

AUTOMOTIVE

Mercedes to manufacture luxury Maybach SUV in US

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The Vision Mercedes-Maybach Ultimate Luxury is intended as a chauffeured car. Image courtesy of Mercedes-Benz

By STAFF REPORTS

German automaker Mercedes has revealed that it will be producing an upcoming Maybach sport utility vehicle in an Alabama plant.

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According to *Automotive News*, this would be the most expensive passenger vehicle manufactured in the United States, with an estimated starting price of \$200,000. Based on the GLS, the car is expected to be available starting next year.

SUV meets sedan

At Auto China 2018, Mercedes-Benz shared its vision of luxury through an electric concept car designed to serve as a mobile butler.

The Vision Mercedes-Maybach Ultimate Luxury crossover vehicle melds the properties of a saloon with those of a sport utility vehicle, creating a hybrid that offers space, security and comfort. As brands seek to make over the driving experience with technology and innovations, Mercedes' concept uses modern touches to reinforce Maybach's positioning and personalization.

A reinterpretation of the Mercedes-Maybach S-Class, the vehicle features an exterior that is designed to combine the shape of an SUV and a sedan. The resulting vehicle features a raised profile while retaining the typical hood, cabin and trunk three-box design of a sedan ([see story](#)).



Mercedes-Maybach concept car. Image credit: Mercedes-Benz

"In terms of design, the Vision Mercedes-Maybach Ultimate Luxury shows how a Mercedes-Maybach might score in future with the ultimate in luxury namely with an extremely spacious interior," Christian Bokich, spokesperson for [Mercedes-Benz](#), told *Luxury Daily* at the time of the concept's debut. "With the clearly defined three-box design, Mercedes-Maybach gives a totally new interpretation of 'sublimity' and 'prestige.'

Mercedes' new car will be a heightened version of its GLS model. This model will be produced at the plant in Vance, AL, which also produces the Mercedes-Benz GLS.

Similarly to the concept car, this model will be more focused on chauffeured trips, targeting a primarily Chinese audience in the midst of a U.S.-China trade dispute.

Sales of sport utility vehicles have dominated the luxury car market in 2018, but the gap between high-end and mass-market SUVs is narrowing.

More than 1 million luxury vehicles were sold in the first eight months of 2018, 62 percent of which were SUVs, according to a report from Edmunds. Growing availability of high-end SUVs has driven this trend, but the price gap between luxury and mainstream vehicles has also shrunk 10 percent in the last decade ([see story](#)).

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