
1957 BMW Isetta - 300

300

Lot sold	USD 0	Condition	Used
Year of manufacture	1957	Location	
Lot number	234	Exterior colour	Other
		Car type	Other

Description

- Capable 298-cc four-stroke single-cylinder engine
- Enjoyable four-speed manual gearbox
- Equipped with luggage rack and bumper guards
- Well-maintained restoration
- Please note this lot will need to be collected from St. Louis, MO

If it were not for the cheeky little Isetta, BMW, as we know it today, may not exist. It took the Bavarian firm considerable resources to rebuild its devastated factories after the war. As the company entered the 1950s, its catalog of costly, baroque-style sedans had limited appeal – particularly when fuel and raw materials were in critically short supply. Salvation for BMW came via an unlikely source: Italian industrialist Renzo Rivolta offered the production rights to his single-cylinder Iso Isetta bubble-car.

BMW acquired the rights to produce the car for its home market, modifying the design to accommodate their in-house motorcycle engines and gearboxes. The inexpensive, fuel-efficient runabout was precisely what many buyers needed during those austere times. With the economy of a motorcycle, but the all-weather protection of an automobile, the Isetta offered a clever, space-efficient package. BMW sold more than 160,000 Isettas, earning Mr. Rivolta a considerable return, and shoring up BMW's finances to allow the development of the 600, 700, and the definitive Neu Klasse.

Offered is a charming example of BMW's iconic microcar. This 1957 Isetta 300 wears a well-

maintained older restoration, presented in an attractive, factory-offered two-tone livery of Pastellblau and Bayerische Blau. It is pleasingly well-finished and detailed throughout, featuring an array of period-correct fittings, including front and rear bumper guards and a luggage rack. Gray upholstery covers the front bench seat and slim interior panels that make the best of the available space inside the surprisingly airy cabin. The car sports correct cream-colored 10-inch steel wheels, shod with black wall tires, and brushed alloy hubcaps.

With an ample 13 horsepower available from the 298-cc single, every drive in an Isetta is an adventure. It is nearly impossible not to smile while stirring the four-speed gearbox as the plucky single-cylinder buzzes along. Despite its humble roots and diminutive size, the Isetta casts an outsized shadow over the history of the German motoring industry, saving BMW from certain takeover, and providing the storied firm its opportunity to continue to greatness. To view this car and others currently consigned to this auction, please visit the RM website at rmsothebys.com/en/auctions/0120.

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