

CLASSIC DRIVER

Porsche Gives its Panamera the Nip/Tuck Treatment

Lead

The Porsche Panamera has been refreshed – yet from the outside, you’d hardly notice the difference. Plug-in hybrid and long-wheelbase versions, along with new V6 engines, are the headline updates in this mid-life facelift for the super-successful saloon...

If you were one of those waiting for the Panamera to be completely restyled, you’ll be waiting a while longer; such has been the success of the super-saloon that Porsche sees no reason to change the fundamental design just yet (though the rear end does benefit significantly from the nip/tuck treatment). Instead, the marque has concentrated on diversifying the range even further, with 10 different versions going on sale by July this year. By far the most innovative is the Panamera S E-Hybrid: a plug-in hybrid totting 410bhp, yet theoretically capable of 91mpg. Speeds of up to 83mph are attainable on electric power alone, as is a realistic range of between 11 and 22 miles, according to Porsche.

The revised car will make its global debut at the end of April at the Shanghai Motor Show; the Chinese market is one of the Panamera’s largest. To further capitalise on this – via China’s appetite for long-wheelbase cars – Porsche has included an ‘Executive’ option for the 4S and Turbo models, which elongates the wheelbase (and thus rear legroom) by 15cm, and seats the rear passengers on two individual chairs.

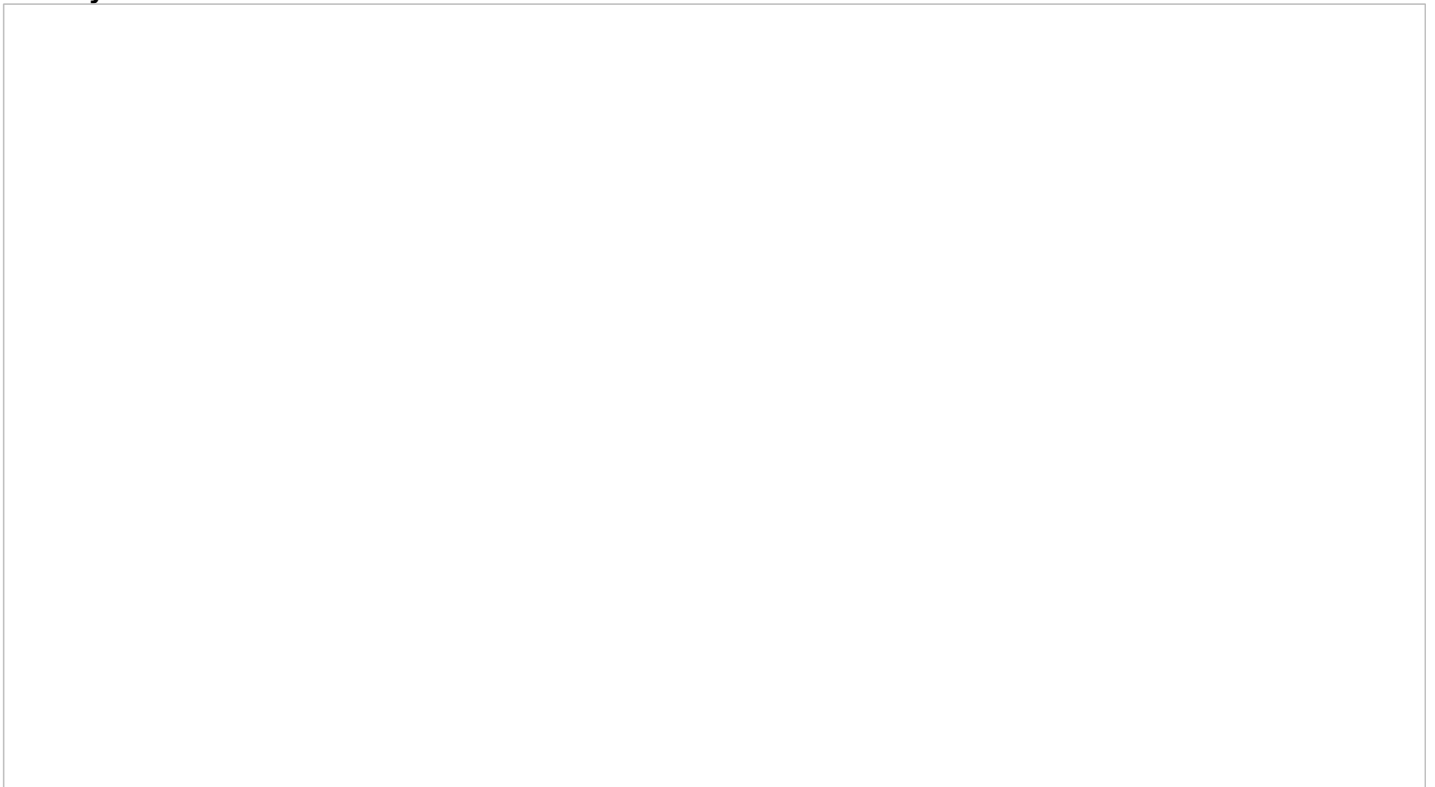
While this new version (also available outside Asia) has been stretched, the engineers have focused on downsizing the engines. A twin-turbo V6 replaces the V8 previously found in the Panamera S and 4S. In 2014, a new diesel and Turbo S flagship will complete the range.

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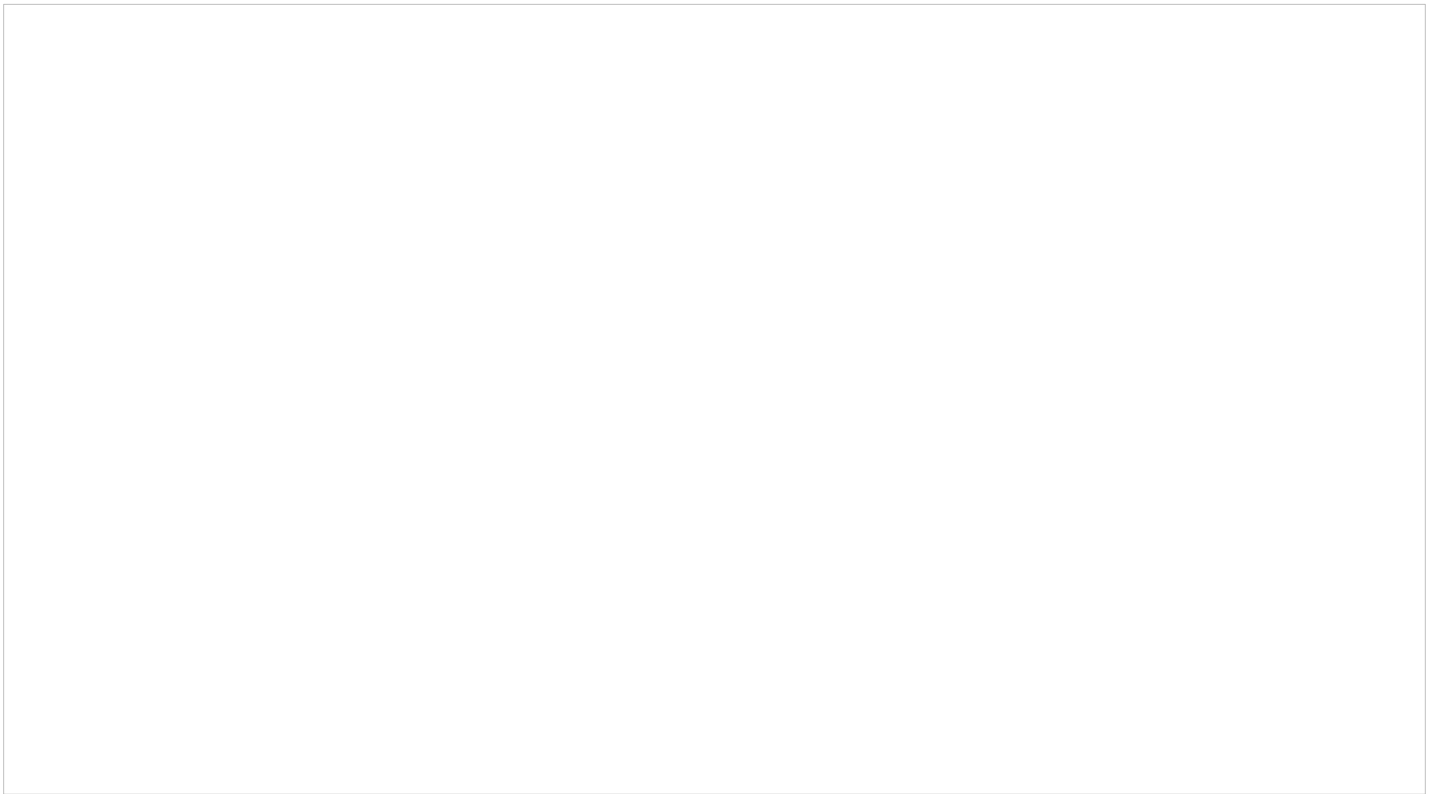
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Photos: Porsche

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