

1936 BUICK ROADMASTER

1936 Buick Roadmaster 36-80 Sedan, 4-door

Owner: Bernie and Janice Taulborg Collection

Original cost: \$1,255.00 (In 1936: average annual household income, \$1,713.00; average home, \$3,935.00; gallon of gas, 10 cents)

Number made: 16,049

Engine, etc.: 3-speed, manual; 8 cyl., 120 h.p., 320.2 cid; 131" wheelbase; 4,098 lbs.

This was the first year for the Roadmaster model. Only two body styles were offered in 1936 in the Roadmaster series: a four-door trunk sedan and an elegant convertible phaeton.

The name "Roadmaster" conjures up images of a big, powerful highway automobile, just what Buick intended. A 1936 Buick sales catalog said "It literally named itself the first time a test model leveled out on the open highway."

Buick's straight-eight engine was heavily revised in 1936. One size was 233 cu. in., 93 horsepower for the Special, and the other was 320 cu. in., 120 hp for the larger series which included the Series 60 Century, Series 80 Roadmaster, and Series 90 Limited.

This was the first year Buicks were identified by a model name as well as a number, to celebrate the engineering improvements and design advancements over their 1935 models. All 1936 Buicks looked dramatically different from their 1935 counterparts and their series names would soon become well known.

Hydraulic brakes became standard equipment on the Buicks in 1936. Coil springs were used in the front, and this was the first year Buick adopted an all steel turret top.

The Roadmaster was a big car, with a 131" wheelbase, seven inches shorter than the Limited but nine inches longer than the Century.

The Roadmaster was a phenomenal bargain. The sedan sold for \$1,255, undercutting the least expensive Cadillac by \$440. The convertible phaeton cost \$1,565 compared to Cadillacs of the same body style which sold for \$2,745 – \$7,850.

The new style was a big hit with total 1936 model year sales tripling from just over 48,000 to nearly 158,000, with the Series 80 Roadmaster contributing 16,049 to that number.

Buick was not satisfied to rest on its laurels from the 1936 re-design. In 1937 it undertook another major redesign and the new models looked even better. A new carburetor and revised camshaft increased horsepower even though engine cubic inch size remained unchanged on the straight eight.

Sources: Standard Catalog of American Cars, 1805 – 1942. Beverly Rae Kimes, et al. 3rd ed. Krause Publications, 1996.

<http://auto.howstuffworks.com/1936-1992-buick-roadmaster.htm>

https://auto.howstuffworks.com/buick.htm?srch_tag=56sqlkfb4poathq7p2vse2pqhvglmtfo#pt1

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Buick_Roadmaster

See Also: http://www.oldcarbrochures.com/static/NA/Buick/1936_Buick/dirindex.html (Original sales brochure)