

Driving into the future: A Q&A with Mercedes-Benz SA co-CEO Mark Raine

 By [Imran Salie](#)

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Mercedes-Benz South Africa recently introduced the latest GLC SUV to the local market, and we caught up with its co-CEO and executive director, Mark Raine, to find out more about the new model and some future plans at the company.



Mercedes-Benz South Africa CEO Mark Raine | image supplied

■ Highlight some of the key design elements and technological advancements in the new GLC that make it stand out from its competitors

The new GLC has unique proportions coupled with classic SUV features such as a simulated chrome underguard, roof rails and running boards. It strikes a great balance between elegance, sportiness and off-road performance.

Highlights include the new headlamps, which connect directly to the radiator grille and accentuate the vehicle's width. In combination with the optional Digital Light, they feature daytime-driving ellipses in addition to the well-known "torch". Another visual highlight is the radiator grille with chrome surround on the standard Avantgarde exterior.

A feature we're very excited about is the transparent bonnet, where cameras stitch together a view of the road surface underneath the car, making off-roading safer and even more convenient.

■ How does the new GLC align with the company's sustainability goals and initiatives?

The all-new GLC range is completely electrified. All petrol and diesel models feature a mild-hybrid system that not only enhances performance but also contributes to lower fuel consumption figures in mixed-use.

■ The automotive industry is undergoing a transformation with the rise of EVs. How is MBSA adapting to these changes and incorporating them into its product lineup?

We've fully embraced that transformation! By the end of 2023, Mercedes-Benz South Africa will offer the largest range of electric vehicles of any manufacturer – seven in total, from the city-slicker EQA to our flagship electric saloon, the EQS. We're also very excited about the Q4 launches of the EQE SUV and EQS SUV.



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What's more, together with our partner GridCars, we're launching a nationwide network of 68 Mercedes-Benz fast chargers to serve the needs of our electric-vehicle customers. These chargers will be positioned strategically to really ease charging on the go.

■ ***Can you talk about some of the safety features integrated into the new GLC and how they contribute to ensuring passenger safety?***

Aside from its immensely strong passenger cell, the GLC features many advanced active and passive safety systems, including the latest generation of the Driving Assistance package containing additional and further improved functions, e.g. in Active Distance Assist Distronic, Active Steering Assist, Traffic Sign Assist, the new Parking package with a 360-degree camera and Trailer Manoeuvring Assist.

■ ***How is Mercedes Benz South Africa incorporating connectivity and digital technologies into its vehicles, including the new GLC?***

Mercedes-Benz has never been hesitant to embrace technology to enhance the lives of our customers, and the GLC is no different. Every element of the GLC's tech-rich driving and ownership experience has been carefully considered. Just one example – the infotainment system's zero-layer interface, where all the important features are just one click away.

■ ***How does the new GLC maintain the luxury appeal while also meeting the practical needs of customers?***

Twofold – the new GLC is more refined and more stylishly finished than ever before, but it's also more spacious, more comfortable and more practical. The luggage area, for example, is 50 litres larger. Ultimately, the GLC is perfectly suited to the family customer who also wants to experience the absolute best that Mercedes-Benz has to offer as a luxury brand.

■ ***Could you provide insights into Mercedes Benz South Africa's future plans, such as upcoming models, technological advancements, or initiatives to expand the brand's presence in the country?***

As mentioned, we're launching a nationwide charging network, which we're very excited about! On the product front, we have a whole line-up of exciting models coming this year, including the new SL, the EQE and EQS SUVs I mentioned, facelifts to the A-Class, CLA, GLA, GLB, GLE and GLS, plus towards the tail-end of the year, the introduction of the GLC Coupe and E-Class.

ABOUT IMRAN SALIE

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