

1993 MERCEDES-BENZ 190 E KLASSE 1

This year marks 100 years since the 1926 merger of Mercedes (Daimler) and Benz, creating one of the world's most influential automotive marques. Throughout 2026 we've celebrated different chapters of that story, from the luxury of the 1956 Mercedes-Benz 300SC and the pioneering engineering of a 1910 Benz to the cutting-edge technology of a hybrid Formula 1 car. This display explores another side of the Mercedes-Benz legacy: touring car racing.

Although it resembles the roadgoing Mercedes-Benz 190E, this is a purpose-built racing machine developed for the Deutsche Tourenwagen Masters (DTM), Germany's premier touring car championship. Since its launch in 1984, DTM has become a fiercely contested racing series, for which manufacturers transform recognisable everyday saloons into extraordinary competition cars.

That's how the humble 190E became one of Mercedes-Benz's defining racers. It was driven by DTM legends including Bernd Schneider and Klaus Ludwig, while Ellen Lohr made history in 1992 by becoming the first – and still the only – woman to win a DTM race, driving a 190E at Hockenheim.

This 1993 car represents the final evolution of the model before Mercedes-Benz the replacement C-Class took over. Aerodynamic refinements, including a deeper front spoiler, slimmer rear wing and lower stance, improved handling, while its 2.5-litre four-cylinder engine produced around 375bhp. It also carried a distinctive livery promoting Berlin's bid to host the 2000 Olympic Games, although the honour ultimately went to Sydney instead. Lohr and Ludwig drove this actual specification in 1993, finishing seventh and fourth in the championship respectively.

An icon on both road and track, the 190E laid the foundations for Mercedes-Benz's remarkable DTM success since then.

Brief Technical Specification

Engine: inline-four-cylinder, 2,490 cc

Top speed: 185 mph approx.

Maximum power: 375 bhp

Price when new: not sold publicly

On display Tuesday 28 July to Monday 10 August, courtesy of Mercedes-Benz Heritage.