

“This car has changed me”

28/03/2025 Ever since product designer Nika Zupanc began driving a Taycan 4 Cross Turismo, the sports car has been a place of inspiration for her.

The dwindling daylight falls on the exposed concrete and high ceilings of Nika Zupanc's studio in Ljubljana, lending the space an almost sacred tranquility.

A black Cherry Lamp and several Ribbon Chairs, whose flowing backrests are sculptural in their design, are just some of her works on display between desks and shelves full of coffee-table books.

Zupanc points to a pair of glasses that she designed herself, the filigree detail of the frames reminiscent of a lace pattern like that at the hem of a dress. It's a homage to her Lolita Lamp, with which she celebrated her international breakthrough in 2008. Zupanc previously studied at the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Ljubljana, where the work of lecturer and architect Saša Mächtig had a profound influence on her.

Exhibitions in London and Milan

Mächtig, whose first work was added to the collection of the Museum of Modern Art in New York in the 1970s, passed on to her his conviction that design is a career of international relevance. It's no wonder that Zupanc presented her work at exhibitions in London and Milan after her studies.

A new era in design

At SaloneSatellite, a renowned design fair in Milan, she captured the attention of Dutch designer Marcel Wanders, who not only recognized Zupanc's talent, but also predicted the beginning of a new era in design marked by her works.

For the Lolita Lamp, Zupanc combined flowing forms with lace edging in pink – elements considered outdated at that time. “I love to break the rules and change the perception of colors and symbols,” says the designer. She chooses to work with motifs that are often ridiculed or dismissed as trivial such as bows, cherries, and lipsticks – with the aim of questioning old associations and defining new ones.

As was the case with an art car she created in collaboration with the Ljubljana Porsche Center in 2022.

An opulent rose design covers a 911 Carrera 4 GTS – a pattern you'd expect to find on a nostalgic tea set, rather than a thoroughbred sports car. Zupanc therefore follows a long tradition of female artists like Georgia O'Keeffe and Judy Chicago, who used flowers as a powerful symbol in unexpected contexts to question clichés and provide new perspectives on feminine strength and self-determination. “The abundance of large flowers on such a powerful car creates a sense of tension that's hard to put into words,” explains Zupanc. The design previously adorned her surfboard in her workshop and today also adorns the 911 GT3 RS of a friend who was visiting her that day in the Slovenian capital.

But a Taycan 4 Cross Turismo in Coffee Beige Metallic has played a special role in Zupanc's private life for the past year or so. “This car has changed me,” says Nika Zupanc, full of conviction. That's because the electric sports car has awakened in her new passions once hidden: the joy of winding roads, dynamic drives, and even race tracks. “It has opened up a whole new world.” Ever since she began driving the Taycan, she's been so inspired that she's now interested in exploring automotive design professionally.

She and her 18-year-old son, Boris, have begun testing their driving skills on the winding roads between Sodražica and Loški Potok, about 100 kilometers south of Ljubljana. Around 12 kilometers in length, this stretch of road winds its way through breathtaking wooded hills and offers a variety of impressive curves – a good place to practice driving techniques and precision. Zupanc longs for the challenge. “I love things that scare me at first.” Her dream is to participate in the Porsche Ice Experience in Finland. She's already acquired some initial racecourse experience on the Grobnik Circuit in Croatia and the Hungarian Balaton Park Circuit. Now she's ready to further expand her skill set.

But for Zupanc, driving is about more than just technique and speed. She also loves roads through picturesque landscapes. “What I enjoy most just might be that feeling of freedom – being wild at heart,” she says. The joy of movement also shapes her everyday routine, with the Taycan by her side as a true companion in her double life. Zupanc, who enjoys the close proximity to nature in Ljubljana, spends time in the forest and mountains, drives to the sea to go windsurfing, and enjoys peace and quiet at home. She also regularly travels almost 500 kilometers to Milan to meet with customers and supervise projects. “I spend so much time in the car that it has become a place of inspiration, where I can think about my work and develop new ideas,” she says.

Plus, the Taycan’s electric mobility offers plenty of benefits. “I can park the car at home and charge it overnight,” says the Slovenian, beaming. “It really doesn’t get any more practical than that.” But for her, it's about more than just convenience. The environmental aspect plays a key role, too. “The Taycan is a great example of how a sports car can be sustainable, without compromising passion and power. In the future, I want to apply this aspect to my designs.”

Info

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MEDIA ENQUIRIES



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Consumption data

911 Carrera 4 GTS (WLTP)*: Fuel consumption combined: 10.8 – 10.3 l/100 km; CO_2 emissions combined: 246 – 234 g/km; CO_2 class: G

Taycan 4 Cross Turismo (Predecessor model)

911 GT3 RS (WLTP)*: Fuel consumption combined: 13.2 l/100 km; CO_2 emissions combined: 299 g/km; CO_2 class: G

*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: “This car has changed me”/Images/img_2.jpg
Title: Surfboard designed by Nika Zupanc, Ljubljana, Slovenia, 2025, Porsche AG
Subline: Clear design style: Whether it's the design of a surfboard or the Ribbon Chair, Nika Zupanc adds an artistic gloss to everyday products.

Path: “This car has changed me”/Images/img_3.jpg
Title: Taycan 4 Cross Turismo, Nika Zupanc, Ljubljana, Slovenia, 2025, Porsche AG
Subline: In the Slovenian mountain landscape outside the city, Nika Zupanc discovered a new passion: Dynamic driving in her Taycan.

Link Collection

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