

Mercedes-Benz SL63 AMG

The Mercedes-Benz SL63 AMG is a heady cocktail.

It is a sumptuous saloon, a grand touring cabriolet, and a supercar all rolled into one

It is sophisticated, balanced, and ready to crackle like thunder whenever the conditions are right.

The SL63 AMG's cabin is extraordinary due to a modern, sanitary, high-class design. Sink into the opulent interior, and fire up the 5461cc V8 engine. You'll be instantly stupefied by the incredible snarl emanating from the quad

exhausts. You could almost say the Benz sounds good enough to devour.

The SL63 comes with a distinctive AMG gear selector as well as a variety of buttons that allow you to alter the settings of the beast-like powertrain and exceptional suspension. There's also a seven-inch infotainment system integrated into the dash which you can control via a dial.





Strangely enough though, the infotainment display screen isn't your main focus when the pedal is to the metal and the twin-turbo V8's scrumptiously smooth growl starts.

The driving experience is nothing short of wild. If you want to overtake a sluggish car, just bury your right foot in the carpet, and before you know it, you've passed the vehicle in front with nothing more than a low turbo hiss to show for the move. The seven-speed automatic transmission plays a substantial role in the drama because the shifts are virtually undetectable.

In fact, the Mercedes-Benz's eyeball sucking

thrust has been cranked up a grade. Where it used to reach 0-62mph in 4.3 seconds, the SL63 AMG will now do it in 4.2 ticks with a top speed of 155mph. During acceleration your pupils will widen and a sense of tremendous gratification will wash over you. You will also be aware that other drivers are staring at you. They will look taken aback, probably because the might of the Mercedes-Benz SL63 AMG is something they've never witnessed before.

But what really makes the SL stand-out is how the Merc balances this tremendous performance with good manners when it



comes to ride and handling contentment. This isn't a Porsche 911, and it doesn't want to be one either. In addition, this car's ride comfort and finesse are better than anything else in this particular premium motoring niche.

The handling isn't instinctive, but it delivers much more information and agility than you'd think likely of a large, luxury-laden drop-top. One of the most important explanations for the SL's dynamic prowess is the aluminium-intensive construction that makes up the best part of the Benz's framework and body. This slashes hundreds of pounds from the Mercedes' mass. The weight reduction aids out-and-out performance, of course, and the other advantage is that the lack of bulk helps the SL63 AMG return a fairly reasonable fuel economy average during motorway driving.

The chassis architecture also makes life simpler for the active body control suspension, another vital part of the Mercedes-Benz SL63's sports machine-meets-luxury motor marriage. The system employs a giddy assortment of electronic and hydraulic sensors to manage



nose-dive and crouch under acceleration – as well as braking, along with roll and lurch, during speedy cornering manoeuvres.

But in real-world conditions, over city streets and on the open road, the brawny Benz reveals an uncanny sense of tranquillity, especially when you know the driving situation would have the suspension of many lesser sports cars fumbling and jabbing for a foothold on the black stuff. With the roof folded, there's no looseness or steering wheel jitter that can afflict other cabriolets. The car is unyielding, unwavering, and quick.

This Mercedes is also overflowing with safety tech. Should you tread over the line of the Mercedes-Benz SL63 AMG's performance brakes with bored discs, the stability and traction control systems, and the grip provided by the 19/20-inch 10-spoke alloy wheels swathed in low-profile, sticky, rubber are second to none.

Furthermore, eight airbags are fitted as standard to compliment systems such as Mercedes' Pre-Safe, which closes the side windows, constricts the seatbelts, and alters the passenger seat if the SL becomes aware that a crash is about to

happen. My test car was also kitted out with Lane Keep Assist, a blind spot warning system, and DISTRONIC Plus intelligent cruise control mated to a Pre-Safe braking system.

So, if you're a bit of a German car badge connoisseur and you fancy yourself as an enthusiastic sports car driving petrol-head, then this could well be the motor you've been looking to buy.

MERCEDES-BENZ SL63 AMG

Max speed: 155 mph
 0-62 mph: 4.2 secs
 Combined mpg: 28.5
 Engine: 5461cc 8 cylinder,
 32 valve turbo petrol
 Max. power (bhp): 577
 Max. torque (lb/ft): 663
 CO2: 231 g/km
 Price: £112,510