

CLASSIC DRIVER

Bugatti's La Voiture Noire is the most expensive new car ever built

Lead

Car designer, supercar expert, and regular Classic Driver contributor Chris Hrabalek explains why Bugatti's latest 'pièce unique' has just redefined the automotive food chain. A step up from superlative, he calls it 'automotive haute couture'...

On the opening day of the [Geneva Motor Show 2019](#) – six months after Bugatti revealed [the limited-production Divo](#) – the marque from Molsheim has done the unthinkable and pulled the sheets off its first contemporary one-off. Christened *La Voiture Noire*, it's on target to reclaim the pre-War ideal of elegance.



More than just a design model of a modern-day stylistic interpretation of Jean Bugatti's iconic Type 57SC Atlantic, *La Voiture Noire* is a real project conceived at the eye-watering price of 16.72m euros after tax. And it's already been sold. Celebrating beauty, elegance, and sophistication, virtually every component was created by hand within the Bugatti Atelier. It features a uniquely long front carriage – increasing the wheelbase of both the Chiron and the Divo – that emphasises its stunning Grand Touring proportions.

With the modern world indulging in electric and autonomous driving hysteria, *La Voiture Noire's* six tailpipes not only pay tribute to the 8-litre quad-turbo W16, an undiluted masterpiece and the sole surviving 'automotive tourbillon', but also remind us that human craftsmanship will endure through any fad.



While many speculated that we'd see an entry-level Bugatti positioned below the Chiron in price and above it in volume, dare I write that the 40-unit Divo and one-off *La Voiture Noire* have redefined the brand's product line-up, with the 500-unit core model being the 'entry-level' into modern Bugatti ownership?

As Bugatti design director Achim Anscheidt explains, "Taking part in the creation of a one-off Bugatti is an unparalleled indulgence that bequeaths an automotive monument to future generations". Meanwhile, [Etienne Salomé](#), deputy chief designer, emphasises that '*La Voiture Noire* is a celebration of Jean Bugatti's masterpiece, the Type 57SC Atlantic' and that working on it was 'any car designer's dream'.



One thing is certain to all contemporary witnesses in Geneva: Bugatti can no longer be mentioned in the same breath as [Ferrari](#), [Lamborghini](#), [McLaren](#), et al. Bugatti is now a marque in a different dimension.

Ettore Bugatti understood a key attribute of anything desirable: you never need it, but you always want it. With *La Voiture Noire*, Bugatti has not just redefined the term luxury but taken ownership of it. No matter which Bugatti trinity you dream of owning – [EB110](#), [Veyron](#), and Chiron or Chiron, Divo, and *La Voiture Noire* – every Bugatti is a work of art, an individual masterpiece, and now the ultimate expression of luxury.

Photos: Bugatti

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