

CLASSIC DRIVER

Porsche 928 GTS: An end to the front-engined debate?

Lead

Those looking for a respectable classic with brisk performance and long-distance capabilities – not to mention a dash of 1980s panache – could do a lot worse than the Porsche 928 GTS, despite what the naysayers might think...

Early Porsche 911s, and even more recent versions such as the [964](#) and [993](#), have always represented a solid investment - almost regardless of specification. Most are loved, maintained properly and driven regularly by their owners, hence one is hardly stunned into awe-struck silence by seeing a good example on the road. As Frank Jacob of German specialist [Springbok Sportwagen](#) explains, the popularity of the 911 has encouraged some buyers to look elsewhere: "We've been dealing with classic 911s for 25 years, but recently it seems that more and more customers are looking for something different."

A colourful choice



That doesn't mean you have to steer clear of Zuffenhausen; it merely means focusing your attention on the lesser-loved stable of front-engined Porsches. Of these, the [928](#) has arguably the best-matured shape of all, something we are reminded of during our rendezvous with a contrasting pair at the Springbok showroom. Both sport striking interior hues augmented by their exterior shades of Amethyst and Tahoeblau – each one a refreshing alternative to the commonly seen black-on-black examples.

The Gran Turismo Sport, abbreviated to 'GTS', formed the final chapter of the 928's lengthy production window. With its forward-thinking design maturing nicely by 1992, a body-coloured rear wing was the most notable of the GTS's stylistic amendments; of far more importance was the enlarged V8 (from 5.0 to 5.4 litres), and the additional 40-odd horsepower it brought.

The responsible bigger brother



During our brief test-drive, we're reminded that although the 928 was famously intended to replace the 911, in truth it was a different being altogether. Much more of a luxurious GT with sporting genes of both a visual and technical nature (indeed, 85% were specified with the auto 'box, as these two were), the 928 eventually played the more responsible bigger brother role to the 911. Its handling was much more conventional, due to the engine being placed in what's regarded as the 'correct' location to everyone but Porsche enthusiasts.

Late or early





Along with the very earliest models, which are now difficult to find in good condition, the GTS is one of the most sought-after versions of the 928. Prices currently start at 20,000 euros, with prime examples (much like the blue, low-mileage car seen here) nearer to 50,000. Having recently undergone work to the cambelt and famous passive-steer Weissach rear transaxle, for now it addresses the main downside of 928 ownership: as with all Porsches, maintenance and repair can prove costly. But for most, the refinement, looks and pedigree it offers in return will do enough to justify a wince-worthy bill every now and again. Perhaps even the rear-engine die-hards will come around one day, too.

Photos: Jan Richter

Gallery

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