



LET YOUR FINGERS LUXURIATE AS YOU CARESS THE GRAINED LEATHER ON THE DOOR TRIM PANELS

was a four-speed gearbox (with overdrive on top), hydraulic brakes on all four wheels, independent suspension with coil springs all round, double-wishbone front axle, and double-joint swing axle at the rear. This added exemplary handling and greater passenger comfort to what was already a very impressive package.

But for the 500K Special Roadster, there was even more icing on a very delectable cake: the graceful yet purposeful-looking, nominally two-seater bodywork, styled by Hermann Ahrens and constructed at Daimler-Benz's Sindelfingen coachbuilding plant. Sweeping fenders started at the front, beside the proud Mercedes-Benz radiator topped by the world-famous three-pointed star, wafting backward in an elegant arc that doubled as the running board on each side. Farther aft, the rear fenders rose to almost the height of the deck with its stowable lid for the dickey (or "mother-in-law") seat that accommodated two more passengers. But easily the Special Roadster's most eye-catching feature was its incredibly long, louvered hood – almost half the length of the car – with two large-diameter chrome exhaust pipes emerging and snaking rearward from

the right side. It blended perfectly with Ahrens' other masterful styling touches to make the 500K Special Roadster one of the most beautiful and well-proportioned automobiles ever seen.

Over the past couple of years, diecast aficionados worldwide were gob-smacked when the Bauer Group of Nuremberg, Germany released magnificent replicas of two different examples of the mighty Bugatti Type 41 Royale in eye-popping 1:18 scale. First came the Coupe Napoleon, followed by the Esders Roadster, both reviewed in detail in *The Diecast Magazine*. Now Bauer has raised its craftsmanship to another level with a superb replica of the 1934 Mercedes-Benz 500K Special Roadster in the even larger scale of 1:12 (item #S 018 H). And again, *The Diecast Magazine* and its readers are fortunate to be afforded a preview of this not-so-miniature masterpiece, with sincere thanks due to Bauer for the privilege.

It is no idle boast by Bauer when it says of its latest diecast offering that "a wide range of materials are brought together with the precision of a Swiss chronograph

to create a unique masterpiece". For that is indeed what you get. Everywhere you look – and it is hard to decide where to start a detailed examination – this thing oozes quality and class. From the artistically styled front bumpers ahead of the imposing radiator grille set back from the front axle centerline, huge headlamps, that elongated hood stretching into the next zip code, a meticulously equipped and detailed driving compartment with literally everything that opens and shuts, dickey seat with fold-out lid, all the way back to twin spare wheels – an amalgam of more than 1959 metal, glass, plastic, rubber and even leather components produces a treat for the visual and tactile senses.

When describing a model of such magnitude and magnificence, the reviewer is always in danger of suffering from adjectival exhaustion and superfluity of superlatives. And that's exactly how I feel right now. Which is why I invite you to kick back and let your eyes feast on the fabulous photos. But contrary to popular belief, not every picture tells a story. So I would be failing in my duty if I didn't point out some of the more noteworthy features of Bauer's big and beautiful 500K Special Roadster.