

In full bloom: A Porsche collection in Moonstone

26/06/2025 Moonstone is one of the rarest paint colors in Porsche history. Fascinated by this shade of lilac, US American collector Justin Roeser has been tracking down cars in this color around the world for years. Porsche accompanies him on his journey in search of the origin story.

With a past shrouded in mystery, this polarizing color often changes its appearance and even goes by different names. And it shows up just about every day in the dreams of Porsche collector Justin Roeser of San Antonio in the US state of Texas. The color that has fired Roeser's imagination for many years is lilac, referred to as Moonstone in the Porsche world.

Applied only to 223 cars in the 911 (G-Series), 924, and 928 model ranges worldwide in 1979 and 1980, Moonstone is one of the rarest colors to grace the exterior of a Porsche. What makes it so mysterious is that it can appear white, purple, or pink depending on the lighting and weather.

Roeser owns three of these rare vehicles: a 924, a 911 SC Targa (G-Series), and his latest acquisition, Oli, one of just nine Porsche 928 ever produced in Moonstone. For the 45-year-old US American,

Moonstone has become more than just a color. The search for any traces of this rare shade has colored his life, filling him with a passion for fitting all the different puzzle pieces together, tracking down individual models, and researching the color's origin. A journey full of adventures that occasionally feel as magical as the color itself – and take him all the way to Stuttgart-Zuffenhausen.

Love at second sight

The first time Roeser ever encountered a lilac-colored Porsche sports car – a 911 Turbo (930) from 1979 – was in a 2018 advertisement. He was thrilled. Roeser paid a visit to the dealer offering the vehicle in the US state of Connecticut. "I'd never seen the color before and immediately remembered the soft candies in this pale lilac color that I used to love as a kid," he recalls. "But the Turbo would remain a dream, at least for the time being."

A short time later, someone in Germany offered him a 928, which he initially refused. At that time, he had no interest in a model with an automatic transmission and preferred to look for something else in Moonstone. He awoke one morning in 2020 and saw a German dealer's Instagram post offering a 924 in this very same color. Roeser contacted the dealer – and purchased the car sight unseen. That 924 was the first puzzle piece in his collection, but by no means the rarest. Of the 223 vehicles in Moonstone, 196 of those are 924 models.

Two years later, Justin Roeser discovered a classified ad in Germany featuring a lilac-colored 911 SC Targa for sale that had once roamed American roads. He pounced on the opportunity, in large part because it seemed to be one of the earliest models in his favorite color. The car had been built in 1977, when Moonstone was still a special request and not yet a standard color. There's also the fact that a 911 in Moonstone is much rarer than a 924, as only 18 models were delivered in that color at the time. The puzzle pieces fit together, with two of the three existing Moonstone models now in his garage. But for Roeser, the search was far from over.

Then in early 2023, he crossed paths again with the same 928 featuring an automatic transmission. Roeser, who had since turned his hobby of locating interesting cars into a career, contacted a mechanic in Germany who could help him find a special limited-edition model, "30 Jahre 911" (30 Years of the 911), also known as the "anniversary 911," for a customer. During their conversation, he also asked the mechanic to get in touch with him if he were to ever come across the lilac-colored 928. The mechanic promptly informed him that he knew the vehicle and its owner. It was love at second sight, and Roeser pounced immediately, finally adding the third piece of the puzzle, one of just nine lilac-colored 928, to his collection.

In search of the origin story

Nearly one and a half years later, in August 2024, Roeser traveled to Germany's Ruhr region to pick up Oli, which is what he calls his latest acquisition. "You don't find the car. The car finds you," says Roeser,

deep in thought. He leaves little to chance. In fact, he very deliberately chose the name Oli, inspired by the name of the 928's previous owner, Oliver, as well as Oscar-winning director Oliver Stone, whose last name reminds him of the word "moonstone."

Because he wanted to learn even more about the rare color, Roeser decided to embark on his first big journey with Oli, 10,000 kilometers across Europe. "Everyone thinks I'm a nerd," says Roeser, who once worked in the shipping industry, laughing at himself. "But this color gives me such a good feeling. The search itself is so exciting. Finding new stories again and again is what drives me." Like a journalist in search of a big story.

Roeser's first stop after picking up the 928 is the Porsche Museum in Stuttgart-Zuffenhausen, where Vlasta Hatter has been waiting for him, so that the two of them can travel back in time. The designer was a member of the Porsche team that created the exterior color Moonstone in the 1970s. Hatter was also responsible for creating the design icon Pascha, a black and white seat pattern inspired by the checkered flag waved at the finish line in motorsport racing.

Roeser can hardly wait. Over the years, he's invented all sorts of theories about how Porsche came up with such an extraordinary color, often discussing them with friends. Early on, he'd only ever known the color as Moonstone and was unaware that it had a different name in German, "Flieder." Now he has the opportunity to ask the woman elegantly dressed in black and white himself.

"The inspiration came from the lilac plant ("Flieder" in German), which you can see everywhere in May," explains Vlasta Hatter. "It has different colors, and we opted for this lighter shade after producing different prototypes." During the development process, she prepared special inspiration boards featuring clippings from fashion magazines, materials such as wood, metal, and imitation leather, carpets, and different sources of inspiration from fashion, the furniture industry, and architecture. There's a reason why the mysterious color looks so different depending on the lighting. "It wasn't a metallic paint. Instead, we used pigments that are no longer allowed today. They're responsible for this effect," explains Hatter, who worked for the Porsche Studio from 1976 to 2008. "It really was a very special color."

Despite all the effort made by the man in charge at that time, Anatole Lapine, and his design team – for example, the English name Moonstone, which was more interesting than just "Lilac" and was supposed to recall the gemstone – the color wasn't very well received by the sales team and customers. There was very little advertising, and the color was apparently out of step with the time. "Whenever something new shows up, it takes time for people to understand it. But 50 years is a little long," says Hatter and laughs. However, the Chairman of the Executive Board at that time, Ernst Fuhrmann, was ahead of his time and drove one of the first models before the color was even incorporated into series production.

Moonstone would likely be a bestseller today. In fact, Pantone named the shade, which it refers to as "Very Peri," a trendy color in 2022. The company is responsible for creating a globally standardized color system to ensure consistent color reproduction in design, printing, fashion, and other creative

fields. Porsche's current Paint to Sample color Moongem is inspired by the Moonstone of the past. And even when developing the color Provence, which premiered with the all-electric Macan, the designers looked to the archive for inspiration.

"I got goose bumps when Vlasta Hatter showed me the picture of the lilac plant," says Roeser. "You imagine how it might've been. And then the woman who developed so many amazing colors with her team explains what it was really like. Meeting her was both moving and surreal at the same time."

Across Europe

The visit to the Porsche Museum is the perfect start to Roeser's personal Moonstone journey. The next stop is for a get-together with another lilac-colored 928 and its owner near Nördlingen, almost 100 kilometers east of Stuttgart. Locating the color twin required detective work. In a photo, he discovered the name of a workshop in small writing on the license plate. The first decisive hint. Roeser was able to make contact – and is now standing before the two lilac-colored 928. It's just about impossible to differentiate between the two as, despite the multifaceted color nuances, the cars shimmer just the same on today's drive.

Roeser embarks on the next leg of his journey to Deutsches Fahrzeugmuseum (German Vehicle Museum) in the Upper Franconian town of Fichtelberg, where he comes across another vehicle in Moonstone, a 924 Turbo. During the drive through Bavaria, he travels to Grossglockner mountain, the town of Zell am See, and then on to Vienna, through Croatia and across the Adriatic Sea by ferry to Italy for a drive down the coast. Oli calls it quits at the seaside resort city of Rimini for the first time and refuses to start up. Roeser is initially at a loss.

But during the unplanned stop, he learns from people he's just met that there's a MotoGP race going on just a few kilometers away. Taking advantage of this opportunity, Roeser decides to go to the race and turn the brief interruption in his journey into something positive. "Shortly thereafter, it became clear that one of the ignition cables was responsible for the breakdown," he explains. "I was able to repair it myself. And for me, it felt like the ignition cable quite literally brought back the spark between us – our connection. As far as I'm concerned, cars have a soul."

After that, he joins a group of acquaintances in France, who are driving their very own "Croissant Rally" along narrow country roads, covering a distance of 300 kilometers in one day. "That was probably the best day on the road I'd ever had," gushes Roeser. The days pass by in a flash, the 928 covers kilometer after kilometer, Roeser meets new people and, more importantly, he develops an intensive relationship with the 928, quite possibly the last puzzle piece in his collection.

Has his search for Moonstone come to an end? Or has the journey itself been half the fun? "I don't know how much more digging I can do. I found the origin story – the lilac plant – in the conversation with Vlasta Hatter," says Roeser. "But this special connection remains. So it's probably no coincidence that Moonstone was launched the year I was born, which was 1979." As far as Justin Roeser is concerned, it

was meant to be.

Info

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Image Sublines

Path: In full bloom: A Porsche collection in Moonstone/Images/img_2.jpg
Title: Justin Roeser, 2025, Porsche AG
Subline: On the lookout: Justin Roeser has a connection with the Porsche color Moonstone. The 45-year-old searches for different models around the world.

Path: In full bloom: A Porsche collection in Moonstone/Images/img_3.jpg
Title: 928, 911 SC Targa, 2025, Porsche AG
Subline: Color twin: The first puzzle piece in Justin Roeser's collection was a 924 in Moonstone (left), which was eventually joined by a 911 SC Targa (right) in the same rare color.

Path: In full bloom: A Porsche collection in Moonstone/Images/img_4.jpg
Title: Vlasta Hatter, Designer, 2025, Porsche AG
Subline: The destination: Roeser visits designer Vlasta Hatter, the creator of his favorite color, in Stuttgart.

Path: In full bloom: A Porsche collection in Moonstone/Images/img_5.jpg
Title: 928, 2025, Porsche AG
Subline: The first tour: Roeser covered more than 10,000 kilometers in the 928 during his trip through Europe.

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