

CLASSIC DRIVER

Morgan Plus 8: Retro resurrection

Lead

Following an eight-year sabbatical, the Plus 8 returns to the Morgan line-up. But don't expect a revolutionary departure from the company's values; the car will maintain its predecessor's characteristics of large displacement and low weight.

Stylistically, the new car differs from the 'classic Plus 8' by having a larger grille and revised front-end. Elsewhere, the sills have been made wider and new fabric and upholstery combinations are used inside (including leather seats and door cards). Contemporary touches added to the classic favourite include a modern alloy wheel design and optional LED daytime running lights.

Other than that, Morgan has ignored the last sixty years of progress in automotive design, instead favouring the company's well-loved swooping-winged styling, with running boards and prominent headlamps. The Morgan tradition of light weight is also respected, with the car tipping the scales at just 1,100kg.

Power is once again provided by a large-capacity engine, this time a BMW, rather than Rover V8. The engine is the 367bhp, 4799cc unit from the X5 and previous-generation 650i. Mated to a 6-speed manual or optional 6-speed automatic gearbox (the first auto used in a Morgan), it helps the new Plus 8 to a power-to-weight ratio of an impressive 315bhp per tonne.



The first generation of the Morgan Plus 8 debuted in 1968 and is credited with saving the small-series manufacturer during taxing economic times (sounds familiar?). Production ceased in 2004 due to the inability of the Rover V8 to meet stringent emissions laws, along with changes in safety regulations.

The new Plus 8 will be formally revealed at the Geneva Motor Show, held this year from 8 to 18 March. Prices and delivery times will be announced then.

Photos: Morgan

Gallery

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