

Mercedes-Benz CLK320 Cabriolet

Miami Auto Show Presentation Script, November 1998

Good afternoon (evening), and welcome to the Mercedes-Benz display at the Miami International Auto Show.

I could just stand here and say the words "New Mercedes-Benz Cabriolet" and walk away. I could leave you to admire this gorgeous automobile and consider my job done. But then, I wouldn't get paid.

Mercedes Cabriolets have always spoken for themselves with timeless styling, stirring performance and undeniable elegance. But this one offers even more, for a price you probably wouldn't expect.

I present the 1999 CLK320 Cabriolet from Mercedes-Benz.

The CLK320 Cabriolet is not only equipped with more luxury and safety features than all previous four-seat Mercedes Cabriolets, but outperforms them, as well.

The CLK320 Cabriolet shares its unmistakable design with the CLK320 coupe, which was introduced last fall and for 1999 has a suggested retail price of \$40,600.

And just as a 25-year-old Mercedes 280SE Cabriolet will still turn heads wherever it goes, I think it's a safe bet this car will draw admiring glances well into the 21st century.

Picture yourself driving the Mercedes CLK320 Cabriolet along a scenic ocean drive, top down, sun setting, someone special in the passenger seat, music playing through the standard Bose audio system.

Sounds terrific, but it gets even better because the CLK320 Cabriolet is an all-year dream car. I guess Florida doesn't really experience the same four seasons as Maine. But let me show you why it's more than a fair-weather friend.

First, imagine the perfect color for your own CLK Cabriolet ... Glacier white? Or this Firemist red? Perhaps a Mineral Green instead...

Then, the destination for a perfect spring weekend ... maybe a trip to the Gulf coast. You can bring a few friends the CLK320 Cabriolet has room for four, with enough cupholders for everyone.

Settle into the 10-way power front seats, each one with memory settings for three positions. You may not want to share the driving with two more people, but that's your call. Now, get ready to drive!

With its 215-horsepower V6 engine, driver-adaptive five-speed automatic transmission and sophisticated suspension, the Mercedes CLK320 Cabriolet was built for romancing the road.

Advanced engine technology includes twin-sparkplug ignition and a magnesium dual-path intake manifold. Or, in English, quick response and lots of low-end and midrange torque for acceleration and passing. Zero-to-60 happens in just 7.7 seconds.

Curvy roads bring out the best in the CLK320. The double wishbone front suspension and patented five-arm rear suspension are what you would find on a sports car ... if that sports car happened to be the Mercedes-Benz SLK. You enjoy sharp handling, but with a comfortable ride not an easy combination to achieve. But then, this is a Mercedes.

It would be nice to think of driving the CLK320 Cabriolet every sunny day, but some of us don't relish the idea of melting into the leather upholstery in summer. Eventually the top has to go up.

Mercedes engineering makes the CLK Cabriolet much more than an ordinary convertible. Watch what I mean.

Pushing one console button closes the roof. (*Demo roof closing procedure, including latching roof at the windshield.*) Then, just secure one latch at the windshield header. That's it. There are no panels to remove to raise the top, nor to replace when the top is lowered.

Now, all you want is cool air blowing in your face. There's plenty of it in the CLK320 Cabriolet the standard dual-zone electronic climate control was designed with couples in mind.

One likes it warm; the other likes it cool. You can set the temperature on your side to, say, 68, and your passenger can set it to 72. Argument avoided.

With this kind of comfort, a mid-morning cruise on the Overseas Highway is a treat no matter the weather.

When you have to return to the weekday routine, the Mercedes CLK320 Cabriolet is a perfect daily commuter. Highway entrances become on ramps to fun. And remember how proud you were to learn all the shortcuts to work? Driving the CLK320 Cabriolet will make you forget them.

Think of the luxury in addition to the Bose music system, automatic climate control and power seats, standard equipment includes leather upholstery, power windows for everybody, cruise control and real walnut wood trim - everything you'd expect in a Mercedes.

Summer is long gone, but With a Mercedes CLK320 Cabriolet, shorter days won't make you melancholy.

When the cool nights mean the top stays up, the lined roof and glass rear window with defroster help keep it cozy inside.

You can also count on Mercedes-Benz safety technology - front and rear crumple zone body structure, dual airbags and door-mounted side airbags. Advanced traction control is standard, and so is a unique Mercedes safety advance something no other carmaker offers - Brake Assist.

Sensors can tell in a split second if you're in a panic stop. If it is, Brake Assist immediately applies full braking power. At the same time, the standard anti-lock system helps you to steer around trouble.

For even more control in wet winter driving, the optional Electronic Stability Program - or ESP for short - can help keep the car from spinning out.

And Mercedes-Benz has even prepared the CLK Cabriolet for a worst-case accident ... a rollover. Rollover accidents may be rare, but Mercedes-Benz wants to protect the car's occupants if one should occur.

(Stand beside rear seat headrests.) Under the rear seat headrests, which can be adjusted for height, is a sturdy rollover protection system. If special sensors detect that the car may roll over, the system deploys to provide space to get out of the overturned car.

Nobody expects the worst, but it's comforting to know Mercedes-Benz has prepared this wonderful automobile to offer that level of protection.

So, I guess the only thing I've left out is the price. What does it cost to buy a grand touring Mercedes-Benz CLK320 Cabriolet with a powerful engine, three-layer power top and long list of standard luxury features? Not to mention stunning great looks...

60 thousand ... 65? The 1999 CLK320 Cabriolet from Mercedes is priced at \$47,200.

Thank you. Enjoy the show ...