

# 1959 CADILLAC SEDAN DE VILLE

1959 Cadillac Sedan de Ville Hardtop, Series 62; 4 door, 6 window; series 6229K

Owners: Bernie and Janice Taulborg Collection

Original cost: \$5,080.00 (In 1959: Average car cost, \$2,200.00; average household income, \$5,010.00; average home cost, \$12,400.00; gallon of gas, 25 cents)

Number made: 23,461

Engine, etc.: 8 cyl.; 390 cid; 325 hp; 130 in. wheelbase; 4,835 lbs.

The name DeVille was derived from its body styling, with "DeVille" meaning "of the town or city" in French. It was a luxury car produced after the Fleetwood name was dropped by Cadillac. Production began in 1949 and ended in 2005 when it was replaced by the DTS. DTS stands for "DeVille Touring Sedan". As innovative as the 1958 Cadillacs appeared, another styling frontier was ahead. That threshold was crossed with the immortal 1959 Cadillac. The restyling was GM designer Dave Hols' response to the Chrysler "Forward Look" 1957 lineup.

No automotive design better characterizes the industry's late 1950's flamboyance than the 1959 Cadillac which incorporated totally new styling: soaring tail fins, twin pod parking lights and tail lamps with backup lights recessed in their centers, a new jewel-like grille, matching rear deck panels, large curved-top windshields, thin-section rooflines, and slim roof pillars. Wheel covers were turbine shaped. In 1959, nothing looked like the newly redesigned Cadillacs.

The design began from a directive by GM executives to make the basic Buick front door a common interchangeable element throughout the GM C-body line in order to trim costs. It made new designs difficult because the door tapered rearward but the directive was given as an order to be followed by the

design teams. Another impetus leading to the new design was that Chrysler had by now "out-finned" Cadillac and this could not be tolerated: the 1959 Cadillac was going to have flamboyant fins.

Designers on the project were inspired by the P-38 jet aircraft and it was no wonder the final design resulted in a Cadillac that looked like it was moving even when sitting still in the driveway. Twin tail lights were used because twice as many looked more expensive. The body style resulted in unexcelled visibility due to thin pillars and the roof design.

Care had to be taken to maintain Cadillac's reputation for high quality. A problem developed in the 1959 Fleetwood Sixty Special model with its upholstery: the metallic fabric trapped guard-hairs of women's mink coats when they sat down and got up. The textile problem was rapidly addressed and solved.

Standard equipment included cloth and leather interior, padded dash, power brakes and steering, automatic transmission, power windows, windshield washers, two-speed wipers, dual backup lamps, wheel discs, outside rear view mirror, and vanity mirror. Optional equipment included radio with rear speaker (\$165), air conditioning (\$474), cruise control (\$97), and remote control trunk lock (\$59).

A flat-top roof styling was used on four-window sedans; six-window models had sloping roof lines with rear vent panes.

The DeVille became a distinct Cadillac series for 1959 and was offered in hardtop sedans, coupes, and as a convertible.

Sources: Standard Catalog of American Cars, 1946 – 1974. John Gunnell. Krause Publications, 2002.

<https://www.conceptcarz.com/z31022/cadillac-deville.aspx>

<http://auto.howstuffworks.com/1950-1959-cadillac4.htm>

<http://motorera.com/cadillac/cad1950/CAD59-62.HTM>

See

also: [http://www.oldcarbrochures.com/static/NA/Cadillac/1959\\_Cadillac/1959\\_Cadillac\\_Brochure/dirindex.html](http://www.oldcarbrochures.com/static/NA/Cadillac/1959_Cadillac/1959_Cadillac_Brochure/dirindex.html) (Original 1959 brochure)

[http://www.oldcarbrochures.com/static/NA/Cadillac/1959\\_Cadillac/1959\\_Cadillac\\_Comparison\\_Folder/dirindex.html](http://www.oldcarbrochures.com/static/NA/Cadillac/1959_Cadillac/1959_Cadillac_Comparison_Folder/dirindex.html) (Original 1959 brochure comparing Cadillac to Imperial and Lincoln)

[http://www.oldcarbrochures.com/static/NA/Cadillac/1959\\_Cadillac/1959\\_Cadillac\\_Factory\\_Pictures/dirindex.html](http://www.oldcarbrochures.com/static/NA/Cadillac/1959_Cadillac/1959_Cadillac_Factory_Pictures/dirindex.html) (Original 1959 brochure, factory pictures)