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BLUE'S BROTHER

Harder edged looks and a sizeable performance increase take the brand new Carlsson E350 CDI up a few gears from its BlueEfficiency roots WORDS & IMAGES IAN KUAH



FOR MAJOR MANUFACTURERS and aftermarket tuners, two things which count for a lot are your reputation and how quickly you can put exciting new products in front of existing and potential customers.

Following the recent European launch of the W212 E-Class, the new face of the mid range Mercedes saloon will soon become a familiar sight on the streets. Having won several car magazine reader awards for the design of its body styling and wheels, Carlsson has an enviable reputation for style and quality, and was one of the first to ready the production version of its body styling programme for this important new Mercedes.

The slightly awkward rear of the E-Class saloon with its heavily sculpted rear arches is emphasised by the standard ride height and modest wheel sizes. However, lowered by

30mm on 20-inch alloys and wearing Carlsson's new aerodynamic styling package, the new E-Class is transformed. The five twin spokes of the new Revo 1/5 wheel design are bi-coloured in matte silver and black, which makes them appear thinner and the wheels even larger. This design is available in 19- and 20-inch diameters, and this test car uses 20x8.5J front and 20x10.5J rear sizes, shod with 245/30ZR20 front and 285/25ZR20 rear Dunlop SP Sport Maxx tyres.

The aerodynamic package includes a new front bumper/spoiler with an RS spoiler lip, larger air intakes with electro-polished stainless steel mesh grilles and vertically arranged LED daytime running lights. Visually linked to the deeper front spoiler by the sculpted side skirts, the new rear valance extension features four vertical boundary layer fences to control air flow separation and

◀ A bootlid spoiler and new oval tailpipes are part of this upgrade.

◀△ The CD35 has a new front bumper/spoiler featuring vertical LEDs.

◀△△ Revo 1/5 alloys are finished in two-tone matte silver and black.





Carlsson takes power up from 228bhp to 276bhp with 82lb ft more torque.



◀ Carlsson's 20-inch wheels well fill the W212's arches.

JUST THE FACTS



Carlsson CD35 (W212)

Engine OM642 2,987cc V6 turbocharged

Power 276bhp@3,800rpm

Torque 480lb ft@1,600-2,400rpm

Transmission 7-speed auto, RWD

Weight 1,825kg

0-62mph 6.2sec

Top speed 158mph

Fuel consumption 40.9mpg

CO2 emissions 181g/km

Years produced 2009-on

OVERVIEW

One of the first with a tuned E-Class, Carlsson's CD35 with 480lb ft of torque is certainly not for the fainthearted

Figures supplied by Carlsson for car pictured, except weight, fuel consumption and CO2 emissions which are for a standard E350 CDI BlueEfficiency; fuel consumption according to NEDC combined

cut outs for the stainless steel sports exhaust's large oval outlets. A subtle bootlid spoiler adds the finishing flourish to the styling package on this E-Class.

Although they were not fitted to this first show car, new front wings with air outlets behind the wheelarches will be added to the programme shortly. Apart from the glass fibre RS spoiler lip and epoxy front wings, all body styling parts are made from OE quality PU-RIM (polyurethane).

The wide range of updated engines and the addition of the new E250 CDI BlueEfficiency turbodiesel has given Carlsson's engineers a lot of work to do, but the E350 CDI BlueEfficiency motor in this car is almost unchanged from the W211 version.

The Carlsson C-Tronic VI Diesel Power CD35 conversion consists of an additional ECU, adaptor plug and wiring harness, and

boosts power from 228bhp to 276bhp at the same 3,800rpm. Torque is increased from an already healthy 398lb ft to an even more substantial 480lb ft throughout the same 1,600 to 2,400rpm rev range.

The overall gain in performance is significant. The sprint to 62mph tumbles from 6.8 seconds to 6.2 seconds, and the top speed goes up from 154mph to 158mph. Fuel consumption is unaffected in normal, part throttle driving, as the enhanced torque curve means you need less throttle to attain the same speed.

If good looks and speed to market are important, Carlsson has a head start with its body styling parts for the new E-Class saloon. And as a final gesture of confidence, the German tuner offers a comprehensive three-year warranty on all of its components and engine conversions.

The performance gain is significant, but fuel consumption is unaffected in normal, part throttle driving





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