

Sixty years of the Porsche 911 Targa: the exhilaration of open-top driving – redefined

25/07/2026 The Porsche 911 Targa celebrates its 60th anniversary. Since its world premiere at the IAA 1965, it has embodied a unique blend of driving pleasure, open-top driving and safety.

- Targa roll bar quickly became a style element

- Evolution of the roof design: from soft top to glass roof

- The new 911 Targa 4 GTS carries on its legacy with T-Hybrid technology for the first time

The Porsche 911 Targa celebrates its 60th anniversary. Since its world premiere at the IAA 1965, it has embodied a unique blend of driving pleasure, open-top driving and safety. The body variant that was new at the time combines the stability of a coupé with the driving experience of a cabriolet. With the current 911 Targa 4 GTS, the concept remains contemporary and combines tradition with the

latest technology.

Porsche introduced the 911 Targa in 1965, with its market launch following more than a year later. Whether soft top, glass or tilting roof – each stage of evolution was an expression of its time. From the outset, the targa is more than just a body variant – it is a way of life. With its flexible roof concept, it combines the stability of a coupé with the feeling of freedom that a cabriolet brings. This versatility, combined with its timeless design, makes it undeniably a future classic even 60 years later. "The 911 Targa is a milestone in Porsche history – a synthesis of technical innovation, timeless design and pure driving pleasure. For six decades, it has inspired drivers around the world with his unique combination of freedom and safety," says Achim Stejskal, Head of Porsche Heritage and Museum. "It is a reminder of successes in motorsport around the world, but also of the fact that Porsche has always had the courage to think differently." The new 911 Targa 4 GTS with T-Hybrid technology continues this story: as a combination of aesthetics, function and progress. As the targa, that has survived by constantly reinventing itself.

The development of the roof systems

Porsche presents the 911 Targa at the IAA in Frankfurt in 1965. The idea behind the car is as simple as it is ingenious: A fixed roll-over bar provides protection in the event of an accident, while the removable roof section brings the driving experience of a cabriolet to life. From the mid-1960s onwards, the targa concept can be found in not only all generations of the Porsche 911, but also other cars such as the Porsche 914 and the Carrera GT. This makes the targa roll bar a style element, with the combination of function, safety and aesthetics seen as a "typical Porsche design". Until 1993, the 911 Targa has the traditional roll bar, while cars from model year 1995 up to and including the Porsche 911 of the 997 generation have a glass roof. With the 911 Targa of the 991 generation, the iconic roof bar design returns – combined with a fully automatic tilting roof that folds behind the rear seats.

The "targa" – a tribute to motorsport

When it comes to giving the new car a name, Harald Wagner, then Porsche Sales Director, suggests the name "targa". The inspiration behind this was the legendary Targa Florio long-distance race in Sicily, where Porsche celebrated great success with eleven overall victories. The term quickly became synonymous with a completely new type of open-top driving.

Six decades of evolution: the development of the targa

In August 1965, Porsche files a patent application for the targa concept. From autumn 1966, the new body variant will be added to the 911 series. The targa is now available as a second option in addition to the coupé. From late summer 1967 onwards, a permanently installed, heated rear window made of safety glass is available as an option. This will soon become the standard and will significantly influence

the appearance of the targa until 1993. The first models have a folding plastic window at the rear. The soft top can be opened with a zip and its four options offer the driver a particularly versatile driving experience: completely closed, completely open, with just the centre roof section removed or with the rear window folded down. When the roof is completely open, you feel like you are sitting in a cabriolet. In 1969, Porsche responds to the desire for more comfort by replacing the plastic window with a pane of glass as standard.

G-Series and the long-lasting place of the targa

Even with the launch of the G-Series in summer 1973 – the second generation of the 911 – the targa remains an integral part of the model range. New bumpers with bellows mark the influence of legal requirements from the US. The targa roof remains untouched from a technical perspective, the only difference being the appearance of the roof bar: it is no longer only available in stainless steel, but also in black.

The 964 with 85 per cent new parts

In the autumn of 1988, Porsche presents a thoroughly revised generation of models – the 964 generation. Almost everything is new, but the design remains familiar. The 911 Carrera 2 and 911 Carrera 4 quickly follow in 1989, featuring both drive concepts and all three body variants: coupé, cabriolet and targa. The targa retains its familiar characteristics: a roof bar, removable roof section and fixed rear window. By 1993, a total of 87,663 targa cars are produced in the first three generations of the 911.

A new beginning: the 993 generation reimagines the targa

The 993 generation see the targa concept take a turning point from 1995. The classic roll-over bar disappears and the roof line remains closed. Instead, a tinted glass surface in the form of a sliding roof runs from the windscreen frame to the rear lid. Segments can be electrically opened and retracted – a new form of open-top driving. The interior remains flooded with light, and wind noise when closed is now significantly reduced. The silhouette of the coupé is retained, which gives the targa of this generation a unique character.

The 996 and convenient access to luggage

The fifth generation of the 911, known internally as the 996, sees the switchover to water-cooled engines in 1997. The targa follows in 2001, with an enhanced glass roof and a new detail: the rear window can now be opened. This makes it easier to access the extended storage compartment and gives the targa an additional practical feature. With more than 1.5 square metres of glass, it offers the

most generous roof of its kind yet seen in any series of the 911.

The 997 generation – two variants of the targa

In 2006, the 911 Targa (997) is launched, with a feistier look and having undergone some technical refinement. The glass roof remains, but is more lightweight thanks to the use of special glass. A new addition is the two high-gloss polished aluminium strips that frame the roof laterally. The targa is now only available in two variants: with all-wheel drive as the Targa 4 and Targa 4S. This means that the model is positioned even more strongly as a sporty and elegant alternative in the portfolio.

A return to its roots with new technology: the 911 Targa (991)

In 2014, the 991 generation targa returns to its original idea – but with completely new technology. The wide roof bar is back, as is the removable roof over the front seats, which now hides itself away completely automatically. The choreography on display when the mechanism moves makes the roof system an eye-catcher. The targa enters the modern era without denying its origins.

The progression of an idea: the new 911 Targa 4 GTS

With the 911 Targa 4 GTS, Porsche is systematically guiding the targa concept into the future. The latest model variant combines the characteristic features with a new drive concept: wide roll-over bar, fully automated roof section, frameless rear window. For the first time in the history of the model, a T-Hybrid system with an electric exhaust turbocharger is used. This enables a technical evolution that rebalances performance, efficiency and responsiveness. The GTS remains a targa in the classic sense – it can be experienced as an open-top car, with a secure structure and distinct lines. At the same time, it opens a new chapter: as a connection between past and present, and between tradition and the breakthrough of new technologies. The idea of the targa – between the coupé and cabriolet – is not only retained, but is reinterpreted.

MEDIA ENQUIRIES



Astrid Böttinger

Spokesperson Heritage and Porsche Museum
+49 (0) 170 / 911 2065
astrid.boettinger@porsche.de

Link Collection

Link to this article
https://newsroom.porsche.com/en/press-kits/Exhibition-Kit-2025/60Y-911-Targa.html

Dr. Ing. h.c. F. Porsche Aktiengesellschaft
Porscheplatz 1
70435 Stuttgart