

Boston Bimmer

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HPDS in full swing with many events still ahead
Insight into the BMW European Delivery Program
Dates set for Concours and new technical sessions

European Delivery: How to make it as perfect as your dreams



— Story by Alex Neihaus,
— Photos by the Neihaus family

Most BMW CCA members have heard of BMW's European Delivery (ED) program. This program allows you pick up a car in Munich, have it shipped home and get a discount on the purchase price. If that sounds too good to be true, let me assure you it is not. I have owned only two BMWs – a 2006 E90 330i and a 2012 F30 335i. Both were ordered here in Massachusetts, picked up in Munich and then re-delivered home about six weeks later.

I'm proof this is an amazing program

If this interests you, and repeat participants like me are proof that it is an amazing program, you can learn everything online from how to get BMW Welt from the airport to where to drive your new car to what to eat, what to bring and more. (The best online forum, bar none, for helpful logistical info is the European Delivery forum at <http://www.bimmerfest.com/>). However,

Pictured above:

Cars purchased in the ED program are delivered to you on a turn-table inside the spectacular BMW Welt at BMW's HQ in Munich. Pictured here is Alex Neihaus and his daughter Rebecca, the day he took delivery in Germany.

online forums are awash in incorrect information about what to do before you arrive in Munich. Questions about the ordering process, pricing and deadlines are usually met with wildly inaccurate information. Here I hope to share with you some of what I have learned about these questions.

First let's talk about the bottom line

The European Delivery price is negotiable. Keep in mind that among the cars BMW sells both here and via ED that there are four price lists. Two are US MSRP and US "invoice." ("Invoice" price is not what the dealer pays, but it is a commonly used proxy price list for where negotiations can begin.) There is another set of these two price lists: ED MSRP and ED "invoice." You can easily find these online for the model you are considering; but remember that not all BMWs are available via ED. Cars built in Spartanville, SC are not available via ED. However, if you want to prolong the experience, you can have ED cars re-delivered in South Carolina. It adds weeks to the re-delivery time.

One of the most common pricing questions people have is why dealers insist that the ED "discount" is already built into the ED MSRP price list. In other words, they want you to pay the ED MSRP for the car. Yes,

ED MSRP is lower than US MSRP. But ED "invoice" is still lower. My advice? Don't fall for this argument.

The price of an ED car is as negotiable as any other car. Most people offer something between \$500 and \$750 over ED "invoice." Buyers are not necessarily privy to BMW's relationship with its franchised dealers - who are independent businesses and who set their own pricing. But many ED buyers believe that most ED cars do not come out of the dealer's allocation, depending on the model, and therefore that \$500 to \$750 over "invoice" is a fair profit for a car the dealer does not add to their inventory or have to finance in advance of its sale. By the way, options are not discounted on either the ED MSRP or ED "invoice" price lists. You would pay the same amount for an options package, say the F30 ZSL (Sport line), on the ED "invoice" price list as you would on the US "invoice" price list.

The Dealer is just an agent

The deal is between BMW NA and you - the dealer is really just an agent. When you buy a BMW here, even one you order, the dealer buys it from BMW and resells it to you. When you buy a BMW via ED, you sign a BMW NA "purchase order." This is subtle, but hugely important. You must pay for or finance (financing an ED car is possible, but beyond the scope of this article

Vehicle Inquiry: Wholesale/MSRP					
Enter Chassis Number (last 7 digits of VIN):					
VIN:	WBA3A9C52	Priority:	Customer:	Assigned to:	E-10-31026
Prod. No.:		0-Tourist "retail"		BMW of Sudbury	
Status:	150 - Production Started	Customer:	Alexander		
Act. Prod. Date:		P			
Model:	123Q 33Si	07/19/2012 09:00 AM			
In-Service Date:		AD - DOUCETTE			
Ind. Block Date:		S02			
Holds:		JC			
Once your car is in status 150, it cannot be changed.					
The date and time of your pickup are shown on the Vehicle Inquiry report					

Insist on getting printouts of the status from BMW's ordering system.

Treffpunkt Auslieferung / vehicle delivery venue					
Zeit time	Treffpunkt venue	Vorname First name	Name Family name	Händlername / Vertrieb BMW dealer / sales region	Kundenbetreuer delivery specialist
09:00	A1	Alexander	Neithaus	BMW of Sudbury	Bernhard Haunmerger
09:00	A2	Manfred	Neumann	Autousa Kattenbach	Tom Van den Heuvel
09:10	A1	Jost	Kingerschmid	Autousa Zentral GmbH	Christian Maximilian Helling
09:10	A3	Dieter	Miegel	Becker-Tiemann Schamburg	Ivan Justice
09:10	A3	Autorino	De Filippo	Autousa Augsburg GmbH	Alexander More
09:20	A3	Henning	Stiel	Autousa Euler Pirmasens	Alexander Weber
09:30	A1	Dipl.-Kfm. Günther	Robertz	Kohl-Automobile GmbH	Hans-Peter Ambros
09:40	A1	Javier	Lopez Vega	Niederlassung München	Benjamin Gregori

ED deliveries run on a precise schedule. Be sure you are there when you request your car.

are far reaching and will determine how smoothly your ED experience goes, which leads me to my next point.

BMW really means it.

Once you get the purchase order to BMW NA via the salesperson and get confirmation of your date and time, the mechanics of a custom order begin. **BMW will build precisely what you ordered** (mistakes happen, but are very rare). It is possible to change the order before the car goes "code 150" (when your car is in production) but it is not advisable (you can find the ordering system codes online). Instead, you should know exactly what you want for model trim and options before you set foot in the BMW store. My experience is that even the dealer's ordering personnel are sometimes unfamiliar with all the options and combinations offered in a particular model. If like me, you want something that is possible but uncommon, you should spend a significant amount of time interacting with the salesperson



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The BMW European Delivery Program lets you drive your new BMW on the roads for which the car was designed, as Alex proves on the A96 towards Zurich.

and getting copies of the current order and its status from the dealer's ordering system. A hard and fast rule: never accept as accurate anything other than a print out of the Vehicle Inquiry Report from BMW's ordering system. This will show you crucial info such as the production order number (pre-VIN), the VIN (once assigned), the production status code and, crucially, the date and time of your confirmed pickup.

German precision delivers on time

Pick your date carefully and be sure to be honest with yourself. If you are the kind of person who is usually a little late, make sure you take this into account in your plans. Your car will be ready at the date and time you selected – moving it late in the process is nearly impossible. You love German precision in the car you bought, so you should keep in mind that is precisely how a delivery process in Germany will go. One more point: you will be asked at delivery who in your party over 18 years of age will be driving the car. If you fail to list someone and they crack up your new baby, you are out of luck. (If you do have an accident other than wheel road rash, BMW covers it completely. It is an amazing benefit that Europeans who pick up in Munich pay extra for.)

Everything about ED is deluxe

Everything about the ED experience is deluxe, including re-delivery. The hardest part is waiting for the car to arrive back here in New England. Remember: you are ordering an American-specification BMW (BMW NA will not sell you anything else) and, unlike other

manufacturers' programs (notably Volvo's), you are completely insulated from worrying about things like port brokers and certificates of origin. Your dealer will register the car exactly as it does every new BMW; in Massachusetts you will receive a title that shows the car as new, but with whatever mileage you noted at drop off. One point to remember: you must wash the car before you drop it off; US Customs and Border Patrol can refuse to inspect a car that is dirty.

An unforgettable experience

To sum it up: ED gives you an opportunity not to be missed. ED participants will tell you it really is not about the money – it is about the experience. BMW makes this experience unforgettable; if you do it once you will do it many times. The trick is to remember that you are spinning up a huge, paperwork-driven machine. It is up to you to learn all the nuances of this and make it work for you. ♦

About the author: Alex Neihaus lives in Southborough, MA and has been a BMW CCA Boston member since 2005. He is already dreaming about his next BMW European Delivery trip.

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