


1958 BMW 503 - 50

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- Lot sold
USD 157 860 - 210 480
EUR 150 000 - 200 000 (listed)
Year of manufacture 1958
- **Gearbox** Manual
- **Drive** LHD
- **Condition** Used
- **Location** 
- **Fuel type** Petrol
- **Exterior colour** Other
- **Car type** Coupé
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Description

1953 - BMW 503 coupé

French car registration document
Chassis: 69278

Bought new in Paris in August 1958.
One single family ownership
Only 273 copies and 139 of this series
Fully restored in 2001 at Lecoq workshop

Presented at the 1955 Frankfurt Motor Show as a prototype, the BMW 503 represented the German brand's return to the premium car market. But beyond its design, which impressed Pinin Farina, who declared it to be the most beautiful car at the show, it was its design and aluminium V8 engine that made a lot of interest. It was clear that this new 3.2-litre V8 engine with a 3.2 litres and 140 bhp had considerable potential and allowed the German GT to rise directly to the rank of luxury car. Intended for the reborn German bourgeoisie and the American market, this coupe will bring a stylistic renewal for the Bavarian brand. Its pontoon bodywork and its engine came to compete directly with Mercedes-Benz on its own turf. Moreover, the sales director, Hanns Grewenig, had been lobbying for some time to obtain a car equipped with a V8 engine, but it wasn't until the announcement of the 300 SL launched by Mercedes-Benz that the project received the green light. Encouraged by the importer Max Hoffman, who saw a bright future for it in the United States, he encouraged BMW to adopt the design of Count Albrecht von Goertz, an independent industrial designer, an eclectic designer ranging from pens to industrial furniture. He was commissioned to produce the coupé and cabriolet on the chassis of the 502 sedan, with a wheelbase of 2,834 mm. A number of developments occurred during his life, the most important of which was the change of the gear lever to the floor at the end of 1957 (The 503 Series II - introduced in 1957 - used the 507 type engine/transmission system with floor shifting). The design of the indicators was also changed, the windscreen wipers were installed in parallel and the passenger compartment was partly modernized. 70 years later, there is no doubt that the sobriety of these lines has aged beautifully and gives the car a timeless elegance.

Discovering such a car is always an exceptional moment. Attached to the history of each car we present at auction, it has a special character. Received by a man beautifully wearing his 87 years old, we discovered a car carefully preserved by a son who was keen to maintain his father's passion for vintage cars. As an enthusiast of the genre, it must be said that his father had a particular fondness for the BMW brand to the point of owning some of its jewels. It was on August 2nd 1958 that his father ordered his 503 coupé from the Impérial Garage in the 8th arrondissement of Paris before taking possession of it a few weeks later, on August 21st. It is impossible to know the real mileage of this vehicle, but we do know that the car was sent back to

BMW in Munich with around 62 000 km at the end of the 1960s to have disc brakes installed in the front as on some of the last examples produced in 1959. Replaced in the early 1970s by a brand new 3000 CS coupé, it was moved to the family stronghold in the Dordogne where it was stored in one of the company's buildings until 2002.

After the death of his father in 1985, the son took over the reins of the family business without giving him time to consider the future of the car. He confided to us that he had always taken care to start it up once or twice a year, before reaching retirement age, and that he really cared about his future. In 2002, after having taken some information, he had the car sent to Lecoq for a complete restoration, giving the order to replace the original black colour and the red leather upholstery for the two current shades of blue according to the colour chart of the brand at the time. Completely disassembled, an important file of invoices of more than 90 000 € and numerous photos retracing each step of the restoration. As for the engine, it was restarted by the Lagrange garage in Villeneuve sur Lot, a great specialist in BMW race preparations. Since 2007, the beautiful 503 coupé has been back on the road for a few gatherings or family reunions in the region. On the day of our visit, in the cold winter of January, the car started at the first keystroke, letting the sound of a balanced V8 sound full lungs thanks to its stainless steel exhaust line.

Driver, passenger or spectator, this car is beautiful from every angle. Accompanied by its original maintenance booklet, its four-languages user manuals, its warranty booklet, but also the car radio instructions, its old vehicle registration document and its original declaration receipt, this car with 81 000 km on the odometer is a real rarity on the market.

BMW's high-performance V8-engined cars of the 1950s attracted a small but demanding clientele, including some very well-known names in the world of motor sport. Expensive and exclusive, the 503 was built in only 412 units worldwide, 273 of which were coupes. Recently appraised at over €200,000 by an independent expert, our model is certainly one of the most beautiful to our knowledge on the market.

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