



By Appointment to
His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales
Motor Car Manufacturer and Repairer

ASTON MARTIN LAGONDA
THE CARS AND THE COMPANY



The Cars And The Company

Aston Martin Lagonda is a name that needs little introduction. It has always stood for fine, civilized cars, designed and produced by craftsmen. There is a special place in the market and in the hearts of owners for classic sports cars which conform to this ideal. These are cars which bring to life the freedom and enjoyment of motoring's golden age.

Even so, every Aston Martin is very much a product of today's science. The latest cars from Aston Martin Lagonda reflect all the traditional values of the marque and yet enable owners to benefit from major technological advances which add to their comfort, convenience, safety and - of course - the sheer pleasure of motoring.

New resources and new investment - in test rigs and tracks, in the latest computer aided design and engineering facilities, in statistical process control and many other leading edge disciplines - are ensuring that for Aston Martin Lagonda, the future is every bit as bright as its illustrious past.



The Making Of A Marque

It is more than 80 years since Lionel Martin and Robert Bamford began their partnership, in a London garage selling Singer cars. The success of this venture gave birth to the idea of building their own car. It was to be called Aston Martin, the Aston prefix derived from the Aston hill-climb, where Martin had competed successfully in a specially tuned Singer 10.

But war was to intervene and it was not until 1915 that the first wholly Aston Martin car was built. Even then, production for sale did not begin until 1923, the year after Count Louis Zborowski - of 'Chitty Bang Bang' fame - had agreed to finance the fledgling company.

Martin Motors Ltd was founded, following an historic meeting with Augustus Cesare Bertelli and William S Renwick who designed their own 1½ litre engine. Bertelli-designed Aston Martins were destined to compete at Brooklands, Le Mans and in the Mille Miglia, laying firm foundations for what was to become a distinguished sporting pedigree.

In 1947 the company was offered to David Brown and, shortly after concluding its purchase, he also bought Lagonda.

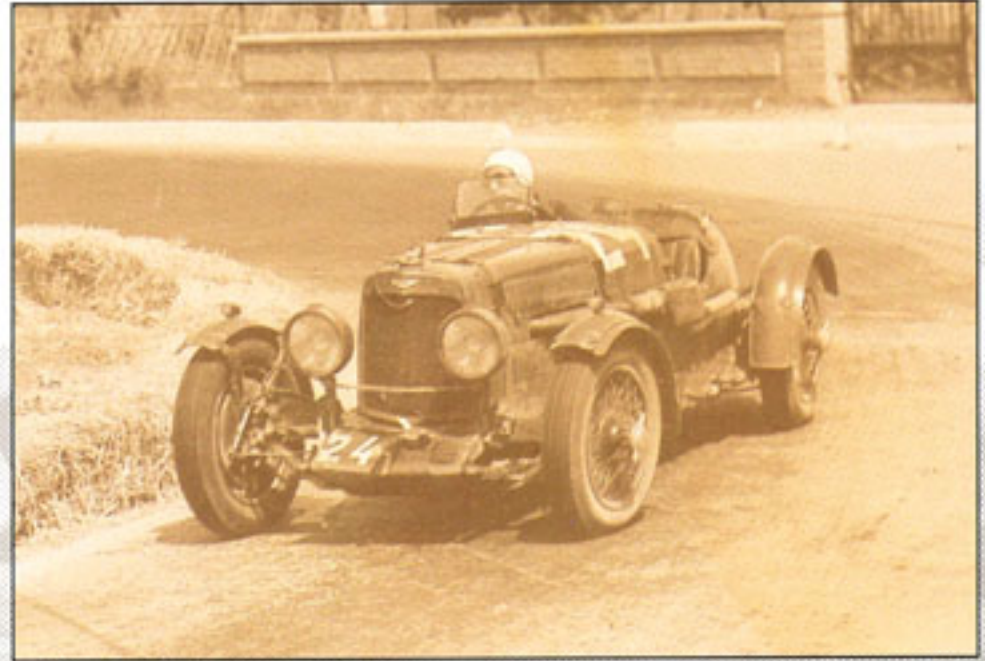
An advanced design space-frame model - the DB1 - was the first project of the new company. An engine designed under the supervision of W O Bentley for the post-war Lagonda was installed, an aerodynamic body was fitted and the car was entered for the 1949 Le Mans 24 Hour event. It went into production as the DB2 the following year.

The marque now went from strength to strength. Eberan von Eberhorst, formerly with Auto Union, was taken on to design the 1951 DB3, setting the scene for a period of mounting success in competition. This culminated in 1959, when the DBR1 gave Aston Martin victory at Le Mans along with the Sports Car Constructors' Championship. The DBR1 was the first British car to win the trophy - effectively a World Championship.





Lionel Martin



Aston Martin Ulster - 1935



Robert Bamford

Aston Martin DBR1 winning
the 1959 Le Mans 24 Hours
(Classic Cars)

The DB4, introduced in 1958, was a new car with an all-aluminium engine designed by Tadek Marek, Chief Designer of Aston Martin. This was followed in 1963 by the four-litre DB5. True four-seater motoring, coupled with sensational performance, came in 1966 with the DB6: the DBS and DBS Vantage were unveiled a year later. The powerful DBS Vantage remained in production until 1973.

A glorious quarter century came to an end in 1972 when David Brown sold Aston Martin. During the next 10 years the company was to have a number of different owners - challenging times for a now famous name.

The 1980s began with the production of the William Towns-designed Lagonda, a remarkable and timely success: 645 were built at Newport Pagnell. A link with Zagato, dating back to 1960, was strengthened in 1986 with the V8 Vantage Zagato.

In 1987, the Ford Motor Company took a controlling interest in the company from Peter Livanos and Victor Gauntlett and began to inject the resources which were clearly necessary if Aston Martin's ambitions were to be realised. The following year saw the debut of the 5.3 litre Virage, Aston Martin's first completely new car for two decades.

Three new cars were introduced in 1992: a 6.3 litre version of the Virage; the Volante and, towards the end of the year, a new Vantage. The most powerful, handcrafted, pure sports car in the world, the Vantage is a magnificent confirmation of the proud heritage and traditions which still motivate anyone - and everyone - who works for Aston Martin.

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Aston Martin Lagonda



Aston Martin DB4



Aston Martin Zagato winner of the 1992 FIA World Championship for historic GT cars driven by Nick Cussons

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DB4 at the 1962 Geneva Motor Show
(Classic Cars)



Peter Collins



Jack Fairman



Jim Clark

A Car For Life

For much of the first century of the motor car, Aston Martin has shown itself to be a very special company, driven by a passion for performance, perfection and a single-minded dedication to engineering and craftsmanship.

It cannot count its success in numbers built. Fewer than 12,000 cars have sported its distinctive winged emblem. But nearly 9,000 of them remain, in the hands of enthusiasts, private owners and museums of automobile art throughout the world. The roll-call of distinguished owners and drivers testifies to a very special kind of loyalty.

Aston Martin has always devoted as much attention, and as many craftsmen, to the service, repair and restoration of older models as to the design and production of new ones. Since 1955, a specialised department at Newport Pagnell has maintained old tools and held a comprehensive stock of parts. Today, the facility includes a workshop dedicated to all DB models and can undertake the restoration of any DB car to its original splendour - only recently completing the splendid restoration of the first of the DB2 models.

Older Aston Martins and Lagondas are still being re-discovered - often in surprising places. Many early Lagondas, for example, were sold in St. Petersburg in Czarist Russia. Sometimes little more than the chassis remains, but all can be brought back to life. Aston Martin offers an individual service, testifying that chassis and engine numbers are genuine - important information for anyone purchasing an historic car.

Today, as ever, Aston Martin owners have access to a private track to enhance their familiarity with the cars, and their driving skills. Several times each year, the company takes over the Goodwood circuit in England, in co-operation with former Grand Prix driver Peter Gethin's Driving School. These open days have become an institution.

Expert travelling mechanics are also available to help any owner, fully equipped to provide special assistance anywhere. They remain an integral part of a comprehensive service demonstrating the company's commitment to its products.





A comprehensive stock of parts are held for past models



Restoration of the first of the DB2s



V8 undergoing restoration

Aston Martin owners take over
the Goodwood circuit

Accustomed To Individuality

Though it is said that no two Aston Martins are alike, this is not entirely true. What is beyond dispute is that the company is renowned for its ability to vary specifications in order to meet the most exacting demands of individual owners.

All too often, small companies - no matter how rich their talent or extensive their craftsmanship - lack the resources necessary to ensure that all special demands are met. But this is not the case at Aston Martin, where custom building and design is a dedicated activity. In 1992 Aston Martin introduced the first Shooting Brakes to be designed and built in-house... and has since responded to owners' requests to build four-door versions of the Brakes and four-door Virage performance limousines.

Car development never stands still in any organisation devoted to continuous improvement - and improvements have been introduced into Aston Martin's range of cars as and when they have been proved worthy of production. A special conversion, for example, of the Virage and Volante, uprates the 5.3 litre engine to 6.3 litres, while also uprating the braking system and adding the largest ventilated disc brakes on any production car. Ride, handling and body modifications like these are as popular with Aston Martin owners as the fitment of advanced entertainment systems and mobile television.





6.3 conversion includes body modifications



Aston Martin Virage Shooting Brake



Aston Martin Virage 6.3

Bodywork hand-formed by craftsman

A New World Of Resources

When the Ford Motor Company became the principal owner of Aston Martin Lagonda it made available a new world of resources, removing at a stroke many earlier constraints.

Though Aston Martin remains an autonomous company, controlling its own products, operations and investment, Ford's huge technical support and test facilities have enabled it to pursue new ambitions. Since the integration of worldwide regulations - covering everything from engine emissions to safety it has become more necessary than ever to design for world markets.

The highest possible standards apply throughout. From test rigs and tracks, through computer aided design and engineering, to statistical process control and many other new disciplines, the small world of Aston Martin now meets the wide world of high expectation.

Access to new resources enabled Aston Martin to complete its 'V' range of modern classics: the Virage (with its conversions), the Volante (the most completely satisfying convertible) and the Vantage. A Vantage Volante is being developed.

It has become clear, however, that many owners have been looking to Aston Martin for a smaller, less expensive, but still wholly satisfying sports car in the DB tradition.

Of course, Aston Martin remains secure and confident in its traditional abilities. Its cars are hand-crafted by men and women with a unique feel for machines and materials; all engines are hand built.

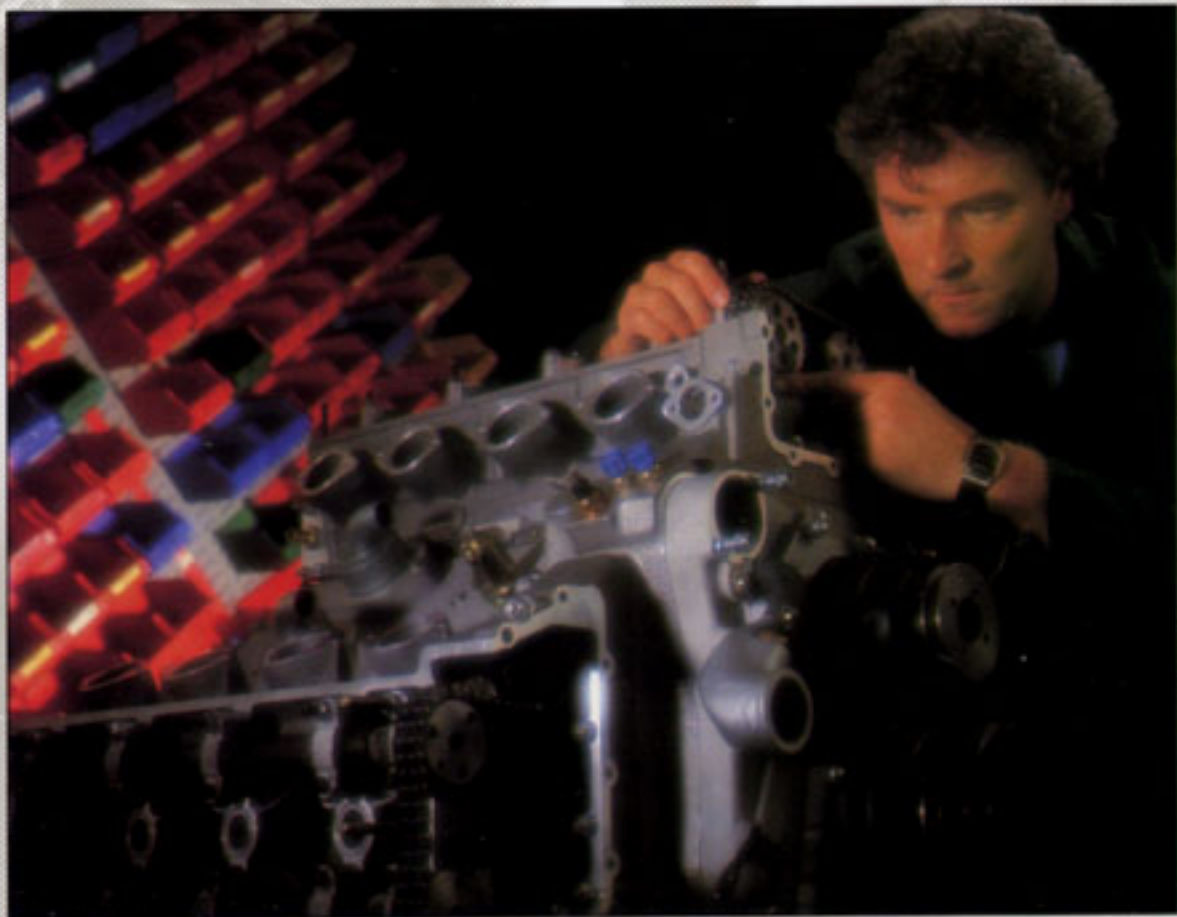
Vantage for instance, takes 16 weeks to build. Engine assembly alone takes 56 hours and the men who lovingly put them together sign their work with their name on a brass plate. Painting takes a further 40 hours. Each interior requires nine hides, of which eight are worked and one is kept in stock should the car need repair. Carpets are finest quality Wilton; woods are selected burr walnut or equivalent.

It is a deliberate, slow and inevitably costly form of manufacture. But that, after all, is Aston Martin - the essence of a passion for perfection. It is what makes a car for life.





A Vantage passes through the paint system at Newport Pagnell



A plate affixed to every Aston Martin engine carries the name of the engineer who built it

An early stage in the building of a Volante

A New Road To The Future

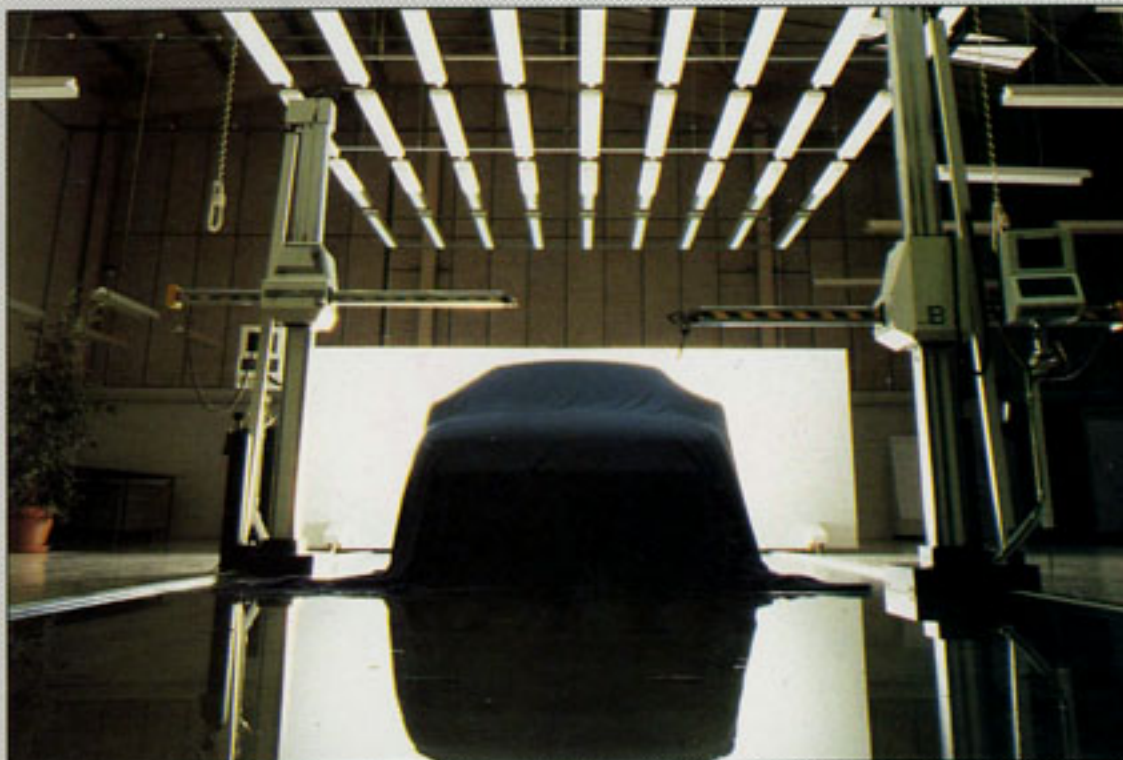
Substantial changes were made in production techniques at Newport Pagnell at the end of 1992. The old method, in which cars were brought to life along a hand-managed assembly line gave way to a new factory layout based on static team building. Each car is now put together by a dedicated group of craftsmen with complementary skills. Every member of the company has been re-trained, learning new techniques and technology designed to work in harmony with traditional Aston Martin skills.

New methods and new ideas were particularly important when plans were developed for the new smaller car. It would have been impractical to build the new model at Newport Pagnell, not least because there was no appropriate space available. In the event, Ford came to the company's aid – making it possible for Aston Martin to obtain the use of a new factory and additional engineering resources.

Jaguar had built a new assembly facility for the XJ220 - its own hand-made sports car - at Bloxham, Oxford and, under the supervision and direction of Tom Walkinshaw, the presiding talent of JaguarSport and the Benetton Grand Prix team, it had established a supporting engineering centre at nearby Kidlington. By arrangement with Jaguar and Mr Walkinshaw, Aston Martin obtained the use of both plants when XJ220 production came to an end. Newport Pagnell began to plan for the new Aston Martin, knowing it had access to two of the most modern specialist facilities in Britain, with the added advantage of Grand Prix technology at its fingertips.

Aston Martin still had one heart - but gained an additional arm - and could therefore plan to continue an established tradition, with a 1990s version of the DB cars which the James Bond films had made the most famous of their kind - anywhere in the world.

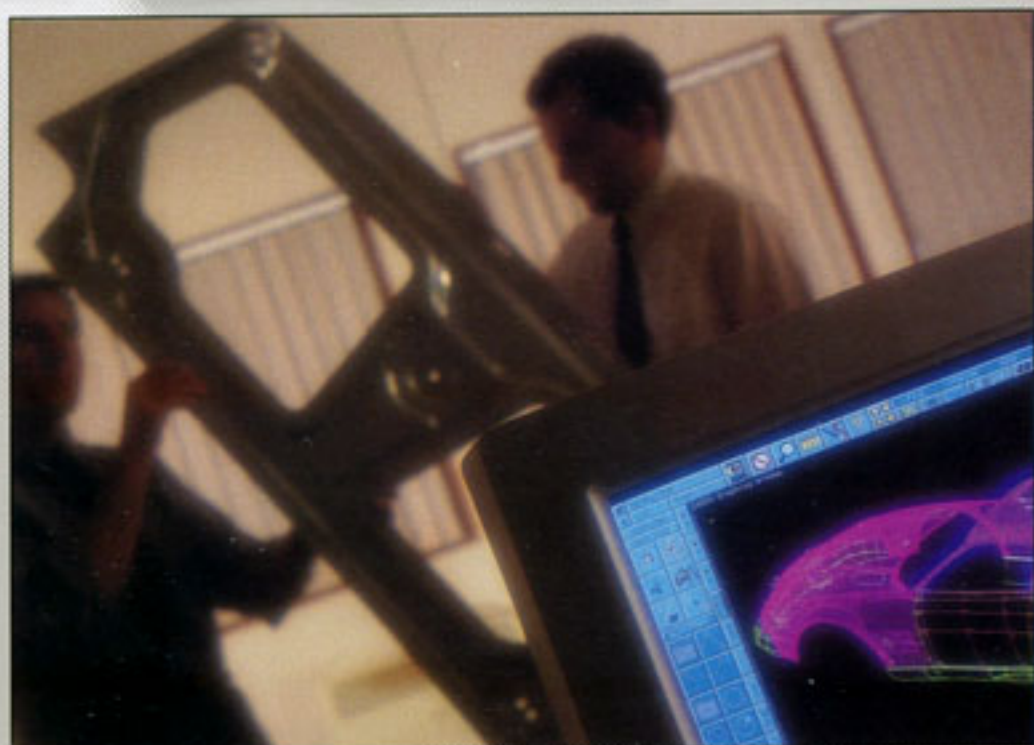




State of the art styling facilities



Each car is put together by a dedicated team of craftsmen



Latest CAD CAM systems are employed

New technology works in harmony with traditional skills

Volante

The Volante defies comparison. No other four-seater convertible is as flawlessly hand-built, as impressively powered. Recapturing the spirit of grand touring in the best of European traditions, it is a supremely elegant car - a true symbol of the pleasure of driving.

Wherever you drive, the Volante provides a very special way of travelling. You arrive feeling relaxed and exhilarated, for this is the ultimate sports convertible.

Wherever you look, there is evidence of craftsmanship: the hood is mohair, the interior hand-stitched Connolly hide and polished burr walnut... every last detail is accorded meticulous care - not to mention foresight! Each interior, for example, requires nine matching hides, of which eight are worked. The ninth is kept in stock should repair be necessary.

Mechanically too, every feature of the car plays its part in providing the full Aston Martin experience - performance and enjoyment. Perfection in engineering, a hallmark of every Aston Martin, is reflected in a hand-built 5.3 litre V8 engine, capable of taking the Volante with effortless ease to 250 km/h (155 mph).

Such distinction is available nowhere else. The Volante is in a class by itself.









Vantage

Accorded to none but the fastest Aston Martin production cars, the Vantage name has commanded respect for 30 years. It stands for extraordinary performance combined with Aston Martin's unique quality of engineering and finish.

The latest Vantage sets even higher standards. One of the fastest road cars in the world, its hand-built 5.3 litre engine, supercharged for superlative response, propels the Vantage to 96 km/h (60 mph) in 4.6 seconds and 160 km/h (100 mph) in a fraction over 10 seconds. Its top speed is the equal of any.

The engine's immense power - 410 kW (550 bhp) - is matched by equally impressive torque of 745 Nm (550 lbs/ft) @ 4,000 rpm. The result is a mighty car that is a pleasure to drive but that will, on demand, produce awe-inspiring performance.

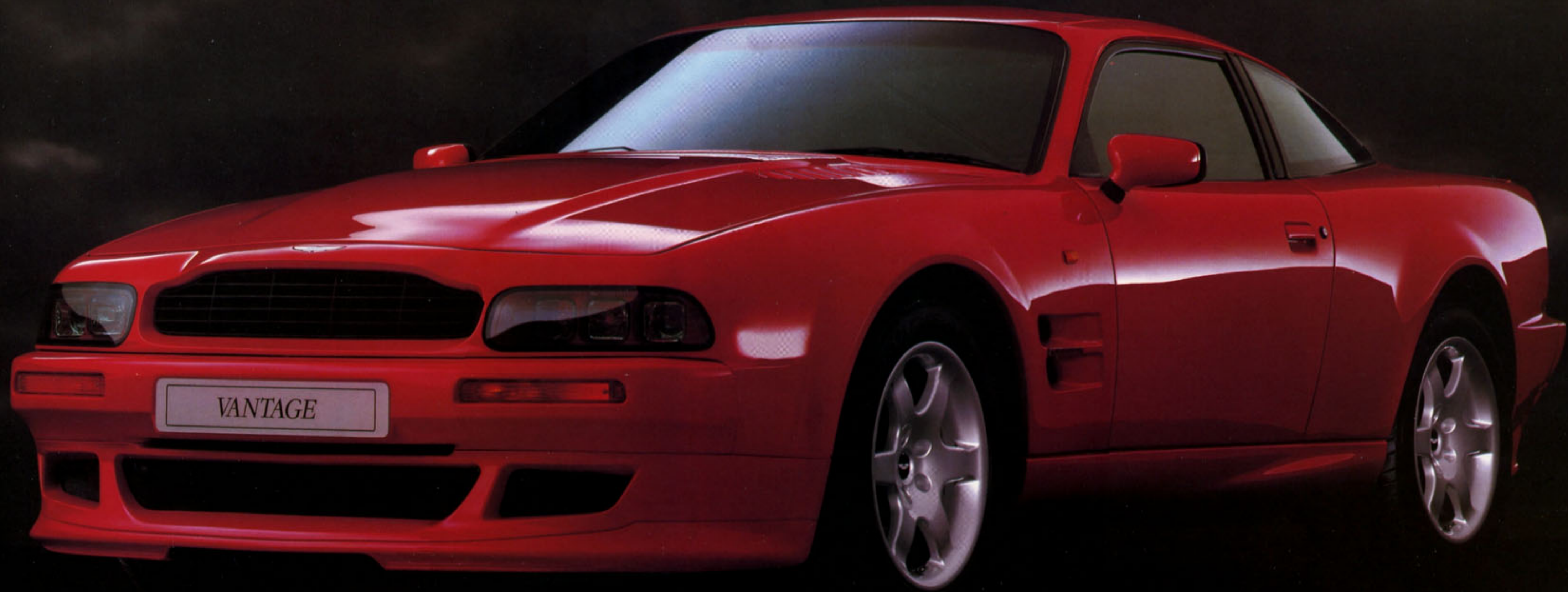
Inside the car's hand-crafted body, the Vantage driver enjoys all the splendour of a classic Aston Martin interior: hand-stitched hide, all wool Wilton carpet, deep burr walnut trim... all the comforts expected of a car with such a provenance.

Yet the heart of the Vantage remains its superb engine. Docile enough in normal driving it will, given encouragement, bring to all your senses ample confirmation that you are driving a very special motor car.





VANTAGE





DB7

Stylish, sporting, adventurous: DB cars are woven into the very fabric of Britain's motoring history. From 1994, a DB model once again takes its place in the Aston Martin Lagonda range. The Aston Martin DB7 is a classic front engine, rear-wheel drive sports car reflecting the 2+2 configuration and design themes of the famous DB series. It is almost the same length as the DB6, but lower and wider.

The body design echoes the lines and proportions of Sir David Brown's definitive marque. Ride, handling and driveability have received the special attention of Jackie Stewart, a Director of Aston Martin Lagonda.

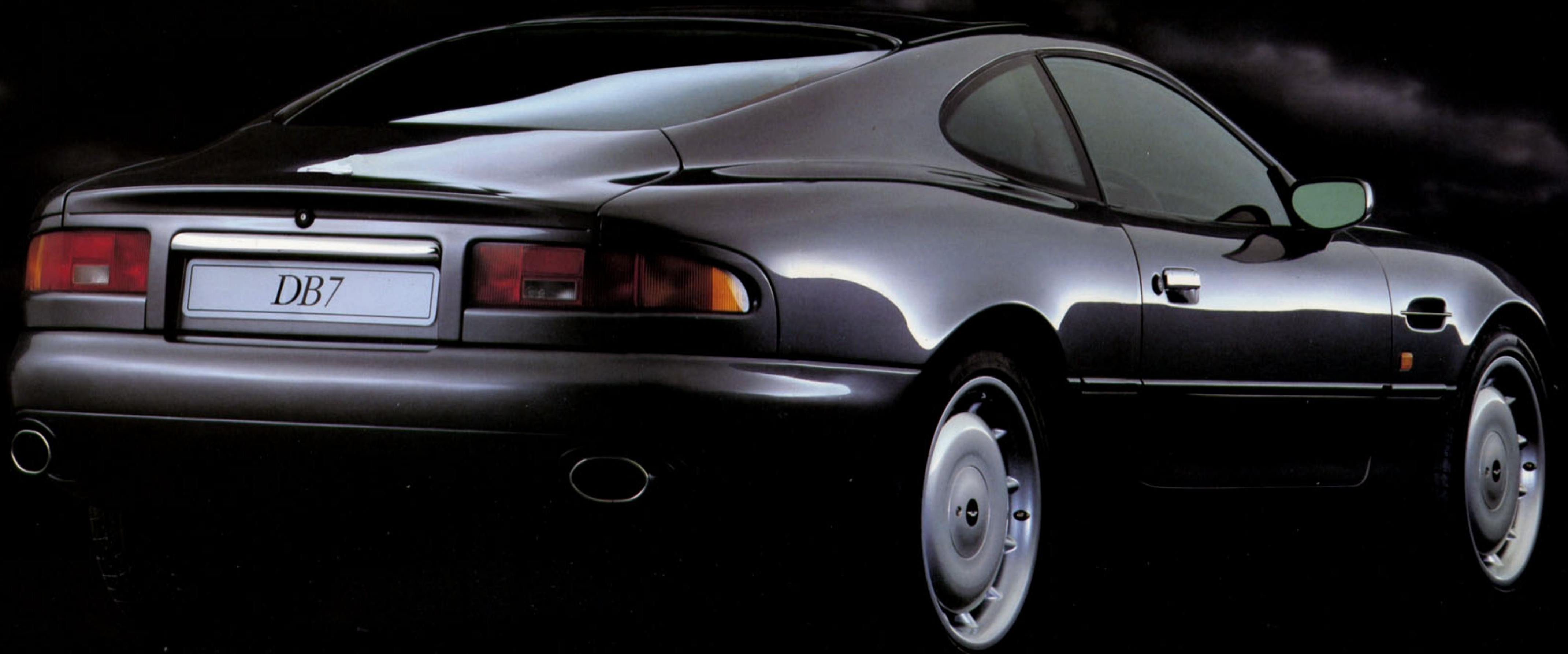
As a result, the DB7 is a rapid motor car. A car for drivers who appreciate the kind of feedback that enables them to feel at one with the machine - that offers performance in safety.

The DB7's 3.2 litre in-line six cylinder, all-aluminium supercharged engine is meticulously engineered to provide a smooth and vigorous response, but at Aston Martin such performance does not come at the expense of comfort. Inside, the DB7 is a car of considerable finesse, with handcrafted leather, the finest burr walnut cappings and crisp, uncluttered instrumentation and controls. Long distances are no endurance test in the DB7.

This is a car of immaculate poise with perfect road manners - sheer driving enjoyment!











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