



By appointment  
to HM The Queen  
motor car manufacturers  
Bentley Motors Limited  
Crewe Cheshire



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**BENTLEY**

## Press Information

### THE LE MANS COLLECTION - CELEBRATING SHARED HISTORY

- **Le Mans Collection marks 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Bentley's sixth victory at the world's most iconic endurance race – the 24 Hours of Le Mans**
- **Shared history: 100 years since the first Le Mans – when a Bentley recorded the fastest lap**
- **Bentley Rotating Display houses a valve from the engine of the 2003 Le Mans winning #7 Bentley Speed 8**
- **Limited edition of a total of 48 Continental GT and GTCs globally**
- **Powered by 6.0-litre twin-turbo W12, the most successful 12-cylinder engine of the modern era**
- **Crafted by Mulliner, Bentley's personal commissioning division**
- **Evocative exterior styling in Verdant green with Moonbeam racing stripe**
- **No.7 on grille celebrates winning Bentley Speed 8 #7 of 2003**
- **Interior features include fascia inlay of six winning wreaths, Speed 8 silhouette treadplate and digital 24-hour clock**

**(Crewe, 12 April 2023)** To mark 20 years since Bentley's sixth victory at the 24 Hours of Le Mans, and 100 years since the first running of the legendary race, Bentley is creating a limited edition of Continental GT Coupés and Continental GTC's. Each will be powered by the Bentley W12 engine, the most successful 12-cylinder engine of the modern era. The Le Mans Collection includes unique exterior and interior details that echo the design of the Le Mans winning Speed 8 #7.

**Mike Sayer**  
Head of Product Communications  
mike.sayer@bentley.co.uk  
+44(0)7507 846782

**Jonathan Smedley**  
Product Communications  
Manager  
jonathan.smedley@bentley.co.uk  
+44(0)7958 058427

**Bentley Motors Ltd**  
Pyms Lane  
Crewe  
CW1 3PL

www.bentleymedia.com  
communications@bentley.co.uk  
@BentleyNewsroom  
@BentleyComms

All Le Mans Collection models are specified with the three-way Bentley Rotating Display, offering a choice of touchscreen, dual veneer or analogue dials – but with a twist; In place of the standard central dial is a Vitrine displaying an engine



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valve from the 4.0-litre twin-turbo V8 of the 2003 Le Mans winning Bentley Speed 8. The engine was removed after the contest and preserved, and now 24 of the 32 valves from the engine have been bisected to create 48 artefacts for this exclusive collection of ultimate Grand Tourers.

In another thoughtful touch, the standard 12-hour analogue clock is replaced by a digital clock with a bespoke dial design – a 24 hour one, naturally.

Mulliner, Bentley's personal commissioning division, has taken inspiration from the dark green Speed 8 racing cars that swept all before them at Le Mans in 2003. From the Verdant green exterior to the sliver of Speed 8 engine displayed in the fascia, the Le Mans Collection is a heartfelt tribute to a long and glorious shared history between Bentley and the Le Mans 24 Hours.

### **Tribute to Speed 8 #7**

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Mulliner's designers closely studied the winning Speed 8 of 2003, surely one of the most beautiful racing cars ever to triumph at Le Mans. The limited number of Continental GT's and Continental GTC's in the Le Mans Collection are finished in Verdant green, with a Moonbeam racing stripe across the bonnet (and Coupé roof). The Blackline specification nods to the black and green livery of the Speed 8, while the carbon-fibre Styling specification body components are finished in black with a subtle pinstripe in Moonbeam. Beluga black is also chosen for the lower front bumper, wing mirror caps and rear 'horseshoe' area beneath the bootlid spoiler, while black 22-inch ten-spoke wheels shroud powerful carbon ceramic brakes and red brake calipers.

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Meanwhile, the distinctive Bentley matrix grille (originally developed to protect the radiator on the unpaved Le Mans racetrack of the 1920s) features a painted #7 in Arctica white, combining the race-winning number of 2003 with the painted radiators of the Bentleys that won Le Mans five times between 1924 and 1930.

### **Bespoke details**

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The interiors of the Le Mans Collection Continental GT and Continental GTC are far more luxurious than those of the Bentley Speed 8s – but there's the same sense of sporting purpose. A bespoke 2003 wreath welcome lamp ushers you into a cockpit trimmed in Beluga hide. Performance-bred napped Dynamica fabric covers the seat faces, while the interior's monochrome colour scheme is relieved by contrast seat stitching and seatbelts in Hotspur. The steering wheel, trimmed in hide and Dynamica, also features Hotspur contrast stitching and six o'clock accent tab.

The dual-finish veneer on fascia and door waist rails is executed in Piano Black and high gloss carbon fibre, with a fine chrome pinstripe separating the two. Matching doors to fascia so the pinstripe flows seamlessly from one side to the other is a mark of the exceptional craftsmanship in every Bentley.

The Le Mans Collection Bentleys feature many bespoke details, beginning with the Speed 8 sill plates and six-wreath treadplates that greet occupants on entering the interior. The fascia displays the six-wreath emblem inlaid into high-gloss carbon fibre, marking each of the six outright victories recorded by Bentley at Le Mans between 1924 and 2003.

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### **Race inspired performance**

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The Le Mans Collection Continental GT and GTC are equipped with Bentley's renowned 6.0-litre W12 TSI engine, delivering 659 PS (650 bhp) and an extraordinary 900 Nm (664 lb.ft) of torque.

With exceptional handling, this results in a top speed of 208 mph (335 km/h) and 0-60 mph in 3.5 seconds (0-100 km/h in 3.6 seconds). A combination of four chassis technologies give the new limited edition a level of agility, performance and ride quality as expected of a car with this heritage.

Bentley Dynamic Ride and three-chamber active air suspension with adaptive damping play a key role in the balance of the car and provide a formidable foundation to build upon. The optional and newly-developed Carbon Ceramic Brakes, Variable Electronic Stability Control, All Wheel Steering, and an Electronic Limited Slip Differential bolster the agility and performance even further.

### **Bentley and Le Mans**

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Bentley's long association with Le Mans didn't get off to the smoothest of starts. "I think the whole thing's crazy. Nobody'll finish. Cars aren't designed to take that sort of strain for 24 hours." Such was W.O. Bentley's reaction in 1923, on hearing that private entrant John Duff planned to contest the first-ever Le Mans 24 Hour race in a Bentley 3 Litre. But the competitive fire in W.O's soul saw him make a last-minute dash to the La Sarthe circuit nonetheless. Inspired by Duff's 4<sup>th</sup> place (despite a lengthy stop to repair a holed petrol tank) and fastest lap, W.O and Bentley Motors returned in 1924 with a works entry – and won. It was the start of a glorious decade that saw five wins in seven years.

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Bentley was back in 2001 with the EXP Speed 8, the start of a three-year programme targeting a sixth outright victory. And on Sunday, June 15th, 2003, Bentley's two works Speed 8s finished first and second in this most gruelling of endurance races. Car #7 of Guy Smith, Tom Kristensen and Rinaldo Capello covered 377 laps at an average speed of 214.33km/h, followed by the #8 Speed 8 of Johnny Herbert, Mark Blundell and David Brabham.

- ENDS -

### Notes to editors

Bentley Motors is the most sought-after luxury car brand in the world. The company's headquarters in Crewe is home to all of its operations including design, R&D, engineering, Mulliner and production of the company's five model lines, Continental GT, Continental GTC, Flying Spur, Bentayga and Bentayga EWB. The combination of fine craftsmanship, using skills that have been handed down through generations, alongside engineering expertise and cutting-edge technology is unique to UK luxury car brands such as Bentley. It is also an example of high-value British manufacturing at its best. Bentley employs around 3,000 people at Crewe.

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