

One more look back....My Top Dream Test Drive of 2010

March 14th, 2011 by Bob Long - Editor in Chief / Host



Every week 52 weeks per year I am very fortunate to have a brand new vehicle delivered by a specialist to my driveway for review. As one my journalistic mentors David E Davis Jr. just recently wrote in Car and Driver magazine, "It is privilege not be taken lightly". A new offering every week gives me the opportunity to have real world driving experience in wide range of vehicles. In addition a few times throughout the year I get a opportunity to drive a special car for a few days. While on the road such the recently held 2011 North American Auto Show in Detroit during my visit there I sampled a 2011 FWD Lincoln MKX. During an average year I drive at least 75 new vehicles..

Some of the vehicles I drive you quickly forget others stay with you for weeks, months or even years. In September 2010 a vehicle came into my life for a few days and I will never forget it.

The vehicle a limited edition convertible called the Bentley GTC Speed 80-11. Bentley's new limited edition model 80-11 is designed exclusively for the North American market. The 80-11 designation underlines just how limited these luxury British convertibles will be with Bentley building only 80 examples of each drop-head in 2011.

The Bentley GTC Speed 80-11 went on sale in the Fall of 2010 as a model-year 2011. Painted in a stunning Midnight color complete with painted red brake calipers showing boldly between the spokes of the standard dark tint Supersports 20 inch wheels



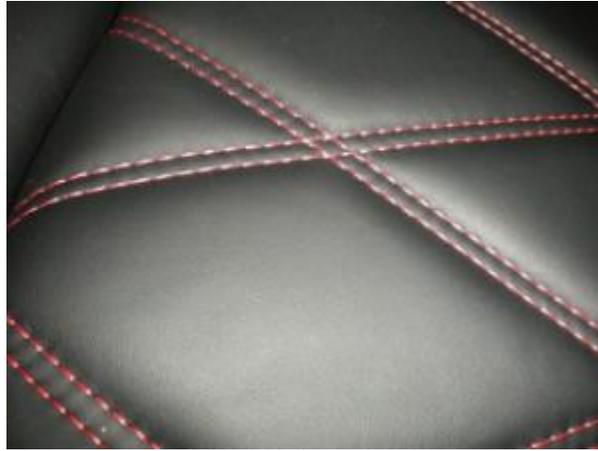
I had driven Bentley's before back in 1999 at the Pebble Beach Concours but that was long before the change of ownership to the VW group. The Bentley were large vehicles with monster c.i.d ohv turbo power-plants. It was beautifully equipped and understated in overall design.

1999 was a long before the introduction of the best selling Bentley of all time the Continental GT. My experience in the GTC Speed 80 was nothing short of spectacular and a country mile from the powerful buy less than athletic 1999 test drive.

Lets start with engine a twin turbocharged W-12 pumped up to 600 Hp and putting out 553 lb feet of torque. This is fastest top speed 4 seater convertible in the world with a top speed of 200mph with the top up, 195 with top down. With no doubt the fastest four seat tanning machine in the world. The 0-60 time is 4.5 seconds is beyond amazing considering the two ton weight of this vehicle

Like it Bentley GT cousin the GTC Speed 80-11 has standard 4 wheel drive. It feel solid as rock in all weather conditions. This a supercar convertible just as comfortable in snow as a 90 degree day The massive 19 inch front and rear disc brakes haul this beautiful machine down from non legal speeds in a whisper. Shod with 275/35/zR 20 inch sport tires the GTC Speed is a great handling car, again for a vehicle of this size and weight it has true sports car like handling.

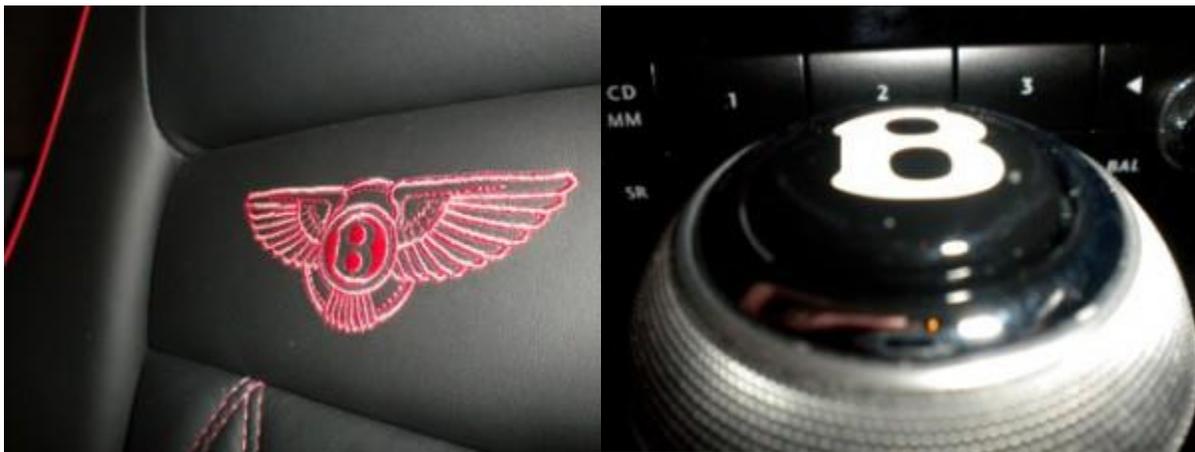
Step inside the GTC 80-11 and will be surrounded by the finest leathers and a complete custom bespoke interior. It is not usual for me to sit inside a high end car at a international auto show for a few minutes but it is not until you live with car like the GTC 80-11 for a few days that you realize the beautiful craftsmanship that goes into building a Bentley GTC 80-11. Turn on the 12 speaker multi channel sound system, look around at the custom interior details and you suddenly realize why this vehicle starts with a sticker price of \$241,950.



The GTC 80-11 delivers a combination of confidence, , luxury and performance unmatched in today's super luxury car marketplace

This is the finest convertible I have ever drivenAmen. Now I hope I get a chance to drive the all new Continental GT coupe.

Check out the Mp3 audio clip from the Detroit Auto Show on the new Continental GT Coupe



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