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Vintage Zeiss Ikon Cocarette 519/15 Special Camera. Dresden, Germany, Circa 1930



125 EUR

Period : 20th century

Condition : Bon état

Length : 8,5 cm (3,35 in).

Height : 17 cm (6,7 in).

Description

This Zeiss Ikon Cocarette 519/15 Special, manufactured in Dresden, Germany around 1930, is one of the most elegant and technically refined folding cameras of its era. Designed for 116 roll film, it produces  $6.5 \times 11$  cm negatives, ideal for highly detailed portraits and landscapes. This special version stands out for its automatic front-opening mechanism activated by pressing the side button, an advanced feature for its time that improved both speed and precision when preparing a shot.

The camera is fitted with a Carl Zeiss Jena Tessar f/4.5 10.5 cm lens, renowned for its exceptional sharpness and beautiful tonal contrast. Designed by the legendary Paul Rudolph, the Tessar was one of Zeiss's most celebrated lenses, and its

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inclusion in this model highlights its high-end quality. It is mounted on a Compur shutter with speeds ranging from Bulb mode to 1/250 s. Mechanically, the camera functions correctly; it has not been tested with film, but the shutter and release system operate smoothly, a clear sign of excellent care over the years.

The black leather bellows are in splendid condition, maintaining their original flexibility without light leaks. The metal parts preserve their shine, and the Zeiss Ikon and Cocarette inscriptions are cleanly legible both on the body and on the front standard. This example includes its original inner roller for film advance and take-up, making it a complete and ready-to-use piece, requiring only compatible 116 film.

The code 519/15 identifies this version within the Cocarette line as a large-format 6.5×11 cm camera intended for advanced or professional photographers. The Cocarette series, produced by Zeiss Ikon between 1926 and 1932, stood out for its mechanical precision, compact design, and durability. Its metal body covered in textured leather, its clean lines, and chrome details reflect the industrial refinement of interwar Germany.

This particular example, the Special version with automatic front release, is among the most sought-after within the Cocarette range for its innovative engineering. It represents the perfect balance between functionality, elegance, and technical heritage--a piece that evokes the splendor of classic Zeiss Ikon craftsmanship.

For its beauty and excellent state of preservation, this camera would make a magnificent addition to a historical camera collection or as a decorative vintage or industrial object, where its presence adds character and authenticity. A piece that not only recalls the golden age of photography but also pays tribute to German precision craftsmanship.

Measurements: 17 × 8.5 cm (6.7 × 3.35 in).

## History of the Zeiss Ikon Cocarette

The Zeiss Ikon Cocarette was one of the most popular German folding camera lines of the late 1920s and early 1930s. Zeiss Ikon, founded in 1926 in Dresden, was born from the merger of four historic manufacturers--ICA, Contessa-Nettel, Ernemann, and Goerz--under the technical supervision of Carl Zeiss AG. This new conglomerate quickly became the world leader in camera production, uniting the best optical and mechanical innovations of the time.

The Cocarette was introduced in 1926 as the successor to earlier ICA models and was praised for its robust construction, precision, and adaptability to different formats (6×9, 6.5×11, and 9×12 cm). Its metal body covered with leather, its bellows system, and compact design made it highly valued by travelers and professionals seeking portability without compromising optical quality.

The 519/15 model, designed for 116 film, produced large, sharp negatives suitable for contact prints and enlargements of exceptional detail. The Special version, as presented here, added the automatic opening mechanism, a rare and innovative feature that placed it among the most advanced cameras in its class.

Produced until around 1932, the Cocarette remained a symbol of German photographic engineering before World War II. Today, these cameras are sought after by collectors and enthusiasts for their balance of aesthetic beauty, structural solidity, and historical importance within the Zeiss Ikon catalog.

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