

CLASSIC DRIVER

Lamborghini Aventador Roadster: The Heat is on!

Lead

A tropical storm on Ocean Drive: the new Lamborghini Aventador Roadster is perfectly suited to Miami, with its speedboats, alligators and neon night clubs – and can achieve a speed of 350km/h (217mph) without a roof. This is a journey into the eye of the hurricane...

Miami might officially belong to the US, but it's arguably the northernmost city in South America. Two-thirds of its residents speak Spanish, and the exuberant lifestyle is reminiscent of the cities of Brazil or Colombia. In the 1980s, the big arms and drug deals were forged under Miami's palm trees – films and TV shows such as *Scarface* and *Miami Vice* have burned these dark themes from the past into our collective consciousness.

Today, Miami is colourful and on-trend again; but instead of cocaine, people deal in contemporary art. The area's somewhat dubious charms have been preserved, however. For the ultimate in street cred, check out the legendary Ocean Drive in South Beach where you can find the widest testosterone-enhanced shoulders and the tightest hotpants – here an understated car is a foreign concept: the cars feature coffee-table-sized shiny chrome rims, reflecting palm trees and art deco facades. In order to stand out, you have to be a bit fitter, broader, louder and more expensive than anyone else. Or simply run a Lamborghini that has only just been registered for the road.





Although anyone with the keys to a 700-horsepower catapult might be tempted simply to cruise in stop-start traffic past bikini-clad girls, we have work to do. On the Homestead Miami circuit we roar rapidly through the banked turns and it's amazing how accurately the incredible power of the V12 from the newly-designed engine can be transferred to this track; the Roadster's stability remains constant under a bootful of acceleration. With the composite hardtop – comprising two sections and weighing just 12kg – in place, any difference in rigidity goes unnoticed. In contrast to the Lamborghini Murciélago Roadster, whose roof required a special training course to deconstruct, the Aventador hardtop is easily removed and stowed in the boot.





Under full acceleration you feel like a jet pilot who accidentally left the cockpit canopy open; in a ridiculously rapid three seconds you will reach 62mph and, if you keep your foot planted on that gas pedal, it feels like you're breaking the sound barrier. If you find yourself over-committed for the next bend, the stiff carbonfibre monocoque tub and push-rod suspension, coupled with all-wheel drive, helps to keep you going in the right direction. In Corsa mode, 20 per cent of power is directed to the front wheels. Despite the technical attempts to rein this car in, the Aventador is still an extreme weapons-grade sort of car. A skillful driver is required to keep the brutal punch of that V12 in check.





But in Miami Beach, the recipe for happiness is just a pair of sunglasses, swimwear, credit card – and maybe a spare towel for spontaneously appearing co-pilots. Back in South Beach, the Aventador Roadster happily runs in Strada mode, with cylinder shutdown and a start-stop system for maximum efficiency. Like a giant crocodile from the Everglades, the Lamborghini can crawl lazily over wide intersections but – like the aforementioned catapult – it can also shoot forward with a bloodcurdling roar that brings tears to your eyes.







All this drama has a price, of course: on top of the 270,000 euros for the hard-top Aventador, you need to add another 30,000 euros for the Roadster. And that's only the official retail price. There is also a terrifyingly long waiting list: Al Pacino and Sonny Crockett might just about get their cars in time for the start of the hurricane season in 2014.

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For more information on the Lamborghini Aventador Roadster, visit www.lamborghini.com

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Photos: [Jan Baedeker](#)

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