


# CLASSIC DRIVER



## 1932 Packard Deluxe - 903 Deluxe Eight

903 Deluxe Eight

Price	USD 299 500	Drive	LHD
Year of manufacture	1932	Condition	Used
Gearbox	Other	Location	
Number of seats	2	Fuel type	Petrol
Drivetrain	2wd	Exterior colour	Other
		Car type	Other
		Engine number	
		Exterior brand colour	green/black

### Description

Nineteen thirty-two was an odd year for Packard production. The board's decision to produce a mid-market luxury car to compete with LaSalle and high-line Buick models was put into action, and the 900 "Light Eight" debuted. It featured unique body styling that was slightly smaller and lighter than the Senior models, but it shared the same engine with the 901 and 902 models despite being priced less. The snappy and freshly styled 900 was seemingly at odds with the traditional Eight and Deluxe Eight models, and Packard dealers didn't quite know how to market them. Sales were down across the board, and the directors reacted by blaming dealers for spending too much time with 900 buyers. Rather than seeing the car as an asset, they felt it was a distraction for regular clientele, and they summarily axed the Light Eight after just one year.

In spite of the disruption caused by the 900 Light Eight, the traditional models soldiered on. New for 1932 was an optional high-compression cylinder head for the 384.8 cubic inch inline eight, as well as an updated Detroit Lubricator 51 carburetor and air cleaner assembly, bumping output to a respectable 135 horsepower. Adjustable ride control and a vacuum assisted clutch aided in relaxed,

comfortable motoring. The styling was a careful evolution of earlier models, with the distinct Packard radiator shell still prominently leading the way. The 903 models rode on a 142-inch wheelbase, with eleven body styles from which to choose. Despite the evolutionary approach to their proven senior model range, sales lagged as the American economy was still in flux.

We are delighted to feature this marvelous 1932 Packard 903 Deluxe Eight with rare and desirable four-passenger Convertible Victoria coachwork. This elegant body style was initially only available on the Individual Custom line, but it was so popular with buyers that it joined the standard Packard catalog for 1932. While not branded as such, the design was a product of Packard's long-running relationship with Dietrich, and the Dietrich department of the Murray body works continued to build them to order. Packard made fewer than 1,000 Deluxe Eight 903 models, and just a handful of buyers selected this elegant open Convertible Victoria coachwork. Price was undoubtedly a limiting factor. At \$4,495, it was the second most expensive model in the 903 range; two-and-a-half times the price of a Light Eight roadster. This car has enjoyed recent care in the private collection of a CCCA member. Past owners include the noted collector Don Stein of Lafayette, Indiana, and Dorothy McDermott of Hicksville, New York - located not far from the selling dealer, Park Avenue Packard.

The beautiful color combination of pine green over black fenders and a subtle light green swage line lend an elegant yet understated look. The concours-quality restoration has matured lightly with time, yet the car retains undeniable presence and charm. Paintwork is excellent, particularly in the deep, glossy black fenders. It is tastefully optioned and accessorized with Packard's vibration-dampening front bumper, dual chrome trumpet horns, chrome radiator shell and slats, Goddess of Speed mascot, dual side mount spares with color-matched covers and factory trunk rack. The car rides on the standard-equipment steel wheels shod with chrome discs and wide whitewall tires for a stunning effect against the understated paint colors.

The cabin is particularly inviting, upholstered in rich, tobacco-colored leather that has acquired a modest character in the time since the restoration. Wood trim and wood-grained metal on the dash and door caps are gorgeous, and the full set of original instruments is beautifully restored. Door panels, carpets, and interior panels are finely finished, and as the seats, the materials show a bit of character from age and light use that suits the usable nature of this Packard. The signature feature of the Convertible Victoria is the folding roof with its large blind quarters that give the car a more formal appearance when up, yet it tucks neatly into the cut-down body for a clean and sporty look when open. This car's tan canvas top is in excellent condition, and a matching canvas boot is included to complete the look.

Packard's legendary "Big Eight" is beautifully presented, finished in correct Packard Green with the silver crankcase and porcelain black manifolds and fittings. The engine retains the correct original air cleaner and Detroit Lubricator carburetor. The "HC" marking on the cylinder head denotes this as having the high-compression option. The engine starts with ease and runs beautifully, emitting a subtle eight-cylinder growl from the exhaust while retaining all of the refinement and relaxed power delivery expected of a senior model Packard. The factory three-speed gearbox shifts well, while the vacuum assisted clutch allows for effortless progress. The undercarriage is tidy and clean, showing the level of attention paid to every aspect of this beautiful restoration.

The high-quality yet pleasingly matured restoration and lovely coachwork make this Packard ideally suited for touring and regular enjoyment on the road. Despite its excellent restoration, it has rarely been shown and is, therefore, a great candidate for club-level events and regional concours. The prestigious and beautiful Convertible Victorias are among the most desired of Full Classic Packards, and this example would be a welcome addition to virtually any collection.

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