

ARIZONA DRIVER

THE ENTHUSIAST'S GUIDE TO LIFE BEHIND THE WHEEL

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Mercedes-Benz
S 560 Cabriolet

PICKUPS! CHEVY-FORD-RAM
NEW CHEVY BLAZER - LAST C7 CORVETTE
OUTDOOR ACTIVITY VEHICLE OF THE YEAR
TWO UNUSUAL ARIZONA ROAD TRIPS
PLUS PERFORMANCE, LUXURY, CONVERTIBLES,
UTILITIES, EVS / AND MUCH MORE

VEHICLES • EQUIPMENT • TECHNOLOGY • PEOPLE • EVENTS • DESTINATIONS • ATTRACTIONS



Open air flagship

463-hp four-seat drop-top **BY JOE SAGE**

Introduced in 2016, this is the first big four-seat flagship Mercedes-Benz convertible since 1971. The new S-Class Cabriolet offers the same basic mechanicals and features as the S-Class sedan, in a sleek open package almost nine inches shorter.

While a midsize E-Class increasingly has the features and feel of a top-of-the-heap S-Class (and the E Cabrio starts at \$67,300, the S at \$134,300), the S Cabrio's horsepower, legroom and such are all greater, and it is surely well more than twice as rare, an attribute that itself reinforces its value.

This is a superyacht of the finest pedigree—although if you'd like even rarer, there are the 603-hp 4MATIC all-wheel-drive AMG S63 at \$180,100 and the 621-hp biturbo V8 rear-drive AMG S65 at \$253,250. Our S 560 Cabrio had equal parts AMG and luxury upgrades, coming in just over \$160,000.

E- and S-Class Cabriolets share features of particular value in an open four-seater—AirScarf to waft warm air upon necks from the front headrests; and AirCap, which rises out of the windshield frame to deflect chilly airflow above and beyond the cabin, supplemented by a rear wind block. These have always been of particular interest to us in

Arizona, where convertible season is largely turned on its head, with more ideal top-down winter days than summer (and with seasoned Arizonans more likely to feel a chill sooner than Northerners).

We've driven the E-Class Cabriolet with these features a number of times always when it was chilly—from early spring in the Great Smoky Mountains, to torrentially rainy days in Northern California, to winter weeks back home in Arizona—and these features have proven themselves to be pamperingly effective. This time around, it was summer, with temperatures approaching 110° F, so we would finally have a chance to satisfy a longstanding curiosity: could the AirCap deflect hot air across a cool air-conditioned cabin and preserve its comfort just as effectively?

And the answer? Not so much, although it was a fun experiment. Airflow was effective, but the power of the sun beating down eclipses that (and is especially apparent on hard surfaces like the steering wheel and shiny metals such as many of the feature buttons and switches).

Summer nights remained top-down bliss in the S 560 Cabriolet, and while daytimes were top-up, that gave us a chance to enjoy such features as its massaging seats (with heat therapy among the optional algorithms) in air-conditioned luxury bliss.

Add smooth, confident biturbo power with just the right tasteful touch of V8 rumble, delivered through Mercedes' proven 9-speed transmission.

For the Mercedes lineup overall, the S Cabriolet is a magnificent addition—augmenting the solid elegance of their biggest sedan with the breezy elegance of their biggest open-top car. ■

SPECIFICATIONS

CONSTRUCTION / SEATING	aluminum unibody / four
ENGINE	4.0L biturbo V8 24v SOHC
DRIVETRAIN	RWD
HP/TORQUE	463 hp / 516 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION	9G-TRONIC 9-spd auto, paddles
0-TO-60 / TOP SPEED	4.5 sec / 130 mph electr lim
SUSPENSION	F/R: indep multi-link w air springs, single-tube shocks w continuously adjustable damping, tubular torsion bar
STEERING	speed-dep electro-mech rack & pinion
BRAKES	F: 14.6x tba; R: tba x1.0
WHEELS / TIRES	8.0x18 cast / 245/50 R18
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	198.1 / 115.9 in
GROUND CLEARANCE	4.5 in
SPECS TBA:	turning circle; headroom (f/r); legroom (f/r); cargo capacity; weight; fuel capacity; full brake specs.
MPG	17/26/20 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE.....\$134,300

LEATHER: Designo® porcelain/deep sea blue Nappa	3250
WHEELS: 20" AMG multispoke	750
HEADLAMP ACCENTS: Swarovski crystal	1750
NIGHT VIEW ASSIST® PLUS	2260
AUDIO: Burmeister high-end 3D sound system	6400
PREMIUM PKG: active multicontour front seats w massage; surround view system	2700
SPORT PKG: AMG wheels, sport bodystyling (bumpers, side skirts, diamond radiator grille w chrome tips, stainless steel sport pedals w rubber studs	5900
WARMTH & COMFORT PKG: heated wood/leather wheel, heated front center console armrest, heated door armrests, heated rear seats	1900
DRIVER ASSISTANCE PKG: active assist: DISTRONIC distance, steering, lane change, emergency stop, speed limit, brake w cross-traffic, evasive steering, lane keep, blind spot; PRE-SAFE PLUS rear-end collision protection; route-based speed adaptation	2250
DESTINATION CHARGE	995

TOTAL.....\$162,545

AMG LINEUP (2019)

Mercedes-AMG S63 Cabriolet (4MATIC AWD):	
603 hp 664 lbft AMG 4.0L biturbo V8.....	\$180,100
Mercedes-AMG S65 Cabriolet (RWD):	
621 hp 738 lbft AMG 6.0L biturbo V12	\$253,250

