

# CLASSIC DRIVER

## Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG GT Roadster: White noise

### Lead

White represents innocence? Think again. With its replacement imminent, we take the Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG GT Roadster on a farewell tour – and look into its black soul for the final time...

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Traditionally, the clocks in Affalterbach have revolved a little faster than normal. This is true not only for the hand-built Mercedes-AMG sports car, but now also for the model portfolio. It's been only five years since the company's high-performance division reinvented the legendary [300 SL Gullwing](#) – while also establishing [AMG as a brand in itself](#) – but it is already about to be replaced. A compact but no less potent successor, the [Mercedes-AMG GT](#), will make its debut in the coming autumn. With this, the [Affalterbach](#) engineers will take direct aim at the eternal king of [sports cars from Zuffenhausen](#), the [Porsche 911](#), for the first time. The imminent arrival of the new GT inspired us to bid a final farewell to the ultimate incarnation of the millennial Gullwing: the Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG GT Roadster (albeit with conventional doors).

### White fire on the boulevards



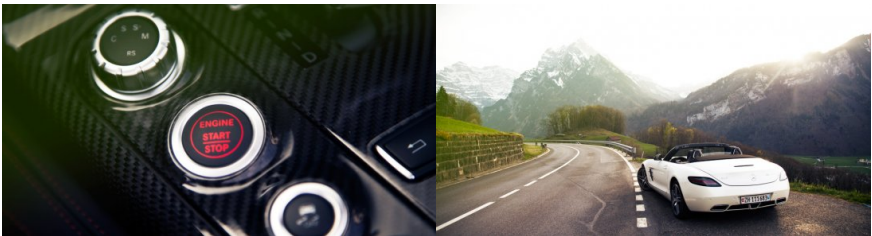
Clothed in virginal white, she stands silently before us, glimmering in the milky sun of spring. The long hood is reminiscent of a [yacht](#) gently bobbing in the waters of a St Tropez harbour, while the fabric hood reclines comfortably between its broad shoulders. It might look more of a boulevard queen than a track king, but the 591 horses sleeping in the engine bay would beg to differ – and indeed, the [GT3 racing version](#) has achieved much success. Thumb the bright red starter button and the V8 thrums into life with a dull crackle. The sound engineers have done a fantastic job: all 6,208 cubic centimetres sound as though they've been gargling Captain Morgan Black Label night after night, a hoarse repertoire that many other manufacturers have attempted to replicate.

### Pedal-dancing to the music



The driving experience is a refreshing one. Those used to the narrow-nosed, wide-hipped layout of its mid-engined rivals will be (literally) taken aback; between the three-pointed star on the grille and the pair of cosseting sports seats is a distance of almost three metres. Much of this is occupied by the probing bonnet, creating traditional GT proportions. Performance is anything but traditional, however, as a planted right foot will see you catapulted to 62mph from rest in a mere 3.7 seconds. The wheel-mounted paddles are the keyboard of the concerto.

### Performance-proving playlists



At 4,750rpm, the snarling V8 dispenses its full 479lb ft of torque to the rear wheels – which proves especially useful while climbing twisting mountain roads, as does the firmer suspension. Find a particularly good combination of serpentine switchbacks and you’ll find them on a repeating playlist, such is the addictiveness of the driving experience. Whether the downsized, turbocharged V8 of its replacement can hold a candle to this aurally enhanced experience is another question, though; one which will no doubt be asked with increasing volume over the coming months.

Photos: Jan Baedeker

### Gallery

































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