

# Mercedes-Benz at the Detroit Auto Show 2008

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The descriptions and data contained in this press kit apply to the international model range of Mercedes-Benz. Specifications may vary from country to country.

## Mercedes-Benz celebrates a double world premiere in Detroit

**Detroit – The Vision GLK FREESIDE and Vision GLK TOWNSIDE are two breeds of the same vehicle which are set to take the SUV world by storm. Both of these studies are celebrating their world premiere at the 2008 North American International Auto Show in Detroit. Whereas the Vision GLK FREESIDE is an all-rounder that showcases the capabilities of today's SUV vehicles both on and off the road, the TOWNSIDE version is designed to make its mark with dynamic performance on the tarmac.**

**By presenting two such different profiles, Mercedes-Benz is seeking to demonstrate the tremendous potential of the compact SUV study. The new generation of the SLK is likewise making its debut in Detroit. It is now yet more dynamic, and offers a brand of emotion-charged driving pleasure that is more intense than ever. Key visual changes include the restyled front and rear, as well as the meticulously modified interior. The two-seater's decidedly dynamic character is brought out to particularly good effect by the 224-kW/305-hp V6 sports engine with high-revving concept that features in the SLK 350, as well as by the optional direct-steer system. Despite the fact that their output has been increased, in some cases substantially so, all of the engines make far more restrained use of the fuel, meaning that their CO<sub>2</sub> emissions have been cut once again. Also going on show for the first time in the US are two innovative new models with groundbreaking drive technologies that are designed to guarantee a clean and economical future for premium-class motoring – the S 300 BLUETEC HYBRID with a compact hybrid module, as well as the ML 450 HYBRID with petrol engine and innovative two-mode hybrid system for purely electrical operation. The Stuttgart-based automotive group is thereby progressing exactly as planned with its "Road to the Future" strategy.**

The Vision GLK FREESIDE and Vision GLK TOWNSIDE provide a stylistic preview of a future compact SUV model bursting with character. What makes them just so fascinating is the way they fuse different design worlds. The two studies

incorporate elements taken from the original angular design of the G-Class, whilst at the same time impressing with design features typical of today's Mercedes-Benz passenger cars. Both stem from the same gene pool, yet each distinguishes itself with a personality all of its own. These two automotive characters are receiving their baptism of fire at the NAIAS in Detroit. In the words of Dr. Dieter Zetsche, Chairman of the Board of Management of Daimler AG: "The Vision GLK FREESIDE and TOWNSIDE reveal new possibilities for the logical progression of our extremely successful model strategy in the SUV segment." Page 3

The FREESIDE and TOWNSIDE take trademark SUV characteristics, such as solidity and off-road capability, and unite them with refined motoring culture on "regular" roads. In both cases, the AGILITY CONTROL suspension promises exceptional driving dynamics and agility, coupled with exemplary ride comfort plus pioneering standards of active safety. The GLK FREESIDE version brings the off-road abilities more to the fore with its special detachable body parts and rugged underride guard, while the Vision GLK TOWNSIDE with sports suspension unleashes its strengths in tarmac terrain. Forming the backbone of both variants is a highly robust bodyshell that forms a solid basis for a number of other key characteristics too: handling stability as well as vibration and acoustic comfort, which are equally as impressive under all driving conditions, plus passive safety, which is up to the brand's usual impeccably high standard.

Responsive performance is guaranteed in both model versions regardless of the conditions thanks to the latest generation of economical and eco-friendly BLUETEC four-cylinder drive units under the bonnet, which operate in unison with the 7G-TRONIC seven-speed automatic transmission and the new 4MATIC all-wheel drive. The compact-sized concept models also feature a number of technical highlights which are normally the preserve of the more exclusive vehicle categories. Quite apart from the PRE-SAFE anticipatory safety concept and the ILS Intelligent Light System, these include the COMAND APS infotainment centre with its intuitive operating concept, a rear-seat entertainment system including two screens, plus THERMOTRONIC 3-zone automatic climate control.

The interiors of the two studies match the expressive design of the exterior, and present an enticing mix of high-grade materials plus an ergonomically coherent

overall concept. Both instantly convey that characteristic Mercedes feel of wellbeing, but interpret it in two completely different styles. The Vision GLK FREESIDE immerses its occupants in an ambience of luxury and comfort, with white leather appointments and wood trim elements in a matt finish. The light aquamarine leather upholstery and brushed aluminium trim elements in the interior of the TOWNSIDE, on the other hand, set a more sporty tone.

### **New generation of the SLK for intense motoring pleasure**

The latest generation of the SLK blazes a trail of new sporty highlights, and bestows yet greater appeal on this thriving two-seater sports car with the trendsetting vario-roof that transforms it from roadster to weatherproof coupé in a matter of seconds.

The designers have honed the looks of the cult two-seater for added sportiness. Especially eye-catching is the restyled front bumper featuring modified segmentation of the air intakes and a more pronounced V-shape, while the area around the Mercedes star now stands out more boldly. The designers have also remodelled the vehicle's tail, with the diffuser-look styling at the bottom giving the Roadster an even more powerful appearance from the rear too.

Many of the interior's details have also undergone remodelling, and the interior has been refined as a whole by meticulous material selection. Particular care was taken to optimise the interior in such a way as to make it that much more driver-focused again. The focal point in this respect is formed by a new three-spoke sports steering wheel with multifunction controls, as well as a new instrument cluster with intriguing-looking bezels.

For the first time, Mercedes-Benz is equipping the SLK with the new NTG 2.5 generation of audio and telematics componentry. This boasts improved user friendliness together with even more handy functions. All audio systems come complete with a built-in hands-free facility with Bluetooth technology, plus a new media interface in the glove compartment, which enables mobile audio devices such as the iPod to be fully integrated into the audio system and operated from its control panel.

The switch to the new telematics generation now sees Mercedes-Benz offering the optimised LINGUATRONIC voice control system, renowned for its outstanding operation, as an option for the SLK-Class for the first time. Page 5

Customers who wish to enjoy the ultimate acoustic experience, whether driving with the vario-roof up or down, can opt for the harman kardon® Logic7® sound system. Here, the passenger compartment is filled by a rich surround sound, delivering crystal-clear listening pleasure of unprecedented quality for a roadster.

### **High-revving sports engine: added power and considerably lower consumption**

Making a mighty contribution to the sporty billing of the 2008 generation of the SLK are three reengineered drive units which all stand out by virtue of their lower fuel consumption, resulting in reduced CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Both the four-cylinder engine in the SLK 200 Kompressor and the six-cylinder sports engine in the SLK 350 benefit from a substantial increase in output and torque. Only the familiar eight-cylinder powerplant in the SLK 55 AMG remains unchanged, despite which it has lost absolutely none of its thrill and continues to be a unique selling point in the SLK segment.

The Mercedes-Benz engineers devoted particular attention to the V6 sports engine with high-revving concept, which is making its debut in the new-generation SLK. By performing a major overhaul of the engine's mechanics, the engineers succeeded in giving the V6 unit a completely new lease of life. From an unaltered displacement of 3498 cubic centimetres it now musters 224 kW/305 hp at 6500 rpm, a whole 24 kW (33 hp) more than in the engine it replaces. Torque has been upped too (+ 10 Nm) and now peaks at 360 Nm at 4900 rpm.

This has been achieved by raising the rev speed limit to 7200 rpm, at the same time as increasing the compression ratio, fitting a new intake manifold and making extensive modifications to the valve gear.

The new engine also strikes a far more emotive-sounding note after being deliberately tuned to deliver resonant sports engine acoustics, with overrun mode

producing a particularly emotion-stirring sound. When partnered by the 7G-TRONIC automatic transmission, the engine management furthermore blips the throttle automatically during downshifts – not only does this create a very sporty soundtrack, it helps to limit load-alteration effects too.

Yet despite its higher power output and such high-calibre performance, fuel consumption in the SLK 350 has been cut by a sizeable margin. In conjunction with the six-speed manual transmission, it now burns just 9.5 litres of fuel per 100 km on the combined cycle, meaning that consumption has been reduced by a remarkable 1.1 litres per 100 km. When coupled to the 7G-TRONIC automatic transmission, the sports engine limits itself to a mere 9.2 litres for every 100 km on the combined cycle, 0.9 litres less than previously. The cut in fuel consumption lowers CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 23 g/km to 219 g/km on the automatic model (manual transmission: 227 g/km, a reduction of 28 g/km).

### **Choice of three further engines**

Following the facelift, the engine line-up for the second generation of the successful SLK-Class will comprise three further variants:

- The four-cylinder supercharged engine delivers an extra 15 kW/21 hp of output (135 kW/184 hp), with torque increasing from 240 to 250 Newton metres. Combined fuel consumption has dropped by 1.0 litre to 7.7 l/100 km. This in turn reduces CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 27 g/km to 182 g/km.
- The SLK 280 has likewise been optimised for lower fuel consumption, and therefore CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Fuel consumption has dropped by 0.4 litres to 9.3 l/100 km (automatic: 9.7 l to 9.1 l/100 km) and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 11 g to 220 g/km (automatic: 231 g to 216 g/km)
- At work under the bonnet of the SLK 55 AMG is the familiar 5.5-litre V8 powerplant delivering 265 kW/360 hp and 510 Nm of torque.

The three new models in the SLK range all come with a precision six-speed manual gearshift. The SLK 55 AMG retains the 7G-TRONIC Sport seven-speed automatic transmission. The SLK 200 can be specified with an optional five-speed automatic, while the two V6 models – the SLK 280 and SLK 350 sports engine – offer the option of the 7G-TRONIC automatic transmission, or alternatively the 7G-TRONIC Sport with shift paddles on the steering wheel.

A newly developed direct-steer system with variable power assistance that elicits the very best from the suspension's sporty capabilities is optionally available (standard on SLK AMG 55). It combines agility and manoeuvrability on twisting country roads with low steering forces when parking and sure steering characteristics at high speeds.

The direct-steer system is derived from the previous speed-sensitive power steering and operates purely mechanically. This dispenses with the need for sophisticated actuator units and complex sensors, which interfere with the direct flow of power between wheel and hand and therefore have a detrimental effect on steering precision. At the heart of the system is a new rack with ingeniously devised toothing, that is designed to alter the steering gear ratio as the steering angle changes. Around the central position, the steering has an indirect ratio for good straight-line stability, resulting in excellent safety at high speeds. As soon as the steering wheel is turned to an angle of 5 degrees, the ratio increases rapidly and the steering feels far more direct. In this way, the number of steering wheel turns from lock to lock is reduced by around 25 per cent with the new direct-steer system. Consequently, relatively small turns of the steering wheel are sufficient for changing course when driving in city traffic. Meanwhile, high-speed twisty sections of country roads can be negotiated safely, precisely and with enormous pleasure using relatively small steering movements, all in almost intuitive fashion.

### **Road to the Future: S 300 BLUETEC HYBRID and ML 450 HYBRID**

Fuel-efficient and eco-friendly premium cars without any loss of safety, comfort and effortless motoring pleasure: that is the ultimate aim of the long-term development plan, which Mercedes-Benz has set in stone in its "Road to the Future" sustainability strategy. The focal points of development include modular drive technologies, consisting primarily of optimised internal combustion engines accompanied by individually customised hybrid solutions, with the two power sources being deployed either individually or in unison, depending on the vehicle category, operating profile and the customer's wishes.

At Detroit 2008, Mercedes-Benz is exhibiting two especially economical and environmentally friendly models for the future. The S 300 BLUETEC HYBRID takes the same BLUETEC diesel emission control technology for the world's cleanest combustion engines that was launched in the US back in 2006, and combines it with a compact hybrid module. The ML 450 HYBRID with V6 petrol engine, meanwhile, features a cutting-edge two-mode hybrid system that permits purely electrical operation. The Stuttgart-based automotive group is thereby progressing exactly as planned with its "Road to the Future" strategy, which only got underway in autumn 2007 with a unique pageant of ultra-economical and eco-friendly models at the Frankfurt Motor Show.

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## Vision GLK: one car with two different faces

- **Expressive styling that echoes the original G-Class design**
- **Harmonious marriage of off-road capability and refined motoring culture**
- **New, clean BLUETEC engines with environmentally friendly profile**

The Vision GLK FREESIDE and Vision GLK TOWNSIDE are two breeds of the same vehicle which are set to take the SUV world by storm. By presenting these two different vehicle profiles, Mercedes-Benz is highlighting the tremendous potential of the compact SUV study, which is making its world debut at the North American International Auto Show (NAIAS) in Detroit. Whereas the Vision GLK FREESIDE is an all-rounder that showcases the capabilities of today's SUV vehicles both on and off the road, the TOWNSIDE version is designed to make its mark with dynamic performance on the tarmac.

The Vision GLK FREESIDE and Vision GLK TOWNSIDE provide a stylistically sound preview of a future compact SUV model bursting with character, whose sense of fascination stems from the way in which it fuses different design worlds. The two studies incorporate elements taken from the original angular design of the G-Class, whilst at the same time impressing with design features typical of today's Mercedes-Benz passenger cars. Both stem from the same gene pool, yet each distinguishes itself with a personality all of its own. These two automotive characters are receiving their baptism of fire at the NAIAS in Detroit. In the words of Dr. Dieter Zetsche, Chairman of the Board of Management of Daimler AG: "The Vision GLK FREESIDE and TOWNSIDE reveal new possibilities for the logical progression of our extremely successful model strategy in the SUV segment." He has a particularly strong link to the compact and striking Vision GLK models, which dates back to his time as a vehicle developer in the mid-1980s when one of his remits was responsibility for development of the legendary G-Class. Looking back now, there is something he would like to make clear: "The requirements profiles have changed over time. One thing has certainly remained the same, however: a model from Mercedes with the letter "G" in its name must be capable of

performing exceptionally under any conditions."

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The FREESIDE and TOWNSIDE take trademark SUV characteristics, such as solidity and off-road capability, and unite them with refined motoring culture on "regular" roads. In both cases, the AGILITY CONTROL suspension promises exceptional driving dynamics and agility, coupled with exemplary ride comfort plus pioneering standards of active safety. The Vision GLK FREESIDE brings the off-road abilities more to the fore with its special detachable body parts and rugged underride guard, while the Vision GLK TOWNSIDE with sports suspension unleashes its strengths in tarmac terrain. Forming the backbone of both variants is a highly robust bodyshell that forms a solid basis for a number of other key characteristics too: handling stability as well as vibration and acoustic comfort, which are equally as impressive under all driving conditions, plus passive safety, which is up to the brand's usual impeccably high standard.

Responsive performance is guaranteed in both model versions regardless of the conditions thanks to the latest generation of economical and eco-friendly BLUETEC four-cylinder drive units under the bonnet, which operate in unison with the 7G-TRONIC seven-speed automatic transmission and the new 4MATIC all-wheel drive. The compact-sized concept models also feature a number of technical highlights which are normally the preserve of the more exclusive vehicle categories. Quite apart from the PRE-SAFE<sup>®</sup> anticipatory safety concept and the ILS Intelligent Light System, these include the COMAND APS infotainment centre with its intuitive operating concept, a rear-seat entertainment system including two screens, plus THERMOTRONIC 3-zone automatic climate control.

The interiors of the two studies match the expressive design of the exterior, and present an enticing mix of high-grade materials plus an ergonomically coherent overall concept. Both instantly convey that characteristic Mercedes feel of wellbeing, but interpret it in two completely different styles. The Vision GLK FREESIDE immerses its occupants in an ambience of luxury and comfort, with white leather appointments and wood trim elements in a matt finish. The light aquamarine leather upholstery and trim elements made from brushed aluminium in the interior of the TOWNSIDE, on the other hand, set a more sporty tone.

Borrowing from the styling of the precursor of all Mercedes-Benz SUV models confers a special status on both the FREESIDE and TOWNSIDE. As Head of Design Professor Peter Pfeiffer neatly sums up: "With the G-Class we created a style icon that has been a yardstick for nearly 30 years now. Unifying this puristic design with the new Mercedes-Benz design idiom is what makes the two Vision GLK variants genuine characters in their own right."

And indeed, never before has it been possible to enjoy such a strikingly expressive preview of a forthcoming compact SUV model. The interplay between the original angular design and the design features typical of all modern Mercedes-Benz passenger cars exerts an enthralling appeal. The clear-cut design idiom, where taut lines interact with large, overextended surfaces, coincides with the bodyshell attributes of practical off-road vehicles, including short overhangs, a vertical front end, slender A-pillars, a steeply angled windscreen and flat roof lines. Specially manufactured 20-inch light-alloy wheels, adapted in each case to reflect the differing characters of the FREESIDE and TOWNSIDE, inject the bodies of the two Vision GLK models with extra power and vibrancy, as do the muscular contours of the wheel arches.

The bodywork's styling is far from being a means to an end in itself, however, rather it allows the benefits that are typically associated with off-road vehicles to be transferred for the first time to the more on-road-orientated, compact SUV class. Large angles of approach and departure coupled to generous ground clearance make excursions off the beaten track a pleasurable experience. The fact that the driver enjoys both an excellent overview of the body and a good all-round view courtesy of the raised seating position boosts everyday practicality and guarantees relaxed motoring, even when driving in dense city traffic.

Artfully setting off the persuasive design concept of the Vision GLK models are two special-effect paint finishes. "Diamond white magno" a metallic paint finish with a matt clear coat, gives the FREESIDE an extravagant flair. On top of this, detachable body parts finished in gleaming sterling silver generate an intriguing contrast. The TOWNSIDE is resplendent in "Alubeam blue", a special high-gloss reflective paint

finish of unprecedented depth which emphasises the body's sporty qualities.

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### **Interior sets new trends in the compact premium segment**

The interior of the SUV studies is a seamless continuation of the exterior's bold looks, serving up a surprising interaction of stylistic contrasts that is generated by the juxtaposition of two quite different design approaches. On the one hand, both Vision GLK models offer an upmarket and luxurious interior, boasting materials of exquisite appeal plus precision build quality down to the finest detail. At the same time, however, the sophisticated surface finishes transfer the contemporary Mercedes design into the interior. The orchestrating element here, due to its dominant styling, is the dashboard, whose form sweeps on into the door trims, lending additional width to the generously proportioned interior. It is impossible to overlook the elegant strip of trim elements which extends across the dashboard's entire width, dividing the base structure into three vertically arranged levels. On the FREESIDE, this element is dominated by matt-finish anthracite-coloured cebrano wood with a white grain, along with a perfectly positioned seam of chrome. In the TOWNSIDE, brushed aluminium appears here to underline the dynamic character.

On both versions, the upper section of the dashboard is trimmed in black leather and spans the instrument cluster and the static central display of the COMAND APS in a single sweep. At the bottom, as well as on the centre tunnel and in the footwells, the different styling touches that distinguish the two Vision models appear once again. The FREESIDE's interior picks up on the exterior paintwork's colour scheme. The seats and lower door trims are upholstered in white leather, which has been treated with a special coating method to give it the same matt sheen as the exterior's "diamond white magno" paint finish. Quite apart from the stunning visual effect, this treatment of the natural covers gives them a silky soft surface that is kind to the skin and pleasant to the touch. Black piping seams on the seats help create the harmonious contrast between black and white. The interior appointments of the TOWNSIDE emphasise its sporty ambitions, with leather upholstery and trim whose light aquamarine colour complements the tones of the exterior's "Alubeam blue" finish. Here, dark blue piping seams produce a visually coherent contrast.

The driver's armrest and the COMAND APS controller are positioned for optimum ergonomics. The tried-and-tested operating logic borrowed from the S-Class makes it possible to navigate through the individual menus intuitively. Additional direct access buttons make it easier to call up the principal main functions.

Both Vision variants protect their occupants with an all-encompassing safety concept founded on a high-strength passenger cell and energy-absorbing crumple zones at the front and rear. The raft of protective measures includes front airbags, sidebags and windowbags, a kneebag for the driver, along with crash-responsive head restraints.

### **New BLUETEC four-cylinder engines with AdBlue injection**

The Vision GLK studies are powered by a brand new generation of diesel engines. The four-cylinder 2.2-litre unit furthers the basic dynamic driving concept of the automotive siblings, and is capable of generating exhilarating performance from its output of 125 kW/170 hp whilst at the same time cutting fuel consumption and emission figures. Technical highlights of the extremely compact and smooth-running CDI powerplant with rearward camshaft drive include the fourth-generation common-rail direct injection with an injection pressure of 2000 bar, as well as a two-stage turbocharger system.

The modular BLUETEC emission control system has been further enhanced by Mercedes-Benz, and is now being combined in its most efficient form for the very first time with a four-cylinder engine. "BLUETEC gives us a technology that makes it possible for us to combine the high efficiency and impressive torque of modern diesel engines with extremely low emissions – a perfect propulsion unit for a compact SUV like the GLK," declares Dr Thomas Weber, member of the Board of Management of Daimler AG and responsible for corporate research and the development of Mercedes-Benz Cars. The focus of BLUETEC technology is on minimising emissions of nitrogen oxides. These are the sole component of exhaust gases whose levels are higher in diesel engines than in their petrol-powered counterparts due to their operating principle. The oxidising catalytic converter and maintenance-free particulate filter are supplemented by a SCR catalytic converter. AdBlue, a harmless aqueous solution of urea, is injected into

the exhaust stream. This method converts as much as 80 per cent of the nitrogen oxides into non-toxic nitrogen and water. The study thereby provides a perfect demonstration of just how the more compact diesel models are also able to comply with the toughest emissions regulations, including even the EU6 limits that are only due to come into force for all new vehicles as of 2015. By that time, the current EU4 threshold for nitrogen oxides will have been brought down by a further 70 per cent or so to 0.08 g/km. Not even the stringent US limits enshrined in BIN 5 or California's LEV2 legislation would pose an obstacle for either the FREESIDE or the TOWNSIDE.

#### **4MATIC drive system: maximum performance under any conditions**

The new 4MATIC all-wheel-drive system featured in the Vision GLK FREESIDE and Vision GLK TOWNSIDE is one of the most proficient of its kind. The basic concept, with the engine installed longitudinally and the transmission and transfer case designed as a single block, produces a compact and lightweight arrangement that minimises frictional losses, as well as heralding a number of further benefits compared to other systems where the drive unit is installed crossways. The upshot of this is that fuel consumption is on a par with that of a comparable model with conventional two-wheel drive. Vibration and acoustic comfort are of a standard normally found in today's luxury models.

The basic 45:55 split of drive torque between the front and rear wheels combines with the ESP<sup>®</sup>, ASR and 4ETS dynamic handling control systems to produce supremely assured and perfectly predictable driving characteristics under all conditions. Optimum traction is assured at all times, along with maximum directional stability and flawless handling. The newly developed multiple-disc clutch in the centre differential comes to the system's aid when friction between the tyres and ground is particularly low, for example when driving over snow or ice. A basic interaxle lock of 50 Newton metres gives a boost to traction, without any loss of handling stability.

The AGILITY CONTROL suspension fitted in the Vision GLK studies succeeds in resolving a conflict of aims that afflicts the SUV segment especially: this is because the chassis engineers seek to create a vehicle that is as sporty and agile as it is comfortable and smooth, plus, at the same time, capable of travelling off-road. If the focus is placed on sporty, dynamic handling, there must be a certain firmness about the tuning of the suspension and particularly the shock absorbers, which both precludes the desired ride comfort typical of the Mercedes-Benz brand and imposes restrictions on the vehicle's abilities in off-road terrain. If, on the other hand, the vehicle is purpose-built for ride comfort and off-road expertise by fitting softer dampers, its driving dynamics will of course suffer. "Amplitude-responsive damping" provides the solution: here, the shock absorber's smoothing forces are of a flexible nature, rather than having a rigid setting. During normal driving along moderately contoured roads or off-road excursions at low speeds, the system is tuned for soft response to the benefit of the occupants' sense of wellbeing and the vehicle's off-road abilities. In order to keep the occupants feeling at their ease when driving at a brisker pace or performing abrupt evasive manoeuvres, the dampers switch to a firmer setting in such situations to ensure maximum handling stability. At the same time, the driver of the Vision GLK can count on the support of the speed-sensitive steering, which provides the optimum level of power assistance as the situation changes. The system therefore makes light work of parking or off-road manoeuvres by maximising power assistance. As the speed increases, however, assistance is reduced in favour of greater directional stability.

Each of the two studies capitalises on the inherent benefits of the amplitude-responsive damping in their own way. With its rather sporty suspension tuning and a ride height that has been lowered by 30 millimetres, the on-road-orientated TOWNSIDE version maximises fun at the wheel when driving on tarmac. The FREESIDE, on the other hand, has been optimised for off-road terrain with longer spring travel and a softer basic set-up, promising the greatest possible driving pleasure regardless of the condition of the road ahead – even when there is no road as such to be seen.

## **Vision GLK: the latest member to join the premium SUV segment**

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Ever since the legendary G-Class was launched in 1979, Mercedes-Benz has laid claim to the role of leader in the off-roader segment. Today's Sports Utility Vehicle segment first started to take shape when Mercedes-Benz brought out the first generation of the ML-Class in 1997. Including the current generation, which made its debut in 2005, this model series has racked up around 900,000 sales to date, making it one of the most successful premium SUVs in the world. Since 2006, the GL-Class has in its turn reigned supreme in the SUV world, offering first-class travel in all conditions, both on the road and off it. The Vision GLK FREESIDE and TOWNSIDE now illustrate just how the tremendous expertise gleaned from this progression of models can be transferred to a more compact format. These two SUV breeds are therefore in the very best company - just like the series-production versions which will be making their market debut in autumn 2008.

## More powerful, more economical, more intense: rediscovering intelligent roadster driving enjoyment

- **Striking new front end and diffuser-style rear end**
- **New economical fast-running sports engine**
- **Newly developed direct-steer system for agility and comfort**

The Mercedes-Benz SLK-Class Roadsters have long captured the hearts of sports car enthusiasts. Incorporating around 650 newly developed components, the SLK models of 2008 are even more dynamic and now offer an even more emotionally charged driving experience.

Since their first appearance in 1996, the compact SLK Roadsters have come to symbolise the dynamic Mercedes-Benz brand image. Already a familiar sight on our roads, the second-generation two-seater is to be further enhanced with the implementation of a raft of measures in 2008, the aim being to further emphasise the car's sporty character and continue the SLK-Class success story by introducing new, dynamic, powerful elements. Some 310,000 first-generation roadster models were sold between 1996 and 2004. And around 185,000 customers – some 60,000 of them in Germany alone – have already purchased the second-generation model since its launch in March 2004 (figures at year-end 2007). This means that total unit sales of the SLK Roadster are now approaching the half-million mark.

The new-generation SLK displays new sporty highlights, further enhancing the appeal of the successful two-seater with the trendsetting vario-roof that transforms the car from a roadster into a weatherproof coupé in a matter of seconds.

**Distinctive character: even more pronounced arrow shape at the front end and a diffuser-style rear end**

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The designers have given the already dynamic-looking two-seater cult model an even sportier appearance. Eye-catching features include the new-look front bumper with a modified air-dam arrangement and a more pronounced arrow shape. Plus the area around the Mercedes star has been restyled to render it even more succinct. In addition, the designers have modified the rear end by introducing a diffuser-style lower section that makes the Roadster appear more powerful when viewed from behind – an effect that is enhanced considerably by the trapezoidal exhaust tailpipes and the AMG-inspired darkened tail lights. The now larger exterior mirrors feature LED indicators with a pronounced arrow shape, while the range of light-alloy wheels is also almost entirely new.

**High-quality cockpit and new three-spoke sports steering wheel**

Many of the interior details have also been redesigned and upgraded following a careful process of material selection. Particular importance was attached to optimising the interior so as to make it even more driver-oriented. Centrepieces include a new three-spoke sports steering wheel with multifunction buttons and a new instrument cluster with captivating dial surrounds.

New "gullwing red" leather appointments will be available – reminiscent of the interior appointments in the legendary 300 SL gullwing model. Further new additions include nappa leather appointments in "natural beige", which complement the new "pale burr walnut" and "black ash grain" wood trims perfectly.

**Enhanced audio and telematics systems**

Mercedes-Benz is installing the new NTG 2.5 audio and telematics generation in the SLK for the first time. It is easier to operate and offers an even wider range of useful functions. Standard features integrated in every radio include a hands-free system with Bluetooth technology and a new media interface in the glove compartment, allowing the full integration of mobile audio devices such as an iPod, which can then be operated via the audio system's user interface.

Together with the new telematics generation, Mercedes-Benz is also offering the easy-to-use, enhanced LINGUATRONIC voice-operated control system as an optional extra in the SLK-Class for the first time.

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### **Voluminous surround sound even when the roof is open**

Passengers can enjoy a unique listening experience, regardless of whether the vario-roof is open or closed, thanks to the optionally available harman kardon<sup>®</sup> Logic7<sup>®</sup> sound system. Rich and voluminous surround sound makes for crystal-clear listening pleasure, the like of which has never before been associated with a roadster.

### **Fast-running sports engine: higher output and much lower fuel consumption**

The sporty credentials of the 2008 SLK generation are further enhanced by three modified powerplants that consume less fuel and, therefore, emit less CO<sub>2</sub>. The four-cylinder powerplant in the SLK 200 KOMPRESSOR and the six-cylinder sports engine in the SLK 350 offer substantially more power and torque. Only the SLK 55 AMG retains its familiar engine – an eight-cylinder unit that has lost none of its mesmerising performance capability and remains a unique selling point in the SLK segment.

The Mercedes-Benz engineers paid special attention to the fast-running V6 engine that makes its debut in the SLK 350. They were looking for much more than minor enhancements, substantially peppering up the six-cylinder unit's credentials by making sweeping changes to the mechanical setup. Three characteristics add a new dimension in driving enjoyment:

- High-revving flexibility through to high engine speeds,
- substantial increase in output
- and a sporty sound that fires emotions.

### **Up to 7200 revs per minute**

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The 3.5-litre engine effortlessly laps up engine speeds normally well out of bounds for series-production engines of this displacement class. Its rated output is reached at 6500 rpm – if necessary, it is even capable of peaking briefly at 7200 rpm. This outstanding high-revving flexibility turns the six-cylinder unit into a thoroughbred sports engine.

Its sporty pedigree is clearly noticeable behind the wheel. The engine is always responsive, comes across as bigger, more powerful than its predecessor and instantly responds to movements of the accelerator pedal, conjuring up a touch of racing track atmosphere in the cockpit without appearing stressed or agitated. Quite the contrary: the comfortable running characteristics are fully retained whatever the operating conditions.

### **Output increased by 24 kW/33 hp with around a litre less fuel consumption**

The increase in output courtesy of the enhancements adds to the decidedly sporty feel. Although the displacement remains the same at 3498 cc, the V6 now develops 224 kW/305 hp – some 24 kW (33 hp) more than its predecessor. The peak torque has also been boosted, by 10 Nm, and now stands at 360 Nm when the engine is running at 4900 rpm. From as low as 2000 rpm it develops 350 Nm, delivering impressive pulling power and outstanding performance. The SLK 350 accelerates from zero to 100 km/h in 5.4 seconds, reaching a top speed of 250 km/h (electronically limited).

Despite the higher output and high-calibre performance, the SLK 350 sports engine consumes considerably less fuel. With the six-speed manual transmission on board, combined fuel consumption is 9.5 litres per 100 km, a reduction of 1.1 litres per 100 km; if the 7G-TRONIC automatic transmission is fitted, the sports powerplant returns a combined fuel consumption of 9.2 litres per 100 km – an improvement of 0.9 litres compared to its predecessor. Lower fuel consumption means that CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are also reduced – by 23 g/km to 219 g/km in the automatic version and by 28 g/km to 227 g/km in the manual version.

The sports engine in the SLK 350 is based on the existing V6 unit but features a range of modified components. Key modifications include:

- Enhanced, weight-optimised pistons with a curved surface and a higher compression ratio of 1:11.7 (previously 1:10.7) ensure optimised efficiency.
- Single-stage intake manifold with no flaps ensures a high charge even at high engine speeds.
- To address the fundamental limitations of the single-stage intake manifold at engine speeds below 4000 rpm, the camshaft position has been advanced by 5 degrees of crank-angle both on the intake and exhaust sides. The high running quality has thus been retained both at idle speed and under partial load.
- Lightweight valves made out of ultra-high-strength and high-temperature-resistant steel. The sodium-cooled valve stems for the exhaust valves have a 3.4-mm bore.
- Conical springs with heavily dampened natural vibration characteristics reliably close the valves even at high engine speeds.
- A tri-oval chain sprocket whose triangular form is barely noticeable effectively counteracts chain-drive vibration that tends to increase at engine speeds above 6300 rpm. The chain sprocket generates inversely phased amplitudes, thus reducing chain vibration and, in turn, the forces acting on the chain.

Thanks to the new engine management system, the sports unit continues to use 95-octane premium petrol despite the higher engine speeds and output.

### **Emotive sound design underlines high-performance credentials**

Further aspects which add to the emotionally charged appeal of the new engine include deliberately powerful sports-engine acoustics with a strikingly emotive sound design when decelerating. In combination with the 7G-TRONIC automatic transmission, the engine management system also blips the throttle automatically during downshifts. As well as producing an extremely sporty sound, this throttle-blipping function reduces load alteration effects.

### **Three further engines to choose from**

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The engine line-up for the second generation of the successful SLK-Class is being augmented by three further variants after the facelift:

- The four-cylinder supercharged engine produces an extra 15 kW/21 hp output (135 kW/184 hp) thanks to the use of a modified engine management system, a more dynamic turbocharger and enhanced pistons. At the same time, maximum torque has been increased from the previous 240 to 250 Nm between 2800 and 5000 rpm. The SLK 200 KOMPRESSOR accelerates from 0-100 km/h in 7.6 s (7.9 s automatic transmission) and reaches a top speed of 236 km/h (automatic transmission 232 km/h). Combined fuel consumption has been cut by 1.0 litre to 7.7 litres per 100 km (with automatic transmission by 1.0 litre to 8.0 l) whilst CO<sub>2</sub> emissions have been reduced by 27 g/km to 182 g/km for vehicles fitted with a six-speed manual transmission (automatic transmission cut by 25 g/km to 190 g/km).
- The SLK 280 has also been further improved with respect to fuel economy and, therefore, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. It continues to produce 170 kW/231 hp from its 2996 cc displacement, delivering 300 Nm of torque between 2500 and 5000 rpm. 0 to 100 km/h takes 6.3 s (6.2 s automatic transmission), while its top speed stands at 250 km/h. Fuel consumption has been cut by 0.4 l to 9.3 l (automatic transmission by 0.2 l to 9.1 l) whilst CO<sub>2</sub> emissions have been reduced by 11 g to 220 g/km (automatic transmission by 6 g to 216 g/km).
- The SLK 55 AMG is equipped with the familiar 5.5-litre V8 powerplant developing 265 kW/360 hp and a peak torque of 510 Nm. 0 to 100 km/h takes 4.9 s before going on to reach a top speed of 250 km/h (electronically limited). The SLK 55 AMG has a combined fuel consumption of 12.0 l per 100 km with CO<sub>2</sub> emission of 289 g/km.

### **Sporty six-speed manual transmission or seven-speed automatic transmission**

Standard equipment for the three new SLK models includes a six-speed manual transmission, which provides fast, sporty gear changes coupled with supreme ease of shifting. The AMG Speedshift 7G-TRONIC, which has been specifically tuned to AMG, comes with aluminium shift paddles on the steering wheel in the

SLK 55 AMG. As a replacement for the manual transmission, the SLK 200 KOMPRESSOR comes with an option of a five-speed automatic transmission, while the SLK 280, and SLK 350 sports engine can be combined with the 7G-TRONIC automatic transmission with seven speeds or alternatively the 7G-TRONIC Sport with shift paddles on the steering wheel and shorter shift times.

### **New direct-steer system for outstanding agility and tangible driving pleasure**

A newly developed direct-steer system with variable steering assistance, available as an optional extra (standard for the SLK 55 AMG), further highlights the qualities of the sporty chassis, combining agility and manoeuvrability when driving on twisting rural roads with steering comfort when parking and assured steering characteristics when travelling at high speed.

The direct-steer system is based on the previously installed speed-sensitive power steering system and operates by purely mechanical means, meaning that there is no need for elaborate actuators and complex sensors, which would otherwise impair the direct flow of forces between the wheels and hands, thereby compromising steering precision. At its heart is a new rack with slick gearing, which ensures that the steering gear ratio changes in tune with the steering angle. The ratio is indirect when the steering is in or around the central position so as to ensure excellent straight-line stability and, therefore, a high degree of assuredness when travelling at high speed. At a steering angle of just 5 degrees, the ratio starts to increase extremely rapidly and the steering feels much more direct. As a result, the number of steering wheel revolutions from lock to lock is reduced by around 25 percent if the new direct-steer system is fitted. This means that, even in city traffic, relatively little steering wheel movement is required to correct the car's path. The effect of the direct-steer system is all the more impressive on bends on rural roads. Small steering movements are all that is needed to steer the vehicle, virtually eliminating the need to reposition the hands on the steering wheel on tight bends; fast sequences of bends on rural roads can be negotiated almost intuitively with relatively small steering movements - with

assurance, precision and a healthy dose of driving enjoyment. All of which translates into far more agile handling.

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### **SLK 55 AMG with direct-steer system and even more striking appearance**

The SLK 55 AMG is now even more dynamic. The appearance of the sporty roadster now reinforces the car's claim to special status even more emphatically. The redesigned front apron with a more pronounced arrow-shape, the modified Mercedes star, enlarged air dams and a black-painted transverse fin on the lower section ensure a distinctly masculine aura. Large, round foglamps with chrome surrounds are now positioned further outwards, enhancing the impression of width. The hot air from the integral engine oil cooler is vented via side outlets in the front apron. The specific SLK 55 AMG bodystyling also includes AMG side skirts, the muscular AMG rear apron with a black insert and the AMG spoiler lip.

New features also include the projection-beam headlamps with dark surrounds and the exterior mirrors. The mirrors are larger to provide better rearward visibility whilst LED indicator repeaters in an arrow design also ensure more safety. The 18-inch AMG light-alloy wheels in a multi-spoke design are more striking: painted in titanium grey and with a high-sheen star, these provide interesting contrasts when viewed from the side. With a width of 7.5 and 8.5 inches respectively, the AMG light-alloy wheels are fitted with size 225/40 (front) and 245/35 (rear) tyres. New, high-sheen 18-inch AMG light-alloy wheels in a twin-spoke design are also available in the same sizes on request for the SLK 55 AMG. Outstanding deceleration values are ensured by the AMG high-performance braking system with internally ventilated and perforated brake discs, size 345x30 mm, at the front. The newly developed direct-steer system is also part of the standard specification.

### **Functional interior with new AMG instrument cluster**

In the functional and sporty interior of the SLK 55 AMG, the new AMG ergonomic sports steering wheel with its three-spoke design gives a visual hint of the direct steering feature. The grip area is specially shaped and lined with perforated leather, while the vertical spoke is embellished by a silver-coloured insert. Two aluminium AMG shift paddles allow manual gear selection.

The AMG instrument cluster with a 320 km/h speedometer scale, silver/red needles and AMG lettering also has a new look, and the new graphics ensure that vehicle speed and rpm are even more easily legible.

## Fuel-efficient and environment-friendly premium cars for the future

- **Innovative modular technology with BLUETEC diesel and hybrid module**
- **Roadmap for a host of environmentally compatible new models**

For the near future, Mercedes-Benz is developing a unique variety of new, particularly economical and clean models, with intelligently combined drive technologies. At the 2008 North American International Auto Show, the Stuttgart-based car manufacturer is presenting its ambitious goals for the future for the first time to the American public. Cars with innovative modular technology combining diesel engine with BLUETEC emissions control technology and compact hybrid module, such as the S 300 BLUETEC HYBRID and the ML 450 HYBRID fitted with a V6 petrol engine and two electric motors, are milestones on the "Road to the Future", which Mercedes-Benz has mapped out and which focuses uncompromisingly on sustainability. The development priorities along the way include modular drive technologies; first and foremost, optimised combustion engines with individually configured hybrid solutions that can be used singly or in combination, depending on the vehicle class, usage and customer.

### **ML 450 HYBRID – the most economical hybrid SUV in its class**

The ML 450 HYBRID will be launched on the market in 2009 as world CO<sub>2</sub> champion as it is the most economical SUV petrol hybrid in its class in the whole world. Its innovative two-mode hybrid system makes it possible to drive powered entirely by electricity, while achieving the highest comfort levels. The V6 petrol engine delivers 205 kW/279 hp and 338 Newton metres of torque, the two-mode hybrid module with two electric motors develops 45 kW/61 hp. A combined system output of 250 kW/340 hp and a combined peak torque of 480 Newton metres give it effortlessly superior power, while offering its fuel consumption of just 7.7 litres per 100 km. This way the ML 450 HYBRID with all-wheel drive

achieves CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of only 185 g/km, a level unmatched by any other vehicle in its class anywhere in the world.

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The two compact electric motors with a total output of 120 kW/163 hp in the ML 450 HYBRID take up a lot less space in the vehicle than comparable systems, thus guaranteeing that this is an ideal package. The system, unique in its kind, with four fixed gears, combines the advantages of a multiple-speed automatic transmission with those of a stepless CVT transmission. The two electric motors are integrated in the innovative two-mode hybrid transmission of the ML 450 HYBRID. This drive is optimised both for urban and country roads. Voltage is supplied by a 288 V battery, which makes it possible to store considerable quantities of electrical energy. In interaction with an intelligent energy management system, this vehicle features all the full hybrid characteristics such as driving entirely under electric power, the start/stop function of the internal-combustion engine, boost effect and braking energy recovery.

Mercedes-Benz is thus offering a hybrid technology which guarantees low fuel consumption, effortlessly superior performance, the highest level of comfort and outstanding practicality - also in terms of a fully utilisable boot volume. The two-mode hybrid also improves fuel consumption, especially at higher speeds, giving it a further advantage over other hybrid concepts available on the market.

### **S 300 BLUETEC HYBRID with 560 Nm torque at just 5.4 litres/100 km**

The S 300 BLUETEC HYBRID, scheduled to go into series production in 2010, underlines the tremendous savings potential and environmental compatibility of the modular technology concept from Mercedes-Benz involving a BLUETEC/hybrid combination. This intelligent BLUETEC technology, developed by Mercedes-Benz, effectively reduces diesel vehicle emissions, in particular of nitrogen oxides, making the compression-ignition engine one of the cleanest and most efficient drives in the world. The road to this objective was paved by Mercedes-Benz engineers, on the one hand by optimising the internal operation of the engine, and on the other hand by means of an effective exhaust emissions treatment system fine-tuned to the engine. The system itself consists of an

oxidation catalytic converter which reduces emissions of carbon monoxide (CO) and unburned hydrocarbons (HC), and an additive-free diesel particulate filter. All BLUETEC models from Mercedes-Benz have the potential to continue to comply with the strictest exhaust emission limits in the future too.

The S 300 BLUETEC HYBRID delivers 150 kW/204 hp and a maximum torque of 480 Newton metres from its new 2.2-litre, 4-cylinder diesel engine, coupled to a 15 kW/20 hp hybrid module. When combined with the standard-fit 7G-TRONIC seven-speed automatic transmission, the S 300 BLUETEC HYBRID accelerates from 0 to 100 km/h in just 8.4 seconds and can reach a top speed of 240 km/h. Even with this superior performance, fuel consumption stands at just 5.4 litres of diesel per 100 kilometres, corresponding to a mere 142 grams of CO<sub>2</sub> per kilometre - 57 grams, or some 30 per cent, less than the current best saloon in the S-Class segment anywhere in the world.

The S-Class uses the version of BLUETEC with AdBlue injection system. Thanks to this unique combination of BLUETEC and hybrid technology, which delivers the most economical and environmentally-compatible premium cars in the world, the S 300 BLUETEC HYBRID has the potential to meet the most stringent emissions standards applicable anywhere in the world in the future too – for example, the European EU6 standard or the U.S. 50-state BIN5 standard.

### **Compact hybrid module with start/stop function**

The compact hybrid module is a disc-shaped electric motor, which also serves as starter motor and generator. The system offers double benefits: on the one hand it helps in many ways to save fuel, while on the other hand it increases driving enjoyment yet more.

The main reason for the increased driving enjoyment is what is known as the boost effect, whereby the electric motor supports the combustion engine during the high-consumption acceleration phase with a maximum extra torque of 160 Newton metres. With this high torque the electric motor assists the combustion engine heartily when accelerating from very low engine speeds. As a result, the combustion engine itself needs less time and energy to build up its

maximum torque. The only thing the driver notices from this synergy of the two power units is a supremely effortless power output whenever he or she starts off.

The hybrid module also features a convenient start/stop function which switches the engine off whenever the vehicle stops, for example at traffic lights. Once the vehicle is ready to move off again, the electric motor starts the main engine again so gently that it goes virtually unnoticed. This of course also contributes to fuel savings and is kind to the environment: since the engine starts virtually immediately, practically no unburned fuel is discharged when starting off. When decelerating, on the other hand, the electric motor functions as a generator, and can recover braking energy in what is known as the recuperation process. This energy is stored in a powerful but compact lithium-ion battery pack in the engine compartment, ready for use when required. The management of this complex system is governed by a powerful control unit, which is also installed close to the engine.

### **Strategy for the future**

Mercedes-Benz milestones in its future eco-friendly strategy:

- In 2008, Mercedes-Benz will be launching the first three diesel SUVs in the world in the guise of the R, ML and GL 320 BLUETEC, which will comply with the stringent U.S. 50-state BIN5 standard and future EU6 emissions standard.
- April 2008 will see the launch of the C 200 CDI, which according to NEDC ratings requires just 5.1 litres of diesel fuel per 100 kilometres (CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of 135 grams per kilometre).
- The A 160 CDI is set to follow in June 2008 with fuel consumption of 4.5 litres of diesel per 100 kilometres (CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of 119 grams per kilometre).
- Mercedes-Benz will also be launching the B 170 NGT in June 2008, the brand's first compact model with natural-gas drive. Its CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of 135 grams per kilometre are some 20 per cent lower than those of a comparable petrol model. Running costs have been cut by around a half.
- Mercedes-Benz will be launching its new generation of 4-cylinder diesel engine in 2009 in the shape of the C 250 BLUETEC. The strong, clean and extremely economical 2.2-litre powerplant delivers 150 kW/204 hp. The

vehicle sets new standards in its output class with average fuel consumption of 4.9 litres of diesel per 100 kilometres and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of 130 grams per kilometre.

- 2009 will also see the launch of the Mercedes-Benz ML 450 HYBRID.
- In parallel with the ML 450 HYBRID, Mercedes-Benz will be launching an S-Class with petrol hybrid. The S 400 HYBRID with 205 kW/279 hp and hybrid module delivers outstanding performance and fuel consumption of just 7.9 litres per 100 kilometres (CO<sub>2</sub> emissions: 190 grams per kilometre) in the NEDC cycle, making the S 400 HYBRID the most fuel-efficient luxury petrol-powered saloon in the world, irrespective of whether competitors pit a petrol, diesel or hybrid drive against it.
- Mercedes-Benz already has the largest fleet of fuel cell vehicles on the road in Europe, Asia, the USA and Australia. And even Iceland's power utility sector already runs a fleet of A-Class F-Cell vehicles. In the summer of 2010, Mercedes-Benz will launch the first series-production car with a local zero-emission fuel-cell drive in the guise of the B-Class Fuel Cell. The powerplant for this innovative vehicle will be a new-generation fuel-cell drive that is completely practicable for everyday use.
- In the summer of 2010, Mercedes-Benz will be leading the way in the business class with the launch of the new E-Class – the first of three Mercedes-Benz models with the unique combination of BLUETEC, 7G-TRONIC and hybrid technology. The E 300 BLUETEC HYBRID is set to become the cleanest and most economical business saloon in the world with fuel consumption of 5.1 litres of diesel per 100 kilometres, corresponding to CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of 134 grams per kilometre.
- 2010 will also see the market launch of the S 300 BLUETEC HYBRID.
- The C 300 BLUETEC HYBRID is set to follow in spring 2011 – fuel consumption of 4.6 litres of diesel per 100 kilometres, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of 122 grams per kilometre.
- The S 400 BLUETEC HYBRID will go on sale from autumn 2011. Boasting fuel consumption of 5.8 litres per 100 kilometres (CO<sub>2</sub> emissions: 154 g/km), this luxury saloon combines fuel efficiency and excellent environmental compatibility together with supreme driving pleasure and comfort.

Mercedes-Benz provided 2007 IAA International Motor Show visitors with a taster of the future of the luxury long-distance saloon: the F 700 research car with innovative DIESOTTO drive combines the very best of the diesel and petrol engine to comfortably deliver the lowest fuel consumption in the history of the petrol-engined car. Thanks to turbocharging and the hybrid module, its 1.8-litre four-cylinder engine delivers combined maximum power of 190 kW/258 hp whilst consuming just 5.3 litres of petrol per 100 kilometres (CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of 127 grams per kilometre).