



While the body color may appear black but it is actually a dark brown specially mixed for Bauer by Mercedes-Benz. Depending on lighting, the intensity of the color can vary between different shades of dark brown.

As you would expect, the centrally hinged hood, divided into two panels on each side, opens to reveal a credible and creditable replica of the best of Mercedes-Benz pre-World War II engineering. Even the less technically savvy collector cannot fail to be enthralled by the symphony of parts – in a variety of materials, colors, shapes, thicknesses, and sizes – that comprise the straight-eight motor, itself a work of art. To the left side of the engine block are such things as steering column and box, ignition coil, distributor, spark plugs and leads, generator, and miscellaneous bits of plumbing, all scaled down to a remarkable degree of accuracy. On the other side you will see the huge cylindrical air cleaner, carburetor, inlet and exhaust manifolds, and – impossible to miss – the large externally finned Roots supercharger at the lower front, and twin chromium-plated “corrugated” exhaust ducts.

The rear-hinged doors swing open upon

deft manipulation of the dainty handles – both inside and outside. Let your fingers luxuriate as you caress the grained leather on the door trim panels – with fold-out map pockets – and the opulent leather upholstery of the seats. Just ahead of the doors’ leading edges, and below the scuttle-mounted spot lamps, are semaphore turn indicators (“trafficators”) that actually flip out.

A faithfully replicated cockpit with full instrumentation – including opening glove-box lid – also defies brief description. Suffice it to say nothing has been missed by Bauer, from the cranked-back gear shifter, pedals, windshield wiper motors, four-spoke steering wheel with horn ring, through to realistically carpeted floor with tailored floor mats. The ventilation flaps just above the windshield can also be opened and shut using a nifty cockpit lever.

Another stand-out feature is the folding top. Made from actual fabric, the roof should be opened and shut with great care, given the delicate and complex linkage of hinged bows to which it is attached. When in the folded-back position, the convertible top can be neatly encased in a multi-studded leather bag of a color matching the

upholstery and door trim.

While all six wheels are removable, it must be noted that unlike Bauer’s two Bugatti Royale 1:18 scale models, the body of the 500K Special Roadster cannot be separated from the chassis. But this is not much of an impediment to examining the details of the chassis, most of which could be easily inspected from underneath. Here you will see the sturdy chassis frame with hefty cross-brace, the gearbox, workmanlike front suspension wishbones, working coil springs at front and rear, what appears to be a relatively slender tail shaft with flexible couplings at each end, plus the massive, “agricultural”-looking differential housing.

Undoubtedly, Bauer is carving a niche as a manufacturer of high-end, über-quality, large-scale miniature motoring masterpieces – and deservedly so. This latest addition to the range, of which only 2000 pieces will be released, priced at \$1695, will go a long way to enhancing that reputation.

Bauer is distributed by Minichamps North America, so check out one of these sensational models at your nearest Bauer dealer or visit www.carvillemodels.com.