

History of the Chrysler 300 Series

1955 - 2005



- At its introduction in 1955, the first Chrysler 300 was also the most powerful production car in the US. It made full use of all 300 horsepower at Daytona that year for a record-breaking 127.580 miles per hour -- around 7 miles per hour faster than its nearest non-Chrysler rival!



- The successor to the original 300, the 1956 300B model saw more horsepower more gear boxes and more success at Daytona beach with a new flying mile record, 139.373 miles per hour.



- In 1957, fins were in! As if that wasn't attraction enough you could now order your 300 as a ragtop. What's more you could order it with 390 horses as well.



- 1964 was a record sales year for the 300 letter series. Happily, the convertible returned to the letter-car lineup after taking a break in 1963.



- 1965 was the last year in the initial series of letter cars. By that time the 300's styling was the responsibility of Elwood Engel, who had succeeded Virgil Exner as head of Chrysler Design. The performance that distinguished the letter cars—especially the raw horsepower--was being de-emphasized as other Chrysler Corporation marques assumed the "performance" mantle.



- In 1970 the letter cars made a brief encore with the availability of the Chrysler 300 Hurst. This special edition of the non-letter 300s was specially modified by Hurst, the performance products company. It briefly revived the mixture of horsepower, special suspension, and distinctive trim that characterized the letter series cars.



- In 1999, after an absence of 20 years, the 300 nameplate hits the showrooms again and after a 34-year hiatus, the letter series makes its return. This time around there are no big inch V-8 engines, no convertibles, and not even a two door in the model range.



- Fifty years after the launch of the 300, The 2005 300 Hemi C sedan brings back legendary HEMI® V-8 muscle and refined Chrysler sophistication. Its unprecedented levels of luxury, comfort, performance, and sophisticated amenities helped the Chrysler 300 led to its designation as **2005 Motor Trend Car of the Year**.