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BUGATTI CHIRON SUPER SPORT ‘GOLDEN ERA’: THE PINNACLE OF HAND-CRAFTED LUXURY



The Bugatti Chiron Super Sport[1] ‘Golden Era’ is perhaps the most challenging bespoke project that Bugatti has ever undertaken. It is the result of two years of innovative and bespoke craftsmanship, featuring entirely new techniques that elevate it from the world of automotive and into pure artistry. It is the very embodiment of the Bugatti Sur Mesure offering, in which customers’ ambitious visions for their vehicles — which stretch beyond the already near-infinite levels

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of Bugatti customization — are brought to life in a collaborative process with the design team.

In this case, that vision came from a Bugatti collector with a deep appreciation for Bugatti history and for the intricate engineering of the W16 engine. Not only did he choose a Chiron Super Sport to celebrate the combustion engine design, but he wanted to appropriately pay homage to the history that had led to the creation of this engine. With this vision presented to Bugatti, the design team developed a proposal that captured the essence of what makes Bugatti special, told through its most memorable and extraordinary creations. And the result is: 'Golden Era'.
Achim Anscheidt, former Bugatti Design Director in charge of this creation, explains the ideation's starting point: ''Our customers can be incredibly creative and we take great pride in helping them realize what they dream of, but extensive special commissions such as this are exceedingly rare — we usually see no more than one or two creations on this scale each year. Given the vision and exacting nature for this project — and the fantastical ideation we wanted to realize — 'Golden Era' is probably the most demanding piece of tailored personalization work that my team and I have ever worked on.

''A very important customer came to us and during our conversations, he expressed that he believed the Chiron Super Sport and its W16 engine represented a landmark moment in the world of the automobile. He wanted to do something truly unique in celebration. We looked back through Bugatti history to find a number of these landmark moments, including the times of Ettore Bugatti, Jean Bugatti and Roland Bugatti, which really marked the first golden era for the brand. And then, of course, the modern-day incarnation of Bugatti from 1987, picking out the icons from these times that came to define the Bugatti brand. Our team proposed a concept featuring 45 sketches of the brand's icons that would be hand-drawn directly onto the car itself, and the owner immediately fell in love with the idea. The implementation may sound quite straightforward, but achieving a perfect finish, and one that would last the test of time, took more patience and craftsmanship than you could ever imagine.''

The customer himself has a great appreciation of Bugatti, and the designers' collaborative process with the owner — in which he made countless visits to the team to see the vision come to life — was sparked by his unbridled passion. Initiating the relationship between the customer and the Bugatti team in Molsheim — and overseeing the project through to its final stage — was Bugatti's trusted dealer partner located in Greenwich, Connecticut.

Bugatti Managing Director, Hendrik Malinowski, says: ''Sur Mesure literally translates as tailored and it is this complete ultra-luxury customer-centric approach to car design that really sets it apart. Our teams will work hand-in-hand with our customers to craft exactly what they want, and then work closely with them over the course of months or even years to transform it into a reality. Each step, every decision and — in the case of the Golden Era — every stroke of the pencil, was completed with the close oversight and input of the owner to exceed his expectations in a way that no other brand is able to do.''

The overall project for the car would capture the incomparable legacy of Bugatti, a story told through a composition of beautifully intricate sketches depicting milestones from the legendary brand. On the passenger side, 26 hand-drawn sketches reveal icons like the Type 41 Royale — lauded as the most luxurious car when revealed in 1926 — and the Type 57 SC Atlantic, widely regarded as the most beautiful car ever designed. It is a showcase of the moments when Bugatti changed the course of automotive history with its new innovations. On the driver's

side, 19 sketches portray the rebirth and enduring success of Bugatti since 1987, tracing from the EB110, through the Veyron and Chiron[2]. A beautifully simple representation of the 3,712 individual components that come together to create the legendary W16 engine — the most advanced automotive engine ever built — rightfully takes its place as a part of the masterpiece.

The team honed and refined their artwork for the project until they achieved precisely the right scale, proportion and form for each of the individual sketches, bringing them together to form one beautiful artwork. But this art would need an appropriate canvas. A bespoke color, a timeless and celebratory shade of gold named 'Doré', was created and applied to the car with a gradiented color split into a special metallic variant of 'Nocturne Black', creating the perfect base for the designers to begin the daunting process of sketching directly onto the car.

Achim Anscheidt continues: ''It was very clear to us from the beginning that we can only achieve an authentic finish for these sketches — and at Bugatti authenticity is paramount — if we actually used the pencils that we use for sketching on paper — anything else would result in something looking fake or low in quality. So that's why we had to find a process that would allow us to use pencils and do all of the sketches by hand, directly onto the paintwork.''

Of course, even for the most experienced and skilled designer, the task of sketching, purely by hand, onto a specially commissioned hyper sports car, was extremely intimidating. From the very first stroke of the pencil, this painstaking, manual process saw Bugatti's uniquely talented team of designers elevating their craft further still in pursuit of perfection. Inevitably, this took a great deal of time, and involved some setbacks along the way. But with extremes of passion, a degree of trial and learnings, the last one of the sketches was eventually completed, having developed a brand new technique to achieve the desired finish for the exterior artwork. In all, this stage of the process took more than 400 hours — testament to the complexity of the artwork.

To create a fully immersive celebration, the design team ensured their proposal would be reflected in the interior. On each of the door panels, three Bugatti icons were hand-applied with a bespoke paint and fine paint brush that would allow one of the design team to draw directly onto the leather. The EB110, Veyron and Chiron, legends of the present day, are facing the icons of the past that had inspired them: the Type 35 — the world's greatest racing car — Type 57 SC Atlantic — the most beautiful car in the world — and Type 41 Royale — renowned as the most luxurious car ever created — applied to the opposite side of the interior. When Bugatti's innovative past meets with its revolutionary future in a car that symbolizes the epitome of Bugatti's savoir-faire. New methods and processes were crafted to ensure that these details would stand the test of time. They sit proudly within the interior as a focal point of beautiful bespoke touches, including subtle 'Golden Era' stitching and hand-written 'One-of-One' motifs.

A timeless and incomparable homage to the era-defining moments in Bugatti history, the Chiron Super Sport 'Golden Era' is beyond comparison in the scale of its bespoke ambition; a project that could only have sprung from the minds of true Bugatti enthusiasts, and one that could only have been finished to such a perfect level of detail by the craftsmen in Molsheim. The car now awaits an official handover to its owner at Monterey Car Week.

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[1] Chiron Super Sport: WLTP fuel consumption, l/100 km: low phase 40.3 / medium phase 22.2 / high phase 17.9 / extra high phase 17.1 / combined 21.5; CO2 emissions combined, g/km: 487; efficiency class: G