

Driving

The Sun King

The sky's the limit—in just twenty seconds. That's as long as it takes for the roof of the new 911 Turbo Cabriolet to open, and then the fun starts. With 480 hp and a top track speed of 310 km/h (190 mph), Porsche's latest model fulfills the enthusiast's every wish. To prove that point, we took a tour of the Taunus mountains between Frankfurt and the Rhine, and stopped to visit some people with a varied and unusual array of passions, who now have one passion in common: the 911 Turbo Cabriolet.

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Our Dutch friend stared at the paper with the technical data. Again and again. And shook his head. Again and again. Finally, he asked perhaps the key question: “What does a convertible need 480 horsepower for?”

That was Monday evening. It’s now Tuesday evening. Our Dutch friend returns to the hotel excitedly after his first drive in the new 911 Turbo Cabriolet and with a smile takes back his question of the previous day. “I have to apologize. I didn’t drive the car until today,” he says.

All that happened between Monday evening and Tuesday evening was a long drive. Yesterday, the critic; today, the fan, he knows you can enjoy everything in this Porsche: the 480 hp (353 kW), the 190 mph top track speed, the open top. It doesn’t matter what part of this Porsche you use, or how—each drive is an experience. And people who see it for the first time, and whose passions have previously tended in different directions, are enthusiastic—about its engine, its design, its suitability for everyday driving, and even its relatively low fuel consumption for a sports car of this performance potential. ▶



Burkhard Dinger and Ursula Zieten Falconers

The falconers at the Grosser Feldberg Falconry in the Taunus mountains have a mission: bringing wild birds of prey closer to people. So their door is always open: you can book it for a child’s birthday party or other family event, or just play falconer for a day. What is the thrill of falconry? “Giving wild birds their freedom and at the same time bonding with them,” says Ursula Zieten. A falconer needs half a year to get a wild animal used to him- or herself—to the glove, to feeding, and to one’s voice. Dinger says, “It’s a serious and dangerous job, and it also involves a lot of hard work. You’re there for the birds round-the-clock.” On the Feldberg, you can see about 40 birds of prey close up: falcons, hawks, buzzards, eagles, kites, vultures, owls, eagle-owls, and screech owls.

The start: Königstein in the Taunus mountains, Kempinski Hotel Falkenstein. Oliver Heberlein, the hotel's chef, is brooding over the menu for his gourmet restaurant, the Siesmayer. It features breast of quail with red onion jam, morel foam soup with spring leek and saddle of rabbit, white halibut in bouillabaisse broth, salt-meadow lamb in *ciabatta*, crisp of lemon...

But the hour of quiet contemplation is suddenly past. Heberlein, who claims to be able to enjoy not only eating the meal but also cooking it, now enjoys a sound. The sound of a car—a Porsche. “A Turbo Porsche,” Heberlein notes with glowing eyes, and rushes outside. Forget the menu, all he cares about is the 3.6-liter six-cylinder turbocharged boxer engine with 480 hp at 6,000 rpm and the 620 newton-meters (457 lb.-ft.) of torque between 1,950 and 5,000 rpm. And the fact that it takes only four seconds to get from zero to 100 km/h (62 mph) with the standard six-speed manual transmission; with the Tiptronic S, that time is cut to 3.8 seconds. “For an eight-course dinner, you should give yourself about four hours,” the chef suddenly says, as he watches the convertible roar off. He had really liked the Turbo Coupé, but this Porsche is the

“icing on the cake.” The same performance—and with the top down, at that! That’s worth a crisp of lemon and raspberries with Topfeneis, or frozen German yoghurt.

First station: Flörsheim-Wicker, the gate to the Rheingau, the riverside district west of Frankfurt. Romana Martini’s hairstyle is still in place after a 250 km/h (155 mph) open-top drive on the freeway. “That’s impossible,” says the wine princess, whose favorite wine is called *Rheingauer Leichtsinn*, or “Rheingau recklessness.” Thanks to the wind deflector, a standard feature, there is hardly any air disturbance in the interior with the windows up, even at high speeds. That makes open driving a lot more comfortable. “You have to be able to enjoy life,” says Martini, shifting the crown on her head. She works for a government agency, loves to appear in front of people, to extol the Rheingau wine and be in the limelight. The bi-xenon headlights lend the 911 Turbo Cabrio a distinctive appearance—and have won her admiration. The fog lights are placed deep and far outside, which makes the front look extremely powerful. Then there’s the broad rear, with the split wing that extends even further than that of the 911 Turbo Coupé—for a total of 65 millimeters (2½ in.)—so that the convertible can achieve the same aerodynamic balance. There’s never been anything like it in production convertibles, anywhere in the world, and it pays off in extraordinary driving stability at very high speeds.

This is a dream car, for sure, says the wine princess. And you have to make your dreams come true. That’s why she doesn’t just want to work for the city of Flörsheim. She wants to be the mayor. ▶

Open for anything:
Whether at the stopover in the vineyards or on a drive through the country, your view is unobstructed



Romana Martini Wine Princess

Romana Martini knows what she wants: “If I were chancellor of Germany, I’d make wine a medicine and prescribe everybody a glass every day. So they’d have more joy in life,” says the wine princess, who represents the Rheingau district, west of Frankfurt, which extends from Flörsheim-Wicker on the Main to Lorchhausen on the Rhine. The area is solid vineyards—some 3,000 hectares (7,500 acres) of them. Of that, 84 percent is planted in Rieslings and 11 percent in Pinot Noirs. About 500 full-time winegrowers and a good number of renowned winegrowing estates even do their own bottling. For a while, Romana Martini’s father also worked as a winegrower part time. “I helped him out a lot back then, and discovered my love for wine,” says the wine princess.

www.rheingauerwein.de





Oliver Heberlein Chef

As a child, he used to watch his grandma make her own jam and fill it into jars. Oliver Heberlein, now chef at the five-star Kempinski Hotel Falkenstein in Königstein in the Taunus, began learning his job when he was just knee-high. He's worked at such gourmet restaurants as the Bareiss in Baiersbronn and the Ente in Wiesbaden, and since 2003 he's been running the kitchen at the Siesmayer, the gourmet restaurant in the Kempinski. Taste and freshness are the key things for him. "Sometimes I'll get a call from a hunter in the morning, and then in the evening, I'll surprise my guests with a wonderful wild-meat dish," says the 38-year-old. His goal: "I want to be a perfect host." He's succeeded, as he can tell late that evening while taking a round through his restaurant. "If people ask for the wine or the recipe, I know they've enjoyed their visit with us."

www.kempinski-falkenstein.com

**Beautiful view:
You can already enjoy the Kempinski Hotel
Falkenstein on the drive there**

Second station: The Grosser Feldberg, a hilltop in the Taunus. The motorcyclists who've chosen to camp here are astonished by the extensive safety package this Porsche provides—six airbags and, if a potential rollover is detected by onboard sensors, a roll bar automatically extends from behind the backrest of the rear seats. The car also has electronically controlled all-wheel drive—Porsche Traction Management (PTM). Only falconer Burkhard Dinger, who lives on the Feldberg six months a year with his birds, looks doubtful: "Just 12.9 liters?"

That's right, just 12.9 liters per 100 kilometers, which translates to about 18.25 mpg. That's the best score in this performance category worldwide—and there are reasons for that. There's the engine, which, thanks to the variable turbine geometry of the two exhaust turbochargers, has considerably better response at low engine speeds. There's the technical development at Porsche: since 1970, the company has reduced pollutant emissions of its sports cars by more than 95 percent. In just the past ten years, Porsche has invested hundreds of millions of dollars in consumption and emission optimization of the engines. Moreover, the convertible 911 Turbo weighs just 70 kilograms (154 lbs.) more than the Coupé, including the roof mechanism and the roll bar. The Cabriolet chalks up a Cd value of 0.31 in the wind-tunnel test—the same as the Turbo Coupé, thanks to the excellent aerodynamic quality of the top. "I worked for Daimler as an engineer," says Burkhard Dinger. Then, he fulfilled his life's dream: "I always wanted to be a falconer." He likes birds and nature. A 480 hp car that gets 18.25 mpg. He's impressed. ▶

Adi Schneider Ferryman

The first ferry runs at 5:45 a.m., the last one leaves at 12:15 a.m. There's a lot of traffic on the Rhine between Bingen and Rudesheim, but despite all the rush, ferryman Adi Schneider enjoys his work. "We do everything on the ship ourselves. We paint the walls, we check the machines." And you can tell from looking at him that he spends a lot of time working outdoors. Well tanned, he directs the 32 cars to their slots. His boat, the *Stadt Rudesheim*, has a 324 kW (440 hp) main drive, and a load area of 400 square meters (4,300 sq. ft.). It carries 250 passengers. "But we're still much more maneuverable than normal ships," says Schneider. And there are also plenty of such "normal ships" plying the Bingen–Rudesheim route—offering everything from a romantic Lorelei tour to a "Swinging Riverboat Shuffle."

www.bingen-ruedesheimer.com



Last stop: the Rhine ferry from Bingen to Rudesheim. We've used even less fuel now, by driving this fast car more slowly. "A slow ride is fun, too," says ferryman Adi Schneider, skipper of the *Stadt Rudesheim*, who's taking us across the river to Bingen. Now, our Porsche is only doing 14 km/h (9 mph)—standing still on the deck. The ferry fits 32 vehicles, plus 250 passengers, for a total of 120 tons. "We can turn around 360 degrees in place," says Schneider, and examines our Porsche for everyday utility. "How long does it take to get the top down?" Twenty seconds. "Twenty seconds?" Twenty seconds, including the windows. "Twenty seconds, including the windows?"

The fully automatic folding top of fabric and light metal weighs only 42 kilograms (93 lbs.), which is very light for a convertible top. It also provides excellent insulation against noise, cold, and heat, thanks to its triple-layer design. When lowered, the top curls up into its box in a Z-fold, which protects both its inner side and the heatable rear glass window. The ferryman pushes a button on the central console, and the roof opens within twenty seconds. He likes his work, always being in the fresh air—like convertible drivers, he says. He makes three tours between Bingen and Rudesheim in an hour. He's at the helm nine hours a day. Back and forth 27 times: from Bingen to Rudesheim, from Rudesheim to Bingen.

Adi Schneider waves goodbye. "Driving fast is also fun," he says and grins. "Especially with this sports car." We accelerate. He's right. And yet—if you want to judge the Porsche 911 Turbo Cabriolet, you have to drive a Porsche 911 Turbo Cabriolet. Otherwise, you may have to apologize later. ◀

911 Turbo Cabriolet Technical Data*

Body: Convertible; unitized, lightweight steel structure, galvanized on both sides; aluminum doors and trunk lid; full-size side and head airbags for drivers and front-seat passengers; number of seats: 2+2

Aerodynamics: Coefficient of drag Cd = 0.31

Engine: Six-cylinder boxer engine, water-cooled; aluminum engine block and cylinder heads; double overhead camshafts; four valves per cylinder; variable valve timing (VarioCam Plus); hydraulic self-adjusting tappets; two exhaust turbochargers with variable turbine geometry; two intercoolers; dry-sump lubrication with separate engine-oil tank; two three-way catalytic converters; two oxygen sensors; engine oil: 11 liters (10.4 quarts); coolant: 25 liters (23.7 quarts.); DME engine control (digital engine electronics) for ignition, injection, and camshaft adjustment; electronic ignition with resting ignition distribution (six ignition coils); sequential multi-point fuel injection

Cubic capacity: 3,600 cc

Engine output: 353 kW (480 hp) at 6,000 rpm

Maximum torque: 620 Nm (457 lb.-ft.) at 1,950–5,000 rpm; with overboost: 680 Nm (501 lb.-ft.) at 2,100–4,000 rpm

Specific output: 98.1 kW/liter (133.3 hp/liter)

Maximum engine speed: 6,750 rpm

Brakes: Dual-circuit brake system, proportioned by axle; front: six-piston aluminum "monobloc" calipers, internally ventilated perforated brake discs, 350 mm diameter x 34 mm thickness; rear: four-piston aluminum "monobloc" calipers, internally ventilated perforated brake discs, 350 mm diameter x 28 mm thickness; Porsche Stability Management (PSM)

Wheels and tires: Front: 8½ J x 19 with 235/35 ZR19;

rear: 11J x 19 with 305/30 ZR19

Weight:** Unloaded weight DIN 1,655 (1,690) kg (3,649/3,726 lbs.); gross vehicle weight 2,000 (2,035) kg (4,409/4,486 lbs.)

Dimensions: Length: 4,450 mm (175.2 in.); width: 1,852 mm (72.9 in.); height 1,300 mm (51.2 in.)

Driving performance: Maximum track speed: 310 km/h (192 mph)

Acceleration:** 0–100 km/h (0–62 mph) 4.0 (3.8) sec.; 0–160 km/h (0–100 mph) 8.6 (8.1) sec.; 0–200 km/h (0–125 mph) 12.8 (12.6) sec.; 0–1,000 m (3,280 ft.) 21.7 (21.4) sec.

* Die technischen Daten können länderspezifisch variieren.

** Die Werte in Klammern beziehen sich auf Fahrzeuge mit Tiptronic S.