

EBERHARD THIESEN



AUTOMOBILE RARITÄTEN SEIT 1972



1959 – BMW 503 Coupé Series II

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1959 – BMW 503 Coupé Series II



- Very original vehicle with high quality patina
- Since 1962 (!) with the second owner (family) in Germany
- Original colour scheme in stone grey with first leather in light-brown
- Decommissioned in 1994 and reactivated in 2008
- Engine "Matching Numbers" and comprehensively overhauled
- BMW Classic certificate and history fully documented
- A stylish and exclusive BMW classic from the top league at the time and with the genes of the BMW 507



This Automobile

This BMW 503 Coupé is a Series II model with centre gearshift. According to this BMW Classic certificate, it was manufactured on May 29, 1959 and first registered on July 1, 1959. The first owners were Mr. and Mrs. Guest. She was an aristocratic princess from Europe and he was an entrepreneur and politician from the USA who became US ambassador to Ireland in 1965. The couple owned the car while they lived in Paris before returning it to BMW AG in Munich for resale in August 1961.

In June 1962, the car was sold through BMW for 18,000 DM to the father of the current owner in the area of Nuremberg. The original purchase contract of that time is available, also the corresponding original vehicle registration. Therefore, the car is in second ownership with the family for more than 60 years. Since then, the history is completely documented with numerous original invoices, receipts and documents available, filling three big folders.

In May 1994, the BMW 503 was decommissioned and stored in its original condition. About fourteen years later in 2008, an overhaul was carried out while retaining the originality. This work, including the overhaul of the engine and the vehicle technology, is documented by photos and invoices. The car was then re-registered on October 9, 2008 by the son of the second owner with a licence for historic vehicles, which the car still has today.





The original color scheme was and is today stone grey with a cognac-brown interior, which still consists of the first leather. The 57,000 miles shown are the original mileage. The still existing mileage tachometer was presumably installed during production, as the first owners initially wanted to take the car to the USA. Later the car was not converted to a metric speedometer in order to preserve its originality. According to the BMW Classic certificate, the engine is "Matching Numbers". In addition to the leather interior, the equipment includes a contemporary Becker Mexico radio and four power windows.

Recently, various overhaul measures were carried out to make the car ready for immediate use. This includes work on the engine, chassis, front and rear brakes, heating system and bumpers, the renewal of the steering spindle bearings and the rubber seals on the B-pillar. In addition, new tires were fitted, the doors were adjusted on both sides and the underbody was ice-blasted and sealed with wax. A detailed list of the work is available together with the invoice.

This BMW 503 fascinates with its aura as a contemporary witness of the last 60 years – and on a high level. The car is in a good, very original condition with authentic patina (eg interior, chrome parts). Some work for optimisation could be done. However, this depends on personal taste and individual needs. The simple but elegant color combination and graceful design make for a sophisticated appearance of this glamorous and exclusive BMW classic.





Model History

The BMW 503 was presented as a coupé and convertible together with the BMW 507 Roadster at the International Motor Show (IAA) in Frankfurt in September 1955. It was based on the eight-cylinder V-engine designed for the BMW 502 Sedan, which for a long time was the only German eight-cylinder engine made of aluminum. The design of the luxurious sports coupé was created by Albrecht Graf von Goertz, who had already designed the BMW 507. The aluminum body was then manufactured by the Baur coachbuilding company in Stuttgart.

The 3.2-litre V8 engine produced 140 hp at 4,800 rpm and accelerated the car to up to 190 km/h. The main difference in the models from series 2 (from December 1957) is a middle gearshift (instead of steering wheel gearshift), electric windows (instead of hydraulic) and continuous straight chrome trim at the rear (instead of curved upwards).

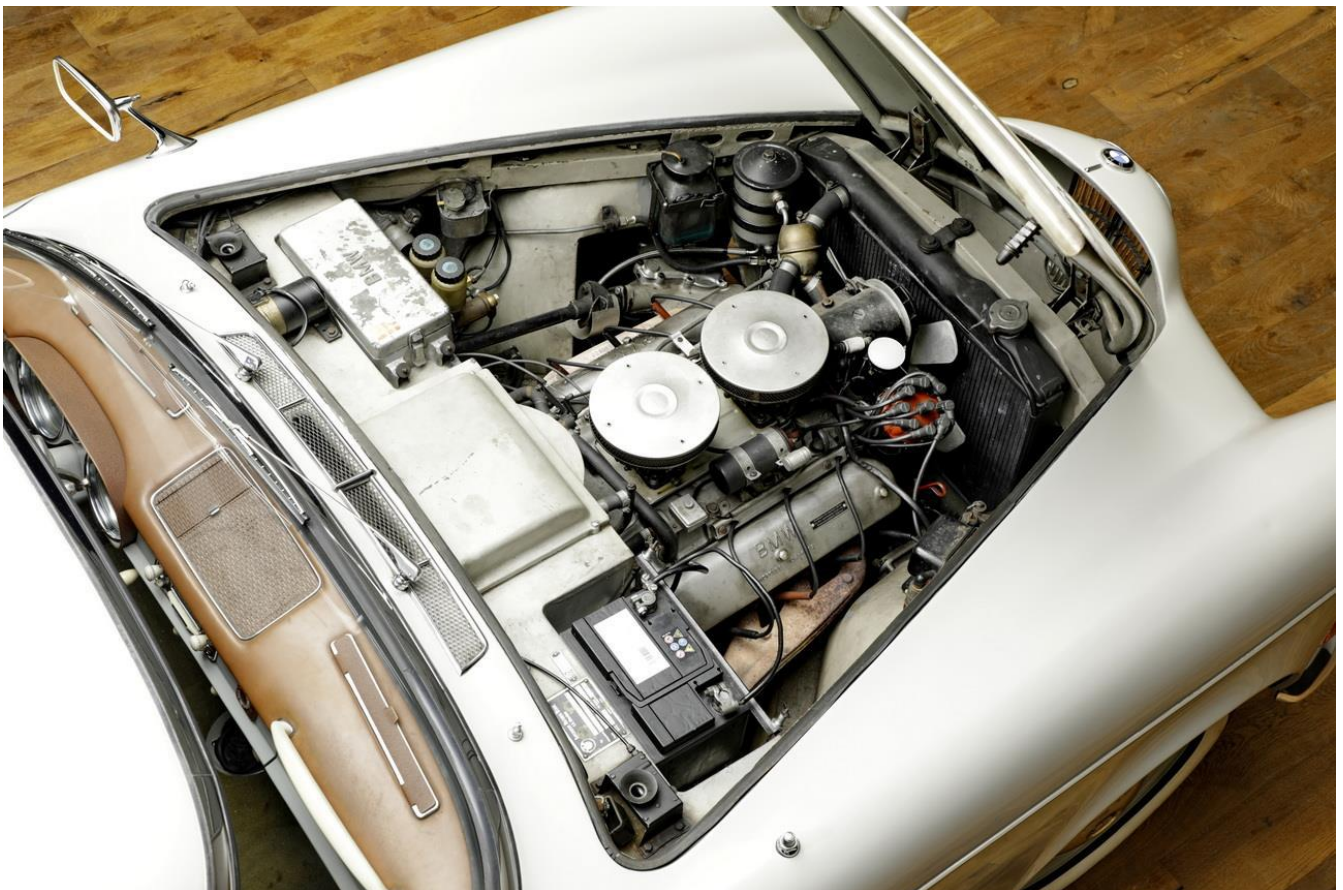
Despite the positive response from the press and the public, the BMW 503 was not a great sales success, mainly due to its high price: In May 1956, BMW was asking around DM 30,000 for the coupe and convertible. That was half the price of a semi-detached house and almost at Mercedes 300 SL level. Moreover, at the time BMW did not yet have an appropriate brand image for such exclusive and expensive luxury vehicles. Among the wealthy and prominent buyers were Graf Faber-Castell and Rudolf-August Oetker. By 1960, only 412 vehicles had been produced, 273 of them coupés and 139 cabriolets.





Data & Facts

Year of production	1959
Quantity	412 examples in total, including 273 coupes and 139 convertibles
Colour scheme	white-grey (stone-grey) with leather interior cognac brown
Mileage (reading)	approx. 57,000 miles
Engine	8-cylinder V-engine, water cooled, double downdraft carburettor Zenith 32 NDIX
Displacement / Power	3,168 cc, approx. 140 hp at 4,800 rpm (factory specifications)
Gearbox	Manual, 4-speed, central-shift
Brakes	Drums front and rear
Empty weight	approx. 1,500 kg
Top speed	approx. 190 km/h
Equipment	leather upholstery, original Becker Mexico radio, power windows
Documents	BMW Classic certificate, German H-registration documents, invoices & photos for repair/overhaul, original service booklet and manual, BMW repair manual, original bill of sale and original vehicle title (cardboard cover) from 1962



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Appendix

Location	Hamburg, Germany	
Price	EUR 220,000 (VAT not to be shown)	
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