
Porsche's 550 Spyder and 904 Carrera GTS deliver primitive perfection

02 September 2014 | Joe Breeze

Between them, Porsche's 550 Spyder and 904 Carrera GTS represent crucial milestones in the marque's glorious racing history - and very rarely do genuine examples come up for sale...

That's why, when [DK Engineering](#) told us they had one of each on offer, we jumped at the chance to pair them up for a photoshoot.

Highly significant to the bloodline of all subsequent [competition Porsches](#), the endeavours of both the [550](#) and [904](#) are well known - even to those with no more than a passing interest. However, their importance also means they are highly sought-after within the ever-expanding circle of marque collectors, with many locked away in private collections as a result. The privilege of seeing two together is a rare thing indeed, let alone experiencing both first-hand, cams on song, as we were lucky enough to do.

Small is beautiful



Even the tale of Hans Herrmann's 550 performing a limbo under a level crossing barrier during the 1954 Mille Miglia does little to prepare the mind for *just* how petite the Spyder is – the first encounter might have you thinking that had Herrmann timed it badly, it'd have probably passed cleanly beneath the train, too. Open the door and step into the cockpit, and you're struck by the car's humble charm: the exposed fuel pumps beside the knee of your clutch foot, or the leather straps securing the clamshell engine cover behind you. They're not there because they look pretty (although they're good at that too); they were simply the most effective solution at the time.

Pure and purposeful





The pleasingly primitive nature of the 550 is one inherited by the later 904, which came into play when evolutionary advances would no longer suffice. Once you've given the door of the coupé a good tug, you're in, and faced with possibly the most honest interior you'll ever come across. DK's example is refreshingly original, with no excuses made for the crude surface finish of the exposed sills or bulkhead. But you would never wish for any superficial cover-ups - in fact, once the six-cylinder has been coaxed up to temperature, its on-cam song serenades you into an aversion to any sort of sound-deadening in something so pure and purposeful.

Functional charm on road or track



Our encounter with this pair of racing legends is brief and leisurely paced, but no more is required to be captivated by the cars' functional charms. Whether purchased stand-alone or as a perfect pairing, for use on road or racetrack, those with the required means would be hard-pushed to find an experience more visceral and enthralling.

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