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BUGATTI SUR MESURE CAPTURES THE SPIRIT OF JEAN BUGATTI'S TYPE 55



The genius of Jean Bugatti — the visionary designer and engineer who imbued the entire automotive world with his pioneering creations — lay not only in his engineering prowess but the unmatched aesthetic proportions of his designs. The yield of Jean's legacy endures, and the Type 55 stands as a testament to his supreme talent.

The Type 55 Super Sport — a marvel of motorsport inspiration — boasted a 2.3-liter straight-eight engine derived from the formidable Type 51 racer. What set it apart, however, was the sought-after two-seater roadster body of Jean Bugatti's design. As Bugatti's inaugural Super Sport, the Type 55 not only marked the foundation of a new category but it also served

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as the blueprint for all modern-day Super Sport models, redefining grand touring — seamlessly blending comfort with a remarkable top speed of 180 km/h.
Yet, Jean Bugatti's ingenuity extended beyond engineering — introducing the then groundbreaking duotone paint scheme that would eventually inspire Bugatti's iconic contemporary A/B color split. And today, the most revered Type 55 model wears the timeless combination of black and yellow.

The Type 55 Super Sport is a rare gem, with only 38 units ever crafted. Its scarcity only adds to its status as a coveted collectors' piece. Its legacy, as the pioneer of the Grand Prix car for the road segment, captured the imagination of a Chiron Super Sport[1] customer and the Sur Mesure team.

For the customer and for Jascha Straub, Manager of Sur Mesure and Individualization at Bugatti, the '55 1 of 1' commission was an opportunity to pay tribute to Jean Bugatti's groundbreaking creations that, in blending elegance and engineering prowess, impacted the modern-day Bugatti brand. "Even 100 years after his time, we have remained totally connected to Jean and his designs" noted Straub. "And inspiration for us today still comes from Jean because he understood proportions better than anybody else and was the first to offer cars combining comfort and sheer performance. Imagine, almost 100 years ago, the Type 55 was able to reach 180 km/h."

With this at the forefront of his mind, Straub worked hand-in-hand with the customer and the Bugatti partner in Dubai to delve into the marque's rich history, capture the aura of the Type 55 Super Sport and seamlessly infuse it into the design of the contemporary Chiron Super Sport to offer a timeless modern interpretation of the original car's distinctive elements.

In capturing the essence of the historic car, the Sur Mesure team focused on the now famous duotone paint scheme introduced by Jean with the Type 55, utilizing the black and yellow combination so favored by Ettore Bugatti. On the Chiron Super Sport, the colors not only serve to portray dynamism but also as a means to visually break up the expansive surfaces of the hyper sports car. The design process was a delicate balance between coloring specific areas and maintaining cohesion with the overall design. The dominant focal point is a black centerline reminiscent of the Type 55. This visual element is further embellished through the grille design, which runs a black line around the famous Bugatti central air intake, and a sleek yellow line that flows from the back of the rear side of the car to the fenders.

Throughout the creative development, Bugatti intensively worked to evolve and modernize elements of the Type 55 to produce a car that is unmistakably of this century, but one that respects to the early pioneering work of Jean Bugatti whilst embodying the DNA of a Bugatti Sur Mesure project.

In this sense, the '55 1 of 1' draws on an approach that involved deploying a meticulously hand-applied fading '55' pattern above the headlights and over the fenders, to center attention to the horseshoe grill and narrow the appearance of the front end — recalling the distinctive fuselage shape of its predecessor, imparting a feeling of elegance, but also one of strength and speed. "From a distance, the '55' pattern ensures that the fender appears to be black like on the original car," said Jascha. "On the original historic car, where you have some parts that end at a certain point, you can just paint until the shut line. But with the Chiron Super Sport, it had to fade into zero. It was a long and intricate process, but it was the right approach."

The ‘55 1 of 1’ commission balances its bold styling with minimalist black 10-spoke wheels. A yellow ‘EB’ emblem in the center delicately connects the alloy design to the Chiron Super Sport’s bodywork. The underside of the rear wing meanwhile provides a distinct link to the design’s roots — ‘55 1 of 1’ written in cursive nods to the masterpiece that inspired this artistic creation.

Jean’s meticulous attention to detail extended beyond the exterior, influencing the interior aesthetic as well. As such, the references to the Type 55 Super Sport reach into the inside of the ‘55 1 of 1’. Featuring sleek black leather that further accentuates the exterior aesthetic, the cabin includes unique accents such as embroidered headrests displaying a unique ‘55 1 of 1’ inscription. The fading ‘55’ motif also continues, this time skillfully hand-stitched into the door panels in a vibrant yellow color.

In further recognition of Jean Bugatti’s visionary contributions, his signature is prominently placed on the door sill and the car’s dedication plate. Together, these interior details not only underscore the aesthetic allure of this Chiron Super Sport but also create a deep connection between the driver and the storied heritage of the Bugatti brand.

> ‘‘At Bugatti, our commitment to bespoke craftsmanship is epitomized by our Sur Mesure program. Our team perfectly manages to reinterpret our brand’s iconic classic cars, creatively blending the past with a contemporary approach and innovative techniques. Our latest commission, inspired by the timeless elegance of Jean Bugatti’s iconic black and yellow Type 55 Super Sport, pays homage to a car that represents a milestone in the history of the brand. The '55 1 of 1’ infuses the spirit of one of Bugatti’s most pioneering models and is testament to the fact that Jean's vision not only continues to shape our entire design and engineering ethos to this day but also inspires our customers worldwide, and in this case in the United Arab Emirates.’’
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> HENDRIK MALINOWSKI
> MANAGING DIRECTOR AT BUGATTI AUTOMOBILES

Bugatti Automobiles would like to thank the Musée National de l’Automobile in Mulhouse for the generous loan of the original Bugatti Type 55 chassis no. 55237, which was photographed along with the Chiron Super Sport ‘55 1 of 1’ on Bugatti premises.

Situated in Mulhouse, within the famed Alsace region of France, home to Bugatti, the Musée National de l’Automobile brings together more than 600 revolutionary and emblematic automotive creations, including more than 100 of Bugatti’s most acclaimed models — each one painstakingly acquired by the Schlumpf brothers over a period of three decades. From the Bugatti Type 28 to the Bugatti Royale conceived in 1930 and the Bugatti Veyron, each car is hand-picked for its historic significance and breathtaking proportions.

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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