

## Much Ado About Crewe

Opportunities like this don't come along every day, so I have start by saying how grateful I am to have been able to experience Bentley at Crewe. During my first and most memorable day in England, I not only drove but really got to experience the luxury, power and handling of our new Mulsanne and Supersports Convertible.

About the Mulsanne: To drive a car of this magnitude was a bit deceiving when behind the wheel. First you sink into the luscious driver's seat and take in all its glory, from seeing your own reflection in the sheen of the hand-polished, piano black front console to the 20-speaker Naim sound system that has a remote control for anyone who may be enjoying the expansive leg-room in the back seat. One could really get a sense of royalty being a passenger in this flagship jewel.

Seeing all the Bentleys lined up with their designated professional drivers awaiting our initial impressions was a sight to behold. We followed a pre-determined route so at times we looked like some sort of presidential motorcade. The two-tone Mulsanne is what seemed to inspire everyone's oohs and aahhs.

Our "track day" was really a "windy-narrow-English-roads" day which put more than one Bentley at risk of a range of injuries from minor scrapes to outright blowouts. Sitting on the right-hand side of the car made it a bit of a challenge to gauge how close you were to the left edge of the road, which did not include a shoulder of any sort, but instead, the impending threat of either rose bush thorns or the jagged-edges of a short stone wall. Our Mulsanne went fairly unscathed.

The route was so organized that we would all stop and change drivers at the same location which usually included a loo and an opportunity to have a sip of water and an energy bar. By 12:30 we reached our lunch destination which was at a beautiful resort village in Gwynedd, on the coast of Snowdonia in North Wales. Portmeirion designed by Sir Clough Williams-Ellis, is very reminiscent of Portofino, Italy. The famous Portmeirion pottery was founded by his daughter, Susan Williams-Ellis and her husband Euan Cooper-Willis.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portmeirion>

[http://wapedia.mobi/en/Portmeirion\\_Pottery](http://wapedia.mobi/en/Portmeirion_Pottery)

After lunch we traded Bentleys and carried out the next leg of our driving assignment. Despite a slight drop in temperature and hints of precipitation, there was no way I could resist the opportunity to drive our Supersports convertible with the top down, especially with as easy as it is to operate. Prior to seeing the car in Citric, a buttercup yellow with a subtle suggestion of lime green, I would have never chosen this color for our showroom. Seeing it with its black top/interior with accent stitching made it a showstopper, provoking thoughts of a chase scene from a great spy movie. I immediately changed our order to replicate this image (anyone can have a black car).

Our driving coach, Steve, was good enough to let me know when I could press the pedal to the metal. Just when I would feel the power and excitement, we would hit a turn in the road and I had to take it back down to 30 mph (not kilometers, much to my surprise). Wait until I get this car on I-70 West!

What a magical introduction into the world of Bentley. The next mesmerizing experience was the day at the factory in Crewe. It killed me to have to surrender my camera. I would have been snapping away. The site looks very industrial with a collection of brick buildings each housing a crucial component to the creation of a bespoke Bentley.

We gathered in the museum which I could have spent more time in, being taken back in history with its collection of original Bentleys. We played in the Mulliner, the workshop where a customer can select paint colors, hide colors, wood finishes, comfort and infotainment options... all the makings of a custom coach... not much different than building a custom home. We saw the different wood veneers which could be as many as 20 layers depending on the model and the wood. Olive ash requires double that of any of the other veneers because of more holes in the natural formation of the wood. We learned that a single Bentley emblem sewn on the head rest is made up of 5,103 stitches. It takes 5 hours to make the cover of a steering wheel and 13 days to do the wood in the Mulsanne (30% more wood than in the Arnage).

To own a Bentley, is truly to own a work of expert craftsmanship.

I am so very proud to be the face of Bentley in Denver.