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TEST DRIVE

## The New E400 - Now Opening

### 2018 Mercedes-Benz E400 4MATIC Cabriolet

DAN LYONS | text and photos  
*Special to the Times Union*

In terms of commitment to convertibles, it's hard to top Mercedes-Benz. The drop top docket for the luxury line includes C300, C43, C63, C65, S560, S63, S65, SLC300, SLC43, SL450, SL550, SL63, SL65, AMG GT and AMG GT C models, as well as this week's test car — the E400.

The four-place, open-air E-Class is offered in rear and all-wheel-drive (4MATIC) versions. Mine was the latter, and with a generous helping of optional equipment, it had sticker price of \$85,735.

The E400 Cabrio is all new this year; the last of this class to migrate to the architecture that underpins the E-Class Sedans. It's a bigger platform (+4 inches wheelbase), resulting in a larger car. Compared to the previous version, the latest, E400 Cabriolet is five inches longer and three inches wider. That's a sizable difference, and it's reflected in the back half of the new 'Benz. While



**2018 Mercedes-Benz E400 4MATIC Cabriolet**  
MSRP: \$68,800 · As Tested: \$85,735

front leg room declined by a whisker (.2 inches), rear seat leg room is up fully 4 inches. That's enough room to fit four average-size Americans. If those up front are six feet tall or better, rear leg room is going to be snug. However, with a slight compromise in seat setup by the long of limb in front, six-footers can be



THE MERCEDES-BENZ E400 4MATIC CABRIOLET is all-new for 2018, longer and wider than the previous version. The 3.0L V-6's 329 horsepower will usher the convertible from 0 to 60 5.3 seconds (AWD) or 5.5 seconds (RWD).

accommodated in back, too. Rear headroom may be an issue with the top up, but why is the top up? This is a convertible, after all, and absent a monsoon, the appropriate position for the top is down.

Getting the top up or down is a simple matter of holding a switch and waiting about 20 seconds. The lid stows below deck, which gives the car a sleek profile, albeit at the expense of some storage space. With top down, trunk capacity measures 9.5 cubic-feet. That's up from 8.8 in the former version and respectable for a convertible. For two people, it's enough for a pack light, weekend getaway (especially if you use the back seat space). But with four aboard, it's day trip gear.

The convertible top is well insulated, and when raised, the cabin is cozy. Like most every convertible, the E400 has big, ¾ rear blind spots, and limited rear visibility through the modest backlight. Tech work-arounds like blind spot/rear cross traffic alerts should be considered mandatory options by the buyer.

If you live in the northeast and you love convertibles, you've got a short season to enjoy them in. The E400 Cabriolet can be equipped with a number of items to help you extend your top-down days into the cooler months.

Two are standard features. AIRCAP is a wind deflector that automatically deploys from the windshield header,

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