

1957 Mercedes-Benz 300SL Roadster

Chassis: 198.042.7500469 Engine: 198.980.7500502 Body: 198.042.7500392

- One of 1,858 300SL 300SL Roadsters
- One of just 554 Produced in 1957
- Spectacular Performance for the Era
- Completely Numbers-Matching Chassis, Body, Engine, Gearbox, Differential, Steering Box.
- 2017-2019 Mechanical Refresh including engine and gearbox Rebuild, MFI Overhauled, New Wiring Harness

The Mercedes-Benz 300SL remains one of the most important and iconic vehicles ever constructed. A car that redefined motorsports performance when new, the 300SL in both gullwing and roadster configuration continues to inspire enthusiasts all over the world today. Released in 1954 with production concluding in 1957, the gullwing arrived first as a triumph of engineering and design. Delivered with production fuel-injection (first of its kind), and achieving the world's fastest top speed, the 300 SL (S-Sport, L-Light) confirmed Max Hoffman's challenge to Mercedes-Benz engineer Rudolf Uhlenhaut - to build a Gran-Prix car, tailored for road use.

Demand for the gullwing was surprisingly strong considering the price, but the growing US market, in particular the west coast, was seeking cars of unique distinction and open configuration, Hoffman insisted that a roadster version also be developed. Far more than a topless 300SL, the roadster was significantly re-engineered to address some of the shortcomings of the earlier 300SL platform. To begin with, the roadster was fortified with additional structural frame members and the side structure improved for traditionally hinged doors with larger openings. Further structural improvements resulted in greater torsional rigidity and better handling via single-pivot swing-axle rear suspension which vastly improved bump oversteer experienced in the gullwing. Other improvements such as roll up side glass, increased horsepower, and softer coil springs made for a much more enjoyable ride without compromising the sporting nature of the race-bred original. A total of 1,858 roadsters were built from 1957-1963 with just 554 constructed in its inaugural year.

This 1957 Mercedes-Benz 300SL Roadster is currently finished in DB180 silver metallic over black leather, the car is equipped with a black soft top and retains its original chassis, body, and drivetrain, including the fuel-injected 3.0L inline-six, four-speed manual gearbox, differential and steering box. This first-year example was shipped from Germany to the US in November 1957 to be sold new by Studebaker-Packard as a DB040 Black over Cream Leather special order.

The car reportedly resided in California until moving in 1967 to Arizona, where it stayed with one owner for 50 years as part of a small collection. It was acquired by the seller in early 2017 and driven regularly through the end of the summer, including trips to the local boat yard for ethanol-free fuel. In the fall of 2017, Albrecht Stachel of Brooklyn Motoren Werke Inc. in Brooklyn, Wisconsin was commissioned for a mechanical overhaul, which was completed in

2019 and involved over \$85k in parts alone. Work included rebuilding the engine and Bosch mechanical fuel injection system, a new wiring harness, as well as overhauling the gearbox, differential, and braking system.

The W198 was Mercedes' last body-on-frame design, and chassis 7500469 retains its original body (7500392) as shown by stampings attached in the gallery below. Curb weight is just over 3,100 pounds. Finished in black from the factory, this example was repainted in silver during the 1990s.

European headlights were installed by the seller. Brooklyn Motoren Werke refinished the insides of the bumpers and replaced the rubber seal on the soft top cover. This 300SL rides a set of five chrome factory wheels was refinished and polished and fitted with new tubes and tires. The original steering box has also been resealed, and the four-wheel drum brake system was serviced with a new reservoir, booster kit, and diaphragm.

The interior color was changed to black in the 1990s, and the owner in Arizona reupholstered the seats with perforated leather. Brooklyn Motoren Werke disassembled the doors to lubricate the window mechanisms. All VDO instrumentation was overhauled by Palo Alto Speedometer. The odometer was zeroed out during the restoration.

The 3.0-liter M198 straight-six produced 225 horsepower when new and features Bosch mechanical fuel injection, a first for a road car when it debuted. The iron block is leaned over at an angle of 50° and equipped with dry-sump lubrication. A mechanical rebuild was carried out from 2017 to 2019 and included blueprinting the block. A new crankshaft and pistons were installed, along with new rod, main cap, and head bolts. The timing gear and water pump were renewed, and the two oil pumps were rebuilt in Germany. The assembled engine was then statically and dynamically balanced. The four-speed manual gearbox and differential were rebuilt as well.

Over 150 photos detail the rebuild process by Brooklyn Motoren Werke and over 20 pages describe the scope of work and the list of parts used. After being reassembled, the engine was broken in on a stand with requisite oil changes. It was then installed into the refinished engine bay with a re-cored radiator and a new stainless-steel exhaust system.

The fuel injection pump and injectors were overhauled by Pacific Fuel Injection of South San Francisco, California, and the pump gears were replaced. A constant-run Bosch electric fuel pump pack was added, and the mechanical lift pump at the side of the injection pump was removed to limit fuel dilution of the pump's oil sump. The fuel sending unit was overhauled, the fuel tank was cleaned, and a see-through pre-filter was added between the tank and electric pumps.

The new wiring harness was sourced from Germany. A 123ignition system was also installed, and the coil was relocated to the front of the engine bay. A new, more powerful Bosch 38-amp generator was installed with a matched regulator.

Drivetrain stampings can be seen in the gallery below and match the numbers on the original delivery note. Component numbers are as follows:

- Engine – 7500502
- Gearbox – 511
- Differential – 525
- Steering box – 538

The original Lieferschein (delivery note) lists the factory serial numbers, finishes, and optional equipment, as well as US distribution through Studebaker-Packard. Included is an original factory jack. This is a mechanically solid 300SL Roadster with some patina showing from light use over the past 20 odd years. It would make an excellent driving and events car, or is a great candidate for a color change back to the original DB040 Black over Cream Leather.