



PORSCHE



50 Years of the Porsche 911 – Tradition: Future

Press Information

The design

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An important aspect of the 911 legend is without doubt the timeless design of the series. A Porsche 911 is immediately recognisable from every perspective and can be identified without the Porsche crest or nameplate. However, at Porsche there was a great deal of uncertainty about the design of the future successor to the 356 during the early development phase. Only after several internal and external studies did Ferry Porsche's son Ferdinand Alexander complete his historic design. F.A. Porsche, as he was called by his colleagues, joined the design office of what was then Dr. Ing. h.c. F. Porsche KG in 1958. He was soon able to prove his vast creative talent when, in 1959, he sculpted a pioneering model of a successor to the 356 series out of plasticine. In 1960, the 754 "T7" prototype was created on the basis of his designs. It was an extremely promising study of a four-seater car, however its rear end did not yet meet with Ferry Porsche's approval. He decided against developing the four-seater "T7" in favour of the "T8", a fastback coupé with 2+2 seating arrangement that was developed from 1962 onwards under the project name "Type 901".

The design was an enormous success for F.A. Porsche, who was 27 years old at the time. The emotional but at the same time functional shape joined together automotive and product design, which were still kept strictly separate in the design world at the beginning of the 1960s. In the original 911, F.A. Porsche distilled the Porsche design DNA into a concentrated masterpiece. He created an unmistakable brand design which still gives all Porsche series their identity today and is the basis for their success. The archetypal shape has the effect of an organic sculpture which allows the car to be immediately identified as a 911 from every angle, even without the Porsche nameplate. And the Porsche designers have never succumbed to the temptation to follow fashionable trends with any of the now seven 911 generations. Instead, the design has been enhanced by means of a careful evolutionary process and has always kept its own identity. And it goes without saying that the design has always borne functionality in mind. Stylistic gimmickry has never been a part of the Porsche 911. And it has adhered to this principle for five decades. Its design has always been modern but never trendy – as should be the case with a genuine classic car. Today, it therefore still remains true to the credo of its creator F.A. Porsche whose motto was "Good design has to be honest."

The design of the 911 also always reflects the work of the head designer at the time. After F.A. Porsche, who founded his own company “Porsche Design Studio” in 1972, Anatole Carl Lapine became the sports car manufacturer’s head designer, a position he held until 1989. He was followed by Harm Lagaay. Michael Mauer took up the post in the year 2004 – and with the current 991 series he has created his own masterpiece within the 50-year history of the 911.

The evolution of the 911 design

After the historic original design of the 911 by F.A. Porsche, every designer in the history of the brand has been faced with the enormous challenge of retaining the iconographic elements of the 911, while simultaneously translating it into the future with a contemporary use of form. This has been successfully achieved with every model generation – the 911 is still a totally unmistakable sports car. The first 911 defined the basic form that has been retained into the present. For example the lateral contours, the design of the fastback, the shape of the side windows, the separate front wings with the flat bonnet between them – these are some of the key characteristics of its design.

The G model in the year 1973 was the next significant step after the original model. The design of its bumpers caught the eye immediately. They are painted in the same colour as the car, have rubber moulding all the way along, as well as integrated front indicator lights and plastic bellows at the side. These were introduced due to new laws in the USA that decreed that no vehicle repair costs were to be incurred at an impact speed of less than 5 km/h. As a result, Porsche produced the bumpers from robust light alloy; on cars for the USA they were affixed flexibly to the frame by means of replaceable impact tubes as well as a hidden spring construction. On the Carrera, the exterior mirrors and the headlight moulding, which had previously been chrome-plated, were also painted in the same colour as the car. Between the two rear lights was a dark red panel with the Porsche name in black lettering. The 911 Turbo, part of the G model range, drove the design forward. Its large rear spoiler with flexible polyurethane frame is a very distinctive feature. Together with the wing flares, and the exterior mirrors and headlight mouldings painted in the same colour as the car, the rear spoiler gave the Turbo its own totally unique appearance. This Turbo look was

later available for other 911 types and for some model years also without the large rear wing. On request, the Turbo could be ordered from 1982 onwards as a low profile version as well. Low profile cars had already been used by Porsche in motor races, whereby pop-up headlights facilitated a low bonnet. In 1982, the forward-looking 911 SC Cabriolet was also introduced. The innovative hood was designed as a bow construction, 50% of which was made of pressed sheet steel sections. This ensured dimensional stability even at high speeds as well as protection in the event of a crash.

The 964 series was introduced in model year 1989. The design of its body was extremely similar to that of the 911 but had been completely redrawn. Two of its main features were that the front and rear end were now integrated into the body shape and the rear spoiler automatically moved into raised position on the Carrera 2 and Carrera 4 models. The slipstream underbody panelling was not obvious at first glance but was nevertheless of great functional significance. The Turbo was given the new body two years later.

In 1993, the 993 model generation was introduced. In comparison to the previous 911, it had reworked front and rear ends. New features were the headlights that protruded somewhat lower and a wider, flatter rear. The rear side windows were now bonded flush with the body. The Cabriolet hood had been completely reworked – the rear section was flatter, giving the Cabriolet a sportier look when the hood was closed. The Targa was presented at the IAA in 1995. Also, small details on the body of the 911 Turbo were modified, for example a redesigned front and rear end and a sill design that harmoniously joined the flared wings. The fixed rear spoiler was also redesigned.

1997: Reworked body design with improved drag coefficient

The 996 series in 1997 not only introduced water-cooled engines to the 911 but also a new body design. The roof line with a windscreen which is around five degrees flatter gives the side view a more fluid look. Furthermore, the entire main body was made sleeker, for example by means of smaller gaps and windows that were fully flush with the body. All the measures put together also have a functional effect, producing a drag coefficient of 0.30 –

the coefficient of the 993 was 0.34. The two exterior mirrors are no longer affixed to the door but are mounted onto the side window triangle. The Cabriolet was delivered as standard with a light alloy hardtop painted in the same colour as the car. It weighed only 33 kilograms and two people could easily remove and install it.

The body of the 2001 model year 911 Turbo was extensively redesigned. The most important features which distinguished it from the Carrera models were different front and rear end trims and a rear spoiler with moving wings and air intake ducts to the air coolers. The front wings were widened and bi-xenon headlights could be integrated. The extendable rear wing of the Turbo was a completely new development. At high speeds it had a significant impact on the aerodynamics of the vehicle and thus, above all, on driving stability. The rear spoiler comprised two wings, one on top of the other. Up to a speed of 120 km/h, the wings were on top of each other; at speeds in excess of this the hydraulics raised the top wing by 65 millimetres. If the speed of the car fell below 60 km/h, the wing was lowered into the base spoiler once again. For model year 2002, the 996 series was given new headlights and therefore a slightly redesigned front, including the front wings.

A completely new 911 generation had its debut in 2004 in the form of the 997 series. One of its main features was its oval headlights. From a distance they looked virtually circular – this element thus bringing the new 911 closer to the original 911 again. In addition to the headlights, other lights such as the parking lights, fog lights and indicators were integrated into the unit behind a clear plastic disc, which gave the entire front of the vehicle a clearly structured and extremely uncluttered appearance. The wind tunnel was an important tool for designing the 997 series and all the aerodynamics measures ensured that, with a value of 0.28, it boasted the lowest drag coefficient of any Porsche series production vehicle to date.

2011: The 911 design enters a new era

The 991 series of the Porsche 911, which was introduced in 2011, is the current version of this sports car par excellence. No area was left unchanged in the design concept. This 911 boasts a flat, elongated silhouette, taut surfaces, razor-sharp sculpted edges and precisely designed details but it is still immediately recognisable as a 911. The starting point

for the new design was the modified proportions of the sports car. The 100-millimetres longer wheelbase, the wider track at the front and the reduced height, coupled with the up to 20-inch wheels are the foundations of a new Coupé with an even more athletic appearance. From this basis, the designers developed the new 911 shape with an optimised height/width ratio. Without changing the overall width, a sports car was created that sits even lower on the road. The standard bi-xenon headlights have also been reshaped and reflect the traditional circular headlight outline of the 911. Following tradition once again, the new 911 does not have a radiator grille but side air intakes – a characteristic feature of the Porsche sports car with rear engine. The other front lights (LED indicators, daytime running lights and position lights) have been moved to the very outside and have been extended around the front to the side; they therefore emphasise the powerful effect of the width of the 911 front end. The exterior mirrors have found a new home on the top shoulder. From the side, the 911 features precise lines with a taut, dynamic look. The more prominently arched and flatter outline of the windscreen plays its part in creating the low, fast silhouette. The typical 911 distinguishing feature is still the characteristic side window design with the triangular window which is now even more tapered towards the rear. In this way the Porsche “flyline” is retained; the roof line slopes downwards towards the rear, ends above the rear wheels and therefore emphasises where the power of a 911 is transferred to the road.

At the rear a continuous ridge above the new, strikingly slim rear lights structures the rear end across the entire width of the vehicle for the first time, thus giving an impression of width. This effect is further enhanced by the powerful shoulders of the sturdily shaped rear wings. The rear spoiler below the air intakes of the engine cover has been redesigned and is now wider. Furthermore, LED technology has been used for all the rear lights.

The 991 series Cabriolet is another masterpiece of the current design. The fabric hood follows the contours set by the Coupé roof almost exactly and gives this 911 Cabriolet a look that is as perfect as that of the Coupé. The credit for this mainly goes to the roof designers who have developed technology for retracting and putting up the roof which can create exactly this shape.