

The electric Pininfarina Battista is my new dream car

Hypercars are like big cities: more glamorous from a distance, rarely affordable to people who earn an honest living, and often claustrophobically limited in interior space. The Geneva Motor Show is full of them every year, but in 2019, Pininfarina has delivered an exception with its 1,900-horsepower, all-electric Battista. This is one of the few cars where I find myself wanting it more *after* I've seen it in person rather than before. Not that it matters what I want with such an exclusive performance and hype beast, of which there'll only ever be 150 made, and each will cost a dizzying \$2.6 million.

Pininfarina design director Luca Borgogno says of the Battista: "We wanted Battista to be very Italian, with sensual curves to give back a feeling of the cars of the '60s and the moment in time when sensual design in cars was to the fore and when Pininfarina really became iconic. The body form speaks this Italian language." I can't converse in Italian to save my life, but the Battista's flowing curves definitely speak to me.

The detailing on this car is fantastic. The butterfly doors integrate some of the scoops channeling air around and into the body, and they make for a striking cutaway of the expressive design anytime they're open. The thin red aluminum lines running along the sides of the Bianco Sestriere Battista in Geneva blend perfectly with the red brake calipers and the tail lights. They add a touch of color to the trendy combo of contrasting black and white (see also: the Honda e Prototype and the Polestar 2), giving a little hint of the red-hot speed

contained within.

That's really the appeal of this Pininfarina car: the fact that its aggressive, streamlined look is entirely matched by its otherworldly performance metrics. It does 0 to 60 mph in less than 2 seconds, even while carrying a large 120kWh battery and a motor for each wheel, producing a mighty 1,900 horsepower in total. A top speed of more than 217 mph (350 km/h) should be sufficient for even the most urgent of late-night runs to White Castle. And the promised 280-mile / 450-kilometer range feels a tiny touch unbelievable. Hypercars aren't really supposed to be usable in anything other than a race track environment. Betraying further ambitions as a more versatile luxury car, the Battista also has bespoke luggage, which fits into a compartment behind the driver and passenger.

Lest you think Pininfarina – long established as a car designer rather than manufacturer or technological leader – is making unsubstantiated claims, it's worth noting that the powertrain tech underpinning the Battista is provided by Rimac. This is the Croatian engineering outfit that last year showed off its own spectacularly fast electric vehicle, the Rimac Concept Two, and which supplies high-performance electric parts for the Aston Martin Valkyrie and the Jaguar E-type Zero, among others. Indian carmaker Mahindra & Mahindra holds a controlling stake in Pininfarina, and its participation in the Battista project should ensure the manufacturing aspect of the business is also properly handled.

The thing that tips the Battista over the line as more than just another outrageously specced hypercar for me is that it's as luxurious on the inside as it is beautiful on the outside. I don't just mean the sumptuous, perfectly stitched leather, though that is admittedly very nice to sit on. There's also ample legroom for both driver and passenger, and the aforementioned butterfly doors make getting in and out of this car a breeze.

Critics might call the triple-screen instrument cluster a clumsy mess that's difficult to read from behind the wheel, and, well, they'd be right. But I'm willing to overlook that slip-up, especially in a car designed to keep your attention firmly fixed on the road ahead.

Not for the first time, I've come to the Geneva Motor Show and fallen in lust with a multimillion-dollar car that I'll probably never get to touch again. The unusual thing about it isn't the futuristic specs, the design, or the storied Italian marque, but the way all of those things come together into one irresistible, electrifying whole.

Photography by Vlad Savov / The Verge

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