

HARDENED PROS

The 542bhp XKR-S is the fastest Jaguar since the XJ220. **Andrew Frankel** finds out if it's as much of a driver's car as an Aston V8 Vantage S, BMW M3 GTS or Porsche 911 GT3

PHOTOGRAPHY STAN PAPIOR



You can tell a lot from the sound of a car, at least when that car is a 400bhp-plus coupé with its eyes fixed firmly on the provision of driving pleasure. If it thunders, it likely inclines more to the Grand Touring way of thinking; hear a snarl and the car's probably got a bit of circuit in its blood. If it howls it's going to have a race track as a second home, but if it screams it'll feel as out of place on the road as the GT does on the circuit.

You'd be forgiven for thinking we'd

brought these four cars together to prove this very point, as each subscribes very precisely to one of the characters outlined above. The thunderer is Jaguar's new XKR-S, with its 542bhp supercharged V8 motor and £97,000 list price, while snarling nicely alongside it comes Aston's V8 Vantage in rejuvenated, 430bhp, £102,500 'S' specification.

Next comes a car so old you can't actually buy one any more. But how could we leave out the howl of the 429bhp Porsche 911 GT3, especially as, technically at least, it →

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