Generation next

20/06/2019 Celebrating the soul of Porsche with a road trip featuring all eight generations of the iconic 911.

With the launch of the eighth-generation Porsche 911 comes a time not just to reflect on the soul of this timeless machine, but also a time to celebrate its future. And what better way to celebrate than by gathering a representative from each era of 911 for an ultimate weekend road trip — dubbed the "Soul of Porsche".

Whilst in some places early and collectible 911 models are viewed simply as museum pieces, in Thailand, many owners take a rather different approach, using their 911s to explore the country's demanding and highly varied driving routes. That made it the perfect location to bring all eight generations of 911 together on public roads for the first time. And because of the event's historic nature, it only felt right to have the occasion documented by different generations of photographers, all of whom were supported by another iconic German brand, Leica.

Stefan Bogner, a long-time Porsche enthusiast and publisher of Curves Magazine — which brings together his passion for Porsche, design, and driving — is a designer by profession. He picked up a camera five years ago because the photographers he was hiring were too slow for the reportage style he wanted, and it didn't take long before his unique style gained worldwide recognition — Curves Magazine is now published in two languages and is as popular in Seattle as it is in Stuttgart.

While on the other side of the photography spectrum is Yik Keat, a young Singaporean urban street photographer and videographer with almost 300,000 Instagram followers. Having always dreamed of owning a Porsche, he was unfazed by the 280 km journey, savoring the opportunity to capture the evolution of the 911's iconic silhouette.

And there were plenty of examples to photograph, thanks to the surprising number of rare and unusual Porsches that have made their way to Thailand over the years.

Joining the drive with the new 911 Carrera S (type 992) was a truly eclectic mix of predecessors, namely: a 912, 911 Club Sport and 964 Speedster — the trio belonging to Porsche collector Isarin Chaleiysilpa — a 996 GT3 RS with just 800 km on the odometer, a pristine 997 Turbo and a 993 RS. The latter thought to be the only one in the country.

Maetup T-suwan, whose father has owned a range of 911s over the years, also brought along his 991 GT3, a car that sees daily use, while the first 992 in the country was provided by AAS Auto Service, Thailand's sole authorised Porsche importer and distributor.

The journey started in the southern city of Surratthani, on the Gulf of Siam, and wound across the Kra isthmus, through Krabi and on to Phuket on the Andaman coast. From bustling Surratthani the roads

scrawl through vast plantations, dense tropical jungle, past vertiginous limestone karsts, and stands of rubber trees impenetrable to midday light, before arriving at the dramatic vistas of Phang Nga Bay — made famous by the iconic James Bond film, “The Man with the Golden Gun”.

The kinship between drivers was palpable over meals of spicy southern Thai food, with lively conversation and plenty of laughter; a true 911 family formed by a cross-generational passion.

Maetup T-suwan took possession of his GT3 late last year. His father has had a number of 911s, and had said, “believe me son, Porsche makes the best car in the world.”

“At first I wasn’t sure, but I think he’s right,” said Maetup, in a refreshing case of generational accord – something that seems all too rare in today’s world.

Isarin Chaleiysilpa could have chosen to drive any of his three vehicles, but instead spent a lot of time behind the wheel of the 912, enthusing about its amazing poise and effortless speed, and marveling at the capabilities of a car the same age as him.

Unsurprisingly, Vutthikorn Inthraphuvasak, fresh from a race win in his Panther/AAS Motorsport GT3 in the Blancpain GT World Challenge Asia, favoured the more modern machinery: “I’m a motorsport man, so I like the technology of the newest 911s. When you drive the GT2 RS, you’re going to get the adrenaline levels up. It is faster than my race car!” He also praised the everyday usability of the newer 911s, echoing the consensus of the rest of the group.

And while all the participants clearly had an appreciation for the newer cars, it was the younger members of the group that were more noticeably enthralled by the modern tech on offer. Natthapon Sahawat, a 21-year-old travelling with his father, was all smiles after driving the 992. “I love the interior,” he enthused, “but I like the exterior design too, it looks amazing. My generation likes the wider body.”

However, after giving himself a brief moment to consider what he’d just experienced behind the wheel of the 992, he explained that the real lure of the 911 remains with its usability. “I want an everyday drive. Something that’s sporty but not hard to drive” — an attribute that is attractive to all generations.

Indeed, whether it is the new 992 Carrera S, Speedster or any of the sportier Club Sport, RS or GT3 models, the soul of the 911 shines through. And while each generation improves on the previous one, with eight generations of 911 together on real roads, it is obvious that it is in the DNA of the 911 to be not only sporty, but also to be genuinely useable day-to-day — a conclusion, that even on the exotic coast of the south of Thailand, is quite frankly, inescapable.

Consumption data

911 Carrera S (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: media/Images/img_1.jpg
Title: Eight generations Porsche 911, Thailand, 2019, Porsche AG
Subline: 911 Carrera S (992), 911 GT3 (991), 911 Turbo (997), 911 GT3 RS (996), 911 Carrera RS (993), 911 Speedster (964), 911 Carrera CS, Porsche 912, l-r

Path: media/Images/img_2.jpg
Title: Stefan Bogner, Yik Keat, l-r, photographers, 2019, Porsche AG
Subline: Photographers Stefan Bogner and Yik Keat (l-r)

Path: media/Images/img_6.jpg
Title: Participants, Thailand, 2019, Porsche AG
Subline: Lavaron Sangsnit, Vutthikorn Inthraphuvasak, Sihabutr Xoomsai, Natthapon Sahawat, Isarin Chaleiysilpa, Patta Sahawat, Vutthisak Inthraphuvasak, Maetup T. Suwan, Wisawa Sriratanaprapas, Thiptawat Sethabutr (l-r)

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