



Mercedes-Benz Classic

Press Information

2 March 2023

## Exclusive special model 30 years ago: the Mercedes-Benz 500 GE V8

- **Premiere for the eight-cylinder engine in the G-Class**
- **Prototype of all later high-performance G-Classes**
- **Only 446 vehicles of the 500 GE V8 are built, in 1993 and 1994**

Stuttgart. 30 years ago, Mercedes-Benz equips the G model for the first time with an eight-cylinder engine. With this, the extremely robust and reliable off-road vehicle, which was launched in 1979, breaks fresh ground in terms of driving performance, equipment and price. A small series of no more than 500 units of the premiere vehicle, based on the W 463 model series launched in 1989, is planned. In the end, 446 vehicles are built.

Powerful engines, right up to the AMG versions, are now a firmly established feature of the G-Class. These variants have established the G worldwide as a luxury off-road vehicle. The rare 500 GE V8 was something of a trendsetter back in 1993, and the harbinger of high-end off-roaders in the automotive luxury class. From 2023, well-maintained 500 GE V8s can be classified as historic cultural assets and, subject to a successful classic car appraisal, receive the coveted H registration plate. This underlines the classic status of the exclusive special model.

### **Strong, luxurious and fast: the Mercedes-Benz 500 GE V8**

At the Geneva Motor Show from 4 to 14 March 1993, Mercedes-Benz presents the 500 GE V8 as the new top-of-the-range engine for the G model. This has been around for 14 years at this point and has earned an excellent reputation as a reliable companion for rough terrain. The initiative to build the 500 GE V8 comes from the Mercedes-Benz Off-road Vehicle Product Unit. The first test vehicles are built at AMG in Affalterbach.

The 500 GE V8 is given a proven eight-cylinder engine from the brand's passenger car range. The M 117 with two-valve technology develops **177 kW (240 hp)** and 375 newton metres of torque from a displacement of 4973 cubic centimetres. The top speed was 180 km/h, while acceleration from 0 to 100 km/h was achieved in 11.4 seconds. A mere increase in performance is not all: the vehicle is fitted with Bridgestone tyres of the new dimension 265/70 R 16 H on aluminium wheels. These are the only off-road tyres approved for speeds up to 210 km/h. The brake system is configured for this level of driving performance with ABS and internally ventilated disc brakes at the front. The developers have designed the suspension with the emphasis on comfort. The drivetrain, with its permanent four-wheel drive, remains unchanged except for the front differential lock, which is not offered here. In addition, there is a slightly shallower fording depth. These subtleties hardly diminish

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\* Further information on the official fuel consumption and the official, specific CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of new passenger cars can be found in the publication entitled "Leitfaden über den Kraftstoffverbrauch, die CO<sub>2</sub>-Emissionen und den Stromverbrauch neuer Personenkraftwagen" ["Guide on the fuel economy, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and power consumption of all new passenger car models"], available free of charge from all sales outlets and from Deutsche Automobil Treuhand GmbH at [www.dat.de](http://www.dat.de).

the off-road capability. The special model is available exclusively as a Station Wagon with a long wheelbase (2850 millimetres).

The standard equipment of the 500 GE V8, the interior of which has been redesigned, is extensive. A black leather interior with contrasting elements is included: the seat and backrest cushions, the seat surrounds and the door panels are trimmed in medium grey. Walnut veneer is used for the wood trim of the centre console, parts of the handbrake lever, the two transmission selector levers and trim elements on the doors. A special amethyst blue metallic paint finish extends to the bumpers, wing flares and mirror housings. Automatic transmission, air conditioning, cruise control, a sliding sunroof, leather steering wheel and heated seats are always on board. The exclusivity and equipment has its price: DM 178,250. Two comparative figures: a G 320 with six-cylinder engine costs 88,500 Deutschmarks at the time, while a 500 SE in the 140-series S-Class, with the M 119 engine, is available for 129,030 Deutschmarks.

One reason for the limited edition of 446 vehicles is the number of M-117 engines available. In other vehicles, the power unit has already been replaced by the four-valve M 119. However, due to its dimensions, this does not fit into the engine compartment of the G-Class.

### **Mercedes-Benz G-Class**

The G-Class is by far the longest-produced model series from Mercedes-Benz and the forefather of all SUVs sporting the three-pointed star. It is launched in 1979. The initial and simply equipped W 460 model series is designed and constructed for tough everyday use, for example by foresters, farmers, in the military or on unpaved tracks all over the world. The "G" combines superior off-road capability with full on-road capability and safety. All-wheel drive and differential locks with 100 percent effect are as much a part of this vehicle as the rigid ladder-type frame.

This robustness also benefits the team Jacky Ickx and Claude Brasseur in 1983: the racing driver and the actor win the gruelling Paris-Dakar desert rally in a Mercedes-Benz 280 GE entered by Mercedes-Benz France and aerodynamically and technically optimised by engineers in Stuttgart. Around 80 percent of all the vehicles ever produced are still in existence - clear proof of the outstanding quality of this off-roader, which has borne the name G-Class since 1993.

Series production of the G models takes place in Graz. The power spectrum of the four diesel and petrol engines initially available ranges from **53 kW** (72 hp) to **115 kW** (156 hp). Customers can choose between the Cabriolet and Station Wagon models with short or longer wheelbase, as well as other body styles. The W 463 model series, introduced in 1989, marks the beginning of an evolution that continually adapts the hitherto very functional G model series to technical progress. Such changes initially include a more comfortable vehicle design, a higher-quality interior and permanent all-wheel drive instead of the manually selectable all-wheel drive that had been standard until then.

### **From off-roader with utility vehicle character to lifestyle vehicle**

The 500 GE V8 from 1993 marks the beginning of the G-Class's journey to becoming a refined lifestyle vehicle. In the same year, AMG follows up with the AMG 500 GE 6.0. The enlargement of the bore and stroke of the M 117 results in a displacement of 5959 cubic centimetres, the power increases to **220 kW** (300 hp). In 1998, the G 500 becomes part of the regular sales range. In addition to the long-wheelbase version, the short version is also on offer, as a Cabriolet. The M 113 V8 engine produces **218 kW** (296 hp) and the top speed is 190 km/h. One year later, AMG presents the G 55 AMG to mark the 20th anniversary of the G-Class. The naturally aspirated eight-cylinder engine with a displacement of 5.5 litres, three-valve technology and dual ignition has an output of **260 kW** (354

hp), while the top speed is electronically limited to 210 km/h. In 2002, Affalterbach succeeds in accommodating a twelve-cylinder engine in the G 63 AMG. Its power output: **326 kW** (444 hp).

In 2012, various assistance systems such as DISTRONIC Plus and PARKTRONIC significantly expand the equipment of the G-Class. The next G 63 AMG, with a 5.5-litre V8 biturbo engine and **400 kW** (544 hp), proves a popular model. The G 65 AMG with a 6.0-litre V12 biturbo engine and 450 kW (612 hp) is exceptional. It achieves a maximum torque of 1000 newton metres - a record in the off-road segment. In the summer of 2017 in Graz the 300,000th G-Class rolls off the production line.

In January 2018, the new G-Class makes its debut at the North American International Auto Show in Detroit. It still bears the model series designation W 463. Technically, this "G" once again sets standards. The kinship to the predecessor remains unmistakable. And there is still a "500" in the sales range.

**Contacts:**

Peter Becker, +49 (0) 176 30 909 790, [peter.becker@mercedes-benz.com](mailto:peter.becker@mercedes-benz.com)

Frank Scheibner, +49 (0) 160 8 680 266, [frank.scheibner@mercedes-benz.com](mailto:frank.scheibner@mercedes-benz.com)

Julia Löwenstein, +49 (0) 151 58 610 215, [julia.loewenstein@mercedes-benz.com](mailto:julia.loewenstein@mercedes-benz.com)

Enquiries by email to [classic@mercedes-benz.com](mailto:classic@mercedes-benz.com) or online at [www.mercedes-benz.com/classic](http://www.mercedes-benz.com/classic)

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## Captions

23C0005\_001

Mercedes-Benz 500 GE V8 (W 463). The special model presented at the Geneva Motor Show in March 1993 is the first G-Class with V8 engine (M 117, 177 kW/240 hp, displacement 4973 cubic centimetres). The 500 GE V8 is available exclusively as a long-wheelbase Station Wagon. Only 446 vehicles are produced from then until 1994. Optional extras: Stainless Steel Package with front brush bar bracket, running board left and right and spare wheel cover. Exterior shot from the front left. (Photo index number in the Mercedes-Benz Classic archive: D93F78)

23C0005\_002

Mercedes-Benz 500 GE V8 (W 463). The special model presented at the Geneva Motor Show in March 1993 is the first G-Class with V8 engine (M 117, 177 kW/240 hp, displacement 4973 cubic centimetres). The 500 GE V8 is available exclusively as a long-wheelbase Station Wagon. Only 446 vehicles are produced from then until 1994. Optional extras: Stainless Steel Package with front brush bar bracket, running board left and right and spare wheel cover. Exterior shot from the front left. (Photo index number in the Mercedes-Benz Classic Archive: A93F99)

23C0005\_003

Mercedes-Benz 500 GE V8 (W 463). The special model presented at the Geneva Motor Show in March 1993 is the first G-Class with V8 engine (M 117, 177 kW/240 hp, displacement 4973 cubic centimetres). The 500 GE V8 is available exclusively as a long-wheelbase Station Wagon. Only 446 vehicles are produced from then until 1994. Optional extras: Stainless Steel Package with front brush bar bracket, running board left and right and spare wheel cover. Exterior shot from the front right. (Photo index number in the Mercedes-Benz Classic Archive: A93F94)

23C0005\_004

Mercedes-Benz 500 GE V8 (W 463). The special model presented at the Geneva Motor Show in March 1993 is the first G-Class with V8 engine (M 117, 177 kW/240 hp, displacement 4973 cubic centimetres). The 500 GE V8 is available exclusively as a long-wheelbase Station Wagon. Only 446 vehicles are produced from then until 1994. Optional extras: Stainless Steel Package with front brush bar bracket, running board left and right and spare wheel cover. Exterior shot from the front left. (Photo index number in the Mercedes-Benz Classic Archive: A93F95)

23C0005\_005

Mercedes-Benz 500 GE V8 (W 463). The special model presented at the Geneva Motor Show in March 1993 is the first G-Class with V8 engine (M 117, 177 kW/240 hp, displacement 4973 cubic centimetres). The 500 GE V8 is available exclusively as a long-wheelbase Station Wagon. Only 446 vehicles are produced from then until 1994. Optional extras: Stainless Steel Package with front brush bar bracket, running board left and right and spare wheel cover. Side view from the left. (Photo index number in the Mercedes-Benz Classic Archive: 1998DIG236)

23C0005\_006

Mercedes-Benz 500 GE V8 (W 463). The special model presented at the Geneva Motor Show in March 1993 is the first G-Class with V8 engine (M 117, 177 kW/240 hp, displacement 4973 cubic centimetres). The 500 GE V8 is available exclusively as a long-wheelbase Station Wagon. Only 446 vehicles are produced from then until 1994. Optional extras: Stainless Steel Package with front brush bar bracket, running board left and right and spare wheel cover. Photo of the engine compartment. (Photo index number in the Mercedes-Benz Classic Archive: A93F96)

23C0005\_007

Mercedes-Benz 500 GE V8 (W 463). The special model presented at the Geneva Motor Show in March 1993 is the first G-Class with V8 engine (M 117, **177 kW/240** hp, displacement 4973 cubic centimetres). The 500 GE V8 is available exclusively as a long-wheelbase Station Wagon. Only 446 vehicles are produced from then until 1994. Photo of the interior with leather upholstery and walnut wood applications, among other features. (Photo index number in the Mercedes-Benz Classic Archive: A93F80)

23C0005\_008

Mercedes-Benz 500 GE V8 (W 463). The special model presented at the Geneva Motor Show in March 1993 is the first G-Class with V8 engine (M 117, **177 kW/240** hp, displacement 4973 cubic centimetres). The 500 GE V8 is available exclusively as a long-wheelbase Station Wagon. Only 446 vehicles are produced from then until 1994. Photo of the interior with leather upholstery and walnut wood applications, among other features. (Photo index number in the Mercedes-Benz Classic Archive: A93F85)

23C0005\_009

Mercedes-Benz 500 GE V8 (W 463). The special model presented at the Geneva Motor Show in March 1993 is the first G-Class with V8 engine (M 117, **177 kW/240** hp, displacement 4973 cubic centimetres). The 500 GE V8 is available exclusively as a long-wheelbase Station Wagon. Only 446 vehicles are produced from then until 1994. Photo of the interior with leather upholstery and walnut wood applications, among other features. (Photo index number in the Mercedes-Benz Classic Archive: A93F81)