

CLASSIC DRIVER

The new Bugatti Bolide is a two-fingered salute to the electric car

Lead

1,850 horsepower, 1,240 kilos, 0,67 kg per HP, 0-500km/h in 20.16 seconds – the new Bugatti Bolide's performance figures are just bonkers. Car designer, supercar expert and regular Classic Driver contributor Chris Hrabalek explains why Bugatti's latest creation is a brighter-than-usual hypercar.



First, let's start with the elephant in the room: Volkswagen Group is allegedly on the verge of offloading its crown-jewel brand Bugatti to the innovative Croatian electric hypercar manufacturer Rimac. It seems VW management is keen to follow the current fad of placing all its 'corporate casino chips' in the field of electric mobility, hoping the wheel of fortune will turn in its favour.

Hence one would expect all future Bugatti projects – namely, its next-generation hypercar and, possibly, a second Bugatti model – to be placed in a temporary holding pattern. One might even imagine a fully electric concept car as a preview of the near future, while the marque's sales team focuses on the rapid-fire sale of the final production slots of its wickedly powered Bugatti Chiron.



Not so at Bugatti. In a year characterised by the unexpected, the brave men of Molsheim present us with the Bugatti Bolide: the most extreme Bugatti of modern times, featuring a never-before-seen weight-to-power ratio of 0.67kg/ HP; and best of all... the Bolide gets to keep its unique 16-cylinder powerplant – an 'automotive tourbillon' and arguably the last unicorn on sale today.

The hard technical facts are breathtaking: an 8.0-litre W16 engine with 1850HP and 1850Nm of torque in a vehicle weighing just 1,240kg – 635kg less (!) than the Bugatti Chiron. Calculated performance figures – of the 1492HP per tonne Bugatti – that predict a top speed of 527.4 km/h (327.7 mph) are as mesmerising as a 0-500-0 time of 33.62 seconds; 0-400-0 time of 24.64 seconds; 0-500km/h in 20.16 seconds; 0-400km/h in 12.08 seconds; 0-300km/h in 7.37 seconds; 0-200km/h in 4.36 seconds; 0-100km/h in 2.17 seconds and a calculated lap time at Le Mans of 3m 07.1s and at Nordschleife of 5m 23.1s.



It's obvious that the Bugatti Bolide is significantly more exotic than Bugatti's [Centodieci](#), [Divo](#)... even [La Voiture Noire](#). In contrast to these three icons, the Bolide is not only a coachbuilt special but a holistic approach that perfects Bugatti's 'Form Follows Performance' ethos – an unprecedented synergy between engineering and design, radical technology wrapped in jaw-dropping beauty.

One immediately wonders how the Bugatti Bolide's Le Mans lap time, as given above, would compare with that of the Chiron Pur Sport or – perhaps more relevantly – that of such track-focused machinery as Lamborghini's recently launched Essenza SCV12. Incidentally, the Essenza's weight-to-power ratio is a now almost underwhelming 1.66kg/ HP (1375kg, 830HP) in direct comparison to the Bolide's 0.67kg/ HP.



Design Director Achim Anscheidt proclaims: "It is the very first time that my team has had the freedom to design an absolutely minimalist concept around the W16 engine. The result is the most provocative proportions of a modern Bugatti and the distilled quintessence of our Bugatti design ethos, Form Follows Performance. Its dramatic proportions are the result of a favourable overall height of just 995mm."

Could the Bugatti Bolide be 'the last hurrah' of undiluted automotive emotion? Hopefully not. For now, however, let's celebrate and cherish the Bolide as a very special moment in the annals of automotive culture – and romance.

Gallery

