

Last Stop before Imola

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19/07/2022 Travelling in style to the Porsche Carrera Cup Deutschland: historic mountain passes, hairpin bends galore, and delectable award-winning cuisine captivated the participants of the Porsche Passion Drive 2022.

The first guests began arriving on the rooftop patio of the boutique hotel Schwan Locke in Munich´s Ludwigvorstadt district. Some of them had last seen each other the day before in the Nürburgring´s pit lane during the Porsche Sports Cup Deutschland, others at the Porsche Carrera Cup Deutschland at the famous Belgian Circuit de Spa-Francorchamps or at the Red Bull Ring in Austria. They may be rivals on track, but here, far from the marshals, they are a sworn crew. Race car drivers, team managers, mechanics, and enthusiasts all sharing one passion – sports cars.

They have all come to get into the right mindset for the upcoming race weekend in Imola and embark on the Porsche Passion Drive 2022: a trip through Bavaria, across Austria, and South Tyrol, along Lake Garda with Bologna as the final goal. It's driver's dream journey, packed with singular vistas and

extraordinary culinary stops along the way. Carlos Rivas, three-time ProAm champion of the Porsche Carrera Cup Deutschland is part of this group, just like Ahmad Alshehab of Kuwait – it's his first tour done in classic Porsches and his second season in the German one-make cup.

Community of racecar enthusiasts

Then there is Jan-Erik Slooten, well-known in motorsports and through social media, as well as Christof Langer, an experienced Porsche racecar driver, and David Prusa, team manager of CarTech Motorsport and longtime partner of Porsche customer racing. This list also includes Alex Fach, team manager of Fach Auto Tech and for the last ten years, part of the Porsche one-make cups. Kurt Ecke, experienced race mechanic and team manager, and Mike Essmann, the Porsche Sports Cup Deutschland champion of 2020, join in the drive too.

While the crew spent time together talking all things cars, the parking attendant a few stories below them in the hotel's underground car park was intensely busy – and happy – carefully guiding the rest of the twelve sports car derivatives into their various spaces. Be it the 992-generation GT3 Touring, 992 Targa, Turbo S Coupé, 991 Speedster, 991 Coupé, 993 convertible, the G Model, or the Boxster – the private cars belonging to this community of race car drivers and motorsports enthusiasts could not be more diverse. And their colours are no less compelling: Racing Yellow, Agategreymetallic, Guardsred, the list goes on. It's a real underground candy shop.

Introduction by Hurui Issak

The next morning, this speedy crew reported to their cars at 8:29 on the dot. Hurui Issak, Project Manager of the Porsche Carrera Cup Deutschland, gave an engaging introduction and, by way of formally declaring the start to this year's Porsche Passion Drive, he then taped the black and white logo on his 911 Targa.

As the metropolis of Munich gradually receded in the rearview mirror, the impressive mountain backdrop loomed closer, signalling the Alpine way of living as the landscape flew by. Window boxes full of geraniums, ski ads, wood carvings and fresh-baked pretzels, whose shape bring back fond childhood memories of Carrera slot tracks. Everybody in the group stays in touch via walkie-talkies. After a short decibel check in a tunnel, it is agreed that the G Model owned by Fabian Heydgen from the race team CarTech Motorsport by Nigrin arguably bellows the loudest. At 22, he is also the youngest participant in the Passion Drive, however, his 930 Carrera is at the same time the oldest Porsche in this group. Fabian had arrived in Munich straight from the Porsche Sports Cup Deutschland at the Nürburgring in his crew´s truck – that's real team spirit.

From Munich to South Tyrol

The first stage after Munich: South Tyrol. The steering manoeuvres so far have hardly posed a challenge, the wind in the open convertibles merely a breeze from a fan. All Porsches remain together in rank and file, nobody makes a breakaway to turn the Passion Drive into an ego trip. Just before lunch, the tour arrives at the Reschen Pass, a signature element of South Tyrol´s mountain valley Vinschgau. Rising from Reschen Lake is the tower of sunken church St. Katharina, a sight that garnered world-wide attention in a Netflix series and to this day is widely shared in the social media cosmos. But the backstory of the submerged church tower is not quite as idyllic: in 1950, the locks of Reschen Lake were dammed due to a construction project. The land of many evacuated families was flooded. Just the spire of the church has remained.

Given this sad reminder, the Porsche Passion crew decided to move on to another towering edifice – the Gault-Millau-crowned restaurant Flurin close by. Maximilian I, king of Rome, once resided here, though he was probably not able to indulge in the team's gourmet lunch of steamed / sautéed chard with local beef short ribs, topped-off with an apple tarte with rosewater and thyme. Meanwhile, another guest had joined the group: Bastian Schramm, Director Marketing Porsche Deutschland, always makes room in his busy calendar to join on occasions like this drive. True to his passion for classic sportscars – he arrived in a G Model in US Turbo spec.

After this regal repast, it was time meet a royal mountain pass: the Stelvio Pass with its 48 turns promising sheer joy to all rear-wheel drive cars. You could read a thrilled “finally” in the face of the race car drivers, as Bastian Schramm rallied the group to the challenge of this legendary mountain road which climbs 1,900 meters before the pass levels off at the top at 2,757 meters above sea level.

As far back as the early 1900s, the first motorists tackled the snaking turns. In the 1930s, racing greats such as Hans-Joachim Stuck, Rudolf Caracciola, and Tazio Nuvolari sped to the summit. And with the great cyclist Fausto Coppi sprinting memorably to the top during the first Giro d`Italia, flanked by towering walls of snow. Any passionate race cyclist has the Stelvio Pass on their bucket list.

Stopover in Bozen

Back in the valley, the drivers' ears have popped. Heading toward the next destination for the night, Hotel Hanswirth in Bozen, the crew are refreshed by pleasant straights and seemingly endless apple tree plantations. The four-star hotel is close to Juval castle — summer residence of legendary mountaineer Reinhold Messner and home to one of his numerous mountain museums. The hotel owner, himself a Porsche enthusiast, welcomes the team with a chilled drink served at the pool. Everyone is visibly exhausted by the drive, but happy and content at the same time.

The next few days are filled with spectacular drives along the craggy faces of the Dolomite range, spiced with sojourns at singular restaurants until the time comes to head toward the final destination of

the Passion Drive: the next race weekend of the Porsche Carrera Cup Deutschland – at Imola. All in all, it is the people who have made this trip special.

Bologna as final destination

During the last evening in Bologna, the first-placed finally reveals what is in store at the one-make cup and what may have been forgotten during this trip: the competition. Carlos Rivas is the first to arrive in Bologna. The Black Falcon driver is relaxing in front of the restaurant San Viglio, quite obviously enjoying a cold drink, and welcomes Ahmad Alshehab of Kuwait upon his arrival with a merry wink of his eye: “This is why we race in the Porsche Carrera Cup – we're fast as hell!” A round of laughs follow. An illustrious bunch of people, whose character underscores why passion and pain are linked and who never take themselves too seriously.

Be it Christof Langer, who has been racing in the Porsche series since 2016. Or the two businessmen from Luxemburg: one still sporting heat blisters on his fingers after refusing to give up trying to remove the protective film from his 993. The other, who instead of hopping on a plane for business trips to Germany, prefers sitting behind the wheel of his GT3 to get there. Then there is Mike Essmann, who drives his Cup Porsche to the Scandinavian North Cape in order to enjoy the icy solitude. And, finally, Jan-Erik Slooten, who entered his first motorcycle race at the tender age of 4 and competes in the Porsche Carrera Cup Deutschland for the team IronForce Racing by Phoenix. They are all united by a passion for motorsports – for which there is only one sports car that comes to mind.

MEDIA ENQUIRIES



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Consumption data

911 GT3 with Touring Package (Predecessor model)

*Further information on the official fuel consumption and the official specific CO_2 emissions of new passenger cars can be found in the "Leitfaden über den Kraftstoffverbrauch, die CO_2-Emissionen und den Stromverbrauch neuer Personenkraftwagen" (Fuel Consumption, CO_2Emissions and Electricity Consumption Guide for New Passenger Cars), which is available free of charge at all sales outlets and from DAT (Deutsche Automobil Treuhand GmbH, Helmuth-Hirth-Str. 1, 73760 Ostfildern-Scharnhausen, www.dat.de).

Image Sublines

Path: Last stop before Imola/Images/img_2.jpg
Title: Hurui Issak, 911 Targa, Porsche Passion Drive, 2022, Porsche AG
Subline: Hurui Issak, Project Manager of the Porsche Carrera Cup Deutschland

Path: Last stop before Imola/Images/img_3.jpg
Title: Bastian Schramm, r, Director Marketing Porsche Deutschland, Porsche Passion Drive, 2022, Porsche AG
Subline: Bastian Schramm, Director Marketing Porsche Deutschland

Path: Last stop before Imola/Images/img_5.jpg
Title: David Prusa, Ahmad Alshehab, l-r, Porsche Passion Drive, 2022, Porsche AG
Subline: David Prusa and Ahmad Alshehab (l-r)

Path: Last stop before Imola/Images/img_6.jpg
Title: Carlos Rivas, 993 Cabrio, Porsche Passion Drive, 2022, Porsche AG
Subline: Carlos Rivas

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