

Harry Metcalfe's
50 BEST SUPERCARS

No 26: Tesla Roadster Sport



No, this column hasn't been hijacked by the green brigade. The Tesla Roadster Sport may have impeccable environmental credentials, being powered by a silent electric motor, but it has supercar performance, despite being totally different to drive.

Accelerating to 60mph takes just 3.7 seconds, which is faster than all but the very quickest supercars, not one of which can do it with the ease of the Tesla. There's no launch control to engage, no juggling the revs then dumping the clutch; you just floor the accelerator and hang on tight. It's as simple to drive as a bumper car at the fairground.

But it's the silence while the rest of the world goes into reverse that makes this car truly unique. Drive the Tesla in town and while you're waiting for traffic lights to change, you'll pick up on other people's conversations, phones ringing, even lorry tyres creaking. Take it on a rural road and you'll hear more new sounds — birds singing, the wind blowing through trees. The scales fell from my eyes. Or do I mean ears?

The Tesla is also the only electric car on sale with a proper range — almost double that of some rivals. Make no mistake, this car is very special.

MODEL	Tesla Roadster Sport
ENGINE	Single electric motor
POWER	288bhp @ 4400rpm
TORQUE	295 lb ft @ 0rpm
TRANSMISSION	Single-speed
ACCELERATION	0-60mph: 3.7sec
TOP SPEED	130mph
FUEL/CO ₂	Zero
PRICE	£94,000
VERDICT	The silent supercar

A 130mph Dodgem ride

BANK MANAGER'S REACTION ★★★★★

Here's a supercar that actually makes a modicum of financial sense, for once. Being a zero-emissions car, it qualifies for a 100% writing-down allowance against your tax bill. And, let's face it, £94,000 is cheap by supercar standards.

DESIRABILITY ★★★★★

Very high. Think of the Tesla Roadster Sport as being similar to a £94,000 iPad: early adopters around the world all fancy owning one.

KUDOS ★★★★★

This Tesla, of which more than 1,000 have been sold, is the best electric car — by miles — on sale today, and the fastest and coolest. Two years on from its launch, no other car gets near its capability.

PULLING POWER ★★★☆☆

You'd think you'd be on to a winner here, what with the silence and that performance. But the Sport has downsides too: you have to carry the chunky recharging cable with you, and getting in and out of the car, which is based on the tiny Lotus Elise, is awkward.

RUNNING COSTS ★★★★★

It costs only about £4 to fully charge the Tesla, after which it will travel for up to 200 miles (roughly the equivalent of a fossil-fuel car delivering 285mpg). Servicing costs are minimal, as the gearbox and electric motor are both sealed units, and as the body is made from carbon fibre and fibreglass, there's no worrying about corrosion.

Coming next, No 27: Aston Martin One-77

