



Mercedes-Benz

Press Information

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Mercedes-Benz VLE drives to Rome and passes long distance tests with flying colors

- From Stuttgart via the Alps to Rome—with just two short 15-minute charging stops under real-life driving conditions
- Mercedes-Benz VLE demonstrates the efficiency of the new Van Electric Architecture on the long-distance journey
- Rear-axle steering ensures easy and agile handling even in tight corners on Italian streets

Two Mercedes-Benz VLE test vehicles made the trip from Stuttgart to Rome, covering nearly 1,100 kilometers (about 683 miles) with just two quick 15-minute charging stops. The route wasn't easy—winding, steep mountain passes through the Alps, long highway stretches, busy rural roads, and tight city streets. Along the way, the VLE proved it's ready for real-world use, making it a solid option for families and adventure seekers alike.

Focus areas included everyday performance - specifically the efficiency of the electric drivetrain, energy recuperation, thermal management, and how rear-axle steering impacts handling.

The Mercedes-Benz VLE performed impressively: the test vehicles completed the 1,090-kilometer (about 677 miles) trip from Stuttgart to Rome in roughly 13 hours of steady traffic. Charging was minimal—just two quick 15-minute stops along the way. The journey began in Stuttgart at 52°F and ended in Rome at a summer-high 91°F. Despite the temperature changes, comfort was never compromised, with the cabin consistently maintained at a cool 72°F.

The rear axle steering proved its worth on the winding roads and narrow streets of Italian cities, ensuring stress-free handling in everyday life.

"Our future MPVs have once again impressively demonstrated their suitability for everyday use on the long-distance route. With just two short charging stops from Stuttgart to the Alps to Rome - the Mercedes-Benz VLE demonstrates impressive efficiency of the new Van Electric Architecture."

Dr. Andreas Zygan, Head of Development Mercedes-Benz Vans, Mercedes-Benz AG

Test drives for maturity level validation

Test drives such as the long-distance route from Stuttgart to Rome are part of a comprehensive program for testing the performance of the overall vehicle, which includes numerous climatic zones and route profiles. In addition to digital validation of the maturity level and tests in state-of-the-art test facilities at the Mercedes-Benz Vans development campus in Stuttgart/Untertürkheim, the development vehicles are put through their paces in real operation on the road. To gain detailed insights into practicality and accelerate the development process to production maturity, the developers and engineers at Mercedes-Benz carry out numerous development drives. For example, the first technology vehicles of the VLE drove from Stuttgart to the North Cape in Norway just over a year ago, and extensive cold testing

was carried out in Sweden in the winter of 2025. This time, the VLE went over the Alps to the south to the Italian capital.

New Era

Starting in 2026, Mercedes-Benz will launch its newly developed modular and scalable Van Architecture, marking the beginning of an entirely new era. This platform creates a clear distinction between luxury-focused Grand Limousines and commercial vans. Since delivering real value to customers is always a top priority for Mercedes-Benz, future MPVs and transport vans will be designed to perfectly meet customer needs, offering the right blend of style, functionality, and everyday usability.

Grand Limousines

The future models of privately positioned MPVs – also known as Grand Limousines – will be named the Mercedes-Benz VLE and the Mercedes-Benz VLS. While the VLE can accommodate up to 8 seats and range from flexible vehicles for families to exclusive VIP shuttles, the VLS will define a unique segment of its own that bestows true greatness to automotive luxury. For the first time, Mercedes-Benz will offer all-electric midsize luxury vehicles in the U.S., Canada and China (Grand Limousines).

About Mercedes-Benz USA

Mercedes-Benz USA (MBUSA), headquartered in Atlanta, is responsible for the distribution, marketing and customer service for all Mercedes-Benz products in the United States. MBUSA offers drivers the most diverse lineup in the luxury segment with 18 model lines ranging from the sporty GLA SUV to the flagship S-Class and the dynamic all-electric vehicles from Mercedes-Benz. MBUSA is also responsible for Mercedes-Benz Vans in the U.S. More information on MBUSA and its products can be found at www.mbusa.com and www.mbvans.com. To learn more about all Mercedes-Benz entities in North America, visit group.mercedes-benz.com/northamerica.

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