

CLASSIC DRIVER

The Aston Martin DB9, 2013-style

Lead

This is the new DB9. Launched today, it will join the Vanquish as the Gaydon company's other luxurious two-door V12, as the Virage will be dropped from the line-up with immediate effect.

It must have been a hard decision to make, but the case for including both the Virage and the DB9 in Aston's 2011-2012 range in tough market conditions was always a marginal one. So the deletion of the newer car certainly clarifies Aston's position: Vanquish, a 'super GT' as the manufacturer puts it, and now solely the DB9, a luxurious high-speed gentleman's express with 'adequate' power, stunning looks and a high specification.

So, what's new? Well, the steelier look of the Virage has found its way to the DB9. It's a sharper, more thrusting car now, with new headlamps, a taller rear spoiler and the curving side-sills found on more sporting Astons.





As on the outgoing Virage and recently retired DBS, Brembo Carbon Ceramic Matrix (CCM) discs now come as standard. The totally revised 6.0-litre V12 carries many parts from the range-topping Vanquish, such as a revised block, new heads including dual variable valve timing, enlarged throttle bodies, an updated fuel pump, revised intake manifold and machined combustion chambers.

Power is now 517HP (from 477HP in the old DB9, 497HP in the Virage) and torque 620Nm (from 600Nm/570Nm).





The 2013 DB9 still carries the six-speed Touchtronic torque-converter gearbox - so no sign of an eight-speed, yet - and the company has decided not to introduce the all-new interior seen on the Vanquish.

For the first time, though, DB9 buyers can choose lightweight seats previously only available in the DBS and V12 Vantage. And we like them. In this configuration, the car comes as a sporting '2 + 0', with the deletion of rear seats.





And speaking of 'sporting', revisions to the DB9's Adaptive Damping System (ADS) give drivers the choice of clearly delineated 'Normal', 'Sport' and 'Track' modes. A 2013 DB9, in '2 + 0' with lightweight seats, would make a handy tool for some seriously fast driving in its brisker settings. Pity, then, that there's no manual option.

It might not be obvious from the pictures, but considerable effort has gone into pedestrian safety, with a completely re-engineered bonnet, grille and lower front bumper designed to meet the latest regulations.

Prospective buyers can contact their nearest Aston Martin dealer right now, with cars likely to be seen in the

metal this October in the UK and Western Europe. Prices are confirmed as: £131,995 (UK RRP); 174,994 euros (German RRP); \$185,400 (USA MSRP); and 21,995,000 JPY (Japan RRP).

Photos: Aston Martin

Gallery

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