

A silver Mercedes-Benz SL55K is shown from a front-three-quarter perspective, driving on a dark road. The car is angled towards the right, with its headlights on. The background is a bright, hazy sunset or sunrise sky. The car's sleek design, including its large alloy wheels and side mirrors, is clearly visible.

RENNTECH SL55K

RennTech SL55K Bests the SL55

BEYOND THE SLEEK AND OUTSTANDING LOOK OF THE SL55K, THE THRUST OF THE ACCELERATION WHILE RESIDING IN A LUXURIOUS COMPARTMENT COMBINED WITH THE IMMENSE STOPPING FORCE ALMOST SPARKS A PHYSICS DEBATE.

STORY AND PHOTOS JASON SIU

Having the opportunity to visit RennTech Mercedes in West Palm Beach, FL, a particular SL500 caught our eyes. It was mild on the exterior but something hinted that it was far from factory. The owner of RennTech, Hartmut Feyhl, briefed us on the engine and the horsepower. That was enough prompting to open the door and sit in the cockpit, turn the key and listen to the massaged V8. Reaching over with my right foot and giving the throttle a light tap, the generous purr of the SL's engine reinforced our hearty expectations.

Balancing exotic, sleek bodylines with aggressive performance, the base Mercedes SL500 is merely breathtaking in stock form. Sporting a mere 302hp @ 5,600rpm and 340 lb-ft of torque off the lot, the SL500 has plenty of untapped potential. We had every confidence RennTech Mercedes would correct this, but more importantly could RennTech preserve the reliability and drivability of a stock Mercedes while giving the owner all the horsepower desired?

Working for years in R & D at AMG, Feyhl, from Germany, lived up to the challenge of enhancing stock Mercedes vehicles, while preserving quality. With his transfer to AMG North America, Feyhl added to his resume with several amazing Mercedes performance innovations but eventually decided that



AMG's restrictions on achieving a pure driving experience held him back. So in 1989, Feyhl opened RennTech Mercedes in sunny South Florida.

"This SL500 has so much more in it as a daily driver. The RennTech SL55K conversion gives the owner a breath of fresh air," states Feyhl. "We are all about performance without compromise. RennTech cars are designed to function and perform like factory Mercedes – run flawlessly, idle smoothly, and have reliability and ease of maintenance comparable to a factory vehicle."

This SL55K conversion, formerly a tame 302hp cruiser with golf clubs in the trunk, is now an exhilarating 550whp machine with 568 lb-ft of torque as an eye opener.





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Taking position into the SL500 (or shall we say, SL55K?) we weren't sure what to expect but it would be grin-inducing for sure. Did the SL55K deliver? Oh yes!

Starting off with revamping the original 5.0L engine, a newly built and stroked 5.5L tuned engine can now be heard from the cockpit as it idles just as silently and smoothly as the original. Pulling the car out onto the street and laying your right foot on the accelerator the tune and torque of the RennTech Lysholm-type supercharger sprang to life. Cooling off the new method of forced induction is a RennTech intercooler system specifically designed and manufactured for this high horsepower package. Along with the upgraded crankshaft pulley, the driver experiences the exhilarating tunes produced by the RennTech sport tuned dual rear muffler system.

This SL55K conversion, formerly a tame 320hp cruiser with



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THE SPORT ROTORS ARE SLOTTED AND SPOTTED
FOR GREAT LOOKS AND IMPROVED PERFORMANCE



golf clubs in the trunk, is now an enlivened 550whp machine with 568 lb-ft of torque as an eye opener. The luxurious daily cruiser has a few surprises up its wheelwells. Acceleration is delivered with an extremely smooth curve that causes you to easily forget that this car produces well over 500 horsepower. The impact of the excess torque can almost cause nausea in a passenger as the SL55K rips through the RPMs like a touring bike. In the blink of an eye you hit speeds up to 186 mph! Switching the car into manual mode, focus went from the speedometer to the tachometer with the charger spinning in the background. The needle swept across the face of the gauge like an altimeter on an F-14. No joke.

With its in-house dyno, RennTech is able to fine-tune each vehicle that passes through its doors. Utilizing an ECU/computer control unit top upgrade, RennTech is able to ensure that this SL55K conversion drives like it's from the factory but minus the performance limitations. The dyno helps confirm every bit of power and a perfect powerband before leaving RennTech and into owner's eager mitts. In addition to its new powertrain system, RennTech further reinforced the drivetrain components of the SL55K. Once again, performance without compromise can be understood, as the entire transmission system must shift just as smoothly as a factory one. A TCU (transmission control unit) and computer upgrade were installed to match up the new powerband of the 5.5L supercharged heart. Last but not least, a performance torque converter was installed to reliably put every horsepower and lb-ft of torque to the rear wheels. With the car properly tuned and back on the street, this RennTech SL500 was a blast to experience inside and out.

The tight accurate shifts of the transmission and the acceleration reminds one of a roller coaster ride with the initial gut-wrenching torque.

The RennTech SL55K has additional amenities to bring back the nostalgic feeling of that roller coaster full of twists and turns. To roll attractively on the streets, RennTech decided to give the SL55K a new stylish stance along with a more fitting package for a luxury coupe. Sporting its own custom RennTech Monolite 10-spoke wheel, these forged aluminum pieces are the perfect balance for performance and beauty. Naturally matching up to the body lines of the SL, the 19x9-inch size in the front and the 19x11-inch variety in the rear fill up the wheel wells absolutely perfectly. A simple yet elegant design, the 10-spoke wheel rounds each corner perfectly and as mildly as possible. With the wider than stock setup, RennTech was able to wrap the specialty wheels with plenty of Pirelli P-Zero rubber.

Again, focusing on functioning products and capturing the finesse of the luxurious Mercedes line, RennTech carefully

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RennTech

SL55K Package

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