

Bought to be driven

24/11/2026 Every year, a convoy of Porsches crosses Bass Strait for the Targa Tasmania Tour. They don't go for the timing sheets. Three long-serving owners, and one famous friend, explain why.

Before the Riana stage, Alyssa Rawson puts Fleetwood Mac's "Rhiannon" on, loud. Then her husband Peter pulls the 911 GT3 RS onto the stage, and she goes back to the route notes.

The Rawsons, from Northbridge in Sydney, have just finished their sixth Tour at Targa Tasmania. Tour is the half of Targa that doesn't appear on the results sheets. Crews drive the same closed roads as the competition field, 41 stages over five days from Launceston to Hobart, in groups of between five and ten behind a Tour Leader. The maximum permitted speed is 130km/h, and nobody is timed.

Peter drives the stages. Alyssa navigates, then takes the wheel on the transport sections between them, and they have their own system of hand signals in the cabin.

"I'm very good at thumping his thigh to get him to slow down," she says.

Peter says that's why Targa works for them when other things don't. He takes his cars to Eastern Creek,

Phillip Island, and Bathurst, but going round and round in the passenger seat at a track day holds nothing for Alyssa. Navigating Targa does. In the towns, it's Alyssa who gets the rock-star welcome from the kids lining the street.

Three Porsches, six Tours

Porsche has hosted owners at Targa for more than a decade. It almost single-handedly created the Tour. And it's a key reason some owners choose the Porsche they choose.

The Rawson's Porsche journey tells the story of their Targas. The first was a 992 Turbo S, in a year when Tasmania "absolutely bucketed down" and the all-wheel drive came into its own. Next came a Lizard Green 991.2 GT3 RS, which Peter now calls "more a track car than a Targa car". This year they were back in their Steel Grey 992 GT3 RS.

Six years in, Targa still isn't routine. Ten of this year's stages were new for 2026, so the route book needed studying again. The Rawsons advise first-timers to watch the exclamation marks in the notes.

What brings them back is the people as much as the roads.

"We've actually become friends with quite a large group now, and we catch up with them regularly," Alyssa says. "And when we go through the towns, the spectators are just hooting and hollering at you. They're so into it."

Bought for this

Brendan Green, from the Sydney suburb of Hurstville, did his first Targa event in a Carrera at Targa High Country in 2016. He has owned two GT3s since, and bought his current black 992.1 GT3 "purely to do these sorts of events".

He chose the GT3 over the RS on purpose. On a Tour, he says, you rarely get to put the RS's extra power to the road.

Green tracks his car too and says Targa is a different thing entirely.

“On a circuit, you drive the same corner lap after lap. In Tasmania you never know what's over the next crest. I find it the most enjoyable way to drive a good car, because the unknown is the unknown," he says.

"You're just so tuned into what's going on. It's just the best fun you could have in a car."

Green compares a short event like the Adelaide Rally to a sprint and Targa Tasmania to a marathon. His

favourite memory is one of the hard days: a dark, wet morning out of Strahan, wipers on their fastest setting, following Porsche's own Luke Youlden through the West Coast stages.

For anyone nervous about a first Targa, Green explains how the Porsche Tour is run.

Each group has a lead driver, and groups are matched to experience.

"Their job is to get you there safely," he says. At the end of each day, everyone is back at base swapping stories about who they followed, and then they do it all again the next morning.

This year, the navigator's seat was a family affair—Green did the 2026 event with his son.

The famous friend

One of the Porsches in this year's Tour was a 911 Carrera S supplied by Porsche Cars Australia, driven by Shane Jacobson. The actor, best known as the star of Kenny, has been coming to Targa for years, and he made no secret of how the week had gone.

"We're on arguably the best roads in the world, in not even arguably the best cars in the world," he says.

"I'm certainly going to keep that Porsche."

Has he been kind to it?

"I've been pretty gentle, actually. Well, until they read the telemetry."

Jacobson has a theory about the midlife crisis, too.

"I met a guy the other day who hasn't done Targa," he says. "He's the one in a midlife crisis. I'm going to do this for the rest of my life. That's not a crisis. That's a pleasure."

Get off the fence

So what would Green and Jacobson tell a Porsche owner who's thinking about coming to the Targa Tour?

Green keeps it short: "Get off the fence and go."

Jacobson puts money on it.

"If you come here and have a bad time, I'll give you $100," he says.

"And if they say they didn't enjoy it, they're lying. So, I'm not giving them a hundred bucks."

Info

- Panel: Tour at Targa Tasmania 2027
- When: 17–21 November 2027, Launceston to Hobart
- What: non-competitive and untimed, on the same closed roads as the competition field
- How: your own road car, in groups of between five and ten behind a Tour Leader; 130km/h maximum permitted speed
- Details and entries: targa.com.au

Images: Dan Allen, Targa Tasmania

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