

MINI CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS

Media Information

18 March 2026

Pure driving fun: MINI JCW conquers the legendary “Tail of the Dragon”.



With 318 bends over a distance of 17.7 kilometres, the 'Tail of the Dragon' is considered one of the most dangerous roads in the world. On the border between the US states of North Carolina and Tennessee, the MINI John Cooper Works impresses with top-performance and agility combined with absolute confidence.

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Asheville. The sun is shining. The foliage gleams in shades of yellow, red, and orange. Right in the middle, the MINI John Cooper Works in the exterior colour Ocean Wave Green. A picturesque scene, typical of the Great Smoky Mountains on the border between the US states of North Carolina and Tennessee. If it weren't for the “Tail of the Dragon.” The US-129 is the most dangerous road in the USA: 17.7 kilometres long, with 318 bends. Every single one is a challenge for both man and machine.

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The Tail of the Dragon repeatedly reveals its relentless side, effortlessly shaking off overconfident drivers. At the "Tree of Shame," located at the start of this perilous stretch of tarmac in the "Deals Gap" car park, hang the relics of mobile overestimation: bodywork parts, mirrors, wheel trims, and motorcycle fuel tanks. A challenge perfectly suited for the MINI John Cooper Works and its motorsport DNA, which is embodied in the legendary go-kart feeling.

This is also emphasized by the parameters of the high-performance model, designed for uncompromising agility. Weighing 1,330 kilograms, the MINI JCW combines firm body control with noticeable lightness. The direct steering, responsive brake pedal feel, balanced axle load distribution with short overhangs, and low centre of gravity form a dynamic unit, which reveals its full potential in demanding bends. Thus, this dangerous stretch of tarmac becomes a place of concentrated, maximum driving pleasure.

The powerful four-cylinder TwinPower Turbo petrol engine with two litres of displacement delivers 170 kW/231 hp and a maximum torque of 380 Newton metres. The MINI John Cooper Works accelerates from 0 to 100 km/h in 6.1 seconds. 18-inch wheels in the JCW Lap Spoke two-tone design with sports tyres ensure maximum traction even in challenging driving situations. The frequency-selective dampers with a special JCW application harmoniously resolve the demanding conflict between dynamics and comfort. The sports braking system, with 17-inch brake discs at the front and 16-inch discs at the rear, provides reliable deceleration when approaching corners.

The camber angle at the front axle is increased by 30 arc minutes (0° 30') compared to the MINI Cooper C and MINI Cooper S, allowing for higher cornering speeds. Fast gear changes of the dual-clutch sport automatic transmission enable clean acceleration out of tight bends. In the MINI John Cooper Works models, this is further refined by the manual use of

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the two shift paddles. JCW sports seats guarantee secure lateral support even on demanding road sections. Thanks to the exclusive "John Cooper Works" driving mode with live displays of torque, G-forces, and current engine output, drivers always have all relevant data in view.

The clearly designed cockpit is structured by the JCW sports steering wheel, the high-resolution OLED display, and the MINI-typical toggle switch strip. The central instrument, with a premium glass surface and a diameter of 240 millimetres, constantly provides all relevant vehicle data and can be conveniently operated by both driver and front passenger. The interior also exudes sportiness in every fibre. The knitted surface of the dashboard, with its black and red pattern, recalls the motorsport heritage of the MINI John Cooper Works. The standard Harman Kardon sound system further intensifies the driving experience.

The exterior emphasizes the sporting ambitions of the MINI John Cooper Works. The Ocean Wave Green paintwork, paired with the black roof and black mirror caps, makes the MINI a head-turner in any environment. The John Cooper Works bodykit, with aerodynamically optimised components such as the front splitter, rear spoiler, and rear diffuser, not only gives the MINI John Cooper Works a dynamic appearance but also generates downforce and further enhances driving dynamics. MINI LED headlights with horizontal JCW-specific daytime running lights ensure a distinctive presence. The rear view is characterised by the aerodynamically shaped rear spoiler and the black rear diffuser. The centrally positioned tailpipe further emphasises the character of this agile powerhouse.

MINI John Cooper Works (fuel consumption combined: 6.8 – 6.5 l/100km according to WLTP; CO₂ emissions combined: 154 – 147 g/km; CO₂-class: E).

All model variants, equipment and technical data described here refer to the German market. Consumption and emission data refer to the German Passenger Car Energy Labelling Regulation (EnVKV).

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Fuel consumption, CO₂ emission figures and power consumption were measured using the methods required according to Regulation VO (EC) 2007/715 as amended. They refer to vehicles on the German automotive market. For ranges, the NEDC figures take into account differences in the selected wheel and tyre size, while the WLTP figures take into account the effects of any optional equipment. For vehicles newly type-approved since 01.01.2021, the official specifications exist only according to WLTP. In addition, according to EU Regulation 2022/195, the NEDC values will no longer be included in the EC certificates of conformity as of 01.01.2023.

All figures have already been calculated based on the new WLTP test cycle. NEDC figures listed have been adjusted to the NEDC measurement method where applicable. WLTP values are used as a basis for the assessment of taxes and other vehicle-related duties which are (also) based on CO₂ emissions and, where applicable, for the purposes of vehicle-specific subsidies. Further information on the WLTP and NEDC measurement procedures is also available at www.bmw.de/wltp.

For further details of the official fuel consumption figures and official specific CO₂ emissions of new cars, please refer to the “Manual on the fuel consumption, CO₂ emissions and power consumption of new cars”, available at sales outlets free of charge, from Deutsche Automobil Treuhand GmbH (DAT), Hellmuth-Hirth-Str. 1, 73760 Ostfildern-Scharnhausen and at <https://www.dat.de/co2/>.

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The BMW Group

With its four brands BMW, MINI, Rolls-Royce and BMW Motorrad, the BMW Group is the world's leading premium manufacturer of automobiles and motorcycles and also provides premium financial services. The BMW Group production network comprises over 30 production sites worldwide; the company has a global sales net-work in more than 140 countries.

In 2024, the BMW Group sold over 2.45 million passenger vehicles and more than 210,000 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax in the financial year 2024 was € 11.0 billion on revenues amounting to € 142.4 billion. As of 31 December 2024, the BMW Group had a workforce of 159,104 employees.

The economic success of the BMW Group has always been based on long-term thinking and responsible action. Sustainability is a key element of the BMW Group's corporate strategy and covers all products from the supply chain and production to the end of their useful life.

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