



Mazzanti Automobili meets HWM

Earlier this month Guy Jenner, CEO of the UK's oldest Aston Martin Dealership [HWM](#), had an online 'firesidechat' with Luca Mazzanti, Founder and CEO of [Mazzanti Automobili](#), manufacturer of the Evantra supercar.

Here's how it went.



Guy Jenner:

So Luca, I've browsed the [Mazzanti Automobili website](#) but it's not often you get the opportunity to talk to the founder of a hypercar manufacturer – how would you best describe what Mazzanti is all about?

Luca Mazzanti:

You know, I've been involved in cars all my life; first starting in our family business here in Tuscany in 1990 straight from school – we did repairs and upgrades for many types of sportscar in this period. And later I was involved in what you might call restoration and refurbishment of classic sports cars to a very high standard, even total rebuilds, with our partner Walter Faralli. This 15 years really was the foundation period for Mazzanti Automobili and for sure it put a lot of pressure on our family, this period.

Guy Jenner:

I can well understand that - we're a family-owned business.

[HWM](#) was founded in 1938, originally as a race team and race car constructor transitioning to a dealership focused business in later years. It is fair to say that life has had its fair share of ups and downs.

How did you transition into manufacturing then?



Luca Mazzanti:

Well, it wasn't an overnight thought – this is something I dreamed of from a very early age, even as a child playing with toy cars and accompanying my father to rally stages of races in Italy. But the opportunity came in 2002 when we received a commission to design and build a modern classic drawing on the best traditions of Italian sportscar manufacture. It was a great break for me – the opening I had been waiting for in fact - and it resulted in the Antas.



Guy Jenner:

That's the fabulous blue retro-styled car I've seen – I think it made an appearance on Top Gear in the UK?

Luca Mazzanti: Yes – the Top Gear presenters really liked it – they said look what the ‘crazy’ Italians have produced now. And we were a bit crazy but everyone loved it – we had so much media coverage after that, it was amazing.

Guy Jenner: Was it a carbon-fibre body?

Luca Mazzanti: No, in fact everything was made by hand, the body from hand-finished aluminium which is how we carried out the refurbishments of cars. It was the same with the second commission, the Vulca – the red car. Really it was only with the Evantra Project that we had to move to a carbon shell so we could achieve the ultra-high level performance I wanted – I have always had this in my mind, ever since I raced our cars when I worked for my father.

Guy Jenner: So, the Evantra project, that’s the program that gave rise to the stable of cars Mazzanti has on offer today? What did you want to achieve with that?

Luca Mazzanti: Really it came as a progression out of the Antas to the Vulca and then to Evantra where we now have three versions, the Evantra Pura, the Evantra 781 and the Millecavalli. If you look at the shape and styling of each car, you can see they have a common link, a heritage so to say. And as a small manufacturer you are always thinking about how to make your cars different from everyone else so that this is your edge.

For us it is a combination of the racing experience that comes with hypercar performance but also the quality of the driving experience. There are many supercar manufacturers out there trying to be the fastest car or the most horsepower and so on and the Evantra can hold its own in this company but we don’t think this alone is enough.



Guy Jenner: As a dealer we always want to know what a manufacturer considers to be its selling points - what would you say these are then?

Luca Mazzanti: Of course as a manufacturer of supercars and hypercars very high levels of performance are expected and we achieve this in part through our own in-house engineering capability.

Guy Jenner: Can I ask how many people you have then?

Luca Mazzanti: In our Workshop in Pontedera in Pisa? 15 in total including former engineers from Pagani and guys who have participated in Le Mans 24. But just carrying on from your previous question, we also have many partnerships with both Italian and international companies who join us at various stages of the manufacturing process. In fact I would say that as many as 50 different people input to the production of each Evantra.

Guy Jenner: Can I just ask about the engine – what are you using?

Luca Mazzanti: At present it's a V8, 6200cc from GM in the current version of the Evantra which we call the "Evantra Pura" and also in the successor to the Evantra 771, the "Evantra 781". In the latest version of the Millecavalli – the "Millecavalli R" - it's 7400cc. Of course when we get the engines we then engage in a lot of fine-tuning so we can hit the perfect performance levels. I decided to use an American V8 block modified in Italy in the tradition of the Italian supercars of the 60's such as De Tomaso, Bizzarrini, Iso Rivolta etc.

Guy Jenner: So what sort of performance levels are you seeing?

Luca Mazzanti: In terms of top speed/horsepower/torque we get 360kph/761hp/910NM for the Pura, 360kph/781hp/969NM for the Evantra 781 and for the Millecavalli it's 400kph/1121hp/1210NM. It gives us 2.9/2.8/2.7 seconds for the important 0 to 100kph test. But as important, perhaps even more important than maximum power is the high power to weight ratio we achieve and which makes the cars so much more responsive.



Guy Jenner: Actually, you mention weight: how much does it weigh?

Luca Mazzanti: It has a basic kerb weight of 1300 kg. Of course this can increase depending on the level of customisation a buyer wants. But it's the low weight we achieve when designing a car that is fundamental. So many modern cars are too heavy to be truly dynamic so by keeping weight incredibly low, we gain huge benefits in the way a Mazzanti accelerates, brakes and rotates in corners. The mass is easier to manage and so the car is more responsive, more fun to drive.

Guy Jenner: I looks like you have worked hard on mass-centralisation and managing weight in general?

Luca Mazzanti: Yes indeed: in fact the design is aimed at creating a stable centre of gravity in which even the driver's own weight has a role to play – we want him to feel like he is part of the car, almost like a fighter pilot. Our main objective is that the owner of an Evantra must really enjoy the driving experience.

Guy Jenner: We understand this Luca. We see more and more that customers are looking for driver involvement rather than simply chasing performance. It is not how fast you go but how you go fast. Would you agree?

Luca Mazzanti: Absolutely! Too many manufacturers produce a stripped back, almost 'brutal' experience

so they can get a little extra performance. And if we have a customer who really wants this, we can provide it, as indeed we have done in the past. But the drive becomes uncomfortable, even very uncomfortable. Many hypercar owners keep their cars in the garage and only to come out very rarely, maybe only once a month for a couple of kilometres: they like owning the hypercar but they don't enjoy driving it. That's what we focus on. Making the experience something that encourages the owner to want to drive their car.

Guy Jenner: And a few more technical questions - I wasn't sure where the petrol tank is exactly?

Luca Mazzanti: It's at the front – in fact it's below your feet.

Guy Jenner: And the chassis?

Luca Mazzanti: A high tensile boxed-section steel frame with molybdenum chrome, at least for now.

Guy Jenner: Where do you stand on electric power-trains?

Luca Mazzanti: Of course it's a huge consideration right now and we have our own development subsidiary, Mazzanti Lab, which is a collaboration with some of Italy's best universities. Its focus is very much on developing new technologies we can include into our cars in the coming years

Guy Jenner: Including an electric power train?

Luca Mazzanti: Yes, this is also something we are working on. At the present time we do not see ourselves being part of the 'first wave' of hypercar manufacturers. We think the best solution may be an electric-hydrogen hybrid and this is something we could see as a possibility within 2 years.

Guy Jenner: That amazing – other larger manufacturers envisage at least 5 years.

Luca Mazzanti: Yes, but that's the benefit of being a small, 'agile' company.

Guy Jenner: And where does the customer sit in all this? Why would they want to buy a Mazzanti as opposed to an Aston Martin or a Lamborghini or the others?

Luca Mazzanti: Look, everything we do is for the customer – I always believe we should give the driver the opportunity to re-engage with their car as one of their most valued and cherished possessions, as they did in the golden age of motoring. And we achieve this by inviting them to be part of the team throughout the production process from when they first come to Pontedera, when I sit with them in an Evantra and get to know them, what they like and what they don't like, through to sign offs on the designs and customisation through to the handover. In fact we are building in the opportunity for customers to name their cars in the same way that a century ago every Rolls Royce that was built was given its own name.



Guy Jenner: That's lovely – I can see customers really getting on board with that. What happens afterwards?

Luca Mazzanti: Well, it doesn't end there: in some ways we are not selling a car but a lifestyle and this is something we are expanding right now so that customers can join us in Tuscany and in due

course at our other locations around the world for events focused around the cars but also social. The new Mazzanti Racing Club for friends of the company is very much aimed at enabling all our supporters to get involved with what we do, to join us at some of the events we appear at and to feel part of the Project.

Guy Jenner: And how about technology for customer support, how do you see that?

Luca Mazzanti: Yes, very important – we're in the 21st Century now! So, we are rolling out this year our Virtual Reality offering which will enable customers and dealers to join us in Pontedera from the comfort of their own homes so to speak. I really think this will be a game changer. Also, although we have a fly-in maintenance team, we are already able to connect online to our cars and this enables us to diagnose most issues remotely, identifying servicing requirements and so on.

Guy Jenner: And how has this translated into sales?

Luca Mazzanti: So far we are at 15 cars sold including 11 in the Evantra range, all hand-made-in-Italy, and we currently have 5 in production. But we have a limit of 20 cars for each model so we are constantly looking at ways to make changes so we are different from our competitors. Right now we are planning the racing version of the Millecavalli – the "Millecavalli R".

Guy Jenner: And pricing?

Luca Mazzanti: In the current range the Evantra Pura is offered at €1.0 million for track and €1.3 million for road while the 781 which has a more 'grand touring' character is €1.5 million on the track and €1.8 million on the road. The Millecavalli is currently only in a track version and is €2.4 million.

Guy Jenner: Luca, this has been fascinating – we could go on all day - and I'd like to thank you. I really can't wait to get over to Tuscany to experience one of your cars in person!

Luca Mazzanti: Guy thanks, the pleasure is all mine and you will be very welcome, I can assure you.

