



pioneered by Aston Martin – making them easier to read than conventional LCDs. Sitting behind the three-spoke steering wheel and feeling the quality of the hand-stitched leather trim has an almost intoxicating effect.

Starting the beautiful beast up involves a touch of theatre. The ignition is controlled by a stainless steel and glass ECU (Emotion Control Unit). The ECU is inserted into a special docking station set within the traditional clear glass starter button. Pressing the ECU fully into the starter button fires the engine. Oh, the sound! You don't need a stereo – the deep, rasping, buttery burble of the 420 bhp 4.7-litre V8 lump means you could happily listen to just that all day.

Add the engine to the smallest model in the range and you get blistering all-round performance. The V8 Vantage can reach 0-62 mph in 4.9 seconds and goes on to an eye-wateringly fast 180 mph. There is no denying that the V8 Vantage is a true

high-performance sports car. The engine is willing, the handling is predictable and the good visibility means that the car is easy to use in town or on twisty country roads. And, of course, if you're interested in track days, this car will handle a race circuit. In fact the Vantage will beg you to take it on a track. It would be cruel not to satisfy its needs.

Yes, the Midlands-based company has done a mind-blowing job on this car. It's thrilling to drive, it draws looks of admiration wherever



it goes and it is an extraordinarily competent all-rounder.

All in all, Aston Martin Lagonda fulfilled my boyhood dreams by letting me drive this tour de force. It's something I won't forget and nor will anyone else who gets behind the wheel of the remarkable V8 Vantage.

- Engine: 4.7-litre 32v V8
- Transmission: Six-speed automated manual, rear-wheel drive
- Power: 420 bhp
- Torque: 346 lb-ft @ 5000rpm
- Max speed: 180 mph
- 0-62 mph: 4.9 sec
- Combined mpg: 21.4mpg
- CO<sub>2</sub>: 312 g/km
- Price: £ 105,000 on the road

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