

# CLASSIC DRIVER

## Porsche 911 Carrera 4S: Snowed under

### Lead

There's no doubting the fact that, in snowy conditions, a Porsche 911 Carrera 4S is a good choice. But when the conditions get slippery, can you still have as much fun with a 4wd car as you can with the standard Carrera S? We went to the Col de la Croix deep in the Swiss Alps to find out.

### **Bienvenue au Col de la Croix**



It's a simple calculation: the weight of the car (say 1,500kg) is multiplied by the theoretical grip of the road (perfect traction will equal '1.0') and you then get the available braking force, in this case 1,500kg. When it rains, the multiplier reduces to 0.7. In snow it's 0.2 and in wet snow 0.1. Factor in a downhill slope and the braking forces are negligible. Welcome to the new Porsche 911 Carrera 4S, *Bienvenue au Col de la Croix*.

Adding four-wheel drive makes no difference when it comes to braking on ice and snow. But distributing the power of the boxer engine to all four wheels, rather than two, is seen as a benefit and has resulted in two out of three customers in Switzerland choosing a 911 Carrera 4. If you add the all-wheel-drive-only Turbo to the figures, 4wd accounts for 85-80 per cent of Swiss 911 sales.

### **Drifting the old way**





So let's take both 2wd and 4wd cars out and try them on snow. First of all, the standard Carrera S. Starting uphill, the tail soon wags, while in the new 4S traction is far better and the driver can admire the clever electronic and mechanical assistance via a colourful display on the dash. All very reassuring, but whatever happened to the famous ability of skilled drivers to swing a Porsche's tail out in bends? Since the engineers at Weissach and Zuffenhausen are not averse to a little (safe) fun, with some driver training it's still possible to drift a 4S 'the old way'.

## From Sport to Sport +





The company offers a driver coaching programme on closed roads in the mountains, so customers can hone their car control in safety. But even without that, be assured that the new 4S has the capability to look after you most of the time - without the need for switching modes or pressing buttons. The system makes millisecond-quick changes in torque vectoring, via Porsche Traction Management (PTM), to ensure that the 400bhp from the 3.8-litre flat-six is distributed to the wheel with the most grip. Pressing 'Sport' and 'Sport +' means the system can be overridden to a certain extent for some old-style sliding.

## **Disappearing in a cloud of powdered snow**



You will notice the 4wd car's wider rear track – another stability aid. Drifting in circles, performing 'doughnuts', is a little more difficult now, but by holding the throttle at 4,000rpm with just the right amount of lock on the steering wheel – and having nerves of steel – the Carrera 4S soon starts to disappear in a cloud of powdered snow.

## **It's all about fun**







You then realise that 4wd is not just about safety and security; it's about fun, too. You cannot really ask for more than that.

*Photos: Jan Baedeker / Dirk Michael Deckbar*

## **Gallery**













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