

CLASSIC DRIVER

Driven: 2010 Porsche 911 Sport Classic



The new, strictly limited Porsche 911 Sport Classic, which honours the legendary Carrera RS, is an instant collectors' item at some 200,000 euros - around the same money as many originals are worth today. We evaluated the first of these cars on a trip to Switzerland.

Like the art market, the simple rules of supply and demand are the deciding factor with car values. This, perhaps, partly accounts for the enormous difference in price between a normal, unlimited **Porsche 911 Carrera S** and the new **Porsche 911 Sport Classic**. But surely it's not just down to the small metal plaque over the glovebox? In our case, the plaque reads '**Limited edition No. 000/250**', so it really is the first in the series.

Does the emotional pull of what this new car represents make us choose it in preference to the countless classic automobiles available today? In **Zuffenhausen**, at the heart of Porsche, tradition has always been a strong sales argument - and one which favours the new **911 Sport Classic**. For yes, it does remind us of the great Carrera 2.7 RS - on the face of it a meagrely equipped racing car from 1973, but later recognised as a design icon. And, to be fair, the best of those originals today might fetch rather more than the price of a new **911 Sport Classic**. Creating this car was a no-brainer for Porsche; unlike the current **GT2 RS** and **GT3 RS**, which are truly contemporary race-orientated cars, the **Sport Classic** is pure retro-racer. A nostalgic creation, it's all about style, design and attitude.





Based on the current **911 Carrera S**, the **Sport Classic** is widened by 44mm and its suspension lowered by 20mm. The steeply rising tail spoiler, called '**Entenbürzel**' in Germany and '**ducktail**' in Britain, was derived by the designers directly from the original 1973 model. It was a similar story with the wheels, which in a direct translation from the German are called 'classical fox rims'. They satisfy the **Retro** look but on the new car they come in a modern configuration and the centres are painted black. Dramatic styling touches include a new front spoiler and lip. Highly reflective and silver-grey in colour, our **Sport Classic** makes quite an impression on the road. There is also a discreet plaque on the front wheelarch, which reads '**Porsche, Exclusive Manufaktur, Zuffenhausen**'. The simple elegance of this car is redolent of the first **Carrera RS** but the new edition is more luxurious, a 21st Century child of its time. On the other hand, it doesn't correspond that closely with the current canon of **Porsche** models.



In creating the interior, **Porsche Exclusive** came up with an unusual mixture, hinting at the 1970s while also matching modern expectations. It is successful and, no bad thing for British buyers, perhaps, it also has surprisingly un-German colour and material combinations. In our car, the **espresso brown leather** and light grey piping of the seats and other areas, including the instrument panel, are extremely attractive. The **chocolate brown carpet**, taken halfway up the door panels, looks marvellous in contrast to the cool-grey, highly polished lacquer of the exterior. This car could hold its head high in a setting of the finest modern architecture. It's up to the buyer to decide, however, whether such fine aesthetics are really worth the surcharge.



The **1973 Carrera 2.7 RS** was an exceptional sportscar and, based as it is on the **Carrera S**, so is the **Sport Classic**. The 3.8-litre flat-six engine, with direct injection, has been tuned for resonance with six switching flaps in the manifolds, raising the maximum output by 23PS to 408PS. Accompanied by a pronounced 911 roar, the **Sport Classic** sprints from 0 to 62mph in 4.6 seconds. Top speed is 188mph. In honour of the original, **Porsche** resisted the temptation to fit the **PDK double-clutch** system here. All **Sport Classics** will come with a manual six-speed gearbox. The enhanced PASM chassis keeps the **Sport Classic** level on the road, and carbon-reinforced ceramic brakes supply the necessary stopping power.



After three days and many hundreds of kilometres behind the wheel, one thing is quite clear: the **Sport Classic** is a stylistic statement for connoisseurs that successfully celebrates a most significant piece of automobile history. The purchase price, exactly 201,682 euros in the case of our test car, is high; but part of the deal is that it guarantees exclusivity. Only 250 will be made and they will all draw admiring looks at the

traffic lights. No doubt it's only a question of the time before lookalikes, fitted with the distinctive rear spoiler and the same road wheels, start to appear. Only the genuine cars, however, will have that small plaque on the glovebox. And that makes all the difference.



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