



Mercedes-Benz

35 years of the Mercedes-Benz G-Class

Press Information

Anniversary with world record and special model

13 October 2014

Stuttgart. One man, one G, one life's work. That sums up the essence of an unprecedented global adventure. When Gunther Holtorf and his wife Christine set out in their Mercedes-Benz 300 GD to visit as many of the countries around the world as possible, the G-Class was just ten years old. Today, some 26 years, just under 900,000 kilometres, and 215 visited countries later, Gunther Holtorf drove his cherished G – christened 'Otto' – back home to Swabia. The marathon vehicle will take pride of place in the Mercedes-Benz Museum in Stuttgart-Untertürkheim, where it will go on show to visitors in the Classic Cars section from 21 October. As a world-record holder, 'Otto' will also be immortalised in the Guinness World Records. Since the finish of this unique journey around the world will coincide with the 35th anniversary of the G-Class, the occasion will be marked with the launch of the highly exclusive G 350 BlueTEC Edition 35 and G 500 Edition 35 special models.

When the vehicle was officially handed over to the Mercedes-Benz Museum, Dr Dieter Zetsche, Chairman of the Board of Management of Daimler AG and Head of Mercedes-Benz Cars, was equally impressed by the driver and the vehicle. "I promise that there will still be a G-Class in the future. Will there be more characters of Mr Holtorf's ilk in the future? I hope so," said Dr Zetsche.

For 77-year-old Gunther Holtorf, his Mercedes-Benz 300 GD, which his wife Christine affectionately christened 'Otto', is quite simply the expedition vehicle par excellence for this kind of (torturous) tour. "In 1988, when I bought the car I was a bit more sceptical about the promise made by Mercedes-Benz, namely "Where there's a G, there's a way". After all, I'd already seen something of the world beforehand and had a rough idea of

what the vehicle would have to endure on this kind of world tour!" This initial scepticism gave way though to an unreserved trust in Otto's capabilities as the years went by. Especially in precarious situations, the symbiosis between the Holtorfs and the G-Class grew.

Earth - Moon - Earth plus 80,000 km under gruelling conditions

The 300 GD covered over 250,000 of the just under 900,000 kilometres off-road, perfectly in tune with its innate characteristics. On gravel or washboard roads, in mud, on pot-holed roads or rocky uphill stretches in the mountains - for the suspension and chassis this punishing workout is equivalent to around 2.5 million kilometres under normal central European conditions. In addition to the challenging terrain there were also the disparate meteorological conditions to contend with, which 'Otto' took in its stride throughout all the world's climate zones - from the unforgiving searing heat of the desert, through steaming jungle regions to the freezing cold of the Arctic climes. As if the demands on the 300 GD were not already high enough, 'Otto' actually always had to contend with overweight. Including expedition gear and food, with jerry cans, operating supplies, tools, recovery gear, spare parts and spare wheels, the expedition vehicle fully tipped the scales at 3.3 tonnes – around 500 kilograms in excess of the permissible gross vehicle weight. The roof alone of the cross-country vehicle had to take 400 kilograms. But according to the Holtorfs even that could not faze the world record vehicle: "Actually the G was always overladen, which is why I fitted it with reinforced springs and bad-road shock absorbers. Otherwise, 'Otto' remains like any series-production vehicle. The entire drivetrain with the engine, transmission and axles is still original. Neither the frame nor the body have shown any signs of fatigue."

When the journey is an end in itself

By the time the vehicle crosses the finish line in Stuttgart today, Gunther and his now deceased wife Christine Holtorf will have travelled around 215 countries with Otto. "Travelled around - mind you!", stresses the former pilot and aerospace manager. "A quick stop, with a stamp in your passport to prove it and a symbolic photo with the vehicle at the border crossing - that was never enough for us! In our eyes, you can only travel through a country once you've delved into the particular hemisphere, come into close contact with the locals and got to know their very many facets." Once a country had been ticked off according to these criteria, another red line was added to the

personal world map "ROUND-THE-WORLD RECORD TOUR 1990 - 2014."

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This now definitive world map is criss-crossed by red lines and, in the course of his tour planning, had opened a few doors for Gunther Holtorf, letting him undertake journeys which hitherto had been deemed impossible. Such as through entirely inaccessible countries like North Korea and Myanmar or the grand tour through China across 25,000 kilometres with only him at the wheel. Gunther Holtorf calls these journeys "pioneer tours" - the first time a foreign vehicle with a foreign driver was allowed to drive through the particular country.

Before 'Otto' gets his definitive space in the Mercedes-Benz Museum, he's going to be sent out on the road again for two years from the end of February 2015 - travelling around the Mercedes-Benz Centres and company-owned sales and service outlets in Germany and Europe. 'Otto' will accompany a touring exhibition developed specially for the vehicle, recounting his interesting stopovers and most impressive experiences. The tour is likely to kick off in Munich in February 2015 – details of other dates can be found at www.mercedes-benz.com.

Detailed Information to the „ROUND-THE-WORLD-RECORD-TOUR 1989 - 2014“ is available online: <http://www.ottosreise.de/start.html>.

300 GD world-record tour at a glance

Duration	26 years
Total kilometres	897,000, equivalent to about 22 times around the Earth or Earth - Moon and back plus another two times round the Earth
Of which kilometres off-road	250,000
Countries visited	215
Borders crossed	410 (outside Europe)
Ocean container shipments	41
Deep-sea ferry passages	113
Highest point	Base Camp Mount Everest 5200 metres above mean sea level
Lowest points	Dead Sea/Death Valley, both around 150 metres below sea level
Coldest place on the tour	Near Irkutsk, Siberia, -27 degrees Celsius
Hottest place on the tour	Australian outback near Alice Springs, +50 degrees Celsius

Technical data Mercedes-Benz 300 GD

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Design/body	Ladder-type frame with bolted-on body, Long Station Wagon
Engine	5-cylinder in-line diesel engine
Mixture formation	Indirect diesel pre-chamber injection, Bosch piston injection pump
Displacement cc	3005
Output, kW/hp	65/88 at 4000 rpm
Torque, Nm	170 at 2400 rpm
Transmission/drive	4-speed manual transmission, engageable all-wheel drive, low range, engageable differential locks front/rear
Length/width/height mm	4395/1700/1950
Wheelbase mm	2850
Kerb weight/payload kg	2105/695
Expedition weight 'Otto' kg	3300
Top speed km/h	130

Exclusive G-Class Edition 35 special model

As the body which has been unchanged for 35 years consistently demonstrates, its own lines are the only path that the G-Class never ventures away from. To illustrate this once more, the exclusive Edition 35 special model is available for the G 350 BlueTEC and G 500 models to coincide with the anniversary. The 18-inch 5-spoke light-alloy wheels sparkle in bright black, the front and rear bumper, wheel arch linings, exterior mirrors and the roof sparkle in obsidian black metallic. Together with the designo mystic white bright or palladium silver metallic paint finishes, this adds up to an extremely exciting contrast. Anyone looking for something a little more subtle can also opt for the obsidian black metallic paint finish for the body. Then the exclusive design features harmoniously blend in with the overall appearance. The standard-fit Sports package, including with AMG wheel-arch flaring and on the G 500 with sports exhaust system as well as a Chrome package with chrome highlights in the radiator grille, chrome surround on the seat adjustment switch panel and loudspeakers or the door sill panel in the luggage compartment with "Mercedes-Benz" lettering make the vehicle even more attractive.

The interior of the Edition 35 models matches the exclusive exterior. Two high-grade leather upholstery and appointments options are available either in two-tone designo porcelain/black or single-tone designo black. In both cases red contrasting topstitching underscores the sporty touch of the special model. Together with the Exclusive package with leather-covered dashboard, AMG performance steering wheel and designo trim in black piano lacquer as well as the roof liner in stylish designo black DINAMICA microfibre the result is a luxurious interior. The adjustable multicontour seats with climate control guarantee the hallmark feel-good atmosphere on-board.

Basic prices for the Edition 35 versions:

G 350 BlueTEC: €84,900.00 (€101,031.00 incl. 19% VAT)

G 500: €94,800.00 (€112,812.00 incl. 19% VAT)

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