

CLASSIC DRIVER

The Night Before the Show: Premiere-hopping in Paris

Lead

Red carpet, camera strobes, Hollywood stars; it could easily be mistaken for the Baftas, but these grand displays are actually the manufacturers' opening parties taking place along the Seine, on the eve of the Paris Motor Show.

Rain, rain and more rain. The French weather gods had no mercy on the party commuters who hopped from one event to another, although they held a brief intermission for Lana del Rey to serenade the attendees of Jaguar's F-type launch at the Musée Rodin. Thematically it was a good choice: del Rey successfully combines the glamour-rich sixties with contemporary pop culture, while the F-type performs a similar role as a spiritual descendant of the legendary Jaguar E-type of 1961.

Brand Chief Adrian Hallmark and Design Director Ian Callum shone light on the three different versions available at launch - and we've already pondered whether Porsche and Aston Martin have a new and unwanted nemesis [here](#).





Elsewhere in Paris, the Volkswagen empire was showcasing the contemporary delights of its ever-extending brand roster. Proceedings at the Halle Freyssinet in Paris began with a swift surprise debut for the [Porsche Panamera Sport Turismo](#), kept under wraps until the last minute. It was met by enthusiastic applause, much to the delight of Group chairman Ferdinand Piëch who was keeping a watchful eye on events. Later, it was joined on stage by another sibling enjoying its inauguration: the 991-gen [911 Carrera 4](#).





It wasn't just German marques in the limelight: Bentley and Lamborghini added an Anglo-Italian contingent. First the Crewe firm showed a [GT3 racing version of the Continental coupé](#), billed as a concept for now but destined to meet rivals on track in 2013 – marking the end of a 10-year hiatus following the famous Le Mans win of 2003.

From the Lamborghini stable came a [facelifted version of the Gallardo](#), which has now sold over 13,000 units, making it the marque's most popular car ever. Next year the V10 sports car will celebrate two anniversaries; the first being its tenth birthday, the other Lamborghini's Golden Jubilee. The latter occasion will surely inspire a replacement for the capable but ageing bull, but until then (the impending generational change has become an open secret in the industry) the gap will be bridged with the refreshed LP 560-4 and an 'Edizione Tecnica' for the Superleggera and Performante halo models.





Celebrating its first appearance under Wolfsburg stewardship was Ducati, the recent acquisition seeming a particularly cohesive move under the bright lights of Halle Freyssinet. Joining the Porsches, Lamborghinis, Bentleys and Bugattis on stage were the new Multistrada 1200 tourer and the 1199 Panigale superbike, which both looked very settled among their new four-wheeled brethren. It was an almost Emmy-rivalling show from the Volkswagen Group – and now that faction includes a motorcycle brand, there's another angle from which it can pepper the market with A-list products.

Photos: Jan Baedeker / Nanette Schärf / Ben Knapp Voith

Gallery

Source URL: <https://www.classicdriver.com/en/article/cars/night-show-premiere-hopping-paris>
© Classic Driver. All rights reserved.