MOLSHEIM
5/30/2023

FINDING 400: AN INCOMPARABLE BUGATTI EXPERIENCE



At speeds above 400 km/h, phenomenal forces are exerted on every area of a car and the human body must learn to quickly adapt to a velocity at which it was never designed to be subjected. The tires alone must withstand around five tons of outward pressure, with a 44g sensor weighing the equivalent of 132 kg. It is, in every sense, an engineering marvel and a once-in-a-lifetime experience being made possible by Bugatti for a few close customers.

While Bugatti was performing Straight Line Aerodynamic Testing with JBPG at Space Florida's Launch and Landing Facility, located in Kennedy Space Center, Florida, a selection of Bugatti

2026 BUGATTI AUTOMOBILES S.A.S.

models sit awaiting their drivers. They are prepared to take to a 3 mile stretch of historic tarmac, once used as the landing facility for the Space Shuttle. Markers on the ground to this day reveal exactly where each of the Shuttle missions stopped on its return. There's a palpable sense of history and achievement here, and each of the drivers is keen to write his own page in this decades-long story.
Convection currents rise from the asphalt, making pockets of air appear to shimmer far off in the distance. Today the selected drivers will sail through a magical milestone — the 400 km/h barrier — in one of the most technically innovative and intricately designed hyper sports cars of the 21st Century: the Bugatti Chiron Super Sport[1].

The experience is inspired by the vision of Ferdinand Piëch for the original Bugatti Veyron, who challenged engineers to build a car that could drive 400 km/h in the morning and accompany its owner to the opera in the evening. Since then, the ability to seamlessly blend incomparable speed with unparalleled luxury and elegance has been a core part of the Bugatti identity, and today, the drivers will feel that identity in its most visceral form. Bugatti customers and partners line up on the tarmac, and among them is Evan Cygler, Brand Manager at Bugatti Greenwich. To acknowledge his remarkable performance in the Bugatti Sales Excellence Programme 2022, Evan was given this opportunity for a once-in-a-lifetime experience where man and machine are challenged to travel at speeds that very few Bugatti owners had ever travelled before in their hyper sports cars — beyond 400 km/h.

Christophe Piochon, President of Bugatti Automobiles, who attended the 400 Drive, said: ''Just a few years ago achieving 400 km/h required months of careful preparation, the very best motorsport drivers and the most favorable conditions. For a very long time no production car could get anywhere near that speed, even for a moment. But today, in the world of our meticulously engineered and designed Bugatti hyper sports cars, we opened up this performance to our customers in absolute safety and allow them something that very few people will ever have, and most of them even had a chance to experience this with their own car. This kind of moment is part of the incomparable magic of Bugatti.''

Before their first runs, drivers underwent an intensive information session with a Bugatti Pilote Officiel, to prepare for both the physical and mental strains they will go through. At 400 km/h they will be covering the distance of 1.25 football fields every second, their body will experience over 1G of longitudinal force during full-throttle acceleration, and their eyes will struggle to pinpoint the braking boards among the heat haze rising from the runway. But, with a background in elite motorsport, the Pilote Officiel offered them valuable guidance on staying focused, and on the unusual feeling of allowing the car to wander at high speeds rather than try to steer it at roughly a third of the speed of sound. Time had come then for drivers to do their first exhilarating runs of the day, but not before the cars were equipped with their Top Speed Key.

The Top Speed Key — which can only be used if the car's automatic systems detect conditions are safe — will move the car into low-drag position, with the ride height and the rear wing lowered, and front-axle downforce reduced through the repositioning of two hydraulically-actuated flaps ahead of the front wheels.

Now Chiron Super Sport is aerodynamically ready to achieve its unmatched top speed. As the first driver takes to the runway, with left foot on the brake and the accelerator pressed all the way to the floor, Chiron Super Sport's 1,600 PS W16 quad-turbo engine automatically finds the ideal revs for the perfect launch. And with the brake pedal released, it leaps forward with ferocious intent. Pinned back into the seat, the driver must hold tightly on to the steering wheel as the four huge tires transfer the car's prodigious power to the tarmac. The Chiron Super

Sport climbs through the gears of its bespoke seven-speed dual-clutch transmission and just 11 seconds later it's travelling at 300 km/h. The howling wind begins to envelop the cabin, as the Chiron's aerodynamically honed body pierces through the air but the driver's focus remains straight ahead watching the horizon as it accelerates towards them.

And yet the Chiron continues to gain speed, holding on to sixth gear right past the 400 km/h mark and only finding its final ratio at 403 km/h. With the driver's heart beating fast, eyes wide as the scenery flashes by, the accelerator remains pinned to the floor. Although the Super Sport has more to give, the 3 mile runway is fast running out, and the driver hits the brake pedal to call the large carbon ceramic brakes into action, pressed hard against the seatbelt. The roar of tires on asphalt, the howl of the wind and the noise of the mighty W16 all begin to fade away, and breathing hard the driver's perception of speed has forever changed.

With that, a once historic milestone is broken with ease.

Evan Cygler, Brand Manager of Bugatti Greenwich, said: ''To travel at 400 km/h and above you need absolute confidence in the car. It's an intense and exhilarating experience that depends on you and the car being in peak condition and fortunate enough to have the perfect environmental conditions; not too windy, nor too hot, not too wet. With the expert guidance of the Bugatti team, I could break through 400 km/h. The Chiron Super Sport felt as capable at 400 km/h as it did at 200 km/h. It's an experience I'll never forget and that only reinforces my passion for the incredible Bugatti brand. ''

Leaving Space Florida's Launch and Landing Facility, each of the experience's participants is handed their tailored Bugatti race suit, embroidered with their name, and a unique Bugatti race helmet inscribed with the top speed they achieved. These are the souvenirs that will remind them of a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, carried along with the memories of a day that will never fade.

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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