

1961 Chrysler New Yorker Convertible

“Unquestionably Chrysler’s finest”

The 1961 New Yorker was shaped for the space age, from canted headlamps to high-flying tailfins. The line-topping New Yorker series was offered in a full range of hardtops, including wagon, plus the sport-styled convertible seen here. Unibody construction—introduced the previous year—was claimed to be stronger than ordinary body-on-frame construction.

Our featured New Yorker convertible, resplendent in Mardi Gras Red, is one of just 576 built. Standard New Yorker features include a 413 cubic-inch “Golden Lion” V8, Torque Flite automatic transmission with pushbutton controls, “AstraDome Control Center” instrument panel, “High-Tower” driver’s seat and “Total-Contact” power brakes. The ’61 Chrysler, last of stylist Virgil Exner’s finned “Forward Look” cars, brought to a close a flamboyant era in automotive design.

1956 Chrysler New Yorker Convertible

“It borrows from tomorrow to put you ahead today”

Chrysler designer Virgil Exner’s fascination with jet aircraft is showcased in the “Powerstyle” 1956 Chrysler. Flamboyant “Flight-Swept” rear fenders highlighted a new wedge-shaped “Forward Look of motion.” These jet-inspired Chryslers were offered in three series: the popular Windsor, prestigious New Yorker, and limited-edition 300 model. The New Yorker offered easy-driving luxury with industry-first “Pushbutton PowerFlite” automatic transmission, “PowerPilot” steering and “PowerSmooth” Brakes. With its standard 354-cubic-inch, 280-hp V8, the New Yorker really was “18 gleaming feet of power eager to call you master.”

Our featured New Yorker Convertible, in a dazzling Desert Rose/Cloud White two-tone, is one of just 921 built. It was originally ordered by New York radio/TV personality Robert Q. Lewis. The current owner’s family purchased the car in 1961 for \$1,000. Rare options include a Swiss-made, self-winding Benrus “ChryslerMatic” 15-jewel steering-wheel watch and a “Highway Hi-Fi” record player.

1960 Chevrolet Impala Convertible

Jet-age style with a “Jet-Smooth Ride”

In 1960, the Chevy Impala was America’s favorite car. The graceful Impala seemed born to cruise the new Interstates, with its “Jet-Smooth Ride,” “Full-Coil” suspension, a choice of “Turbo-Fire” or “Turbo-Thrust” V8 engines, and optional “Powerglide” or “Turboglide” automatic transmissions. Impala styling was out of this world, too. Horizontal gullwing fins arched gracefully above a sextet of tail lamps. Completing the image was a stylized “jet-with-vapor-trail” streaming across each quarter panel. The dual-cove dashboard added a measure of Corvette-like spirit to the Impala interior.

This Ermine White Impala convertible has been in the same family since 1960. It was originally a GM executive car driven by a neighbor who was a Chevrolet zone manager. A restoration was completed in the early 1980s. More recently, it was used by the Danbury Mint to help create a 1:24-scale die-cast model of the 1960 Impala.

1958 Pontiac Bonneville Convertible

“Go modern in a big way”

The rocket-themed “New Directions” styling of the 1958 Bonneville was a bold departure from the conservatively-shaped Pontiacs of just a few years earlier. The lavish, line-topping Bonneville Sport Convertible was a spectacular study in late-fifties fashion, complete with “vapor trail” sculpturing, “jet-pod” tail lamps and color-coordinated leather interior. Pontiac offered more than 200 color combinations in 1958, with 60 interior trim options. Technical details included an X-shaped “Aero-Frame,” “Circles-of-Steel” body and “Quadra-Poise” chassis.

With prices starting at \$3,586, just 3,096 Bonneville convertibles were built in '58. Our featured Bonneville is one of just 16 ordered with Fuel Injection. So equipped, the 370 cubic-inch V8 was rated at 310 hp. Other options include leather front bucket seats, “Sportable” transistor radio, Hydra-Matic and power windows. A white Bonneville convertible was the 1958 Indy 500 pace car.

1959 Dodge Custom Royal Lancer Convertible

"Newest of everything great. Greatest of everything new"

Call it the glitter queen of the "Forward Look." From scowling face to "Jet-Trail Tail Lamps," the 1959 Dodge Custom Royal Lancer is as flamboyant as its extravagant name plate suggests. Did someone mention "safety?" Dodge's track-tested "Level-Flite Torsion-Aire" front suspension promised road-going confidence while the "IndiColor" speedometer ribbon changed colors as speed increased.

Our featured Custom Royal Lancer Convertible, resplendent in yellow and black, is one of just 984 produced. It is equipped with the new-for-1959 Super D-500, 383 cubic-inch, 345hp, dual carburetor V8 engine. Other extras include Push-Button TorqueFlite automatic transmission, "Autronic Eye," "Constant-Control" power steering, "Music-Master" transistorized radio and "Swing-Out Swivel Seats.

1960 Chrysler Imperial Crown Convertible

"America's most carefully built car"

"Are you too conservative for this?" teased a 1960 Imperial Crown Convertible ad. "Of course you're not. Even though it's young and possibly a little rakish, you've noticed how beautifully the Crown Convertible seasons its dash with dignity." Imperial was the ultimate expression of Virgil Exner's "Forward Look," featuring upswept fins with "gunsight" taillights at the top and a stylized "Flite Sweep" deck lid that recalled the classic-era "Continental kit" spare tire.

The 350 hp, 413 cubic-inch wedge-headed V8 offered "greater effective torque than any other passenger car engine in the world," boasted an Imperial ad. Inside, the Crown Convertible displayed a lavish leather interior and novel "Panelescent" instrument-panel illumination.

This Crown Convertible, in a fashionable shade of Dawn Mauve, is one of only 618 produced. Original list price was \$5,474. Options include air conditioning, power windows, automatic headlamp dimmer and "AutoPilot" cruise control.

1959 Ford Thunderbird Convertible

“The car everyone would love to own”

Although many mourned the passing of the two-seat 1955-57 Thunderbirds, these second-generation 1958-60 ‘Birds — available as coupes or convertibles — were far more popular. From Sunset Boulevard to Main Street, U.S.A., the bucket-seat “T-Bird” convertible quickly upstaged established luxury brands for pure prestige. Using technology borrowed from the 1957 Ford Skyliner, the convertible featured a power soft top that folded neatly into the trunk, for a dramatically clean top-down appearance.

The 1959 Thunderbird Convertible on display today is one of only 1,168 built with the optional “J-code” Thunderbird Special V8. Displacing 430 cubic inches and rated at 350 horsepower, this was the largest engine available in any 1959 car. Other Thunderbird options include “Cruise-O-Matic” automatic transmission, “Master-Guide Power Steering” and “Swift-Sure Power Brakes.” The exterior color is Indian Turquoise.

1957 Cadillac Eldorado Biarritz Convertible

“Magnificent beyond all expectations”

In 1950s America, Cadillac was regarded as the “car of cars.” And even among Cadillacs, the Eldorado Biarritz Convertible was a spectacular beauty. All new in 1957, the Eldorado featured exclusive rear styling with dramatic fins, delicate “bumperettes” and a wide selection of luxurious leather trim combinations. Special “Sabre-Spoke” aluminum wheels were a popular option.

Our featured Eldorado Biarritz is number 1,680 out of just 1,800 built. It was produced on May 23, 1957, and originally purchased in Allentown, Pennsylvania for \$7,218. It has all factory options except air conditioning and gold-accented grille. The Bahama Blue exterior (painted in the correct acrylic lacquer) complements the unique-to-Eldorado Sabre Blue convertible top. The current owner purchased this Eldorado Biarritz in 1977 for \$100, and subsequently performed a complete restoration.

1960 Buick Electra 225 Convertible

“A design as fresh and clean as sea air”

The style of the delta-winged 1960 Buick is unmistakably “jet-age.” Quad headlamps are set in simulated twin-jet nacelles. A “Vista-Panoramic” windshield wraps around and canted tailfins sweep rearward. Buick’s “Tri-Shield” emblem made its debut on the ’60 models and front-fender “ventiports” returned after a two-year absence. The lineup of “Buick’s All-Time Best” retained the new-in-1959 nameplates: LeSabre, Invicta, Electra, and Electra 225, in ascending order.

This top-of-the-line Electra 225 Convertible, finished in elegant Pearl Fawn, includes a wide array of options: air conditioning, front bucket seats and console, power windows, power antenna, Autronic Eye and Twilight Sentinel. A 401 cubic-inch “Wildcat” V8 and “Turbine Drive” automatic transmission, standard on Electra 225, provide an ultra-smooth flow of power. The restoration took four years (and two parts cars) to complete.

1958 Edsel Pacer Convertible

“Once you’ve seen it, you’ll never forget it”

How could anything go wrong? Backed by the latest market research and loaded with space-age glamour, Ford’s brand-new 1958 Edsel was destined to make history. Four lines were offered: the Ford-based Ranger and Pacer, plus the Corsair and Citation on a revised Mercury platform. Body styles included sedans, coupes, hardtops, wagons and convertibles.

“Only Edsel gives you 1958’s most talked-about, most exciting styling — with America’s first jet-grille design,” enthused an Edsel ad. The “Jet-Age Aviation Style” interior included “Teletouch Drive” with pushbutton controls on the steering-wheel hub, a “Control Center” instrument panel that “follows aircraft practice,” and “Control-Center” split front seat. A 361 cubic-inch, 303hp “E-400” V8 engine was standard equipment in Ranger and Pacer models.

Our featured Edsel is the sporty Pacer convertible, finished in Ember Red and Black. Options include power steering and power brakes, automatic transmission, and a Town & Country radio with dual antennas. A complete restoration was undertaken over a seven-year period to return the car to an as-new condition.

1957 Ford Sunliner Convertible

"Ford brings a Touch of Tomorrow to the low-price field"

Ford was brand new for 1957, and the line-topping, super-sized Fairlane 500 was a hot seller. "You'll ride sweet, low and lovely in this new prestige car of the low-price field," said Ford. Two Fairlane 500 convertibles were offered: the aptly-named Sunliner with a conventional soft top and the Skyliner — a jet-age wonder with a fully retractable hardtop. "These are the best Fords of our lives," beamed one Sunliner ad. "These are the cars that will bridge our way from today into tomorrow." This space-age '57 Ford literally glittered with "Hi-Canted Rear Fender Fins," "King-Size Jet-Tube Tail Lamps" and a wraparound "Full-Vision Windshield."

The Fairlane 500 Sunliner shown today is finished in Raven Black and Flame Red, with a wide array of optional equipment. A "Lifeguard Safety Package" includes padded dash and padded sun visors. "Swift Sure" power brakes and "Master Guide" power steering were other options selected by the original owner. The sporty, luxurious character of this line-topping Ford is further enhanced by its "Town & Country" radio, deluxe center-mounted rear antenna and "Sunburst" wheel covers.