

# CLASSIC DRIVER

## Two New E-Class Performance Cars from AMG and Brabus

**Announced within days of each other, two tuned versions of the all-new E-Class will offer tyre-shredding performance clothed in a sober, 'businessman's express' suit.**

AMG or Brabus – take your pick from the world's finest preparers of seriously fast Mercedes. AMG is now a Mercedes brand in its own right, while Brabus works very closely with the company on official Smart collaborations and has, in effect, taken on AMG's previous role as the No.1 tuner. In recent years, AMG has toed the line with 155mph-limited cars (derestriction being a cost-option), while the Bottrop company has many 200+mph versions in its catalogue.



### **The Brabus 6.1-litre E-Class**

First off was Brabus with its 6.1-litre version of the E500 (E550 in the US). By fitting a special crankshaft and larger pistons, as well as modifying the cylinder heads, the V8 now produces 456bhp at 6200rpm and 615Nm (453lb ft) at just 3100rpm.

Transferred via the standard car's gearbox (with a limited-slip differential as an option), the car will accelerate to 62mph in just 4.7 seconds and then on to a 191mph maximum.



The company also offers uprated brakes, a special control unit for the AIRMATIC air suspension and Monoblock light-alloy wheels, available in various designs with diameters ranging from 17 to 20 inches. The Brabus E-Class can be made more individual with the addition of special aerodynamic parts and an almost limitless customisation service on the interior.



### **The Mercedes-Benz E 63 AMG**

This model uses AMG's in-house 6208cc V8, developing a power output of 516bhp and torque of 630Nm (464lb ft) – a touch higher than in the previous version. The latest car has the 7-speed AMG SPEEDSHIFT MCT transmission first seen in the SL63. This has a wet start-up clutch running in an oil bath, replacing a torque converter. It not only makes super-fast, lossless changes (down to 100 milliseconds when in 'M', manual, mode) but also contributes to an improvement in fuel consumption of almost 12%.

Drivers can select from four gearbox modes: 'C' (Controlled Efficiency), 'S' (Sport), 'S+' (Sport plus) and 'M' (Manual). 'AMG Ride Control' suspension is designed to give the driver the option of 'Comfort', 'Sport' and 'Sport plus' settings to alter the standard rear air suspension and uprated front dampers. The front axle is all-new with a 56mm wider track, increased negative camber and beefed-up wheel bearings.



The new E 63 comes equipped with 18in diameter AMG light-alloy wheels shod with 9in 255/40 R 18 (front) and 9.5in 285/35 R 18 (rear) tyres. Externally, the usual array of subtle spoilers and air-vents completes the sporty picture.

Inside, E 63 drivers will enjoy (or be totally baffled by) an array of controls for the suspension, gearbox and driving modes.

I think, however, that if you just put it into Drive, and depress the throttle enough, it will move off down the road in a very satisfactory manner.



*Text - Steve Wakefield*

*Photos - BRABUS / Mercedes-Benz*

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