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PORSCHE
CARRERA GT

The Carrera GT was a hypercar from a period before the term existed. In a roundabout way, it borrowed some of its architecture from prior Formula One and sports-prototype projects, and did so in devastating fashion. It was a road car infused with racing car DNA but still drivable in the real world, as demonstrated by two-time World Rally Champion Walter Röhrl who piloted the concept version down the Champs Élysées to the Louvre on the eve of its unveiling at the Paris Motor Show in September 2000. The truly remarkable part, though, is that the car had only been dreamed up eighteen months prior.

The heart of the Carrera GT was a normally-aspirated V10 powerhouse, a turbocharged flat-six unit having been mooted but discounted early on. This engine was rooted in a 3.5-litre unit built for the Footwork (né Arrows) F1 team in 1992. It never raced but, not being one to waste things, Porsche dusted off the design for a sports-prototype codenamed '9R3'. It could conceivably have taken the fight to BMW and Audi at Le Mans in 5.5-litre form had Porsche's board not annulled the scheme in early 1999 (a car was tested in period but Porsche denied its existence for more than two decades).

Instead, Porsche made use of the engine in the Carrera GT concept car, the decision to build it in series being announced by the company's chairman, Dr Wendelin Wiedeking, at the Detroit Auto Show in January 2002. What's more, he expected Porsche would make around 1000 cars with production starting in the autumn of the following year. The end product remained faithful to the original concept, too, although the engine's displacement



PORSCHE

911 SPEEDSTER (1989)

A leftfield choice, the first 911 Speedster nevertheless sold out quickly. Rooted in a G-series 911 SC-based concept car that was first seen in 1987, the production version arrived two years later. It borrowed styling cues from the 356 Speedster, not least the stumpy, raked-back windscreen with rounded upper corners and the fabric hood

that could be stowed beneath a tilt-up glassfibre fairing. Built in part to celebrate 25 years of the 911, it was offered in either 'narrow' form without spoilers or in wilder Turbo-look configuration, with power coming from a normally-aspirated 3164cc flat-six that produced 231bhp at 5900rpm.

The Speedster was also lighter than the

regular car (as much as 150kg was removed depending on whose estimates you credit). Aside from the roof surgery, it did away with rear seats and items such as electric windows. According to the factory figures, the Speedster was capable of 152mph. As an aside, German-market cars were available with or without catalytic converters. 2103 Speedsters were

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PORSCHE

911 CARRERA
GTS (991)

The arrival of the 991-series 911 in 2011 was a seismic one for Porsche-lovers, although divisive is perhaps more apposite. There was a lot to take in, not least because this new strain was a bigger car than the version that preceded it (the wheelbase was 100mm longer, and that's just for starters).

More than anything, though, the purists weren't happy that the 911 was now water-

cooled rather than air-cooled. Nevertheless, the new strain of 911 represented a step change in terms of rigidity. That, and weight distribution, not least because of the new design of transaxle.

First seen at the LA Auto Show in November 2014, the 991-series Carrera GTS variant was that rarest of things: an underrated Porsche, and one whose praises have only largely been

sung in retrospect. Power came from a 424bhp 3.8-litre flat-six (as opposed to 3.4-litres for the regular Carrera). It was allied to either a seven-speed manual transmission or a PDK automatic set-up. Sub 46c 0-60mph times came as standard. Three-litre turbocharged units became standard across the board with the second-gen model that was launched in 2016, the 991.2 GTS gaining an extra 20bhp relative