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Aston Martin's future hinges on the new DB11

01 March 2016 | Alex Easthope

The worst-kept automotive secret of the year, Aston Martin's long-awaited DB11 has been officially revealed at the Geneva Motor Show. Our first glimpse of Aston's 'Second Century' plan, it's the illustrious company's most significant car since the DB9 arrived in 2003...

We've been ogling the grainy, leaked images of the Aston Martin DB11 for several weeks now, but little could be deduced... until now that is, as Aston Martin has just revealed the car at Geneva. While the car's new design architecture is perhaps not as radical a departure as people had anticipated, a closer look reveals myriad changes, both above and below the surface.

Airflow trickery





Innovative aerodynamics play a prominent part in the overall design, from the broader DB2-inspired grille and gargantuan clamshell bonnet to the uninterrupted roof-strake that goes from A- to C-pillar, where it stands proud. Underneath there's airflow trickery aided by vents above the wheelarch working in tandem with the signature Aston Martin side-strake, and a discreet virtual spoiler activated by air fed from below the C-pillar. In our eyes it looks like a baby One-77 from the front, and much like a Jaguar F-type in profile – and that's certainly not a bad thing. Elements of the design do look rather weird to us, however, such as the BMW i8-esque C-pillars, though perhaps that'll change when we see the car in the metal.

Interior design



Entry to the cabin is made easier thanks to wider door openings and, once inside, there's plenty more space. The One-77's interior design has certainly been channelled in the DB11, with futuristic leather patterns on the seats and a square-ish steering wheel housing a number of controls. We're a little sad to see the ornate (if hard to read) instruments replaced by an electronic display – not very Aston Martin. The centre console is certainly more logically laid out, with an eight-inch infotainment display controlled by either a rotary switch or a touchpad with gesture recognition. Whether you like it or not, it certainly looks like a car rooted in the present.

Out with the old



Arguably the biggest change comes under the bonnet, where Aston Martin's cornerstone naturally aspirated V12 has been replaced by a 5.2-litre twin-turbocharged V12, developing 600bhp and an impressive 700Nm of torque. It's allegedly been developed in-house, despite the recent announcement that the firm will enter a 'technical partnership' with Mercedes-AMG, and it makes the DB11 the most powerful DB-series Aston Martin to date.

An important Aston Martin





Coupled with an aluminium chassis that's both lighter and stronger, 'reimagined' suspension, steering and electronics, a torque-vectoring system that works by braking, and the existing eight-speed automatic ZF gearbox, the DB11's driving experience is said to be potent (the 0-60mph sprint is taken care of in just 3.9sec) yet it retains the comfort and civility befitting a luxury Grand Touring car. "The most important Aston Martin in its 103-year existence," said Dr Andy Palmer, the DB11 will be priced from £154,900 in the UK and 204,900 euros in Europe, with deliveries set to commence in the autumn.

Photos: Aston Martin

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