McLaren Senna - Tribute To A Legend

he McLaren Senna has been designed, engineered and developed with single-minded purpose: to be the ultimate McLaren track-concentrated car for the road. Legalised for road use, but not sanitised to suit it, the new Ultimate Series deliberately compromises McLaren's trademark breadth of supercar daily usability; instead it provides the purest connection between driver and car, to deliver the most intense circuit experience of any road McLaren.

The technical recipe is classic McLaren Automotive supercar, a pedigree established and earned in the short time elapsed since the pioneering sports and supercar company was founded in 2010, but taken to another level entirely in the McLaren Senna. Ultra-lightweight construction, with carbon fibre chassis and body panels. Mid-mounted, twin-turbocharged V8 McLaren engine. Rear wheel drive.

Sophisticated race-derived suspension that delivers an unparalleled blend of control and dynamic balance. Electro-hydraulic steering that rewards accurate inputs and gives the purest feedback. And two seats – but with absolute focus on the importance of the one that the driver occupies. The carbon fibre Monocage III chassis that forms the core of the McLaren Senna is a further development of the structure that underpins the McLaren 720S and the strongest monocoque ever built by McLaren for a road-legal vehicle. Every body panel is made from carbon fibre, in line with a relentless focus on the weight of every individual component that has resulted in the McLaren Senna being the lightest road-legal McLaren since the iconic F1 road car, at just 1,198kg*.

With maximum power of 800PS (789bhp), the McLaren Senna enjoys a power-to-weight ratio of 668PS per tonne. This statistic immediately underlines the performance credentials of the newcomer to the McLaren Ultimate Series, a product family introduced with the McLaren P1™ that is reserved for the rarest and most extreme McLaren cars.

Unsurprisingly, there are strong echoes in the new McLaren Senna of the incredibly focused philosophy behind the McLaren P1™; where the latter was designed to be the best driver's car on road and track, the ambition for the McLaren Senna is for it to be the best road-legal track car, setting a new benchmark for circuit excellence with track prowess absolutely taking precedence.

The indomitable spirit of Ayrton Senna has always been alive at McLaren and the McLaren Senna will further amplify his global legacy and link to the McLaren brand.

"Our family is extremely proud of the naming of the new Ultimate Series McLaren Senna. This is the first project that really connects with Ayrton's racing spirit and performance. The McLaren Senna honours my uncle because it is so utterly dedicated to delivering a circuit experience that allows a driver to be the best they can possibly be. There is an absolute, seamless connection between car and driver and this pure engagement, these sensory cues that a driver responds to and relies upon, ensure an experience so focused and immersive that you are left in awe of the depths of excellence the McLaren Senna possesses."

Bruno Senna, racing driver and McLaren Ambassador

Visually, the McLaren Senna shocks. The first impression is of an aggressive, unforgiving machine, organic shapes having given way to a design language that is purposely fragmented in pursuit of absolute performance. With downforce and aerodynamic balance the guiding principles, this car is the purest expression yet of the 'form follows function' design philosophy embraced by McLaren.

Viewed from above, the body is nature's most efficient shape – a teardrop – with body components 'clipped' onto the cabin to deliver optimal aerodynamic performance.

McLaren's designers went to extremes by cutting open the 'shrink-wrapped' body to reduce weight visually and functionally; while recognisably a McLaren in proportional terms, you cannot follow a single line from the front to the rear without it passing through a functional air intake or vent.

The double diffuser at the rear of the car is unmistakable. Created as a single piece of carbon fibre, it begins under the rear axle and as it increases in height accelerates air out from under the vehicle. This creates a low-pressure zone that sucks the McLaren Senna even tighter to the ground.

The doors, which are constructed of carbon fibre, feature two-piece glass side windows with a fixed top part and a smaller opening section below. Both the door upper (effectively part of the roof) and the lower half of the door side can be specified with glass as a replacement for the carbon fibre panels that are standard-fit. This enhances the sense of space inside the cockpit and in the case of the glazed door lower, dramatically reinforces the visual connection between driver and track environment. To accommodate the door design, the release mechanisms and window switches are housed alongside the engine start button in a carbon fibre console above the driver's head.

The third model introduced under the McLaren Track22 business plan, the McLaren Senna will be hand-assembled in England at the McLaren Production Centre. Production will be limited to 500 vehicles, each costing from $1.1-million, and all already allocated.

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