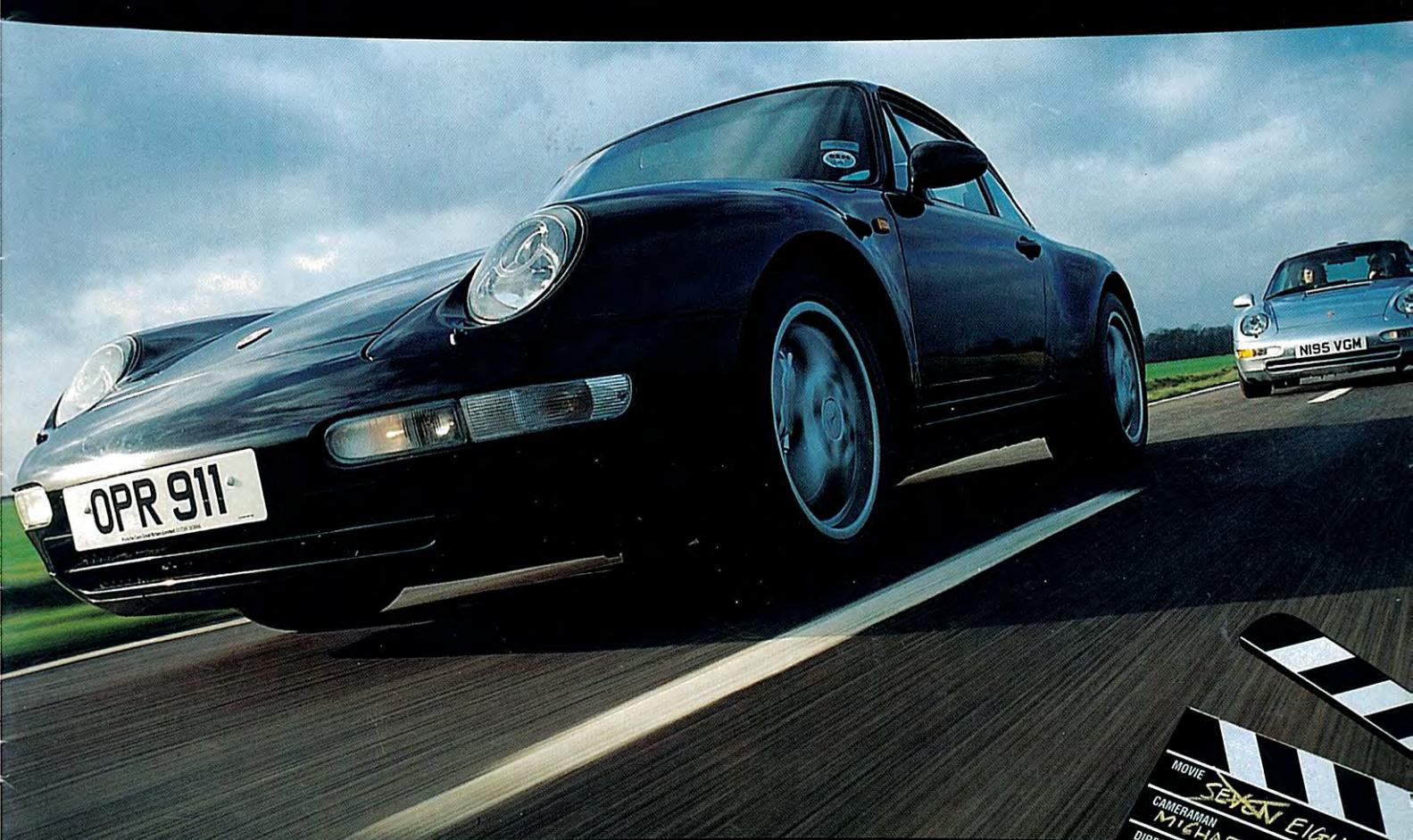


# performance car



NOW SHOWING...

# The Porsche 911 range

MOVIE: *SEVEN EIGHT (PORSCHE)*  
CAMERAMAN: MICHAEL BAILIE  
DIRECTOR: PETER BOOTH  
DATE: 12 JANUARY 96  
LOCATION: SOMEWHERE ELSE

STARRING: PERFORMANCE  
TAKE: 34

Reprinted from Performance Car magazine March 1996

The only new Porsche is a 911, but which is best? Worry not, because we've gathered all eight together, from the regular 284bhp Carrera 2, to the outrageous 430bhp GT2. Grab your popcorn and settle back for the ultimate 911 group test

# NOW SHOWING...

## PERFORMANCE

- 1 Porsche 911 Carrera
- 3 Porsche 911 Cabrio
- 5 Porsche 911 Carrera S
- 7 Porsche 911 Turbo



**Words John Barker Photography Michael Bailie**

If you had the money and inclination to write a cheque for the whole of the current 911 range, as shown here, the figure just above the flourish of your signature would read £622,930. So, you could have either one McLaren F1 or a 911 for every day of the week, plus one at the dealers being polished. You wouldn't tire of them because although they all share the same basic shape, engine and chassis, they're like you and me; they all have different characters. Taking extremes, the 285bhp Carrera 2 is quite unlike the 430bhp GT2.

Now a 30-something, the 911 has outlived all the other Porsches including the one intended to replace it, the 928. Continual development has kept it in the sports car Premier League, and although there have been a few rivals, none has had the Porsche's rock-solid build quality and high resale value.

In 1996 the 911 range offers the choice of the Carrera 2, the Carrera 4, the fresh air Cabriolet and Targas, the Tiptronic auto, the Turbo-look 4S, the raw RS, the phenomenally quick Turbo and the devastating GT2 – the road-going version of the Le Mans 911.

Drive a 911 for the first time and you'll be either hooked or appalled. It's so small, the pedals are so peculiar, the nose is too light and the tail too heavy, and it feels too darn quick for its own good. Every writer on *Performance Car* thought this on their first encounter, yet every one of them is now a fan.

It's not hard to pin down what makes the 911 such a compelling sports car. Driving it well is like trying to crack a deceptively simple puzzle: the majority of the weight is hanging out beyond the rear axle but if correctly exploited, this can be an advantage. To the backing track of the flat-six's guttural, loping note, a 911 tackles any testing ribbon of road delivering both broad and subtle hints as how best to proceed. Such is the skill with which the engineers at Stuttgart have constructed this motorised conundrum, novices to experts can enjoy trying to solve it with equal rewards. The puzzle lasts as long as the journey.

Only when you have mastered the 911 can you claim to be a great driver. It's a long road and we've got eight of the blighters to suss before we settle on a favourite. Ain't life a bitch? ▶

## CAR PRESENTS

Porsche 911 Carrera 4

Porsche 911 Targa

6 Porsche 911 RS

Porsche 911 GT2



## NOW SHOWING...

### Carrera

*It all starts here*

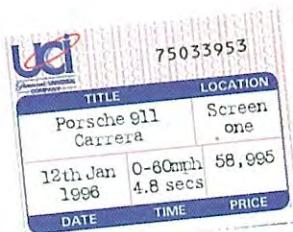
► A quick office poll reveals that all of us would be happy enough with the stock

911 Carrera. Its pure, curvaceous shape, energetic, rumbly flat-six engine and fluent, involving handling are the bedrock of the 911's appeal. These gradually evolving elements have entertained generations of Porsche drivers, and the current Carrera 2 is such a fine driver's car, there's really no need to progress any further up the ladder. That said, if you're hooked, you'll inevitably want to.

This car has the most recent development – the new 'Varioram' version of the 3.6-litre flat-six. Variable length induction tracts help tune the engine throughout its rev range and result in peak power of 285bhp (compared with 272), a smidgen more peak torque and a wadge more torque in the middle. It's fitted to all variants bar the RS, Turbo and GT2.

The old motor was lusty enough but gave a distinct on-cam kick at 4000rpm, while the new one feels stronger low down and its power builds more progressively. We tested them back-to-back and the figures show the 0-60mph time is down from 5.0 to 4.8secs, top speed is up a fraction from 158 to 159mph, and mid-range acceleration in the gears is stronger. Not massive gains, but the new motor was only a couple of thousand miles old, while the old one was in Porsche PR man James Pillar's high-mileage runabout. You think we've got good jobs...

It's a complete package, the Carrera 2: responsive, rewarding and well-rounded in its abilities. You don't find yourself craving more power or better brakes, but we'd make one slight adjustment to its standard specification, spending £1610 to swap its 16in rims, which make it look a bit undernourished, for the optional 17in 'Cup Design' alloys. Otherwise it's a case of that'll do nicely, thank you.



### Carrera 4

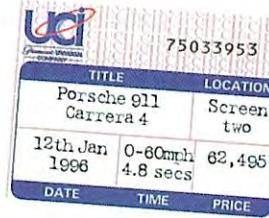
*A more faithful Carrera 2*

Get in, drive five miles and you probably won't know whether you're at the wheel of a Carrera 2 or the four-wheel drive Carrera 4. Bizarrely, this is precisely what

Porsche set out to achieve. Having equipped the Carrera with a propshaft, a front differential and a clever rear differential (and charged an extra £3500 for them) it hoped they'd go unnoticed. The idea was to retain all the character of the C2 and provide the benefits of all-wheel drive only when necessary. It works.

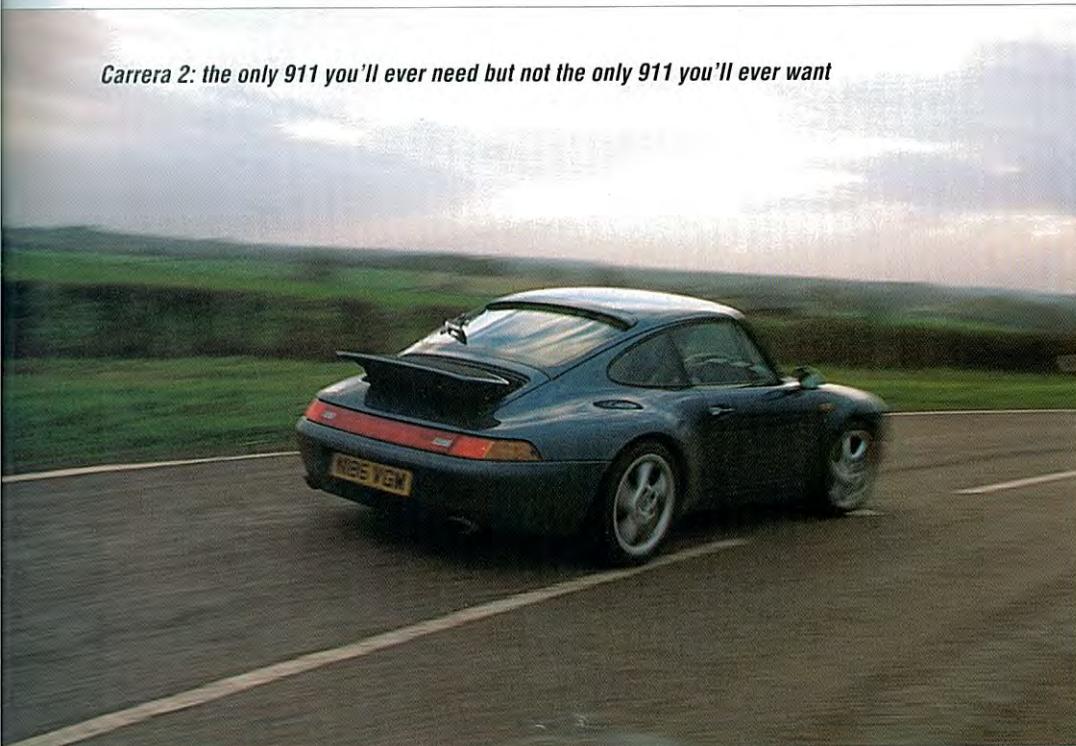
Anoraks will know they're in the C4 (the giveaway is the silvered shift pattern badge on top of the gear knob, porkspotters) and those who hustle it will, too. As you edge towards its limits, there's a perceptible change in its behaviour compared with the C2; the nose tucks into turns a bit better and there's less drive squandered as you power out. This is best appreciated in the wet but it's also evident in the dry, where the C4 feels that bit more responsive and agile than the C2.

This is partially because of the driven front end (which gets at least five per cent and up to 40 per cent of the power) and partially because of the 'dynamic



*Pornography. Pass the sponge...*

*Carrera 2: the only 911 you'll ever need but not the only 911 you'll ever want*



*Carrera 4: just as gorgeously well-rounded in its abilities as the Carrera 2, but with a bit extra when it matters*



differential' at the rear. This reduces the propensity for the back end to swing around on a trailing throttle as you enter a corner, while there's also a sort of reverse anti-lock system that applies the brake to individual rear wheels to stop them spinning on the exit at speeds up to 44mph.

So, there are good reasons for trading up from the C2, and a few of us here would. Only it's not that simple. It's not that a fractional reduction in the 0-60mph time is offset by a slight increase in fuel consumption, but that the clever dynamic rear diff is offered as an option (at £1045) on the Carrera 2. Oh cripes, it's not going to be as easy to pick a favourite as we thought.

### Cabriolet

*All the better to hear the engine*

Let's get one thing straight right away: on a bumpy road, the Cabrio doesn't shiver or shudder at all. The steering wheel doesn't shimmy like the front wheels are 50 pence bits and nor does the image in the rear-view mirror blur like there's an earthquake



catching you up. It's solid, man. And when you've pressed the button and watched the electric roof whirr away to reveal a cloudless blue sky, you won't find yourself speeding

along with your own personal dust devil in the cockpit.

The 911 Cabrio is one of the best

convertible cars you can buy. Not as clever as the Mercedes SL (which was designed as a drop-top) but right there at the head of the table of chopped hard-tops. And yet we wouldn't choose it over the coupé. Sure, there's no better way to hear the addictive rumble of the flat-six but we're traditionalists – the coupé's lines are spoiled and, rigid as it is, taking off the lid also takes the edge off the handling. Ah, but imagine a summer with the that engine note swirling around the cockpit and the warm air ruffling your barnet...

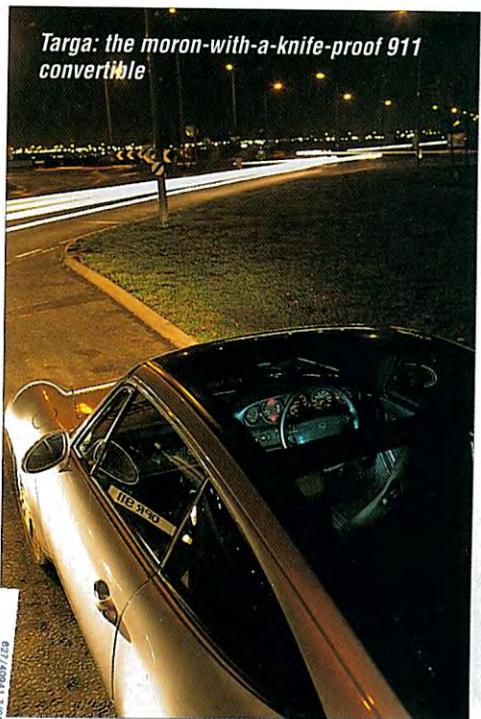
## Targa with Tiptronic

**A convertible for when it's raining**

If you've ever wanted to crawl through a London in a convertible when it's lagging it down, the Targa will bring you pretty close and you won't arrive looking like you've just stepped out ▶

TITLE		LOCATION	
Porsche 911	Cabriolet	Screen	three
12th Jan 1998	0-60mph 4.8 secs	64,950	
DATE	TIME	PRICE	
75033953			

*Targa: the moron-with-a-knife-proof 911 convertible*







*performance  
car*

NOW SHOWING...



Carrera 4S: looks like the Turbo, goes like the Carrera 2

► of the shower. That's a whacky ambition but the Targa is a whacky car that has you thinking: well, what can I do in this that I couldn't do in the Cabrio? Well, there's one for the list, and you need never worry about mindless gits taking a knife to the roof.

The whole roof, from the screen rail to the engine cover, is an expanse of tinted glass. With its electric blind in place, it feels like the coupé; with it furled into the screen rail, you enjoy a greenhouse effect. And with the huge glass sunroof stowed parallel to the rear screen, it feels like the Cabrio. Well, sort of. Because the roof side rails are always there, the question of rigidity never arises.

This car also has the 'Tiptronic S', the nifty auto that gives the option of thumb-tip shifts on the steering wheel, or easy up and downshifts with the gear lever. It's a well-sorted, foolproof 'box; shame it's got only four ratios, instead of the manual's six.

Together, Tiptronic and Targa create a 911 tailor-made for you if you live in the city and want a secure convertible.

**RS:** it goes like this and editor Fraser complained about the feeble stereo speakers. He worries us sometimes

## Carrera 4S

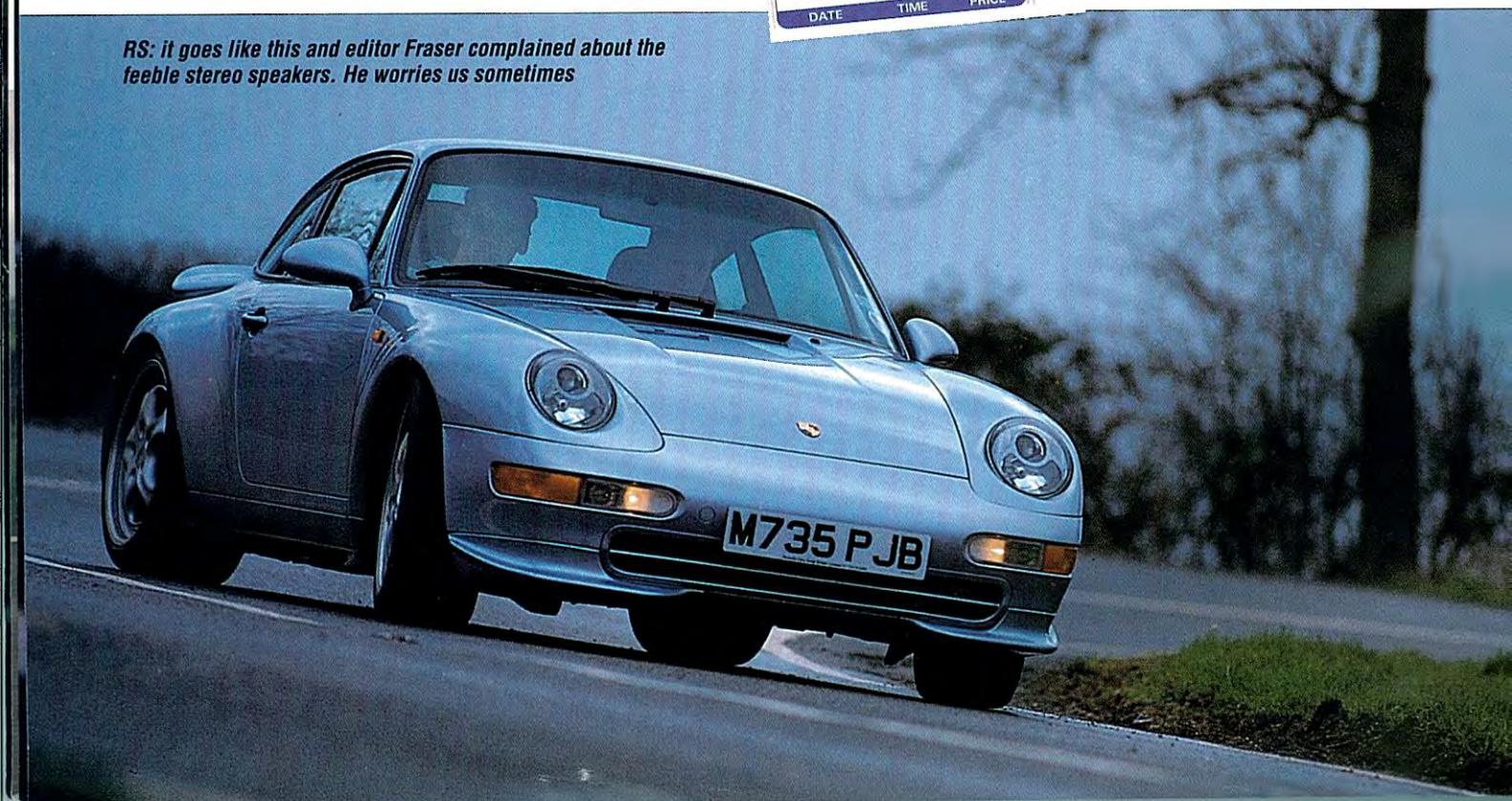
### A Carrera 4 for those who can't afford the Turbo

Years ago, Porsche offered the Turbo running gear in the standard 911 shell (what a giggle), but the 4S is an example of its more recent trend of offering the Turbo-look on a standard car, in this case the Carrera 4. You don't get the Turbo's melted cheese rear spoiler or badge (not in the showroom, anyhow) but you get all the other Turbo bits.

Flared arches, massive, 18in diameter 'Technology' alloys, fat tyres, and Turbo brakes. With less weight to haul down, these huge, ventilated dinner plates get the 4S from 100mph to zero even quicker than the Turbo, which gets there in an eye-popping 3.8secs. And it has monster cornering grip.

TITLE		LOCATION	
Porsche 911	Screen	five	
Carrera 4S			
12th Jan 1996	0-60mph	74,795	
	4.9secs		

Turbo: pregnant women and anyone with a heart condition should not ride in this car





## Carrera RS

### The best-ever driver's 911

Editor Fraser got off to a bad start with the RS. Hunting in the various 911s' luggage compartments for his jacket, he hoisted up the RS's lid and ducked his head in for a look. Clang! One bruised bonce. The RS is stripped of electric windows, rear seats, sound-proofing, central locking, air bags, heated rear window, wiper delay, instrument dimmer... and hydraulic bonnet stays.

In the pursuit of a better power-to-weight ratio, over 200lbs is pared from the Carrera 2, while in the back is a bigger 3.8-litre, 300bhp version of the flat-six – the original Varioram engine, as it happens. It worried us that Fraser grumbled about the stereo's feeble speakers: what the hell was

he doing listening to the radio when every wheeze, zizz and growl of the super-sharp flat-six is audible through the rear bulkhead? The Carrera 2's major

controls have an unrivalled consistency of weighting and feel, and the RS takes them one stage further by adding even more intimacy. The penalty for its stiffer, lower suspension and fatter rubber is remarkably small, much smaller than the Turbo's. You feel so well connected, and the engine is so responsive, that you're confident of pressing on even when the roads are slick.

In short, the RS is the 911 in its purest form – a Carrera 2 with less of what you don't need and more of what you do. Even Fraser said he'd have one. Shame they're only selling 1200 worldwide.

## Turbo

### Reigning Performance Car of the Year

Any car that can make the RS feel sluggish is one serious mutha. The Turbo does. It betters the RS's 0-60 time by over half a second, getting there in 4.3secs, and goes on to 100mph in a mouth-drying, trouser-dampening 9.8secs. There's a note in the handbook like you see on the scariest

Some people want to enjoy the ground-hugging look without shelling out the full £94,000 or, indeed, taking on the responsibility of the Turbo's 408bhp. They'll probably be very satisfied but, as colleague Meaden said in his *First Drive* last month, what you lose with the 4S is the delicacy, fluency and subtlety of the standard car.

Mind you, the reverse idea of a slim-hipped, stock Carrera with the Turbo's go-faster gubbins lurking within, gives us the heebie-jeebies.

TITLE		LOCATION	
Porsche 911 RS		Screen six	
DATE	TIME	PRICE	
12th Jan 1996	0-60mph 4.7 secs	68,495	£64,210 per/cd



*GT2: the Le Mans racer  
for the road that's every  
bit as fast as it looks:  
0-60mph in 3.9secs,  
0-100mph in 8.9.  
Absolutely awesome*

## NOW SHOWING...

► funfair rides: no pregnant women or people with heart conditions. Well, alright, there isn't, but healthy blokes clamber out looking so shell-shocked you'd think they'd just been told they were pregnant.

Thing is, the Turbo makes its extraordinary performance so accessible. You simply plant your right foot and *goooooo!* No lag, no fuss, just a huge,

instant tidal wave of power pushing you towards the horizon. Corners arrive very, very quickly, so it's handy

that the Turbo's brakes are rated at 2000bhp and that it feels as if the tyres are made by the Limpet Rubber Co.

Such is its power advantage, the Turbo is as quick as the RS even on the most demanding road. The difference is that in the RS it's you that's making it happen.

## GT2

### A Turbo for Le Mans

Any car that can make the Turbo feel sluggish is one serious mutha. The GT2 does. It's the road version of the Le Mans 'GT2'-class 911s and is, without doubt, the rarest new 911 of all. There are just two in the UK and Porsche intends to make only

40, which will make it rarer than the F1. Essentially, it's an anorexic RS with a 430bhp Turbo engine driving just the rear wheels. Its owner, Martyn Konig, uses it for hard-driving, tyre-smoking, brake pad-eating track days... and also pops down to Tescos in it. And when it needs an oil change or some more washer fluid, he trundles it down the M4 to see those nice chaps at AFN Chiswick. Yup, it's that docile.

The damp, sinuous B660 has never seen a convoy like this: Turbo chasing RS chasing GT2. Features ed Meaden is caning the RS but it doesn't stand a chance. Even though the GT2 is pushing its nose wide with worrying ease on the tighter, wet turns, as soon it's just about pointing straight, it blasts away as if it's been fired from a cannon. No slip, no slide – who needs four-wheel drive?

Inside, it looks like an RS but feels quite different. The steering is meatier and the gearshift is tighter, more mechanical. Glance in the mirror and the view is sliced horizontally by the high-tail spoiler and diagonally by the half-cage Martyn has had fitted. Serious.

When he catches up, an animated Meaden describes watching the GT2's inside front wheel as it turned into a left-hander, and seeing it hang in mid-air as the tarmac fell away. The anti-roll bars are adjustable and Martyn's car is set up for the dry. We could set it up for a wet B660 if we wanted to...

In the dry, the GT2 is devastating, and not for wimps. There's an evil edge to it at high speed, a creeping feeling of edginess at the

75033953

TITLE		LOCATION
Porsche 911 GT2	Screen eight	
DATE	TIME	PRICE
12th Jan 1996	0-60mph 3.9secs	135,000

rear that makes you think: if I hoisted it now this would be one *huge* opposite-lock accident. Then you look at the speedo and realise you are

being very silly indeed.

Martyn isn't sure he isn't being silly by meeting us at Millbrook to put numbers to its performance – no other magazine in the world has tested a GT2. The first run yields 4.06secs to 60mph, and we have a little chat. Martyn: 'Have you figured many cars that got to 60mph in under four seconds?' Me: 'Only one or two production cars.' Martyn: 'Go for it.' Top bloke.

Next run, 3.98. Opposite run, 3.85. Job done. It betters the Turbo's 0-60 time by a shade under half a second, getting there in 3.9secs, and goes on to 100mph in a brain-squeezing, trouser-tenting 8.9secs. Woof!

## Conclusions

In the end, after five days of hard driving, the decision is easy. If we had the money, we'd have a GT2. And an RS for when it's raining. And a Convertible for when it's sunny, unless we were in town when we'd need the Targa Tiptronic, oh, and a Carrera 2 for general use.



### 911 Carrera (272bhp pre-Variomat)

ACCELERATION THROUGH THE GEAR (SECS)	
0-30mph	2.0
0-40mph	2.9
0-50mph	3.9
0-60mph	5.0
0-70mph	6.5
0-80mph	8.0
0-90mph	10.0
0-100mph	12.2
0-110mph	14.8
0-120mph	18.3
Standing mile 1/4mile (secs/mph)	13.5/106
TED (secs/ft) Time exposed to danger	4.6
Time and distance required to overtake an articulated lorry travelling at a constant 45mph	
ACCELERATION (SECS)	
20-40mph	3.9/5.0/6.5/7.7
30-50mph	3.8/4.9/6.1/7.7
40-60mph	3.5/4.9/6.1/8.6
50-70mph	3.2/4.6/6.2/8.9
60-80mph	3.0/4.2/6.2/9.2
70-90mph	3.3/3.9/5.9/9.8
80-100mph	3.0/4.1/5.6/10.4
90-110mph	-/4.1/5.6/10.4
100-120mph	-/4.7/5.7/10.4
TOP SPEED (MPH)	158

### 911 Carrera 4S

ACCELERATION THROUGH THE GEAR (SECS)	
0-30mph	1.7
0-40mph	2.6
0-50mph	3.7
0-60mph	4.8
0-70mph	6.2
0-80mph	7.8
0-90mph	9.8
0-100mph	12.0
0-110mph	14.5
0-120mph	18.1
Standing mile 1/4mile (secs/mph)	13.4/106
TED (secs/ft) Time exposed to danger	4.6
Time and distance required to overtake an articulated lorry travelling at a constant 45mph	
ACCELERATION (SECS)	
20-40mph	3.9/5.2/6.7/10.5
30-50mph	3.8/4.9/6.1/7.7
40-60mph	3.5/4.9/6.1/8.6
50-70mph	3.2/4.6/6.2/8.9
60-80mph	3.0/4.2/6.2/9.2
70-90mph	3.3/3.9/5.9/9.8
80-100mph	3.0/4.1/5.6/10.4
90-110mph	-/4.1/5.6/10.4
100-120mph	-/4.7/5.7/10.4
TOP SPEED (MPH)	159

performance car march 1996

### 911 Carrera RS

ACCELERATION THROUGH THE GEAR (SECS)	
0-30mph	2.0
0-40mph	2.6
0-50mph	3.6
0-60mph	4.7
0-70mph	5.9
0-80mph	7.5
0-90mph	9.1
0-100mph	11.2
0-110mph	13.6
0-120mph	16.8
Standing mile 1/4mile (secs/mph)	13.2/109
TED (secs/ft) Time exposed to danger	4.5
Time and distance required to overtake an articulated lorry travelling at a constant 45mph	
ACCELERATION (SECS)	
20-40mph	3.7/4.6/6.2/8.7
30-50mph	3.5/4.5/5.7/7.9
40-60mph	3.2/4.3/5.6/7.4
50-70mph	3.0/4.0/5.5/7.7
60-80mph	3.0/3.9/5.3/8.3
70-90mph	3.2/3.9/5.1/8.0
80-100mph	-/4.0/5.2/7.8
90-110mph	-/4.3/5.5/8.2
100-120mph	-/-5.8/-
TOP SPEED (MPH)	156

### Porsche 911 Turbo

ACCELERATION THROUGH THE GEAR (SECS)	
0-30mph	2.0
0-40mph	2.8
0-50mph	3.5
0-60mph	4.3
0-70mph	5.5
0-80mph	6.7
0-90mph	8.2
0-100mph	9.8
0-110mph	11.7
0-120mph	14.2
Standing mile 1/4mile (secs/mph)	12.7/115
TED (secs/ft) Time exposed to danger	4.2
Time and distance required to overtake an articulated lorry travelling at a constant 45mph	
ACCELERATION (SECS)	
20-40mph	3.4/5.1/7.1/11.2
30-50mph	2.7/4.2/6.0/9.7
40-60mph	2.2/3.4/5.1/8.6
50-70mph	2.0/2.9/4.2/7.9
60-80mph	2.1/2.7/3.7/6.3
70-90mph	2.5/2.6/3.5/5.4
80-100mph	-/2.8/3.5/5.4
90-110mph	-/3.4/3.5/5.5
100-120mph	-/-3.8/5.8
TOP SPEED (MPH)	169

### Porsche 911 GT2

ACCELERATION THROUGH THE GEAR (SECS)	
0-30mph	1.7
0-40mph	2.7
0-50mph	3.1
0-60mph	3.9
0-70mph	5.0
0-80mph	6.1
0-90mph	7.3
0-100mph	8.9
0-110mph	10.5
0-120mph	12.9
Standing mile 1/4mile (secs/mph)	12.2/119
TED (secs/ft) Time exposed to danger	4.2
Time and distance required to overtake an articulated lorry travelling at a constant 45mph	
ACCELERATION (SECS)	
20-40mph	3.3/4.5/6.3/9.4
30-50mph	2.6/3.7/5.3/8.2
40-60mph	2.1/3.1/4.6/7.4
50-70mph	1.9/2.8/4.1/6.6
60-80mph	2.0/2.6/3.8/6.2
70-90mph	2.2/2.5/3.5/5.9
80-100mph	-/2.8/3.5/5.8
90-110mph	-/3.0/3.5/5.8
100-120mph	-/3.4/3.9/5.9
TOP SPEED (MPH)	not attempted

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