

CLASSIC DRIVER

The new Bentley Continental V8



With an official launch next January at the 2012 North American International Auto Show, Detroit, Bentley has just released images and important facts on a new, eight-cylinder version of its super-successful Continental range.

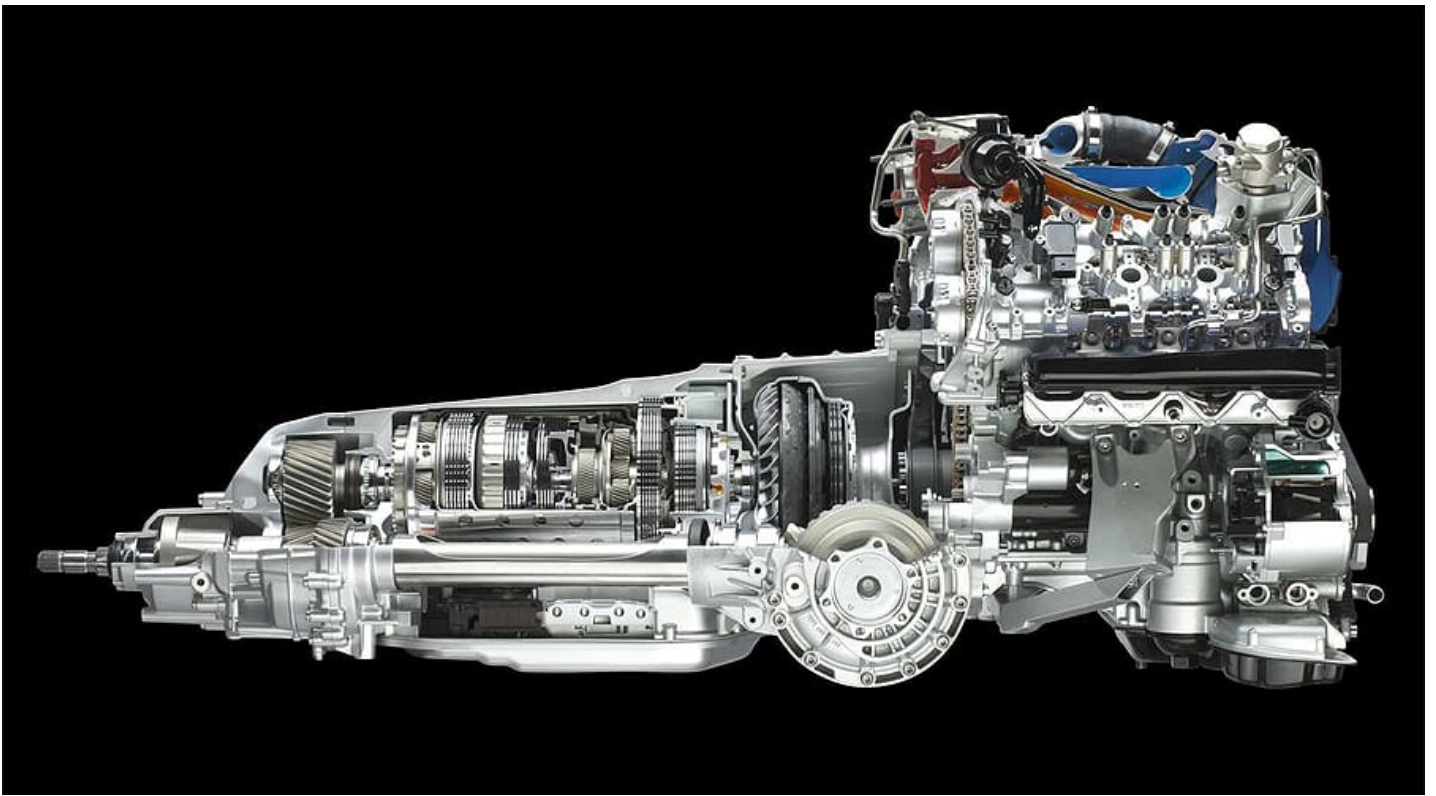
Combining the 4.0-litre, twin-turbo, direct-injection V8 with an 8-speed automatic transmission has delivered a 40 per cent improvement in fuel efficiency and CO2 emissions. The new engine produces 500bhp at 6,000rpm, with the company's trademark lavish levels of torque available from just over tickover (660Nm, from 1,700 to 5,000rpm).

As standard, the 12-cylinder engine in the current Continental GT produces 567bhp/ 700Nm, enough to propel it from zero to 60mph in 4.5 seconds and on to a top speed of 195mph.

The new Continental V8 (to be available as a coupé and GTC convertible from launch) has a top speed still in excess of 180mph, with 60mph from standstill coming up in under five seconds.



Bentley is using cylinder-cut-out technology (whereby the engine imperceptibly switches from a V8 to a V4 where conditions allow) to really cut back fuel consumption and emissions, while still delivering startling performance. The company expects a well-driven coupe to cover around 500 miles on one tank. It will have an “instantly recognisable growl” - [previewed elsewhere on Classic Driver](#) - to separate it from its W12-engined stablemates.



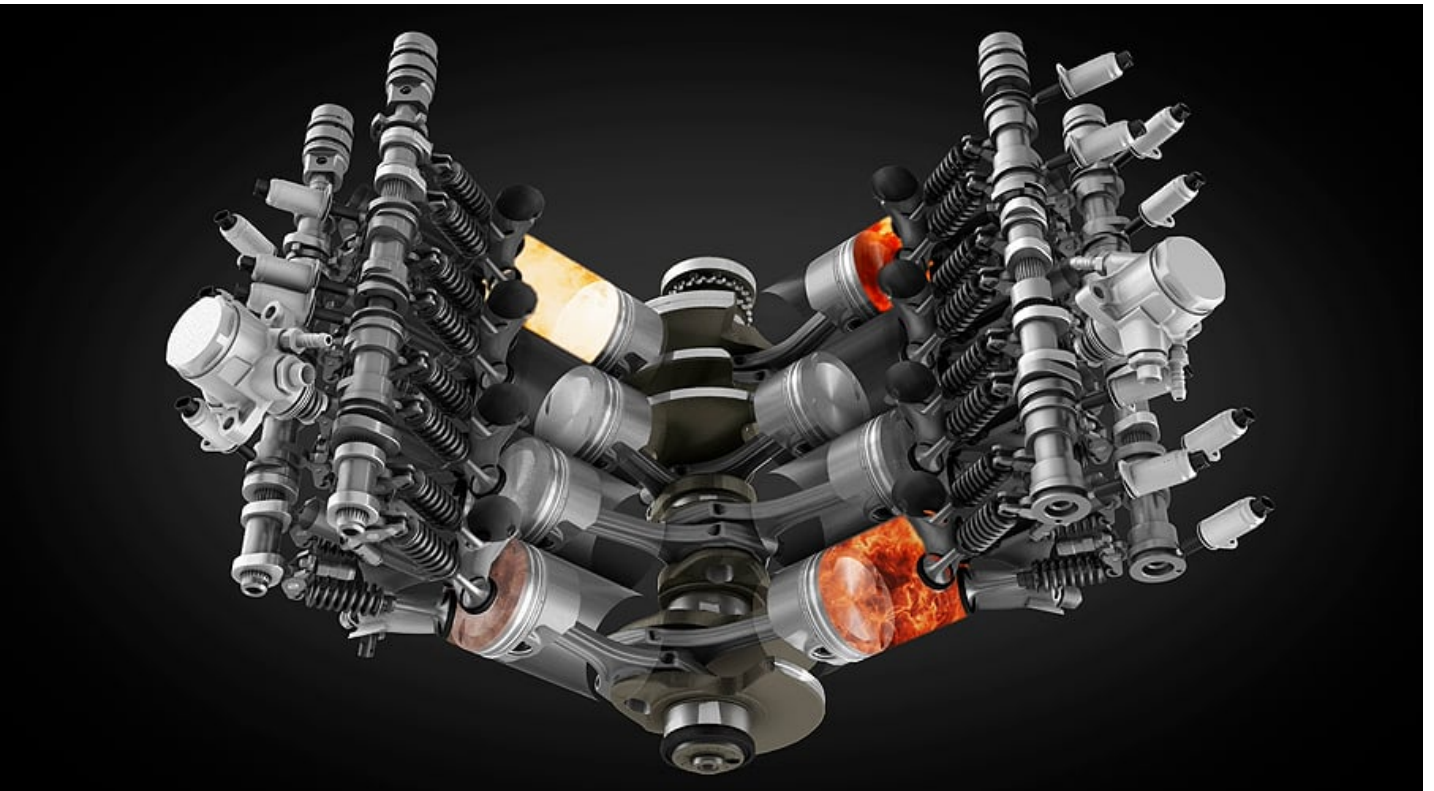
Exhaust note aside, enthusiasts will recognise a new Continental V8 by its black gloss matrix radiator grille with chrome frame and centre bar, red enamel Bentley 'B' badges front and rear, and a black matrix three-segment lower front bumper, divided by body-coloured strakes.





From behind, the observant will admire the unique, chromed 'figure eight' exhaust tailpipes and a dark lower valance. Inside, Bentley's customary sumptuous level of trim will be carried over with quite possibly a more sporting feel. The wheel-size, as standard, is 20in, while 21in six-spoke alloys are on the options list.

As with the 12-cylinder models, 4wd with a 40:60 rear-biased power-split comes as standard.





Commenting on the new V8 models, Wolfgang Dürheimer, Chairman and Chief Executive, Bentley Motors said: "With the new 4.0-litre V8 engine we are widening the appeal of the latest generation of Continentals, introducing a completely new driving experience.

"The new engine will have all the exhilarating power, drama and performance you would expect from a V8 engine sporting the famous Bentley wings, effortlessly delivered with our characteristic 'wave of torque'. This is complemented by innovative powertrain technology that delivers exceptional fuel efficiency and emissions."

*Text: [Steve Wakefield](#)
Photos: Bentley*

Gallery

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