

Kent Life

THE COUNTY MAGAZINE

First Smugglers in Kent Skies

See Pages 31, 32 and 33



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OUR COVER PICTURE

shows the annual service of Blessing the Fisheries at Folkestone

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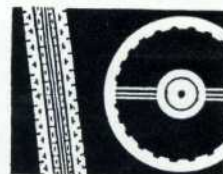


Fast, effortless motoring, the Jensen C-V8. Read By Highway and Byway with Tony Tucker on pages 55-57.

fast, effortless motoring

ROAD TESTING THE JENSEN C-V8

BY HIGHWAY
AND
BYWAY
WITH
TONY TUCKER



THE ideal car? It doesn't exist. Give me the pick of the world's motor industry and I'd want at least half a dozen for an ideal stable, each having that almost indefinable collection of characteristics creating an immediate affinity between car and driver. But not one could satisfy my every requirement. It's a case of horses for courses, ranging from a small, nimble town worker to a spacious five-seater. There would be at least two motor-sporting models and an open car for that one hot day of the year. But the one I'd use most would be a big-engined grand tourer, like the Jensen C-V8.

Motor-minded almost from birth, the brothers Jensen began building *their* ideal cars when teenagers, in 1928, reducing an Austin Seven "Chummy" to its component parts before rebuilding them into a home-built body incorporating a sense of line seen in every Jensen ever since.

From one-off experiments they progressed to a commercial body-building company creating special coachwork on larger, more expensive makes like Rolls-Royce, Delage and Star until, in 1936, they co-operated with the late Edsell Ford to begin the first of a long line of their own big-engined cars, a 3½-litre Ford V8 engined Jensen.

They have followed this formula right through to the current C-V8, a fast luxurious two-door four-seater whose eye-catching exterior conceals a Chrysler 6¼-litre V8 producing around 330 horse power. One glance tells you that it is built by men who like motor-cars—and driving them.

Fast? Three up, my test car covered a flying mile at an average 133 miles an hour, still accelerating as it left the last marker post at 138. This, and an ability to reach 100 m.p.h. from rest in just over 17 seconds, makes it

seater saloon on the market. just about the fastest standard four-

But in safe, effortless motoring rather than outright performance lies the Jensen's charm. Whether motorway cruising at over 100 or creeping quietly through crowded streets, progress is quite untiring for mile after mile, hour after hour, without the slightest mechanical fuss, unless you count slight surging noticeable at less than walking speeds in stop-go-stop traffic hold-ups.

Helped by gear ratios ideally matched to engine power, automatic changes of the Chrysler Torqueflite three-speed transmission are imperceptible to passengers during normal driving, and "kickdown" changes are less obtrusive than most. An over-riding manual control can be used to hold intermediate to 90 miles an hour before the revolution counter needle is too far into the forbidden zone.



In an age when controls are often designed for car users rather than drivers, the Jensen pleases with an overriding impression that its design emphasis has been on "feel". The rack-and-pinion steering is heavy during parking, and at high speeds reactions from rough roads are felt through the steering wheel; but I would be loth to lose its positive precision for the sake of power assistance.

Braking (by Dunlop discs all round) needs fairly high pedal pressures, but is progressive and will bring the Jensen to a safe, unflurried stop from 100 miles an hour—if necessary in under seven seconds—without a suggestion of locking the wheels into accident-provoking skids.

Dunlop Road Speed tyres, a limited-slip back axle and firm suspension combine to give stable road-holding, and with such a tremendous reserve of engine power, corners can be taken without moving one inch from the selected line. But as I learned on one of Silverstone's tighter turns, centrifugal forces set up during very fast cornering can cause a

JENSEN
C-V8

For the man who wants more than a fast car!

The Jensen C-V8 is certainly fast and silent. Its standing $\frac{1}{4}$ mile time of 15 seconds is proof enough of that. But where else would you find a 136 m.p.h. GT with such comfortable seating for four people? Or such an enormous boot? Or the smoothness and silence of a limousine? Add to this servo-assisted disc brakes, adjustable ride control and automatic transmission (or manual if preferred) and you'll see why so many demanding motorists regard the Jensen C-V8 as **the** Grand Tourer. See it — try it, at

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