



1939

**Bentley**

4.25L VanVooren Pillarless Saloon

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B3MX is a late MX series overdrive car of which there were only 200 produced. The overdrive cars featured Marles cam and roller steering, 17-inch wheels, higher gearbox ratios, higher rear axle ratio, improved camshaft, by-pass filter, thermostat with dummy shutters and revised instrument & switch panel layout. These cars were guaranteed by the factory to run continuously at speeds of 80 miles per hour with no unnecessary wear and tear. This was up from 70 miles per hour on the previous cars.

This car's unique Coachwork is by the renowned Carrosserie VanVooren of Paris. VanVooren bodied just seven of the M-Series cars and this one-off design is the only one that is known to have survived. This particular Bentley was the last constructed by VanVooren before the war, making this the last Bentley bodied by VanVooren.



The original owner of this Bentley was Lilly Bollinger of the famous Bollinger champagne family in France. When the Nazis invaded France in 1940, they took 178,000 bottles of champagne, but the Bollingers agreed to keep producing the wine in order to free their employees from prison camps and to protect their home and winery.

At night, with her château commandeered by the Germans, she slept in the cellars often next to her beloved Bentley which she had bricked up in order to conceal it from the Nazi invasion. The Bentley survived a second close call as the retreating German army threatened to dynamite the Bollinger cellars, but General Patton's Third Army arrived just in time to stop the German's from destroying the cellars along with the Bentley.



Lilly Bollinger retained the car for a number of years before selling to Mr. E. Phillips, the British Consul at Biarritz. He kept the car for a number of years before ownership eventually passed to former Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance co-chairman Jules Heumann.



Sir Malcolm Campbell, whose run at Bonneville in 1935 had raised the world land speed record above the 300 mph mark, chose a Bentley 4.25L for motoring back home. Its engine, steering and brakes were “absolute perfection,” he declared. Never before had he driven a car that “holds the road so well.” The wordsmiths at Bentley couldn’t have said it better. Cohabitation of two great marques had brought high performance to Rolls-Royce and refinement to the Bentley tradition of fast motoring.











Bund on the Boulevard

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