



# BEAUTY & THE OPEN ROAD

*Ferrari F8 Spider*

Ferrari never ceases to surprise with their nomenclature. In South Africa, their most recent unveiling is of a car that is named after their most acclaimed engine of the last couple of decades, the 3.9-litre V8.





The odds of having an engine named as Engine of the Year in its category are stacked against most manufacturers, having the same engine take the title four years running is near impossible for all but a handful of the most experienced carmakers. Even at the lofty heights of technological development where Ferrari operates, this is a significant achievement.

It is rare, that Ferrari named the F8 Tributo after its engine, and later spawned a Spider version, to rub it in the collective noses of their competition.

This is fitting, when you consider that, as is the case with some of the most iconic Ferrari super sports cars, the F8 takes most of its cues for its powerplant. And in the case of the F8 Tributo and its topless Spider sibling, the powerplant is a 3.9-litre V8 that has been called “the most significant engine of the last two decades”.

Beating with 430 kW of raw power, Ferrari’s mighty V8 can hardly be described as anything less than ‘significant’, and adding its torque figure of 770 Nm to the mental mix, heaps even more awe upon it.

Sad then, that we have not yet had the opportunity to drive the car, as the unveiling in South Africa earlier this year, was a viewing event only. Nevertheless, the F8 Spider bristles with other significant traits

worthy of a mention, least of all its sublime architecture.

#### WHEN IT AIN'T BROKEN

Typically, a Ferrari chassis would be applied to two vehicle generations. However, in the case of the F8, it is constructed on the same chassis that was developed for the 458, which in turn also underpinned the 488.

On that note, some have described the F8 is a heavily facelifted 488 - of which the last two iterations were the hardcore 488 Speciale and the somewhat tamer Pista - and many elements from these cars are carried over to the F8 Tributo, and the Spider.

Least of which, the engine, is an emissions-regulation-sanitised version

of the Ferrari Challenge Cup engine used in the Pista. This not only means that the engine boasts lighter internals than the standard 3.9-litre V8 of the 488, but the resulting dynamic changes mean that the new car generates an astonishing amount of power. Incidentally, the same amount of power generated by the McLaren 720S...

#### CHALLENGE EXCEEDED

Over the last decade, Ferrari has been working increasingly hard to produce mid-engined sports cars that appeal to a broader, and more sophisticated category of buyers. Spurred on by rival McLaren's stratospheric rise in this segment in the last ten years, Ferrari has been upping its



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game in almost every respect. Besides the proven performance aspects of the F8's predecessors, Ferrari cabins - of the F8 in particular - are exceptional environments worthy of the heritage and performance pedigree that form the bedrock to the brand's success.

We would not dare surmise that this has anything to do with what McLaren (or any other rival automaker) has brought to market. Still, there is no doubt that the increased competition from other brands has encouraged Ferrari to go to great lengths to make the F8's interior, spectacular.

At this level of competition, and price, neither Ferrari, nor any of its competitors can afford to employ anything but the highest grade materials and most luxurious finishes in their cars, so there is much of the same

in the F8 as you would find in other Ferrari products.

However, if a direct comparison were to be drawn between the McLaren 720S and F8, the latter's cabin is a substantially roomier environment than that of its British competitor. Whereas the McLaren relies on a carbon fibre tub platform - which necessitates that the driver and passenger seats are placed closer together - the F8's all-aluminium frame allows for more space between the front seats, and an inevitably roomier cabin layout.

From previous experience in the 488, the F8's similarly proportioned layout is one of the easiest to understand, and use of any of its rivals. Changing drive modes, for example, is managed by a single switch on the steering, and three

buttons control gear selection for the seven-speed dual-clutch system on the middle console.

The beautifully specified reveal model that Ferrari South Africa showed us during the car's reveal earlier in 2020 is a testament to what Ferrari buyers can look forward to on this car. Swathes of carbon fibre finishing on the exterior, Nero leather with yellow stitching on the seats, door panels and the dashboard, and carbon fibre interior finish (standard on the F8), round off this work of automotive art. All that remains for us now is to drive it, for the opportunity to fully appreciate the heart, and soul, of one of Maranello's finest. 🏎️

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