

CLASSIC DRIVER

Versatility is this Porsche 911 Carrera 3.0 RS's trump card

Lead

The Porsche 911 has long been considered the most versatile sports car in the world. This ultra-rare Carrera 3.0 RS, a veteran of two 24 Hours of Le Mans races and numerous prestigious European rallies, just so happens to be among the most versatile collector cars full stop...

For the discerning collector who wants a significant car with which to truly make the most of the international events circuit, this 1974 Porsche 911 Carrera 3.0 RS fits the bill.

Over the course of a year, its custodian, if so inclined, could realistically tackle both the Tour Auto and Modena Cento Ore, complete a season of Peter Auto's popular Classic Endurance Racing series, return the car to the Circuit de la Sarthe for the Le Mans Classic and show at any number of concours events for which it would be welcomed with open arms. Oh, and not to mention snatch the odd summer Sunday drive in what is one of the rawest and most exhilarating air-cooled Porsches of them all.



Immortalised by the International Race of Champions, a series of races in 1974 in which then-current Formula 1 stars battled it out in identical cars, the Porsche 911 Carrera 3.0 RS is one of the rarest and most sought-after 911s in existence. Just 55 road-specification cars were originally built by the factory for homologation purposes, drastically fewer than the comparatively soft Carrera 2.7 RS it replaced.

It cost almost twice as much as its predecessor, but then it was twice the car. Thinner gauge steel, aerodynamic bodywork addenda including a 'whale-tail' rear spoiler, a spartan interior devoid of all creature comforts and a potent 3.0-litre fuel-injected flat-six engine kicking out 230HP at 6,200rpm combined to make a seriously quick 911, one capable of upsetting much more powerful machinery on race circuits and rally stages alike.



This fastidiously restored example, chassis number 911 460 9107, more than proved its worth on both. In addition to upwards of 40 road rallies, notable results of which include overall victory at the Six Heures de Dakar in the hands of legendary Frenchman Jean-Pierre Jarier and class honours in the Monte-Carlo Rally, this Carrera 3.0 RS contested the 24 Hours of Le Mans twice in 1976 and 1977. In the former, drivers Raymond Touroul and Alain Cudini finished a remarkable sixth overall, while a class victory followed in 1977.





"This is a very well-known Carrera 3.0 RS that, unlike so many of these cars, has a straightforward and easy-to-trace history," comments Robert Fellowes of Henderson Fellowes, the Classic Driver dealer [currently offering this incredibly special Porsche for sale](#). "To a collector who seeks the full historic Porsche racing experience, this history will be of paramount importance and taken into account by event organisers - with two period appearances at Le Mans, it has very good credentials."

That this car was as adept on a racetrack as it was a rally stage seems extraordinary today, but this go-anywhere, do-anything attitude was par for the course in the 1970s and '80s, when GT competition cars were, true to form, cars you could buy in the showrooms and drive to the racetrack. "This 911 was a tool for the job," continues Fellowes. "With some adjustments to the gearing, interior and livery, these cars were either raced then rallied or rallied then raced in a very short space of time, sometimes just a few days apart."



In all fairness, the Porsche 911 has always been the best all-round sports car. "In a similar vein, I was recently reminded of how in 2010 the British motoring journalist Chris Harris drove a Porsche 997 GT3 RS from Weissach to the Nürburgring 24 Hours.

"The car was in standard road-going trim bar the technical changes required to race. It qualified well up the grid and finished in a remarkable 13th overall. There are many parallels between that car and this one as the Carrera 3.0 RS is hugely versatile, too, and can be used on a road rally such as the Modena Cento Ore and then, a month later, can be banging down the Mulsanne Straight at the ever-popular Le Mans Classic."



There are few classic cars that offer their owners the incredible breadth of use as this Porsche 911 Carrera 3.0 RS. Eligibility, originality, rarity, provenance, beauty - they're all buzzwords that discerning collectors obsess over. Suffice to say, this Porsche really has it all. Now, will it be the Tour Auto or Spa Classic first?

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Gallery

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