

A shift to hands-on driving by China's wealthy has seen a spike in demand for luxury convertibles

想親自享受駕駛樂趣的富裕中國車主愈來愈多，豪華敞篷車的需求因此日益增加

TEXT/撰文 MARK ANDREWS



Lamborghini's Aventador LP 700-4 Roadster
林寶堅尼的Aventador LP 700-4 Roadster開篷跑車

Vrooom with a view 極速風光

Chinese auto-maker BYD sold just seven of its S8 hard-top convertibles in 2010. When it began its brief production run, soon discontinued, it was the only open-top car (apart from the BJ2020 jeep) built in China.

Shaun Rein, founder of China Market Research Group, isn't surprised. "Traditionally, people wanted boss-like cars and they wanted to be driven around," says Rein. However, over the past five years there has been a shift in the desire for more personal driving.

Convertibles are popularly perceived as road-trip cars. While this image holds true in the United States, Australia and Europe, the Chinese market is different, with drivers wary of pollution, heat and the effects of the sun.

However, ragtops from premium luxury brands are beginning to nudge

their way into the market, especially for those who own a stable of vehicles. This year Lamborghini is bringing in its new Aventador LP 700-4 Roadster, while next month (APR), Jaguar's new F-Type, which only comes as a convertible, will also be available in China.

Rein's group found that the purchasers of luxury open-top cars tend to be rich young businesswomen who rarely drive with the roof down. Despite this, figures from China Market Research Group predict the market for convertibles will grow at 35 percent a year, on average, for the next five years.

However, Bertel Schmitt, Editor-in-Chief of The Truth about Cars website, remains cautious. "Convertibles are most useful as a marketing tool," he says. "They attract buyers into the showroom, but most of them then buy a less exciting car."

中國汽車生產商比亞迪出產的S8硬頂開篷車，於2010年全年只賣出七輛，而且這款車的投產時間並不長，目前亦已經停產。除了BJ2020吉普車之外，S8可說是唯一一款在中國製造的開篷車。

對此，中國市場研究集團的創辦人雷小山並不驚訝，他指出：「中國人傳統上來說都偏愛具有『老闆派頭』的車款，而且出入均由司機接送。」但是過去五年來，喜歡親自體驗駕駛樂趣的車主愈來愈多。

提起開篷車，很多人都會聯想起駕著開篷車在公路上馳騁的情景，這種情形在美國、澳洲和歐洲等國家特別盛行。但在中國市場，車主普遍對空氣污染、酷熱天氣及紫外光敬而遠之。

話雖如此，奢華品牌的開篷車已悄悄滲透中國市場，買家通常是已經擁有多部汽車的車主。今年，林寶堅尼準備在中國市場推出Aventador LP 700-4 Roadster開篷跑車，Jaguar也會於4月在中國推出只設開篷版本的全新F-Type跑車。

雷小山的集團發現，許多名廠開篷車的買家都是年輕的商界女強人，而且她們在駕車時鮮少會將車篷打開。然而，根據中國市場研究集團的數字估計，未來五年開篷車的銷售數字每年平均會有35%增長。但《The Truth about Cars》網站主編Bertel Schmitt卻抱持較審慎的態度。他說：「開篷車能吸引顧客造訪陳列室，但消費者最後通常都會選購其他較保守的車款。」■



Convertible only: The new Jaguar F-Type
開篷名車：全新 Jaguar F-Type 跑車