator grille is more upright, and the traditional four-lamp headlight design has jewel-like detailing with LED daylight-running lamps.

Inside, a new touchscreen infotainment system features state-of-the-art navigation, **Google Maps** and entertainment, plus there's **Balanced Mode Radiator** speaker technology and **Dirac Dimensions™** digital sound processing to give superb audio quality. **Bentley** assures us that new levels of cabin design will give even greater comfort and hand-crafted luxury with, for example, seats that provide extra support and rear leg-room, and a stylish, sweeping dashboard and instrument panel finished in premium, soft-touch leather hides.



Says **Dr Ulrich Eichhorn, Member of the Board, Engineering**, "We've distilled nearly 90 years of engineering excellence into the new **Continental GT** coupé. It represents everything **Bentley** stands for: breathtaking performance, beautiful design and unparalleled quality, comfort and luxury."

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