



Above left: even the desks at Paganini are carbon-fibre. Above right: carbon weave options. Below: Mecalle (left) takes a first look inside the Huayra with Horacio Paganini. Bottom: every part (this is a flywheel) is stamped with the Paganini logo



PAGANI HUAYRA

the wind of change is blowing through the supercar world, and its name is Huayra. Paganini's new supercar takes its appellation from the ancient Argentinian god of wind and, like the Zonda before it (also named after a wind), it's poised to set new benchmarks for the world's fastest and most exclusive road cars.

It's pronounced 'why-eh-rah' (we have this on good authority from none other than Horacio Paganini himself), though the actual sound that escapes your lips might well be 'phwoar'. Because the first time you see the Huayra in the metal - or rather in the carbon, aluminium and titanium - I guarantee it'll bring out the small child in you. This is a supercar in the very best sense, dripping with advanced materials, packed with new technologies, powered by a sensationally powerful twin-turbo V12 engine, and clothed in bodywork of quite stunning proportions and exquisite detailing.

I'll let you in on a little secret. The Huayra was originally planned to appear almost two years ago, at the 2009 Geneva motor show. But when I visited the Paganini factory in December 2008, Horacio confided that he'd decided to delay the launch. With the world economy in turmoil, he said, it wasn't the right time to be unveiling a glitzy new supercar.

'Damn! was my first reaction. I'd been close to the project for a while and we'd set a number of pages aside for the big reveal. But in fact the decision made perfect sense. For a start, it meant the car would be fully compliant with Euro 5 and LEV II (the equivalent US emissions regulation) right from launch. And since actual production wasn't due to start until 2010, customers wouldn't have to wait so long for their cars to arrive. Canny businessman, Mr Paganini. Now wind the clock forward to December 2010 and I find myself at the Paganini factory once again, but this time there's a real buzz about the place. Apparently the Huayra test programme has been going spectacularly well,

the car proving to be even quicker and even more dynamically accomplished than they'd hoped. I've only been inside the factory for minutes but Horacio is just itching to show his new baby in all its glory.

He ushers me into the inner workshop, where a finished Huayra is hiding under a fitted cover. Even like this, the proportions and stance look fantastic, the shape Zonda-like but much smoother and, from what I can tell, with no obvious spoilers to muddle the lines. Horacio and test driver Davide Testi each grab a front corner of the cover and begin to peel it back. The jewel-like headlights appear first, the exquisite rearview mirrors, seemingly hanging in space from the slimmest stalks imaginable. So far so Zonda, but with each emerging part the Huayra reveals itself to be a radically different design and very much its own thing. The overall effect is less showy than some of the more recent Zondas. Subtler, classier. It's a single aspect of the car is quite beautifully finished, be it the forged and polished wheels (different right-to-left so the spokes curve in the direction of the wheels' rotation on both sides of the car), the single titanium nut that clamps each wheel to its hub, the unique front and rear lights or the distinctive titanium exhaust tips poking from beneath the rear. Everywhere you look there's another gorgeous thing to enjoy - the leather straps, carried from the Zonda, that hold the front and rear covers to the central tub. The Cinque's dual exhaust cans, just visible through the rear window, are so much to take in.

According to Horacio, the overall shape was inspired by an aircraft's wing and its fundamental 'rightness' in terms of design. That's why the nose section of the Huayra looks slightly odd at first. Instead of having a protruding front splitter, two large scoop channel air beneath the Huayra's prominent nose. At first glance, I'm not convinced that's a good idea. Surely these scoops will only lift under the front axle, while the bluff will increase drag. Horacio quickly organizes