

CLASSIC DRIVER

Mercedes-Benz at the IAA 2003

The Mercedes presentation at the 60th Frankfurt Motor Show is a fitting occasion for two automobiles that set standards in both design and technology, thereby emphasising the role of Mercedes-Benz as the pacemaker and innovative leader among car brands: the SLR McLaren and Vision CLS. Daimler-Chrysler also debuted a 4MATIC version of the 'new' E-Class.



The Vision CLS continues a series of extraordinary, pioneering car concepts with which Mercedes-Benz has repeatedly set trends in previous years. Never before have two different characters been combined as specifically and beautifully as in this design study, where the stylistic excitement of a coupé harmonises with the comfort and functionality of a saloon. "We are one coupé generation ahead with the Vision CLS", says Professor Jürgen Hubbert, the member of the Daimler-Chrysler AG Board of Management responsible for the Mercedes Car Group. "The idea of a four-door coupé opens up interesting possibilities, and is especially intended to appeal to people for whom cars and driving are a passion."

Vision CLS: Coupé with the comfort and space of a saloon -

A unique synthesis between a coupé and a saloon has produced the Vision CLS, a car whose elegant lines arouse instant enthusiasm and which exhibits all the typical Mercedes characteristics in terms of safety, innovation and comfort - a perfect combination of enthrallment and good sense. The same applies to the powerful diesel engine, whose 195 kW/265 hp provides excellent conditions for a dynamic driving experience. It accelerates the Vision CLS from zero to 100 km/h in only 6.4 seconds, the maximum speed being electronically limited to 250 km/h. Despite this impressive performance the six-cylinder engine is happy with 7.5 litres of fuel per 100 kilometres (NEDC overall consumption) and meets the stringent EU-4 exhaust emission limits.

"The combination of outstanding performance, a low fuel consumption, EU-4 compliance and a diesel particulate filter illustrates the great potential still remaining in this ultra-modern six-cylinder biturbo diesel, and in diesel engines in general", Professor Jürgen Hubbert explains.

As in the case of other studies and show cars with which Mercedes-Benz has repeatedly presented new and interesting vehicle concepts for open discussion - and which have usually entered series production - the project planners are once again using the Frankfurt Motor Show to gauge the opinions of visitors to the show, and will reach their decision for this unique vehicle concept according to the public response.

With four doors and a generously dimensioned interior the Vision CLS offers a significant improvement in comfort and functionality compared to other coupés. The distance between the front and rear seats is 829 millimetres, and therefore at the level of a saloon. The 470-litre boot capacity (VDA measuring method) of the Mercedes study also considerably exceeds the figures for other coupés and many a saloon.

The coupé study is equipped with pioneering Mercedes innovations such as adaptive front airbags, windowbags and sidebags, as well as belt tensioners and belt force limiters for all seats, giving it the same high safety standard as the Mercedes luxury class. Active headlamps, cornering lights and the electrohydraulic braking system Sensotronic Brake Control (SBC™) are other special technical features of the Vision CLS.



Mercedes-Benz has combined the high-torque biturbo engine with the new 7G-TRONIC, the world's first seven-speed automatic transmission for passenger cars. This offers a high degree of gearshift comfort while allowing fast mid-range sprints, so it harmonises particularly well with the dynamic character of the coupé study.

Premiere of the 4MATIC permanent four-wheel drive system in the E-Class -

Other new Mercedes products celebrating their premiere at the Frankfurt Motor Show include the 4MATIC variants (Saloons and Estates) in the E-Class. By interacting intelligently with the standard Electronic Stability Program ESP® and the 4ETS traction control system, 4MATIC helps the driver to manage critical situations safely and confidently. From autumn 2003 the six-cylinder models E 240 and E 320 will be available with 4MATIC, as is the eight-cylinder E 500.

In addition to the interaction between ESP® and 4ETS the new four-wheel-drive models in the E-Class feature another technical highlight - Sensotronic Brake Control (SBC™) - which first entered series production at Mercedes-Benz. Thanks to variable brake force distribution at each wheel this provides more safety when braking on bends, while increasing the efficiency of Brake Assist, the Electronic Stability Program ESP® and 4MATIC by virtue of its dynamic intervention and precision. Braking impulses become even more sensitive and rapid.

A new entry to the E-Class range is the E 500 Estate, which has a powerful V8 petrol engine generating an output of 225 kW/306 hp.

Text/Photos - Daimler Chrysler

Gallery

Hide gallery

Source URL: <https://www.classicdriver.com/en/article/mercedes-benz-iaa-2003>

© Classic Driver. All rights reserved.