



8C Spider

STUNNING ALFA 8C SPIDER CONCEPT MAKES ITS GOODWOOD DEBUT

Last year the future, thrusting face of the Alfa Romeo brand was represented here at the Goodwood Festival of Speed by the Brera, this year though the stunning 8c Spider is their headline act, the award-winning concept sports car rightfully taking its place in the Sunday Times Driving Supercar Paddock.

The Alfa 8c Competizione roared onto the world stage in style almost three years ago at the Frankfurt IAA, creating such a stir that Alfa Romeo has toyed with the idea of putting into place a limited production run ever since. Deposits were taken from eager would-be customers and then returned, however, new Alfa brand CEO Antonio Baravalle firmly believed in the project and, reportedly using cost savings achieved in other areas, gave the sports car project the green light earlier this year. Around 400 versions of this dramatic coupé are expected to be built during the course of the next year using architecture sourced from the next generation Maserati Coupé/Spyder and the new 4.7-litre V8 unit which is being developed by Ferrari for the new Trident models. A racing future for the car has also been discussed, one of the reasons for the production run being focused around the closed roof model.

However, with the 8c Competizione attracting huge goodwill instantly, Alfa Romeo Centro Stile decided to create a convertible version, the inimitable Spider. The project though then went very quiet for quite some time. Suddenly, at last year's Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance in California where the Milanese carmaker was the featured marque, the 8c Competizione Spider concept was revealed with a flourish. Every bit as good-looking as the coupé, it brought its own strengths to the irrepressible '8c' theme. Early this year the 8c Spider reappeared at the prestigious Concorso d'Eleganza Ville d'Este on the shores of Lake Como when it swept up the "best concept car" award after being pitted against very strong opposition.





This weekend has now seen the 8c Spider make its second high-profile European appearance of the year, this time at the Goodwood Festival of Speed where it has joined a string of highly prestigious cars in the Sunday Times Driving Supercar Paddock. These include several strong Italian rivals: the new Lamborghini Murcielago LP640 is making its UK debut here, joined by its small sister the Gallardo Spyder; Maserati has brought a GranSport Spyder and the limited-edition GranSport MC Victory, a special model created to celebrate their racing sportscar successes with the MC12 last year; Pagani have brought a Zonda F, finished in lurid orange-and-carbon-fibre; while Ferrari have the show-stopping new 599GTB Fiorano, FXX and the 612 Scaglietti in track action. A swage of non-Italian metal on the 'Supercar Run' this weekend includes the Bugatti Veyron (which is being driven by Lord March up the hill this weekend), the new Porsche 997 Turbo, Bentley Continental GTC, Mercedes-Benz CLK DTM AMG Convertible, Koenigsegg CCX, Prodrive's one-off P2 concept car and the new Caparo T1, with its F1-derived styling which is in pre-production form.

Against these important rivals - and many more - though the Alfa 8c Spider looks very comfortable in its place, its gorgeous flowing lines pulling in the Supercar Paddock crowd to ape at it, and - if the 8c Competizione proves to be a sales hit - it could just be a possible future production possibility.

by Edd Ellison at Goodwood

