

CLASSIC DRIVER

Meet the Mercedes-Benzes that pulled in some of Rock n' Roll's royalty

Lead

Famously owned and chauffeured by some of the world's most famous personalities, the Mercedes-Benz 600 is the hallmark of quality. It's rare to come across such a machine, let alone a 600 and its lengthy Pullman sibling, but both are heading to Oldtimer Galerie Toffen's upcoming auction.



"Lifestyles of the rich and famous, they're always complaining", the lyrics once uttered by Maryland-born rock band Good Charlotte, a band that would become world-famous for hits such as this one, eventually leading them to stardom, and more than likely, a lot of complaining. But what exactly is it that the rich and famous have to complain about? A snap of the finger can bring along a driver willing to take you anywhere you desire, and for us, there'd be nothing to complain about while lounging in the back seats of a Mercedes-Benz 600.

A monstrous feat of engineering that even today is a figure of power and wealth, the 600 defined automotive luxury since its first appearance way back in 1963, where it was quickly snapped up by dictators and prime ministers around the world. While it was a buttery-smooth cruiser, designed to glide rather than drive, the 600 was more than capable of breaking away from pesky paparazzi or the odd assassin, thanks to its impeccable 6.3-litre V8, making the 600 the first limousine in history to be fitted with such an engine. Despite weighing almost two and a half tonnes in its regular, SWB form, the 600 could rocket its occupants away from outside a red carpet to 100 km/h in just 10 seconds.



Looking a little closer at the shorter of the two heading to auction with Oldtimer Galerie Toffen on June 1st, this stately saloon has enjoyed a well-pampered life gliding through Switzerland's effortlessly smooth roads, which were seemingly designed for such a car. Having been restored and repainted from its original Silver Metallic to the sophisticated black over a plush tan leather interior, this 600 has racked up a healthy number of kilometres, whilst being treated infrequently at a Swiss Mercedes-Benz Classic Centre. Perhaps what sets the 600 apart from its regular W108 and even the statelier W109 variants of the luxury saloon, is the sheer amount of money needed to be thrown at it to make it as good as this one. According to the car's reports, over 400,000 Swiss francs has been spent since new to maintain this beast, but that's a small price to pay for a true piece of Mercedes-Benz history. A mere 2,190 examples of the 600 were made, making well-kept examples such as this one something of a rarity.

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Speaking of rare, and expensive, let's take a closer look at the 600's stretched-out sibling, known as the Pullman. Costing well over 80,000 Swiss Francs back in 1966, a value now knocking on the door of 300,000 Swiss Francs 58 years later, the Pullman made the offerings from Rolls-Royce and Bentley seem like pocket money. The eye-watering pricetag was somewhat justified, though, as those owners' wealthy enough to purchase a Pullman would experience luxury never experienced in an automobile before, luxury only a handful of cars even today can flaunt.



Many custodians of the Pullman were politicians or musicians, but this example was snapped up from new by the personal transport division of Welti-Furrer AG in Zurich in March of 1966. From there the car was immediately put to use and became the go-to cruiser for celebrities visiting Switzerland. In fact, this very car was used by The Rolling Stones for their first ever concert in Switzerland in April 1967. During their stay, the car would be used by the Stones as a tranquil and yet powerful cruiser that would certainly make a statement as they arrived outside the concert hall. By 1969, the car had racked up nearly 70,000 kilometres as it wafted the wealthy around Switzerland, and by 1994, with over 250,000 kilometres now on the odometer, the Pullman was finally retired and sold, where it led a comfortable life with just two more owners. Now, showing 262,000 kilometres and running sweeter than ever, this low-owner piece of musical and automotive history is looking for its new custodian, who will undoubtedly enjoy every moment of driving it, or being driven in!

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This wonderful pair of Mercedes-Benzen, as well as a host of other classics will be heading to [Oldtimer Galerie Toffen's 'Swiss Classic World' sale which takes place on June 1st.](#)

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