

The road to Christmas – in a Porsche Macan Turbo Electric

23/12/2025 Driving Germany's Silberstraße: a 140-kilometre ribbon through Saxony's Ore Mountains – where mining heritage, forest craftsmanship and festive magic all intertwine.

In the fairytale forests of Saxony, lies a road paved with silver. Not literally of course, but with a little imagination – and in soft winter light – the tarmac has the sheen of well-polished silverware, reflected in the Ice Grey Metallic paintwork of the Macan Turbo Electric.

We're somewhere in the Ore Mountains, or Erzgebirge, in the southeast of Germany, astride the border with the Czech Republic. The Ores might not have the sky-scraping majesty of the Alps or other high ranges, but what they lack in altitude they make up for with postcard scenes and hidden treasures. It was here, more than 800 years ago, that miners first struck silver – a discovery that shaped the region both physically and culturally. In the 1500s the Erzgebirge became the most important source of silver ore in Europe, its riches funding entire cities and shaping a way of life that endures today.

The famous Silberstraße is a 140-kilometre trading and transport corridor first carved out in the 12th

century. Now an official scenic or holiday route, it's not a single road but a network of several old trails – threading across the mountains from Zwickau to Dresden and the former vaults of Saxon Kings.

Start in Zwickau

In Zwickau, the spirits of an industrial past still linger in red-brick factories and cobbled yards. From here, the old route heads into dense forests, where blades of morning sunlight slice between the trees and strike the silvery Macan. The car moves quickly and quietly – so quietly, you can almost hear the ghostly clanks of miner's axes and the rattle of ore carts. Near Hartenstein we pass one of several old mines, now turned into museums and experiences.

The timber from these forests, dense with spruce and beech, once held up the mines and their tunnels. Later it supported livelihoods. When the mineral deposits eventually dwindled, miners turned their skills to new crafts including woodcarving and toymaking.

Porsche Werkzeugbau in Schwarzenberg

We reach Schwarzenberg, a medieval town dominated by its ivory tower castle. But it's also home to a lesser-known strand of automotive history: Porsche Werkzeugbau, as it is now known, is one of Porsche's specialised in-house toolmaking divisions – essentially, the place where Porsche designs and builds the high-precision tools, dies and body-panel forming equipment that shape its cars.

For more than 125 years, large-scale tools have been manufactured in Schwarzenberg. Contract work for Porsche also has a long tradition here: in the late 1930s, forming tools for the VW Beetle designed by Ferdinand Porsche were produced in Schwarzenberg. In 2015, Porsche AG acquired the toolmaking division of robotics specialist Kuka and has since advanced its technology.

Seiffen: Unofficial capital of Christmas

A slight detour down towards the Czech border takes us to the town of Seiffen. Nicknamed Spielzeugdorf – The Toy Village – it's Germany's unofficial capital of Christmas. Every street glows with fairy lights and flickering candles. Shop windows are packed with wooden figurines, toy trains and nativity scenes. Nutcracker soldiers stand to attention in bright, regimented rows. For hundreds of years, Seiffen's woodworkers – descendants of miners who swapped ore for timber – have crafted the toys and decorations that make this place famous.

We're here for some Christmas shopping and a visit to Erzgebirgische Volkskunst Richard Glässer, perhaps Seiffen's most celebrated maker of Erzgebirge pyramids: multi-tiered wooden carousels depicting angels, wise men, forest animals, scenes of mining life and more. Traditionally, heat rising

from candles turns the windmill-like blades atop each pyramid, spinning the carousel below. More recently, smooth electric motors do the job – a neat metaphor for the silky, effortless power of the Macan Turbo Electric waiting outside.

Michéle Drechsel leads us through a side door for a behind-the-scenes tour. "So this is where it all happens," she says, entering what can only be described as a real-life Santa's workshop. Lathes hum. Wood shavings carpet the floor. People hunch over desks, assembling the figures from tiny parts – all carved and painted by hand. Angel wings, crowns, shepherd crooks and more; all created thanks to a lineage of skill that stretches back through centuries.

We leave with a carefully chosen pyramid and rejoin the Silberstraße toward Freiberg, Saxony's historic silver capital, and then Dresden, where the Striezelmarkt – one of the world's oldest Christmas markets – glows beneath Baroque buildings paid for by the precious metals mined along this route. In the centre of the square, a giant wooden pyramid spins above the stalls. Glühwein, roasted chestnuts and bratwurst perfume the air; carols drift between twinkling lights. This might be peak Christmas – but we're not finished yet.

Arrival at the Porsche Werk Leipzig

The following morning, we turn north toward Leipzig and the Porsche factory where the Panamera and the Macan are built. The iconic, diamond-like form of the Porsche Experience Centre offers a futuristic endpoint. Delivering a hand-carved Christmas gift to such a modern Porsche location feels oddly poetic: Saxony's oldest craft greeting its newest.

The Macan made swift progress across the Erzgebirge and its smooth, inviting roads. But perhaps even more inviting are the two Porsche Charging Lounges at Himmelkron and Estenfeld, making the journey from Zuffenhausen to the Silberstraße and back a seamless experience. These smart, rapid-charging hubs are open 24/7 and accessed via the Porsche Charging Service. They provide a warm, modern space with Wi-Fi, restrooms and refreshments. Typically, Porsche Charging Lounges offer up to six 400 kW chargers, and with the Macan able to go from 10 to 80 per cent State of Charge (SoC) in 21 minutes, there's barely time for an espresso. Between the Charging Lounges and Porsche Destination Charging at the Experience Center Leipzig, replenishing the Macan's battery was an effortless part of this Christmas road trip.

By the time dusk settles across the Erzgebirge the Silver Route reveals itself as far more than a themed drive. It's a living seam of European history: a place where mining forged identity, woodcraft reimagined it, and age-old skills continue to define it. At this time of year, it feels like driving straight into the very heart of Christmas.

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Consumption data

Macan Turbo (WLTP)*: Consumo energia elettrica ciclo misto (gamma modelli): 20.6 – 18.3 kWh/100 km; Emissioni CO_2 ciclo misto (gamma modelli): 0 g/km; Stato [StandHeute]

*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).

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