

CLASSIC DRIVER

New for 2011: The Aston Martin V8 Vantage S



Look beyond the relatively modest 10bhp increase in power and you will see that, with a new seven-speed Sportshift II transmission as standard, a quickened steering-rack, uprated front brakes and wider rear wheels, the latest V8 Vantage merits the 'S' badge, to become the range's most performance-orientated model.

The new specification, announced by Aston Martin prior to a likely debut at the Geneva Motor Show, is available in both Coupé and Roadster versions. Maximum engine power is now 430bhp at 7300rpm, with torque of 490Nm peaking at 5000rpm.

No performance figures have been released by the Gaydon factory, but the combination of more power and torque, coupled with the closer-ratio, seven-speed gearbox and lowered (4.182:1) final drive should sharpen things up considerably.

The suspension features all-new springs and dampers, matched to suit the more performance-focused mien of the V8 Vantage S. The steering ratio has also been changed: to 15:1, instead of the standard car's 17:1, while wider rear rims will help the bespoke Bridgestone tyres obtain maximum traction.



Other mechanical changes include larger diameter front brake discs with new six-piston calipers, Hydraulic Brake Assist ('HBA', which provides assistance in emergency braking) and Hill Start Assist ('HSA', a way of holding the car on slopes).

The 'Sport' button gives the driver the option of the fastest possible changes coupled with the most aggressive throttle mapping. It makes the new-for-the-car exhaust louder, too.

Visually, the V8 Vantage S carries a horizontal splitter under the enlarged lower front grille, a spoiler on the bootlid, new 19in 'V'-pattern alloy wheels, and side-sills echoing those of the GT4 racing cars.

Commenting proudly on the latest Aston Martin, the company's CEO, Dr Ulrich Bez, said: "The Vantage S epitomises every attribute of the V8 Vantage and pushes the driver experience beyond what we have offered before.



"It combines dynamic exhilaration with all the charming finesse, beauty and practicality already associated with the Vantage range."

The cars are available to order now from the worldwide dealer network.

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