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Mercedes-Benz Introduces the 2010 S400 Hybrid Delivering on the promise of hybrid technology.

There's no denying the buzz about fuel economy surrounding hybrid vehicles. However, a funny thing happened to hybrids on the way to the luxury category – the promise of impressive fuel economy seemed to go missing. The all-new 2010 Mercedes-Benz S400 Hybrid brings it back in resplendent luxury.



Mercedes-Benz is introducing the 2010 S400 Hybrid, the first ever full-size premium luxury hybrid sedan that can achieve 26 mpg on the highway. It does so without a frightening price premium that makes you wonder if choosing a hybrid is a smart choice at all.

The S400 Hybrid is, quite emphatically, a very smart choice. With an MSRP of \$87,950, the S400 Hybrid is the new starting point in the extraordinary S-Class, which receives restyling and updates for 2010. Just for comparison's sake, the 2010 Lexus LS600h L Hybrid sedan achieves 22 mpg on the highway and has an MSRP of \$106,035.

The 2010 Mercedes-Benz S400 Hybrid teams a 275-hp V6 gasoline engine to a "mild" hybrid system. The disc-shaped electric motor is mounted in the torque converter housing between the engine and transmission.



This innovative hybrid system provides a 118 lb/ft torque boost under acceleration, controls automatic start/stop at traffic lights to reduce fuel consumption and emissions and recovers energy while braking to help recharge the lithium ion battery pack. A powerful computer controls the hybrid system, calculating the best operating mode 160 times a second to maintain an ideal balance between fuel economy and performance.

No worries about comfort with automatic start/stop. The air conditioning compressor and power steering pump are electrically operated and continue to function. The moment you release the brake, the engine starts and works with the electric motor for seamless performance.

The result is a V8-like driving experience with better fuel economy. Driving an S400 Hybrid, you'll notice the classic S-Class quietness and smoothness, and you'll also notice how the electric motor's torque boost makes acceleration feel powerful and effortless. A special hybrid pictogram within the speedometer shows the energy flow, energy recovery and battery charge.

Some hybrid sedans sacrifice trunk room to house their battery packs. In contrast, the S400 Hybrid has the same large trunk space as all other S-Class models because its battery pack -- the world's first lithium-ion battery designed specifically for automotive use -- is installed in the engine compartment.

The rest of the S400 Hybrid is, well, pure S-Class, so it shares with other 2010 S-Class models freshened styling that includes a more streamlined front grille, larger outside mirrors and a new front bumper with a chrome strip below the air intakes. New active bi-xenon headlights feature LED turn signals along the lower edges.

At the rear, the 2010 S-Class models get LED taillights and exhaust outlets integrated within a recontoured rear bumper. The S400 Hybrid does not shout "Hybrid!" Rather, it softly conveys its mission with unique 18-inch wheels, "HYBRID" logos on the trunklid and dash and "Blue Efficiency" badges on the front fenders.

Inside, the 2010 S-Class comes with an upgraded wood/premium-leather steering wheel. Standard ambient lighting can be selected in three hues -- polar (ice blue), neutral (white) and solar (amber). In addition, there's a new rear-seat entertainment system available.

Mercedes-Benz remains a safety innovator and so it should not surprise you that the 2010 S-Class introduces *six* new and potentially lifesaving safety features. Attention Assist can recognize if you might need a rest from driving and alert you with a coffee cup icon appearing in the instrument cluster. Lane-Keeping Assist can alert you by simulating "rumble strip" vibrations in the steering wheel if the car drifts from its lane without the turn signals on. Nightview Assist Plus with pedestrian detection bathes the road ahead with invisible infrared light. Images of pedestrians from up to 500 feet ahead are projected in the instrument panel. The Pre-Safe Brake system can now apply full braking to bring the car to a stop if it detects an imminent collision and the driver has not reacted. Adaptive Highbeam Assist detects both headlights and taillights, then softly and automatically transitions between high and low beams to avoid dazzling other drivers. Finally, the ABC active suspension now also incorporates a new crosswind stabilization system, making the S-Class feel even more stable in very windy conditions.

Perhaps, within a few years, other premium luxury sedans will offer technology and benefits similar to the S400 Hybrid. Why wait when you can experience them today?