

# CLASSIC DRIVER

## These German Porsche specialists are bonkers about boxer engines

### Lead

Located a stone's throw from Stuttgart, Boxer Motor & Klassische Automobiles has been dedicated to the repair, restoration, and sales of Porsche's most important models for the last 20 years and is today one of the largest independent marque specialists in Europe. We paid a visit...

For the founders of Boxer Motor & Klassische Automobiles, Christoph Schlagenhauf and Detlef Förster, starting a business dedicated to the repair and restoration of special Porsches from all eras was simply a way to fully immerse themselves in the world of the Stuttgart brand. What started as a love of technology and a desire to preserve and truly make the most of theirs and their friends' cars has evolved into one of Europe's largest Porsche specialists, encompassing a well-regarded workshop and a large-scale sales department offering a mouth-watering selection of Porsches and other collector cars. We took a memorable drive with Christoph and his son Niklas, who's following in his father's footsteps and safeguarding the future of Boxer Motor.



### What are your earliest automotive memories?

**CS:** My earliest automotive memory is probably of the Porsche 914 my father bought in 1969. As a child, I'd sit in the driver's seat every afternoon when I didn't have kindergarten and press all the buttons on the radio and the dash until the battery eventually ran out, much to the dismay of my parents!

**NS:** Since I was a child, I've always been around the company. I was able to gather impressions and experiences from very early on and I remember many weekends when I'd tried to help out in the workshop. Later, I used to spend every free minute after school helping until I finally completed my training and started working full time.



### Is that why you gravitated towards Porsche as a brand?

**CS:** Yes, the passion came from my father – he'd always dreamed of a 356 Speedster or a Gullwing, but in the end owned only the 914/4. I was initially fascinated by Porsche's simple yet very robust technology, which made it possible for the brand to beat much more powerful competitors in long-distance races. This David versus Goliath ethos has definitely pushed us forward as a company.

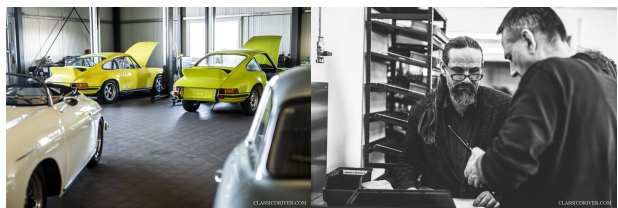
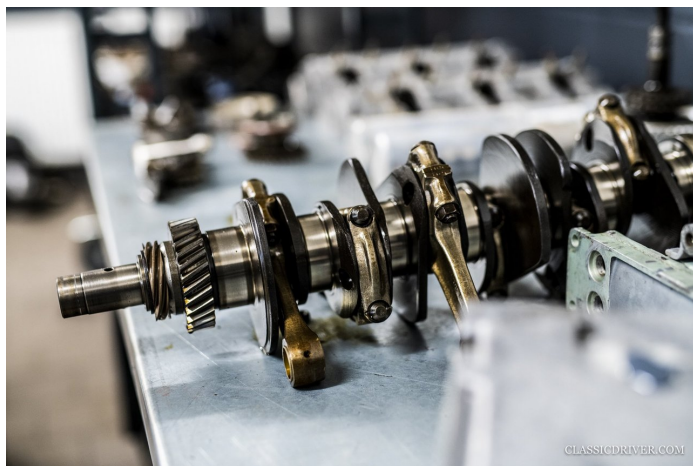
### What was your first classic car?

**CS:** My first classic was a Porsche 914/4 – I wish I'd have kept it!

**NS:** I bought a Porsche 924S when I was 18. It was my first car and I still have it.

### What prompted the decision to establish Boxer Motor?

**CS:** Cars were a hobby at first and I formally trained in other areas, just like my friend and business partner Detlef Förster. We worked together on Porsches and VWs on the side and at one point, we were taking on so many jobs that we decided to turn our passion into our profession and start Boxer Motor. We started with nothing but a single telephone and a desk in a leaky old building, but we just wanted to be a part of this fascinating Porsche world.



**Despite remaining quite discreet, you're today one of the key players on the European Porsche scene – how did you achieve that?**

**CS:** We never thought the company would become so successful, but from day one, we always gave 110 percent and tried to achieve perfection in our work – not a difficult task when it's first and foremost our passion. We appear discreet because we do little in the way of advertising. Our customers come to us almost exclusively through recommendations. In the end, we're the same simple Swabians we were 20 years ago, and perhaps that's what our customers appreciate the most about us.

**How did you find the right people with the knowledge and the skills to work for you?**

**CS:** One of the biggest challenges here in Germany is finding people who are motivated and well educated but who don't want to work for a big company and instead value great craftsmanship. It was difficult for us to find good employees in the beginning because the jobs we offered did not feel 'secure'. But this has improved the most successful we've got and we no longer have any problem finding highly qualified employees. Over the years, we've also built up a good network of colleagues, specialists, and Porsche veterans, meaning we can always gather the information we need.



**Judging by the nine 356 Carreras in your workshop and showroom, it looks like you've become the king of the Fuhrmann engine. How did this come to be?**

**CS:** Over the years, we've earned a reputation that attracts customers from all over the world, each of whom wants their Porsche perfectly restored or repaired. Our reputation has also attracted customers with top-quality models, hence why we have such a high level of Carreras for sale or in our workshop.

**What can a customer expect from Boxer Motor that he or she won't find elsewhere?**

**CS:** Our customers can expect honest advice from us as true Porsche enthusiasts – we share the same passion and work to the exact needs of the customers to deliver the best possible result.







**How would you analyse the current Porsche market?**

**CS:** The market is changing a lot. Investors have been around for a long time, viewing these cars like stocks, without any emotional relationship to them. The thing is that doesn't work and the market has normalised again – the genuine enthusiasts are back and the market is stable again. Thanks to our years of experience, we've gone through many ups and downs, so we know how to react to trends and changing market situations.

**Your son Niklas has now joined the fold - how does this make you feel?**

**CS:** My business partner Detlef Förster and I are glad that our children have joined the business and that they're so enthusiastic about it. We didn't force them – they decided on their own and we're really happy that they're following in our footsteps. It's been really fruitful because the mix of young energy and old experience gives us another dimension. It's great that what we've built will continue to exist in the future.

**NS:** Even as a young boy, I always looked up to and respected my father and his work. I'm proud of what he's achieved and want to move forward together with him.



**How do you imagine Boxer Motor in 10 years' time?**

**CS:** It's difficult for me to imagine because 10 years ago, I couldn't have imagined how the company looks today. In the future, we'll keep on striving to give everything to our customers and to closely follow the technical progress. Let's see where it takes us.

**NS:** It's difficult to predict the future, but it's my life's work to tackle a new challenge every day and to constantly improve.

**What is the ultimate Porsche in your opinion?**

**CS:** For me, the ultimate Porsche is the 1973 Carrera RS – to this day, it's the sports car icon of them all.

**NS:** For me, the ultimate Porsche is a 356 Speedster. It combines automotive beauty and absolute driving pleasure. In a Speedster, you perceive your surroundings and the landscape more than in any other vehicle.



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**Gallery**













































































































































