

# 911

# LOVE

*RS*



# FROM R TO R

## 50 YEARS OF PORSCHE 911 RS

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**A**

**911 R**



**PORSCHE 911 R**



# How the 911 R was born

## It began with an R

**Today, Porsche can look back on a proud tradition of R/RS/RSR models. Half a century ago, the letter R stood for a vision. And, as is so often the case, no one realised the opportunities presented by it.**

One can, and must, link the history of the legendary Porsche 911 R directly with the personage of Ferdinand Piëch. After earning his engineering degree at ETH Zurich, Piëch began his professional career as a technician in the race engine testing department on April 1, 1963. He had, however, already spent many a summer holiday working as an intern, so he was perfectly acquainted with the company and knew the projects inside and out.

The basic dimensions of the new six-cylinder for the 911 were already fixed when Piëch started at Porsche, but he understood exactly how the rather straightforward drivetrain could be changed to become the sporty engine he envisioned for the typical Porsche driver. At his request, it was switched to a dry-sump lubrication, which ensured an adequate oil supply to all parts, despite the extreme centrifugal forces that occur in motor racing. This was the principal difference between the Type 821 and the later series engine. In his *Auto.Biographie*, Piëch wrote: 'In 1963 it was still a matter of course that a young engineer from the family would hire on with Porsche in Stuttgart, even if he came from the wrong country. The desired separation of the Piëch/Austria and Porsche/Germany spheres of influence was porous. Ultimately having such an excessive concentration of Piëchs and Porsches in Stuttgart is another story, however.'

'I started out as a technician in race engine testing on April 1, 1963. There were about a dozen of us, including Hans Mezger, who was second-in-charge in our department and who would later gain fame as an engine designer. It was a decisive point in time, because the Porsche monoculture was about to end, and the 356 was on the cusp of being replaced by the 911, which was still called 901 at that stage. The design was the responsibility of my cousin, Ferdinand Alexander Porsche – "Butzi", as he was known. Somewhat ahead of the 911, the 904 racecar was also in the works. This particularly beautiful and progressive vehicle with a fiberglass-plastic body was the first from the hand of my designer cousin. With one stroke, he had created a masterpiece which practically didn't require any changes. It was planned to immediately test the limits of the 911 engine in the 904 under racing conditions, and afterwards tune it down to more reliable levels for series production. Sadly, while the body of the 904 was ready, the 911 six-cylinder wasn't. There was no other option but to bring the old "Fuhrmann four-cylinder" back in for the 904, its displacement being the same two litres as from the unfinished six-cylinder.'

'That's where my job began. Despite missing the 904 deadline, we still had plans to develop the 911 engine for racing in parallel. The goal was 180bhp, compared with 130bhp for the series 911. The Solex carburetor was one of the concerns set forth by my uncle. Because it had a float instead of an overflow level, the engine could sputter and come to a halt depending on how hard you took a corner. As a member of the family, I got away with far more than the other technicians, so I ordered triple Weber downdraft carburetors. With these, you could take brutal turns without stammering, and I ended up with a robust 180bhp racing device before the others reached 130bhp in series development. After that, I also became responsible for the series engine. Throttling it down from 180 to 130bhp was not an issue; only the wrong carburetor remained a problem. Professor Pierburg – owner of the Solex company – had a strong bond with my uncle and procured such a reliable team for him, he could successfully press the case for his carburetor. When the deliveries of the 911 began in November 1964, it soon became clear it was simply not going to work. We had to swap to a triple-downdraft carburetor. Luckily, I had already done the necessary preparations for the interchangeability of both systems.'



*Zuffenhausen, 1967. Porsche's racing team before the Marathon de la Route.  
The car in the middle is one of the four prototypes of the 911 R.  
Vic Elford stands in front.*

'While the first vehicles indeed had Solex carburetors, Weber triple carburetors were used in series production as of February 1966, from engine number 907 001 and chassis number 305 101 onwards. With these alterations, the flat-six had all the assets to make it race-worthy, and it met Ferry Porsche's specifications: 130bhp at 6,500 rpm.'

Ferdinand Piëch had not only brought the "road" engine to a high level, he had also created a solid basis for track use. As Piëch was promoted to lead the development department in 1965, he knew precisely how much the brand's reputation and fame depended on motor racing. It was not long before considerations were afoot to add more power to the new 911. This desire would ultimately lead to the birth of the 911 R, even if its path was not quite as straightforward, since the new 911 wasn't the immediate bestseller they had expected.

In the autumn of 1964, after a long and bumpy run-up, Porsche began the assembly of what became the 911, because Peugeot had objected





*The same prototype of the 911 R, chassisnumber 307671, after it won the Marathon de la Route with Vic Elford, Jochen Neerpasch and Hans Herrmann behind the wheel.*

against Porsche's original designation, 901. But production numbers ticked up slowly in 1965, due to the high price setting. A 911 with 130bhp cost 20,980 German marks, while the 911 S with 160bhp bore the stately price of 24,480 German marks when released in the autumn of 1966. At that time, a VW Beetle could be procured for the difference in value between both Porsches. Unsurprisingly, Porsche promptly added the 912 with the old four cylinder engine, slotting roughly into the range of the old 356 C models. Porsche explained the backward turn thus:

*Porsche wanted this car to appeal both to the existing, loyal customer base and also gain new potential buyers, so the price had to be maintained at the level of the previous Porsche 356 C and 356 SC. At 16,250 German marks for a 912 with four-speed gearbox and 16,590 German marks for a 912 with five-speed gearbox, it balances right in between those two older vehicles, and offers significantly more value for money since it's a brand-new vehicle.*

Thoughts of a particularly sporty variant of the 911 S initially suffered from the fact that not enough 911 and 912 models were retailed. Ultimately, the 912 starter model put some cash in the till, with Porsche selling no fewer than 6,401 copies in 1965, compared with just 3,390 expensive 911s. Moreover, the fine-tuning of these additional models left little time for much motorsport tinkering.



*Peter Falk and Ferdinand Piëch*

PORSCHE 911 2.7 RS LIGHTWEIGHT

# ALWAYS WEAR SUNSCREEN

Most Porsche love affairs are about absolute loyalty. This one suffered from a little fling on the side.









It all began in the 1950s with a bright yellow Porsche 356 Convertible. Michael Willms was only a toddler, but he already understood there was something about his uncle's car. 'I probably got infected with the virus before I was four.' It was just a start. Things got much worse afterwards.

Michael was one lucky dude. His father was such a car nut, he took his equally enthusiastic son to all the races in the wider area.

'His friend was a big shot at Philip Morris. He gave me a job at Marlboro during the German Grand Prix when I was 16. Around the same time, I interviewed Willy Kauhsen for our school magazine. A former Le Mans hero, Willy had raced 917s as if there were no tomorrow. After that, I spent all my free time in his workshop, cleaning wheels and helping out with small stuff. We got along so well, he asked me to assist him during a few of his races. He's 78 now, but we still are good friends.'

After his wild student years, Michael started writing for the German motorsport magazine *Rallye Racing*, while accepting any other job with a slightest link to motorsport. When tuning became Germany's biggest

craze in the early 80s – and everything was a matter of how wide and how low you could go – Willms was working for a tuning parts company. Then, he spotted another opportunity to climb the ladder.

'After I grabbed the post of managing director at Eibach, a very small company producing springs, I tried to establish it as a renowned name, like Bilstein was for shock absorbers. During the Spa 24 Hours, I literally peddled from pit to pit with my brochures. It was a long and hard work, but eventually it paid off.' Meanwhile, an advertising company on the side also grew to enormous heights. And he became PR for Bridgestone's motorsport activities.

'They were cool times, and Eibach was really booming. However, after ten years, I got slightly bored. So I engaged myself in the Formula 1 universe instead. I became Benetton's German agent in 1993, the year before young Michael Schumacher claimed his first title. And I was connected with most other teams in one way or another afterwards.'

While it's easy to find countless men who lost an entire family fortune on motor racing, Michael Willms clearly is one of the happy few on the other side of the fence.



Although Willms has collected cars since he was 28, his Porsche love affair started relatively late.

'I bought my first 911 in 1987, a nice Carrera convertible.'

A few years later, he acquired his first significant Porsche, even if it was partly by coincidence.

'I could not possibly afford a new 911. But Willy Kauhsen helped me buy a nice Carrera 4 from the factory at a reduced price. It was one of 50 prototypes used for road testing from Death Valley to the Artic. They were all white and none had any extras. Only later did I understand how special it was. This car gave me another shot of this poisonous Porsche virus.'

Afterwards, things went truly crazy.

'As soon as I had enough money, I purchased another Porsche. And another, and yet another. I established a first theme around early short wheel base 911s with 0-chassis numbers, and another around low-mileage soft window 911 Targas with original paint.'

Meanwhile, Michael also took a serious detour around Italy's finest. Raging Ferraris, wild Maseratis – a lot of them. He even picked up racing them in vintage events. It was fun, but it wasn't fulfilling. Not really. It was time to commit to the brand fitting his own character best. Porsche, obviously.

His collector's mind now focused on the most powerful 911 in each model range, and on 911s with a direct link to the Porsche family. There's a 911 from 1967, which was owned by "Ferry" Porsche, and one from 1972 with a very tasteful interior created by Anatole Lapine for Ferdinand Piëch's brother Hans Michel. 'He told his secretary to get some wool samples in Ludwigsburg. It took me four years to properly restore it.'

Hans Michel Piëch's former 911 is now parked next to the 964 coupe of his mother, Louise Porsche. And there's more to come, hopefully.

'It's not easy, though, if only because Wolfgang Porsche is also trying to purchase cars which belonged to his family. I have quite the competitor there.'

However, no collection is really complete without at least one 911 RS. Willms, too, knew he had to have one: 'As a kid, when driving my bike to Willy Kauhsen's office, there was always an RS parked around the corner. Willy kept assuring me I would buy one, one day. I could only agree. An RS has such a gorgeous stance.'





Willms got his first 2.7 RS with a Touring body 20 years ago: 'It's one of the very few without the ducktail. I used it for years as a daily driver, even on winter tyres. After all, the first owner drove it 365 days a year. It has a sunroof, which is ideal for long-distance rallies. I once did the French Tour Auto with it.'

Then, six years ago, he could lay his hands on Zuffenhausen's finest: 'This orange lightweight 2.7 RS originates from the first batch of 500, and it was built for a guy who wanted a sunroof. Which wasn't a problem. Quite a few Touring-bodied RSs had one. However, because this guy didn't have much money, he opted for the lightweight variant since it was 1,000 German marks cheaper.'

It seemed a weird choice, considering that the few lightweights all went to men with their eyes on the road, not with their head in the air. But, in the long term, it proved extremely smart. What started as a way to save money grew into the ultimate investment. Today, the rare lightweights all belong to important collections, and none can be associated with the idea of a bargain. Certainly not this orange marvel, one of only two lightweights with a clear view to the sky. It's unknown whether the other survived.

Willms is over the moon with his peculiar car park and with this athletic sibling: 'Both RS cars behave really differently. Whereas the Touring is more comfortable, the lightweight handles better, is much easier to control and gives a better connection because there's no insulation. Turns out, 100 kilos truly matters.'

Over the years, Willms got infected so deeply with the Porsche virus, he even founded a small club with a few friends: 'The Series 0-registry is limited to owners of an original 911 from the first three production years. Although we're officially recognised by Porsche, we don't try to grow. We're all guys happily wearing the *Ferry Mutze*. We only want to drive to nice places, organise unique trips – car or art related – and talk a lot of bullshit,' he smiles.

In hindsight, Willms's eternal Porsche-love hasn't suffered from his Ferrari fling on the side. On the contrary. His Italian flirtation probably helped him understand to which family he truly belonged. Porsche isn't arrogant or high-brow just for the sake of it.

This brand is on top of things yet compassionate, brilliant yet sympathetic, ragingly popular yet attainable, dedicated to the bone yet marinated in the finest humour left of England. It can even laugh with itself, from time to time. Because men who remain boys just want to have fun. If possible, with a warm ray of sunlight on their fortunate head.

PORSCHE 991 GT3 4.0 RS





# ROUGH AROUND THE EDGES

Most Porsche love affairs start with an awesome drive. This one, with a pencil and a piece of paper. Ever since Michael Mauer was a young boy, he knew he wanted to draw cars. Well, Porsches really.

Which he eventually managed. And more. After his car design studies in Pforzheim, Mauer immediately secured a job at Mercedes. He contributed to several models – including the A-Class and SLK – became head of design at Smart and then moved to Saab in Sweden. Things could not get any better after he was hired as Porsche’s design director in 2004. Except they did. In 2016, Michael was promoted to lead the design activities of the entire VW group, alongside his task at Porsche.

The job would be too vast for one man. But not for Mauer. He’s as charming as the loveliest Smart, as dedicated as the weirdest Saab, as comforting as the biggest Mercedes, yet as focused as the wildest Porsche RS.

‘Being a car designer is the world’s nicest profession for car nuts like us. Working at Porsche is even better. But designing a 911 RS? That’s the ultimate level of excitement. It’s the one assignment my entire team fights for. I never have to ask them for proposals for an RS. The guys in the studio spontaneously do it. That’s one reason why we don’t employ special designers for RS models. It would be too demotivating for all others.’

Mauer proudly shows the current 991 GT3 RS in the Kesselhaus in Munich’s Motorworld. Once an industrial boiler room, it is now a concert hall and fancy gathering place. And an inspiration, apparently. ‘Everything is for a creative mind. I just love how

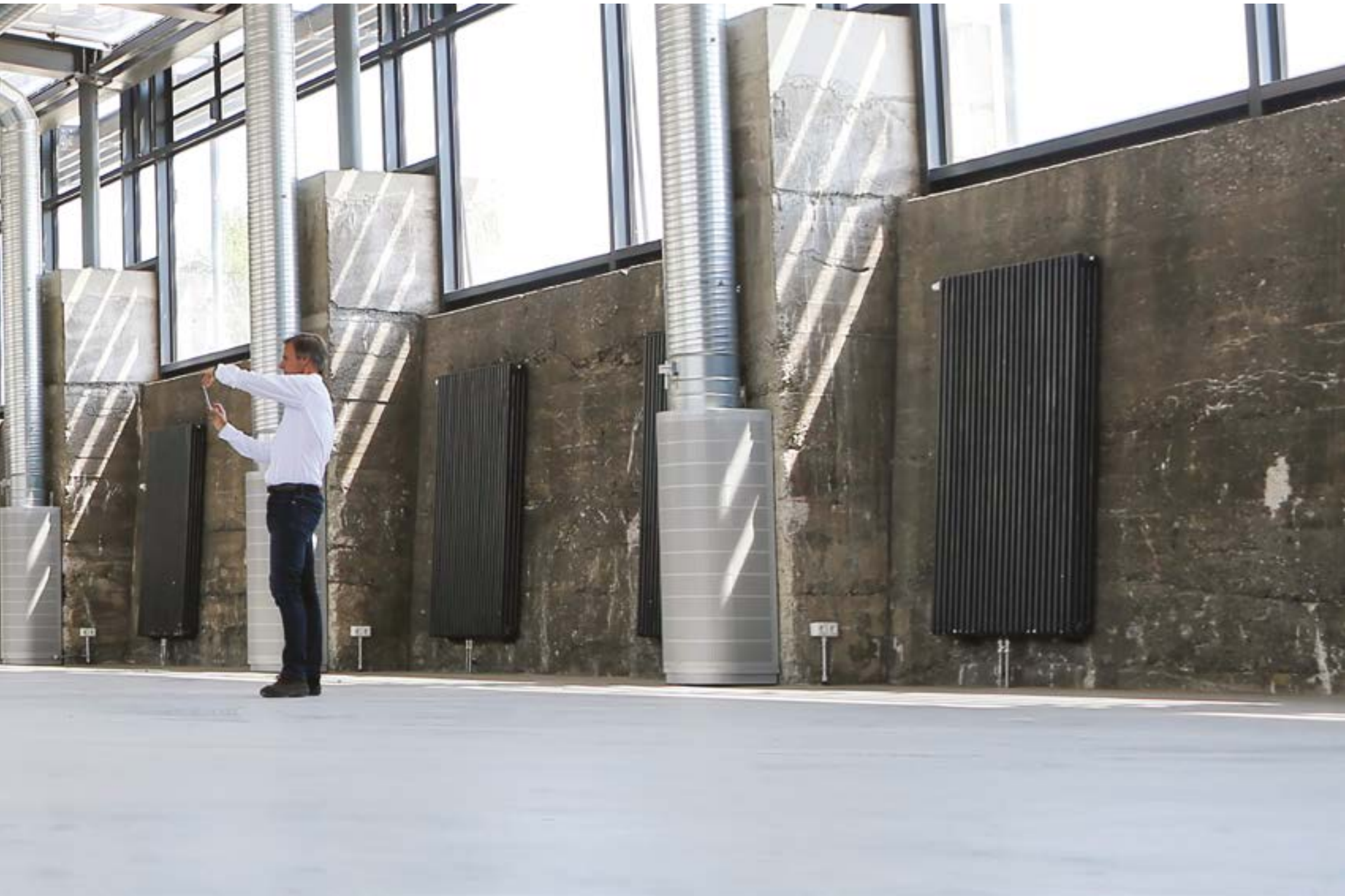


such old buildings come back to life by combining new and vintage elements. It's fascinating to decide what's worth keeping and what needs to be rebuilt.'

Like with the design of a new 911, almost.

'Porsche's design philosophy is clearly based on the past, and our approach is more evolutionary compared to other carmakers. Our history is even more important for hard-core models like GT3 and GT3 RS. During the design process, we always park all previous RS models in the studio, although we absolutely want to avoid ending up with a sort of replica. We already finished the design of the Porsche 992 – the successor to the current 991 – and just started on the 992 GT3 and GT3 RS. It's a bit early to say, but

we might stretch their look a little further than usual. While defining the base 911, we already have the sporty spin-offs in mind. If we change the proportions of the 911 – as has happened with the 991 – we immediately take into account that the Turbo will be even wider. Knowing that the GT3 and GT3 RS will probably use the side panels of the Turbo, we also leave enough space for added wings, front and back. Sometimes, we have a very exciting idea for a bumper, but judge it as too much for the base model. We then let it digest for a while, and after a few months consider it again for the Turbo or the RS.'









Because each RS is highly influenced by engineering, the design process is quite different compared to a “normal” Porsche, if such an animal exists in the first place.

‘Everybody in this industry loves to talk about “agile teams” and “agile development”. But the way our design team and Andreas Preuninger’s racing division collaborate for an RS really creates a special momentum. His squad doesn’t do anything according to official processes. They just test on the track, where the driver gives direct feedback to the engineer, who straightaway talks to the designer. Because these procedures differ

totally from how a regular production car comes together, the designers are over the moon with excitement and utterly motivated to find the best result.’

What could be a clash of egos turns out to be an alliance with nothing but winners. ‘For the limited edition of the 997 4.0 RS with 500bhp, Porsche immediately understood it needed extra downforce. The bigger rear wing and the small front deflectors wouldn’t be a designer’s natural solution. But I like it a lot that such projects show a certain roughness around the edges, which wouldn’t be accepted on any other 911. And then it turns out they have an aesthetic value of their own.’

Today's GT3 RS is asphalt grey with yellow calipers, Mauer's absolute favourite combination.

'It's so tasteful, if only because the contrast with the black parts isn't as outspoken. Looking at how the front spoiler moves into the fender on this latest RS, there's a disconnection with a little offset because the fenders are wider. No designer would ever start like this. But it happened for reasons of efficiency, and it gives the car a nice touch of brutality. The extra opening above the front wheels for additional down-force would never be proposed by our studio from the beginning, either. However, by collaborating and searching for a solution which works well for design and engineering, we come much closer to the old axiom of "form follows function".'

Mauer is a designer. He obviously prefers simplicity. 'I'm very much into pure and reduced shapes. While we more or less managed to integrate the rear spoiler into the design on a GT3, that's a no-go for an RS. These are totally driven by ultimate track performance. It's nice that the rear wing on a GT3 is quite organic as a shape, but I love the race aesthetics of the wing on the 997 GT3 4.0 RS. It's less stylish and more functional. Sadly, we had to smoothen the braces for safety and homologation reasons. It's ridiculous how the law obliges us to soften all radiuses where people can touch their head in one way or another. It would have been even cooler if it looked like it had been laser cut. I never fancied the ducktail on the 2.7 RS, however. To me, this weird triangle spoils the elegant sloping roof.'



And then there's the new R, the apple of Mauer's eye. 'When I bought a GT3 for myself, I had a coffee with Andreas Preuninger from the special division and told him I dreamt of making a sort of "sleeper", by removing all the spoilers and added aerodynamics from a GT3. The end result would seem to be a normal 911, while it's anything but. It's kind of cool when nobody sees how exceptional it is, apart from a few experts who can spot the different exhausts or whatever. Even if Andreas had already been chewing on such a concept, he immediately objected. The balance would be completely destroyed without the aero-

dynamic devices, he said. But the idea had touched a sweet spot. Considering they were dreaming of reviving the R in one way or another, while our design department produces free proposals yearly – like a GT3 convertible and a spoiler-less GT3 – a common brainstorm eventually led to the R.'

Mauer is very happy with it. Yet, at the same time, he's not.

'Sadly, I couldn't get hold of one, whereas it's absolutely my kind of car. If you take away the stripes, 90 percent of onlookers will not recognise it. The R also has a manual gearbox, which I prefer on public roads. On a track, I'd rather have the PDK, though. I'm not a world champion-type driver, and the PDK just makes me feel better about the level of my skills.'

Since Mauer has the world's best job, he's parked a few Porsches in his private garage.

'I bought a 997 GT3 because it was the first Porsche designed under my responsibility. When I joined the company, the base model, convertible and turbo versions of the 997 had been done, and we initiated the work on the GT3 and GT3 RS. To me, the division between GT3 and GT3 RS makes a lot of sense. The differentiation is quite big, which creates a nice offer for our customers. It's clear what each of them stands for. I prefer the GT3 on public roads, but I clearly fancy the GT3 RS on the track. If we're not talking about track performance, the 997 GT3 is my pick, if only because it's smaller. Which obviously was our aim for the 992. Not saying it will actually be more compact, but it will certainly seem less big.'



Because no man of good taste can ever own enough 911s, Mauer also enjoys himself after working hours with a very special one.

'I'm building a 964 convertible with an RS flavour, slightly commemorating the idea of the first Speedster. It's a 911 that has never existed. It's totally understated and a bit rough, just like an outlaw.'

It'll be his Sunday morning partner in crime.

'Because with my GT3, I've always got one foot in jail. It's so blindingly fast, and the speed limits are becoming severer by the day. That's why I love old cars. They feel fast at reasonable speeds. I bought a 1984 G-model but quickly realised it was too old for me. The 964 offers the perfect compromise. It's modern yet looks like the old one. It's my favourite design anyway. I don't fancy the 993 too much. The back is okay, but the front tries too hard.'

Mauer is as friendly as a boy scout, but his humour can be a little rough around the edges. It might well be his refined way of saying things, if the bare truth hurts too much. After all, he's the world's most important car designer, since he has so many brands under his responsibility. 'I don't feel like that at all, however, and my task differs considerably from what my predecessor, Walter de' Silva, had to do. While he influenced each individual car of the entire group, my job is more strategic. Our CEO, Matthias Müller, leads this concern in another way and gives a lot of confidence to the management of each brand. I apply the same strategy for design. I just overlook it, search for synergies and coordinate everything. And I interfere – or help – if one brand doesn't evolve in the right direction. I also provide the design philosophy we established at Porsche, since it's so highly valued by our management. Every six weeks, all our brands propose their novelties at big design reviews. Although they might have to go back and change the design if I don't like it, I still see my job mostly as assisting my colleagues, and supporting them against the finance or marketing departments. I also communicate constantly. In a creative business, it helps a lot if you talk to each other. So I organise *Stammtisch* days for the design chiefs, just to discuss whatever what in a relaxed atmosphere. I don't believe so much in harsh competition. I prefer to inspire.'







**PORSCHE 991 R**



# How the 991 R was born

## Back to the roots

**Although the new 911 R could not possibly be as pure as its predecessor from 1967, Porsche did recognise the desire of certain clients to once again acquire a 911 in the classic style. Unsurprisingly, the planned 991 units sold out in a matter of hours.**

Certain segments of Porsche's loyal customer base regularly voiced complaints about how the 911 was becoming ever larger, heavier and more comfortable. A GT3 RS with air conditioning? Of course. A seven-speed double-clutch transmission? Sure. It's practical, convenient and allows you to shift in fractions of a second. But weren't the old-fashioned manual transmissions more exciting and wilful?

Porsche was obviously aware of these criticisms, while the 50th anniversary of 1967's legendary 911 R loomed on the horizon. The longer they mulled over this issue in Zuffenhausen, the clearer it became for all involved: a new R was not a bad idea at all. Moreover, a limited edition of 991 units would surely sell out in no time. No-one imagined it would ultimately take less than a few hours, though. Unsurprisingly, Porsche proudly announced the following in a press release from March 2016:

*With its present 911 R, Porsche unveils a puristic sports car in a classical sense at the 2016 Geneva International Motor Show. Its 368 kW (500bhp) four-litre naturally aspirated flat-six and six-speed manual sports transmission places the 911 R firmly in the tradition of its*

*historic role model: a road-legal racecar from 1967. Produced as part of a limited series, the 911 R (R for Racing) performed in rallies, the Targa Florio and in world-record runs.*

Like its legendary predecessor, the modern 911 R relies on systematic lightweight construction, maximum performance and an unfiltered driving experience: this limited edition of 991 units has an overall weight of 1,370 kilogrammes and is currently the lightest 911 version. With the high-revving naturally aspirated six-cylinder and manual sports transmission, Porsche once again displays its commitment to emotional high-performance sports cars. Born in the motorsport workshop, the 911 R extends the spectrum of high-performance naturally aspirated engines alongside the racy models 911 GT3 and 911 GT3 RS.

Designers and technicians needed barely 14 months to develop the new 911 R, which obviously featured the rear-mounted, four litre flat-six engine from the 911 GT3 RS, also used in racing. It boasts 500bhp at 8,500 rpm and musters 460 Nm of torque at 6,250 rpm, while its compression ratio of 13.2:1 is a record-setting value. Blessed with such abundant power, the new R cracks the 100km/h barrier from a standstill in just 3.8 seconds, tops 200 km/h in 11.6 seconds and reaches a top speed of 323km/h. And, of course, there was the DIN standard consumption: 13.3 litres of super per 100 kilometres. Specialists swore such impressive values could be reached. But was it any fun to drive a 911 like that?

What a difference to its predecessor, which 50 years ago astonished its environment with what were then unbelievable numbers. 210bhp became 500bhp, 220km/h with the appropriate gear ratio stands against 323km/h now, whereas the kerb weight grew from 800 to 1,370 kilogrammes, even if the new 911 R is 50 kilogrammes lighter than the reigning champ, the 991 GT3 RS.

The price in 1967 was 45,000 German marks. Those with the good fortune to score a modern 911 R were asked to cough up 189,544 euros. And while there weren't any options in 1967 – what for, after all? – Porsche now offered R-buyers such things as a lightweight battery

for 2,261 euros, a single-mass flywheel for 2,975 euros, a lift system for the front axle at 2,975 euros, the Sport Chrono package at 1,664 euros, and automatically dimming interior and exterior mirrors at 547 euros. There were a number of ways to boost the price even further: Bi-Xenon headlights for 1,195 euros or LED main headlights, including the Porsche Dynamic Light system, for 3,088 euros.

The reduction to 1,370 kilogrammes was achieved through the resolute use of carbon fibre body parts. The wings and front bonnet were constructed from this lightweight material, for example. The Zagato double-bubble roof was made of magnesium, while the rear side windows and rear window consisted of plastic. Thick door handles on the inside were replaced by straps, whereas radio, air conditioning and rear seats were never installed in the first place. The roll cage was missing and the brand logo was forced to slim down, too. As with the "old" 911 R, a sticker indicated the manufacturer's name.

The new 911 R is unmistakably a racecar tamed for the street, characterised first and foremost by its obsessive lightweight construction. Even so, it will never be seen on circuits. Those who want to hit the throttle on the track should opt for a 991 GT3 RS Clubsport, a 991 GT3 R or a 991 GT3 RSR. The 911 R is more suitable for museums and private collections, and will undoubtedly hardly be seen on the road.

The exterior design of the 911 R remains reserved and understated. At first sight, the body resembles that of a simple Carrera. Merely the nose and rear body parts from the 911 GT3 hint at the birthplace of the 911 R: the Motorsport Department in Flacht. However, the 911 R has a lot to show under the bonnet, since the drivetrain originates from the GT3 RS. All the lightweight body components and the complete chassis are also taken from the 911 GT3. With road use in mind, there's no longer a fixed rear wing, though. Instead, the retractable rear spoiler from the Carrera and a specific rear diffuser provide the necessary downforce. Front and rear bumper shields come from the 911 GT3 as well. The centrally positioned sports exhaust system consists of lightweight titanium. A redesigned spoiler lip is installed at the front. Logos on the sides and colour stripes in red or green over the entire mid-section illustrate the link with its legendary predecessor.

And the interior? The press department had this to say:

*The driver sits in a carbon full-bucket seat with fabric centre panels in Pepita tartan design, recalling the first 911 of the 1960s. An "R-specific"*



*GT sport steering wheel with a diameter of 360 millimetres receives steering commands from the driver. Gearshifts take place in traditional manner through an R-specific short gearshift lever and the clutch pedal. Carbon-trim strips in the interior with an embedded aluminium badge on the passenger's side indicate the limited number of the 911 R.*

Zuffenhausen is also keen to emphasise that “in keeping with the puristic character of the vehicle, the 911 is available exclusively with a six-speed manual sports transmission.”

While the early 911s required an expert at the wheel when taken to the limit, owners of the new model had state-of-the-art electronic aids at their disposal. Porsche described it this way:

*It's as if the 911 R is made for tight corners. The specially tuned rear-axle steering guarantees direct turn-in and precise handling while maintaining high stability. The mechanical rear differential lock builds up maximum traction and the standard Porsche Ceramic Composite Brake (PCCB) ensures the greatest possible deceleration. Brake discs measure a generous 410 millimetres on the front axle and 390 millimetres on the rear. Ultra High Performance tyres are responsible for contact to the road. They are mounted on forged 20-inch lightweight wheels with central lock in matte aluminium in the following dimensions: 9 x 20" on the front axle (245/35 ZR 20) and 12 x 20" on the rear axle (305/30 ZR 20).*





Motorsport Development has specially adapted the Porsche Stability Management (PSM) for the 911 R. A double-declutch function can be activated with a button to ensure perfect down shifting, while a single-mass flywheel is optional. This significantly improves the spontaneity and high-revving dynamics of the engine. For unrestricted practicality in everyday use, a lift system can also be ordered. It raises ground clearance of the front by approximately 30 millimetres at the touch of a button.

Bonnet and wings are made of carbon and the roof of magnesium, to reduce the centre of gravity. Rear windscreen and rear side windows consist of lightweight plastic. Additional factors are the stripped interior insulation and the omission of a rear bench. The optional air-conditioning system and the radio, including audio system, also fell victim to the diet. They could, however, be re-added through the options list.

From this perspective, the new 911 R was essentially a stripped-down RS. Those who didn't fancy the martial looks of a huge rear spoiler on the GT3 RS were perfectly served by the R. This is a wolf in sheep's clothing. Or, more precisely, a classic 911 with racing technology beneath its carbon shell.

It requires a good eye for detail to recognise the R. The broad decorative stripes stretching from the bonnet over the top and down to the rear spoiler naturally helped. But what if the customer didn't opt for this visual aid? Then a glance at the R rims, including the ceramic brakes with yellow calipers, provides a first clue. And the magnesium roof with two humps could also only be found on the 991 GT3 RS. The same goes for the centrally positioned dual exhaust with two titanium tailpipes. A peek into the interior gives another hint. The Pepita-upholstered bucket seats make it perfectly clear that you're looking at a 911 R bought by a clever person who knew what had to be done during the few hours before it sold out. Or it might be from someone who loved the 911 R so much yet failed to score one initially, and who had to pay a good deal more at a second stage. In just a few days, the 911 R became an object of speculation which made a lot of money for a few dealers. It's a pity, because the new R has so much to offer, it really belongs in the hands of true aficionados who'll cherish and care for it, and who, once in a while in pristine weather, will take it out for a magnificent spin.

