



PHOTOS: COURTESY OF BENTLEY

While the Bentayga Speed's title holds for now, it'll have its heels nipped by other cushy and quick rivals, with performance-oriented SUVs coming from Ferrari, Aston Martin, and Porsche.

2020 Bentley Bentayga Speed



Customers can tack on bespoke options like 22-way adjustable front massaging seats, rear-seat entertainment and mood lighting.

BENTLEY DEBUTED its Bentayga SUV back in 2016, proudly declaring it the world's fastest and most luxurious SUV. That heavy hauler honor didn't stick long, soon scooped up by the Lamborghini Urus. Now, a bitter but determined Bentley is looking to get it back, releasing its new 2020 Bentayga Speed performance variant.

The model's massive W12 engine has been boosted to deliver 626 horsepower and 664 lb.ft of torque. That moves the SUV from 0-62 mph in just 3.9 seconds and delivers a top speed of 190 mph. All that power gets to the ground through a revised Sport mode and the vehicle features a system called Dynamic Ride, which is the world's first electric active roll control technology. It'll instantly engage in cornering, counteracting lateral rolling forces.

Other sports car-like enhancements include

optional ceramic brakes, the largest and most powerful ever fitted to a Bentley. They not only withstand extreme heat, but also save 44 lbs. of weight. The model's exhaust note has also been made louder and the suspension has been firmed up, too.

Making the motoring experience not just fast, but lavish, is a cabin rich in details and elegance. There's a new color split interior highlighted by Alcantara trim, available for the first time in a Bentayga. If customers prefer, it can be swapped out for leather at no cost. New contrast stitching can be found on areas like the diamond-quilted upholstery and door pads. There's also new Speed embroidery at the top of the seats and a metal badge, fixed to the passenger side of the dash. Illuminated Speed tread plates also come with this special package.

Exterior touches include dark-tinted headlights, body-colored side skirts and a well-integrated rear

spoiler. There's also a dark-tint radiator and bumper grilles and unique 22-inch wheel designs, available in either silver, dark tint, or black finishes.

The Bentayga Speed will go on sale later this year. U



Matt Avery is an automotive author and historian. His new book, "COPO", documents Chevy's ultimate muscle cars, showcasing over 40 of the world's best COPO examples. Learn more at COPOthebook.com