

# Editorial 338

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## The Birthday Present

On his 75th birthday in 1984, Ferry Porsche received a four-door sports car based on the 928. Although the company founder desired nothing more ardently from his engineers than a sports-oriented vehicle for four people, his present remained one of a kind. In 2009, Ferry Porsche would have turned 100—and this is precisely the year in which his company presented the Panamera in Shanghai. A Porsche with four seats.

Ferry Porsche always believed in the four-seater. Even back then he was dreaming of a spectacular series that combined the luxury of a sedan with the dynamism of a sports car, and his company has pursued the idea to this day. In the past, however, the time was not ripe. But now there is the Panamera. As Sales Director Klaus Berning explained a few weeks ago at the presentation ceremony in China's burgeoning market, Porsche "has combined the best from the world of sports cars with the best from the world of luxury sedans."

The latest feat that Porsche achieved with this car—the likes of which the world had yet to see—was in connection with the presentation itself. Because the elevator in the Shanghai World Financial Center was too small for the 4.97-meter (16-foot) length of the Panamera, the organizational strategists tipped the vehicle on its tail in order to get it up

to the breathtaking ambiance of the 94th floor, where it was introduced to the industry. Nothing less would do for Porsche than an observation deck some 425 meters (1,400 feet) above the ground.

With the Panamera, Porsche has literally reached new heights. And those responsible can be justifiably proud. As Development Director Wolfgang Dürheimer noted, Porsche's engineers, technicians, and designers have put their full range of expertise into this four-seater Gran Turismo. His words are more than mere praise. What Porsche has achieved with the Panamera, and in particular how the company has done so, is here for you to read in this issue of *Christophorus*.

Design Director Michael Mauer, for example, explains why the Panamera has the style that it does yet still contains all the Porsche genes. The car is the first hatchback in the premium class, and for Mauer precisely that is a highlight. As far as the designer is concerned, the point is to convey dynamism, elegance, and emotion—all with a certain harmony. And as this specialist in aesthetics well knows, design for Porsche has to be both pleasing and discreet. For the engineers and technicians, on the other hand, it was important that this tasteful and luxurious sedan not sit too heavily on its wheels. After all, they were building a sporty luxury vehicle that was to share the famed Porsche dynamism. "The Weight Watchers" is the title of our article focusing on the resolute development of lightweight construction in this car.

This issue of *Christophorus* also covers the Panamera premiere, of course, including a presentation that has never before taken place in quite this form. High above Shanghai, Porsche displayed a new dimension of its abilities—albeit based on values that are tried and true. Suddenly, in an old film leading up to the presentation, you could hear and see company founder Ferry Porsche talking about everything that still distinguishes his company today. And about the properties found in every single Porsche.

Up to and including the 2009 four-seater Panamera.

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