



Porsche Taycan relay record on the Indian Golden Quadrilateral

01/07/2024 Over a decade after the Golden Quadrilateral reduced driving times across India, the sub-continent's most important highway network is now busier than ever. Some of the best drivers in the country teamed up with evo India magazine to drive a fleet of Porsche Taycans, non-stop, to set the new EV relay record of 100 hours and 43 minutes.

India | Roads electrify economic growth and in 2000, the Golden Quadrilateral was conceived to connect the four major hubs in India. From Mumbai, the financial capital of the country in the western part, to Chennai in the South, Kolkata in the East, and Delhi in the North, the administrative and political capital of India, before circling back to Mumbai, this highway spans 6000 kilometres.

Colloquially called the G-Quad, these network of roads have played a pivotal role in the world's fourth largest economy, and a natural consequence of it is the dramatically increased traffic. Traversing this network of highways in a non-stop relay record, driving through day and night, required assembling the finest drivers in the country.

The driving team

evo India, the country's leading enthusiast motoring magazine, assembled a team of the best race and rally drivers in India and partnered them with highly experienced automotive enthusiasts who happen to be sports car and supercar owners. This team of drivers joined the highly trained editorial staff of the publication to form the core group that would attempt to set this non-stop EV relay record. Porsche India provided the drivers with a fleet of Taycans that would be used for the drive.

"We are blessed to be able to call upon such a strong network of professional drivers and enthusiasts. Of course, the opportunity to spend a week road-tripping across India in a Porsche, while engaging in proper investigative journalism on the feasibility of electric performance cars in India, meant 30 drivers signed up immediately to the task at hand." said Sirish Chandran, editorial director of evo India.

A wide spread

While the Porsche Taycan has been on sale for a few years in India, the current fleet of press, marketing and demonstrator cars is the strongest due to the growing popularity of the sport sedan. For the record attempt, Porsche India provided the driving team with the full range – Taycan, 4S, GTS, Turbo, Turbo S, and even a pair of Cross Turismos.

"From a luxury family car to sub-3 second rocketships, it's incredible how wide the Taycan portfolio is and that there is a noticeable change in character between each of these cars." said Anand Mohan, Editor - Digital and Special Projects, evo India.

Further support came from key Porsche Centres around the country with not just cars but also drivers who would participate in the relay. The drive started from Porsche Centre Mumbai, and the dealerships in Bengaluru, Kochi, Chennai, Kolkata, Delhi, Chandigarh, and Ahmedabad pitched in to make it a collective exercise unlike any other in the country.

The plan

A relay record requires a baton switch. The fleet of Taycans would be strategically placed 250-300km apart on the Golden Quadrilateral, manned by the team of expert drivers selected by evo India. Each driver was tasked with three things – collecting the cars from the nearest Porsche Centre, getting to the relay point and topping up to 100 per cent, and then picking up the 'Soul Electrified' baton to electrify the next leg of the relay. It was crucial to arrive at the relay point well in time and charge the car so that the relay doesn't slow down. It needed responsible drivers who would play a vital role in setting an impressive time for the relay record, all while being responsible drivers and sticking to the laws of the land. With each driver briefed on their role, the plan was in place for the evo India team to flag off the drive.

4:00am – April 28, 2024

The India Book of Records would monitor and certify the drive and in the presence of the adjudicator the drive was flagged off from Porsche Centre Mumbai at 4 in the morning on the Sunday. The stopwatch had started and would only stop when the Soul Electrified baton got back to Porsche Centre Mumbai after four days and clocking a little over 6000 kilometres.

There were three constants in the driving team – Sirish Chandran driving leg 1 from Mumbai to Chennai; Aatish Mishra, assistant editor of evo India, driving from Chennai to Kolkata; Anand Mohan from Kolkata to Delhi and finally Sirish taking over the baton for the last leg from Delhi to Mumbai. The guest drivers had already set off on their transport legs of the relay record and were awaiting the baton for their legs of the record, ensuring the relay drive maintained good average speeds and also gave a breather to the core team at evo India.

“What surprised me was how effortlessly we were touring across India in a Taycan. One thing I figured was that if you could drive the Taycan across the east coast all the way from Chennai to Kolkata, you can drive it anywhere.” said Aatish.

Picking up the pace

While this highway network is just about a decade old, India’s rapid growth meant road widening and repair work were being carried out all along the route. Further, the heavy traffic slowed down the pace on the first two legs of the journey but as the relay crossed the state of Bihar and powered into India’s most populous state of Uttar Pradesh, things changed for the better. The state has the largest network of expressways and that helped increase the pace.

“We were very conscious of sending the right message and nowhere did we exceed the speed limit,” said Anand.

But wide-open expressways meant the team could set the cruise control to 100 or 120kmph wherever permitted and marvel at the range of the Taycans – so much so that the change over distances were increased to take advantage of the 400-plus kilometre real world range and thus clock higher average speeds.

8:43am – May 02, 2024

Exactly 100 hours and 43 minutes, the Soul Electrified baton returned back to Porsche Centre Mumbai. It had passed through 12 states and one union territory if India covering a total distance of 6021km.

“These Taycans are expensive cars. They look and feel expensive. And that means you approach

unfamiliar and hazardous roads with a healthy dose of caution. Except the Taycan doesn't ask you to change your way of driving." said Sirish. Over expressways, under construction highways, plenty of speed breakers and even a few gravel tracks, the only hiccup the team at evo India experienced was a puncture. "Setting the new record for electric cars on the Indian Golden Quadrilateral also answers the question many cynics ask – where are the roads in India to drive sports cars in general and an electric sports car in particular. With an EV like the Taycan, you can drive all over India and enjoy every single kilometre of it!"

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