

FREE SAMPLE

The opening pages of

1957-1970 Cadillac Core Range Buyer's Guide

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Factory-Correct Restoration Reference

1957-1970 Cadillac Core Range Buyer's Guide

Model Year 1957-1970

Coverage	Eldorado, Coupe de Ville, Series 62 / Calais, 1957-1970
Engines	365 / 390 / 429 / 472 / 500 V8
Body styles	Convertible, hardtop coupe/sedan, sedan
Key check	Chrome inventory, trim completeness, structure
Market note	Coupe de Ville is the smart buy; Brougham is separate

Every specification in this guide was checked against factory literature, marque references, period road tests, and documented survivor cars. Where sources disagree or the record is silent, this guide says so rather than guessing.

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Inside This Guide

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Chapter 1 - Why the Core-Range Cadillac

Beyond the halo Eldorados sits the range that made Cadillac the Standard of the World: the Coupe de Ville, the Series 62 (and its successor, the Calais), and the mainstream Eldorados. These are the cars that deliver ninety percent of the fin-era experience — the presence, the V8 effortlessness, the chrome — at a fraction of the Eldorado's price and with meaningfully better parts support. A 1962 Coupe de Ville is not a consolation prize; it is the smartest buy in the classic Cadillac market.

This guide covers 1957 through 1970: the fin era, the restrained early-sixties cars, the 1965 perimeter-frame redesign, and the big-cube 472 and 500 years. The buying doctrine is the same across all of them: these are big, heavy, complex luxury cars whose restoration costs are dominated by chrome and trim, not mechanics. Buy the most complete, most solid, best-documented car your budget reaches — the purchase price is the smallest check you will write if you buy wrong.

Chapter 2 - The Range 1957-1960: The Fin Era

The 1957-58 Cadillacs wear the 365 V8 (300 horsepower in 1957, 310 in 1958) on the 129.5-inch-wheelbase X-frame chassis, with the Series 62 as the entry Cadillac and the Coupe de Ville as the premium hardtop trim. The 1959 redesign — 130-inch wheelbase, 225 inches long, the tallest fins Detroit ever built, and the new 390 V8 at 325 horsepower — is the icon year; 1960 refines it with calmer fins and detail changes.

Buying notes for the fin era: the chrome load is the budget — price every pitted piece for replating before you negotiate. The X-frame's body mounts and the X junction are structural inspection points. Power accessories (windows, seats) must all work; the Hydra-Matic should shift smoothly. A '59 Series 62 coupe in solid, complete driver condition is the entry ticket to the icon year without the Eldorado premium — and it turns exactly as many



heads.

Chapter 3 - The Range 1961-1964: Restraint and the 429

1961 shaves the fins and restyles the car into the restrained early-sixties Cadillac; 1963 brings stacked headlamps; 1964 introduces the 429-cubic-inch V8 at 340 horsepower with the new Turbo Hydra-Matic. The Series 62 continues through 1964, and the Coupe de Ville — its own series since 1959 — settles in as the heart of the range.

These are the connoisseur's Cadillacs: lower chrome bills than the fin cars, the same effortless V8 character, and prices that lag the '59-60 market disproportionately. The 1963-64 cars with the 390 and 429 are among the best-driving Cadillacs of the decade. Watch for the usual: X-frame mounts, chrome pitting, and power-accessory function. The 1964's Turbo Hydra-Matic is a better transmission than the earlier Hydra-Matic in every way that matters to a driver.

Chapter 4 - The Range 1965-1970: Perimeter Frame to the 500

1965 brings the new perimeter-frame chassis, all-new bodywork, and the Calais replacing the Series 62 as the entry Cadillac. The 429 continues at 340 horsepower through 1967. In 1967 the Eldorado goes front-wheel-drive on the E-body — a separate market with its own drivetrain considerations. 1968 introduces the 472-cubic-inch V8 at 375 horsepower, and 1970 puts the 500-cubic-inch V8 — 400 horsepower and 550 lb-ft — in the Eldorado, the largest production passenger-car V8 of its time.

The 1965-70 cars are the value end of this guide's range: big, comfortable, fast in the 472/500 cars, and priced well below the fin-era market. The perimeter frame simplified structural restoration versus the X-frame. Inspection priorities shift to the vinyl tops (moisture traps), the lower quarters and trunk floor, and — on 1967+ Eldorados — the front-drive drivetrain: CV joints, the TH425 transmission, and front suspension wear, all of which are serviceable but must be priced.

Chapter 5 - Engine Guide: 365, 390, 429, 472, 500

Engine	Years	Rating	Notes
365 V8	1957-58	300/310 hp	Eldorado tri-power 335 hp (1958)
390 V8	1959-63	325 hp	Eldorado tri-power 345 hp (1959-60)
429 V8	1964-67	340 hp	With Turbo Hydra-Matic from 1964
472 V8	1968-70	375 hp	Strong, well-supported
500 V8	1970 (Eldorado)	400 hp / 550 lb-ft	Largest production V8 of its time

All five are straightforward pushrod V8s that reward standard rebuild practice — none is exotic, and none should be hot-rodded in a Cadillac. The 472 and 500 have the deepest aftermarket; the 365 and 390 are fully rebuildable with available parts. A tired engine in any of these cars is a budget line, not a dealbreaker — price the rebuild and move on. What you do not want is a swapped engine family presented as original; the VIN and block casting settle it.