

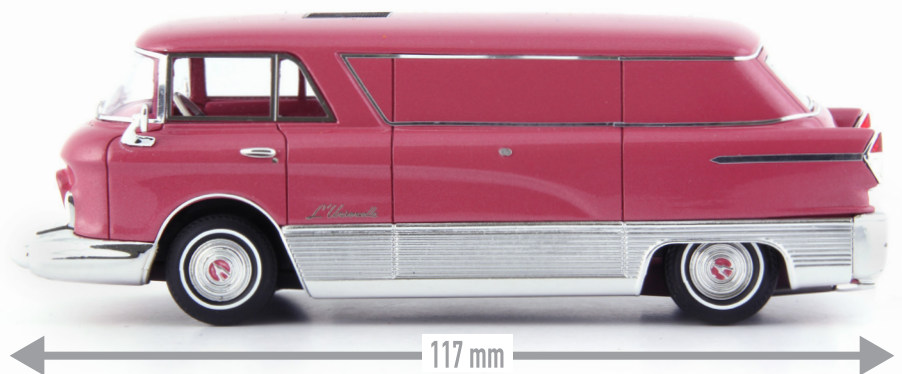
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release

08/2019

limited edition 333 Stk.



## A few decades too soon!

To value the revolutionary charm of the minivan named L'Universelle built by the American manufacturer GMC correctly, we have to look back into the US automotive scene of the 1950s. Back then the typical US-car was a pickup. Across the manufacturers these pickups had all the same structure. The engine was located in the front underneath a long bonnet followed by the driver's cab and an open load bed.

By contrast, in Germany the cab over engine design, where the driver was seated directly above the front axle at the very front, was generally accepted. This very design inspired the manufacturer GM to reinterpret the pickup theme for the US-market. Internally the van was named "Dream Truck" and was designed by Harley Earl and Chuck Jordan in 1955. Beside the very front position of the driver both designers went for a chassis, which was as low as possible. The engine was a 4.6-liter V-8 engine with a performance of 180 hp out of the Pontiac range and was

positioned right above the front axle. With their design of the car body Harley Earl and Chuck Jordan had the finger perfectly on the pulse and fascinated the US car scene. In January 1955 a selected audience had the chance to take a first look at the bronze van at the first-class hotel Waldorf-Astoria. The general public was able to have a look at the reinterpreted design of a minivan in the course of the very same year.

The management of GM seriously considered the series production of the van, but the in-house accountants calculated the potential sales price on a level of an imposing Cadillac. This was far too high and also cost cuts could not get the price down. In the end it was simply not possible to reach a competitive sales price. The idea of a series production was rejected and the whole project was ceased.

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