

Adler Standard 8 Automobiles — History and Standard 8 Models

Adler History

Adler, Adlerwerke vorm. Heinrich Kleyer AG, is commonly known as Adler, a was company founded in Frankfurt am Main, Germany in 1880. Originally, Adler made bicycles and typewriters before venturing into automobiles in the 1890s. Their first cars appeared in 1900, using De Dion-Bouton engines from France. Shortly after, Adler developed its own engines. Before WWI (1900–1914) Adler quickly grew into one of Germany's leading automobile makers. They produced a wide range of cars: small 2-cylinders, larger 4-cylinders, and by 1904, 4.6-liter 6-cylinder models. By 1914, Adler was second only to Benz & Cie in German car production.

After WWI (1918–1930), Adler resumed production with conventional, solid cars. They offered economical 4-cylinder model and larger 6-cylinder touring cars, which gained popularity. Adler became known for reliability and a strong dealer/service network. In the 1930s, Adler introduced some of the most advanced German cars of the era. Then in 1932 introduced the Adler Trumpf – designed by Hans Gustav Röhr, that featured front-wheel drive which was very rare in Germany.

In 1937 the Adler Trumpf Rennlimousine – a highly aerodynamic, streamlined racing car that competed at Le Mans and other endurance events. Other models included the Adler Diplomat and Adler Standard series. These streamlined designs influenced later German manufacturers including early designs from Ferdinand Porsche. During World War II (1939–1945) Adler's car production shifted to military vehicles, trucks, and equipment and its Frankfurt factory was heavily damaged by Allied bombing.

Adler Standard 8 Models

The Adler Standard 8 was launched at the 1931 Berlin Motor Show as Adler's top model and was Adler's bold entry into the German luxury car market. The Standard 8 built on the success of the Adler Standard 6 established Adler as a serious competitor in the middle/upper-class car market and Standard 8 models were intended to compete directly with Mercedes-Benz, Horch and Maybach in the luxury segment. They represented Adler's peak in luxury car engineering.

The Standard 8 Engine was an inline 8-cylinder, 3,887 cc (later 3,918 cc producing 100 hp at 3,800 rpm and a 4-speed manual gearbox on a rigid axle front and rear, semi-elliptic leaf springs. Fitted Hydraulic drum brakes (progressive for the time). Standard 8 had a top Speed of 120 km/h (75 mph), depending on body style.

Body Styles & Models

Adler sold the Standard 8 in several body variants, both factory-built and by custom coachbuilders:

The 4-Door Limousine (Saloon) was the standard production model with conservative styling, aimed at businessmen and official use.

The Cabriolet (2- and 4-door) were an elegant convertibles which were popular among wealthy private buyers.

The Touring Car / Pullman Limousine were built on an extended wheelbase chassis and versions included chauffeur-driven luxury vehicles.

Available with Custom Coachwork produced by several German and European coachbuilders like Karmann, Ambi-Budd, and smaller firms that produced one-off or limited production bodies.

Adler Standard 8 (1931–1934) Production numbers remained small as the market for luxury cars shrank during the Depression. Early production during 1931–1933 has conservative styling similar to the Standard 6 but larger and more prestigious. Mild updates were made in 1933–1934 including more refined interiors and improved mechanicals.

The Standard 8 was admired for refinement and smooth performance, but Adler never sold them in large numbers. Buyers in the luxury class typically favored Mercedes-Benz and Horch, whose prestige overshadowed Adler. After 1934, Adler concentrated more on medium-size cars (like the Trumpf) and gradually retreated from the luxury segment. Surviving Standard 8s are extremely rare today and are prized by collectors of interwar German cars.