

AUSTRIAN ALPINE SKI LEGEND MEETS FRENCH HYPER SPORTS CAR



Hermann Maier has never avoided a good challenge - be it down the hill or off the piste. Although nowadays he tends to keep a low profile when it comes to public endorsements, he couldn't resist the opportunity of testing the Bugatti Chiron¹ for the marque's exclusive customer magazine 'ettore'. And to feel right at home, the roads had to be swapped for a snow-covered trail. The hyper sports car did not disappoint. Thanks to the precisely set-up drive slip control technology, this sleek beast can prance effortlessly in an environment so dissimilar to its natural habitat.

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Hermann Maier is a legendary Austrian winter sportsman. Maier ranks among the greatest alpine ski racers in history, with four overall World Cup titles, two Olympic gold medals, and three World Championship titles, setting records along the way still valid to this day. Known as an indestructible comeback champion with a courageous and risky style when skiing downhill, he was given the nickname 'The Herminator' after the famous Hollywood fictional character The Terminator portrayed by his fellow Austrian, Arnold Schwarzenegger.

"The exhilarating feeling of a controlled drift is only comparable to a perfect one performed on skis", Hermann Maier exclaimed, fascinated by the Chiron's performance in such slippery conditions. "Despite the raw power of this car I felt safe and in control from the beginning. So, I decided to take it up a notch and switched to the Handling Mode. Incredibly enough, this resulted in even more fun! The Chiron makes the most difficult seem so effortless and suave."

The Bugatti Chiron's unique 8-litre W16 engine, with its power of 1500 PS and a torque of 1600 Nm, is positioned directly behind the monocoque. Giving the car a perfect weight distribution and providing power to all four wheels it is responsible for the convenient lack of understeering. The precisely set-up all-wheel drive of the Bugatti Chiron allows for a controlled instability on the icy track, making the car poised. While the Chiron is one of the few hyper sports cars that features all-wheel drive, Hermann Maier is no stranger to it. His daily driver is the Audi Q7 e-tron.

The location for this fun-filled test drive couldn't have been more fitting. The ice tracks of Altenmarkt im Pongau in Austria, not far from Hermann Maier's birth place, had hosted the Historic Ice Trophy 2019 just a few weeks earlier. For their local alpine skiing hero the organisers kindly opened and prepared their amazing track again. True to his competitive nature that had once lifted him to the Olympus of winter sports, Hermann Maier seemed to have gotten hungry for more.

"I've practically spent my whole life on skis. I never imagined that four wheels could deliver a similar joy in the snow as two skis", Maier gushed. "After this experience I would love to test out a Bugatti more often". And in this spirit, the Herminator sped the Bugatti Chiron on its way, borrowing fellow countryman Arnold Schwarzenegger's signature quote: "I'll be back."

¹ Chiron: WLTP fuel consumption, l/100 km: low phase 44.6 / medium phase 24.8 / high phase 21.3 / extra high phase 21.6 / combined 25.2; CO2 emissions combined, g/km: 572; efficiency class: G