

CLASSIC DRIVER

Is this the most collectable Porsche 911 of the new millennium?

Lead
Identifying the models which will become true top-tier collector cars is a very tricky endeavour, but this 996 Porsche GT3 RS going under the hammer at Aguttes' Spring Sale is pure collector gold!



We're always hesitant to point a specific model and proclaim "This is a great investment," because there are simply too many forces at play to make such a claim with certainty. However, when it comes to collector cars, there are a few telltale signs that indicate they have potential to increase in value. Low production numbers are key, and being the first or last model of a specific lineage also helps. Racing pedigree is also an important factor, while the level of driver satisfaction the model provides will always play a role. It just so happens that one of the lots at [Aguttes' upcoming Spring Sale on March 10th](#) fulfils all the above criteria, and it's this glorious 2003 Porsche 911 GT3 RS.



Now that the world has finally moved past the fact that the 996-generation 911's headlights aren't perfectly round, people have begun to overlook the fried egg or teardrop-shaped lights and instead focus on the countless positive attributes of the 996. One common to all variants is its size: the 996 is a much smaller car than all subsequent water-

cooled 911 generations, making it far easier to live with in an urban environment, and much more fun to fling around on a twisty piece of road. Additionally, it's the most analogue of the bunch, with a conventional cable-throttle found on the earliest examples, and hydraulic steering common to all of them — something that was eventually lost with the introduction of the 991. However, these are just the general boons of the 996, and the GT3 RS adds some significant additional appeal.



First things first, it's the first GT3 RS Porsche ever built, and perhaps somewhat surprisingly, it's on of the rarest too, with only 682 examples in existence. In fact, in terms of water-cooled Porsches, only the 997-generation GT3 RS 4.0 — of which only 600 were built — is rarer. These production numbers alone should already have some collectors' ears pricked, but there's far more to the 996 GT3 RS than that.

Launched in 2003, the 996 GT3 RS was the first model overseen by Porsche's current head of the GT Department, Andreas Preuninger, who praised the model as the closest thing Porsche has built to the legendary 911 Carrera RS 2.7 that started the whole lineage. Building upon the already-razor-sharp GT3, the RS shaved off 20 kilograms thanks to the addition of a polycarbonate rear window, a carbon fibre bonnet, and a huge carbon fibre rear wing, resulting in a lithe 1360kg curb weight. And we haven't even discussed the engine yet.



Nestled behind the cabin, Porsche installed the now-famous 3.6-litre Mezger-designed flat-six, derived from the unit found in the 1998 Le Mans-winning 911 GT1 race car, which didn't have round headlights either, by the way. In the GT3 RS, it's capable of producing a claimed 381 horsepower, which the Porscheholics among our readers will know is the same as the standard 996.2 GT3. They key word, however, is "claimed", because if you put any 996 GT3 RS on a dyno, you'll be far more likely to see a power figure in the region of 400bhp. By 2024's lofty standards, these numbers aren't that impressive, but just listen to any YouTube clip of a 996 GT3 at full chat and you'll forget all about the spec sheet.



So as the first generation of the GT3 RS, one of the rarest cars to feature carry the Renn Sport moniker, and one of the last to feature that legendary Mezger flat-six, there's a lot going for this ultra-desirable water-cooled 911. This example sports the rare combination of Carrera White with Riviera Blue decals, and was optioned with air conditioning, a radio, and most importantly, ceramic brakes, which drops a further 27kg from the weight! Showing just 37,000 kilometres, this GT3 RS has been savoured during its time on the road and remains in optimal condition, having benefitted from a service and fresh tyres in January 2024. If you're looking for a great example of what many would consider the ultimate water-cooled 911, then this is the car for you!

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