



Star Attractions

MBCA's Guided Tour of the Stuttgart Region Brings to Life the Rich Heritage of Mercedes-Benz

Owners of new or classic Mercedes-Benz automobiles often say they can feel the heritage built into their cars, but there is no substitute for experiencing it first hand. MBCA makes this possible each year on at least one weeklong guided tour of Mercedes-Benz facilities and related sights in and around Stuttgart.

On the eighth MBCA German trip in the past six years, my wife Laura and I – along with 23 other members – had the

opportunity to visit historical and contemporary locations that reaffirmed why so many of us are brand-loyal enthusiasts. Touring southern Germany with our Daimler AG guides, Ambrose Kluyskens and Wolfram Körner, we learned a variety of fascinating details about the country and our favorite marque.

Before the official tour started, many of us visited the biennial Frankfurt International Auto Show and were almost literally blown away by the impressive presentation created by





Mercedes-Benz, which filled one of the largest exhibit halls with dramatic vehicles, enticing displays, a well-executed stage performance, and lots of vehicles and technology to capture our dreams and aspirations. The F125! Concept Safety Vehicle convinced us that the company is ready for the future.

We enjoyed a day at the Mercedes-Benz Museum and even had some rarely available time on the company's test track adjacent to it. Club member Ron Miller captured the essence of our track experience as "The most fun I have ever had in a Mercedes-Benz."

The structure of the museum, designed as a double-helix that visitors descend, integrates the history and products of Daimler and Benz with a history of the world during each time period. It is possibly the only museum in the world to do this in the context of its own products,

Clockwise from opposite bottom: Small towns with agricultural and industrial economies dot the countryside around Stuttgart. The buildings around Daimler headquarters in Untertürkheim (center) include a sports arena, development center, the Mercedes-Benz Museum, Brand Center, and test track. The first Mercedes, on display at the museum. On the test track, our tour bus looped the banked curve at 100 kph (62 mph). The visitors center at Sindelfingen. Our guide explains the plant's layout.





helping people understand the products as part of history.

We visited both the Cannstatt engine plant, and the huge Sindelfingen assembly plant, though we couldn't take any pictures there. Our tour guide mentioned that the Sindelfingen plant covers more ground than the entire principality of Monaco (see picture on page 49). We also visited the Center of Excellence, where high-end vehicles (SLS AMG, Maybach, and designo) are ordered by clients of adequate means.

We were fascinated by the Carl Benz Museum in Mannheim, the Daimler Workshop in Bad Cannstatt, the graves of Benz, Gottlieb Daimler and Wilhelm Maybach a short walk away in Cannstatt, the AMG facilities

Mercedes-Benz Museum in Untertürkheim



Opposite, clockwise from bottom: The Mercedes Museum is designed as a double helix and visitors proceed down the ramps through the years. The first gallery displays the earliest Daimlers, Benzes, and Mercedes cars. The museum starts its displays with the 1886 Patentwagen at the top of the building. The 1932 770 Grand Mercedes convertible owned by Emperor Wilhelm II in exile, alongside the 1935 770 Grand Mercedes Pullman limousine that transported Japanese Emperor Hirohito. One display area is devoted to the 300s – Cabriolet, Gullwing, Roadster, and Uhlenhaut SLR. This page, right: Nearly all of the significant Silver Arrows are displayed together in the Gallery of Racing Greats. Middle Row: Epitomizing Mercedes-Benz research, one of the finback test cars, and the specially built monitoring vehicle used in onroad testing. Bottom, left to right: Styling exercises show possible futures for Mercedes-Benz. 1907 Milnes-Daimler double-decker bus operated in London and other cities as early as 1904.



in Affalterbach, the Classic Center in Fellbach, tours of the Sindelfingen plant and the engine manufacturing plant where they purchase fuels from 170 different countries to ensure that each Mercedes-Benz will operate properly on its local fuel.

MBCA trip organizer and leader Jim O'Sullivan and our Daimler guides did not limit our experiences to only Mercedes-Benz history. We saw a Pagoda restoration center, the Auto

& Technik Museum Sinsheim, and the Meilenwerk classic car complex in the hangars, control tower, and terminal building at the old Böblingen Airport near Stuttgart.

The best thing about this trip? As a member of MBCA, you can go, too. O'Sullivan organizes them every year. For more information on the 2012 trips, visit mbca.org/upcoming-events, or call Jim O'Sullivan 617.879.0017.





Carl Benz Museum in Ladenburg

For nearly 40 years before the merger of Daimler and Benz, the works established by Dr. Carl Benz in Ladenburg produced Benz automobiles. Today the restored buildings house the largest collection of these cars in the world.



Meilenwerk Classic Car Complex

A tribute to how seriously Germans treat the old car hobby, the decommissioned Böblingen Airport outside Stuttgart now houses a storage facility, several classic car dealers, a restaurant, and a car-themed hotel in the control tower building.



Classic and Technical Museum Sinsheim

From classic cars to supersonic transports, the private collector museum in Sinsheim is a treat for enthusiasts of anything with wheels or wings.





AMG Center in Affalterbach

Visiting the AMG Center in Affalterbach was a rare treat because this facility is not open to the public. We saw the one-man-one-engine principle in practice, and were shown some unusual cars being built or maintained for special customers.



Classic Center in Fellbach

The Classic Center not only restores and maintains the treasures of the Mercedes-Benz Museum as well as those of private customers, but also sells parts for almost anything ever built by Mercedes-Benz. 🌿

Stickel Pagoda Center and Workshops

The Stickel Pagoda Center in Wartung, maintaining its own engine-rebuilding facility, body and paint shop, and interior-trimming workshop, is respected throughout the world for the quality of its work on the W113 and other models.

