

## 1958 Chrysler 300 “D” Convertible

A prime example of Virgil Exners’ “Forward Look” the 1958 D was a virtual clone of the 1957 model called, amazingly enough the 300C. The 1959 model had another inspired name---- the 300E. Small sales demand (new body styles sell better than more optional paint colors!) saw production of the 300D convertible total a scant 191 examples (4 were export and 3 went to Canada)! The styling was considered to be clean and did not contain the excess chrome common to other cars of this era. The 300D is equipped with Chrysler’s famous HEMI (Hemispherical Combustion Chamber) 392 cubic inch motor and dual four barrel Carter WCFB carburetors.

Billed by Chrysler as the “Detroit’s most powerful car”, this model was more popularly known as the “Bankers Hot Rod”. With a base price of \$5603, plus the options of \$337.20, the total price of \$5940.20 made the 300D convertible the most expensive automobile in the 1958 Chrysler lineup! Perhaps the nickname was earned, since only a “Banker” could afford one!

This car is optioned with the “auto-pilot 391”, offered for the first time on any America made car in 1958, this feature became what we commonly call “cruise control” today. In addition it has power windows (304), power seat (303), remote exterior mirror (402), and power antenna (334), and Chrysler’s Hi Way Hi Fi.





Tests of the era confirm that the 300D was in fact a **VERY** fast and response machine, which continued to earn Chrysler high marks for both style and performance. Top speed was rated at 135mph, astonishing considering the weight of 4523 lbs., and length of over 18 feet! Note the “warning sticker” on the glove box door...

Another option rarely found is the 16 2/3 rpm Chrysler Highway Hi Fi. Although an exclusive Chrysler novelty of the time, the practical application did not work as well as the engineers had hoped. The records were manufactured by Columbia Record “exclusively for Chrysler Corporation” and include such memorable hits as “Davy Crocket”.

Less than twenty of these cars are known to exist today...

