

One Porsche Drive – 3

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24/08/2015 The new US company headquarters are the largest foreign investment in the history of Porsche. It is presented in a series of articles. Part 3: How the customer experience centre captivates the minds of thousands of people.

Porsche expects about 30,000 visitors a year to the new customer experience centre with its attractive architecture and well-conceived facilities. The direct connection to the largest civilian airport in the world, which handles about 95 million passengers a year, has a highly positive impact. Almost 80 per cent of the US population can reach OPD within a flight time of two and a half hours. In a vast country such as the USA, that can by no means taken for granted.

Every few minutes, big airliners glide over the Porsche grounds covering a total area of eleven hectares. The main feature of the customer experience centre is a 2.6 kilometre long road, which winds through the different areas and courtyards of the entire grounds and even passes through the main building. "You often hear the sound of Porsche sports cars when the window is open," enthused Tamika Money.

"Our customers experience very intensely the fascination of Porsche"

The route includes six modules for acquiring driving skills under the guidance of 10 full-time and 40 part-time instructors: the Handling Circuit, the Off-Road Course, the Dynamics Area, the Low Friction Handling Circuit, the Low Friction Circle and the only Kick Plate in North America. This is a circular, specially coated plate on which drivers can drift and driving behaviour can be simulated under various weather conditions.

"When they drive at the car's limits, our customers experience very intensely the fascination of Porsche at the extreme. They also notice how safe it is to drive the cars at theirs limits," said PCNA Chief Instructor Brian Cunningham. Visitors can hire a car on site from the present company fleet – from the Macan through to the 911 GT3. Demand is high. The waiting list for driver trainings was already about four months at the opening of One Porsche Drive.

Besides drives on the race circuit, Porsche now offers the possibility of visiting the Human Performance Center in Atlanta. This is a type of sport science laboratory where customers can test and enhance their personal fitness under expert instruction. Visitors can pursue their passion for sports cars on several driving simulators or in the Personal Design Studio where each visitor can build his or her own personalised Porsche model.

OPD also houses a modern conference centre comprising venues to cater for all kinds of events on an area of 1,200 square metres as well as a gourmet restaurant called "356". Its interior decoration is based on the design of the legendary sports car classic. From the restaurant guests have a direct view onto runway "826RIGHT".

"Together we managed to produce a brilliant solution"

The Classic Car Gallery is ideal for fans of classic Porsche cars. It contains an exhibition of customer and museum cars as well as a restoration workshop. "We are especially proud of our technicians and engineers, which is why we integrated a technical training centre at our new location to train employees from our 189 Porsche dealerships in the United States and the 16 dealerships in Canada," said Detlev von Platen. "It won't be long now until we and our experts can offer training courses for more than 1,000 technicians."

It was an enormous challenge to combine all these various sections in a single building complex. "The architects and construction companies were faced with the difficult task of designing and integrating all the necessary functions in a genuine multi-purpose building with an adjacent test track so that it meets the expectations of our visitors and the needs of our employees," said Simon Kuhnimhof, who managed the construction project together with Kerstin Endress and Daniel Barcham before the move.

"But together we managed to produce a brilliant solution."

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