

Targa Classica to Turn One

30/03/2026 Across four autumn days in Victoria, 95 crews set out on a journey defined not by speed, but by precision. In a 911 Carrera 4S Cabriolet, one Porsche team discovered the quiet discipline - and immense joy - of regularity rallying, among friends old and new.

From city streets to country rhythm

Leaving Melbourne behind, the road turns south toward the Mornington Peninsula, where traffic fades into vineyards, farmland and wide coastal skies. Autumn light settles across the landscape, the air cool and clear enough to sharpen the senses.

At first, it feels like any road trip. Then the details begin to matter. Distances are measured. Times are noted. Conversation narrows to numbers, directions and instructions.

We are no longer simply travelling. We are driving with intent.

Precision, not speed

Targa Classica celebrates a different kind of driving. This premier four-day regularity rally honours classic and modern automotive culture. Rather than racing outright, crews aim to hit precise target times and speeds over defined sections of road. Too fast or too slow - even slightly - and penalty points accumulate. What sounds simple quickly proves otherwise. Gradients alter momentum, corners interrupt rhythm and every small input suddenly matters.

From the beginning the experience belongs to two people. My wife, Kerry, and I share the roles of driver and navigator. The navigator interprets the road book and calls distances and timing points. The driver listens and responds.

Gradually a rhythm forms between the numbers and the road ahead. Regularity rallying rewards patience, communication and trust.

A 911 in its element

Our driving companion is a 991.1 generation, 911 Carrera 4S Cabriolet. It proves perfectly suited to the task. The steering communicates clearly, the chassis remains composed over undulating country roads and the all-wheel drive offers quiet reassurance in all conditions.

With the roof lowered, the flat-six becomes part of the soundscape - its distinctive growl echoing through forests and across farmland. What stands out most is its balance. The car responds cleanly to small inputs, making it easy to settle into the measured pace regularity driving demands.

Performance, as Porsche has long understood, is not only about speed. It is about composure and control.

The people make this rally

Scrutineering begins among a wonderfully eclectic collection of machinery - from delicate classics to modern performance cars. Ninety-five crews have entered, including more than twenty Porsche teams.

Conversation begins immediately. Stories, advice and admiration are shared with gentle rivalry. Practice runs introduce the discipline of regularity driving. At first the stopwatch feels unforgiving, yet by the third attempt the rhythm begins to make sense.

That evening at Point Leo Estate – Targa Classica's starting location – while overlooking sculpture gardens and the sea, laughter travels easily across the tables. The rally has already begun - socially.

Finding the groove

Competition starts beneath grey skies as the rally traces the twisting roads around Western Port Bay and into Gippsland. The tests demand concentration. Maintaining a precise average speed across changing terrain requires constant adjustment through every crest, corner and straight.

Day Two brings forests, farmland and unexpected test venues - a karting circuit at Stony Creek, the sweeping curves of Bryant Park and tracks through recreational reserves.

Roof lowered. Sun breaking through the clouds. Between the cryptic calculations there are moments of pure driving pleasure.

Along the route, schools and small towns greet the rally with waves and cheers. Drivers respond with the traditional toot and wave - a ritual that never loses its charm.

From stopwatch to spectacle

By the third day the rally settles into its rhythm as the route turns towards the Yarra Valley. Spectators gather beside the road and school children wave enthusiastically.

Inside the cockpit everything now feels natural. Driver, navigator and machine begin to move together. More importantly, friendships deepen among the crews. Shared meals reveal the strength of the Porsche presence and the warmth of the entire Targa community.

The finish in Melbourne arrives just as the city shifts into F1 mode for the Australian Grand Prix. Soon the stopwatches disappear and crews gather for the final celebration.

Porsche teams feature strongly in the results. In the Classic class, Rory Johnston and Leo Edward finish second in their 1958 Porsche 356 A. In the Legend class, Brendan and Tracey Morter take overall victory in their GT3 RS.

Across four days we travel more than 1,300 kilometres and complete dozens of timing tests. More importantly, we shared the road with an extraordinary group of people.

Why it matters

Events like Targa Classica remind us why we drive. Not for outright speed, but for shared journeys, conversation and camaraderie. More than a machine, the Porsche 911 4S Cabriolet is the perfect companion for life on the open road.

Targa Classica is the most exquisite mix of classic cars, beautiful venues and colourful characters, blended with skill and love by its organisers, the Lawson family.

Info

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