

# *Aston Martin* VANTAGE 'S'

Aston Martin is one of the most revered automotive brand names on the planet. So, getting a chance to drive one of their beautifully crafted cars wasn't to be passed up....

It was off to the global headquarters of Aston Martin Lagonda at Gaydon in Warwickshire, to sample one of the hottest models on the block - the Vantage S.

The 'S' is the most significant outward indication that the car is different to the already acclaimed Vantage. Basically the engineering team at Gaydon looked at every single performance attribute of the

standard model, from engine through to tyres, to make this car deserving of the coveted 'S' badge. The result is a pure driver-focussed package that exploits and emphasises the sporting nature of the iconic Vantage.

The 4.7 litre V8 engine has been modified to deliver peak power of 430bhp and a new automated manual seven speed gearbox, with paddle shifts on the steering wheel, enhances driveability and gives you increased control.

As well as selecting gears manually with the paddle-shift, you are also able to select the 'D' button on the facia to engage automatic mode. This acts like a traditional automatic gearbox changing



gear at precisely the right time, making light work of urban traffic and motorway driving.

But the Vantage S' sporting character really comes into its own when the 'Sport' button is depressed, affording faster gear changes and preventing the car changing up to the next cog until the revolution limit is reached. The default 'normal' provides a more progressive throttle response suited to more everyday situations.

The Vantage S also features a unique exhaust muffler specifically tuned to aurally define its sporting intent. In 'Sport' mode the car produces a wonderful crackle. It's a sound that is utterly magnificent.

Step inside and the tailored Vantage S' cabin hints at the car's dynamic capabilities, defined by a distinctive three-track stitch detail on the doors and on the seats. A folded leather design runs along the sewn tracks, echoing the gills of a shark. Needless to say, the sumptuous seats cosset the driver, providing support during high-spirited driving, while remaining ultra comfortable on long journeys.

The Vantage S coupe is hand built entirely in England and, unsurprisingly, it has an exceptional character. Of course, it is far from cheap; but, price tags aside, you'd have to have a heart of stone not to fall in love with this glorious machine.



#### PROS 'N' CONS

- Looks ✓
- Power ✓
- Refinement ✓
- Excitement factor ✓
- British ✓
- Expensive X

#### FAST FACTS

- Max speed: 189mph
- 0-62 mph: 4.6
- Combined mpg: 21.9
- Engine: 4735cc V8
- Max. power (bhp): 430 at 7300rpm
- Max. torque (lb/ft): 361 at 5000rpm
- CO2: 299g/km
- Price: From £102,500