

CLASSIC DRIVER

Range Euphoria - Taking the Porsche Taycan Turbo S to Val Bregaglia

Lead

Zurich, Basel, Geneva - the roads between these Swiss metropolises are the perfect playground for the Porsche Taycan. But can this electric sports car also take you to the most remote valleys in Switzerland? We take a short trip to Val Bregaglia to find out.



With the Porsche Taycan, Switzerland has found its perfect touring car: From Zurich to Geneva? From Basel to Lugano? No problem, even when driving on a single charge. But, how well does the Taycan perform when you leave the cities and Swiss highways and venture into the particularly remote Alpine valleys, yet to be developed for electric sports cars? How carefree is fully electric travel on the fringes of automotive civilization?



At the southern end of Graubünden – beyond the glamor of St. Moritz, the traditional elegance of Sils Maria, the serpentine of the Maloja Pass – only a few kilometres from the Italian border is Val Bregaglia. Not many places in Switzerland are as wild, pristine, and rough as this remote mountain valley. Or as dark. "We have no sun here in Val Bregaglia during the winter for three months," reported painter Giovanni Giacometti from the village of Stampa. "When it reappears behind the high mountain peaks in spring and the snow has melted, the whole valley appears to be strewn with golden dust." Even on Google Maps, the valley floor is in dark shadow. So why not catch the last rays of sunshine before the Val Bregaglia goes into hibernation?



The journey begins in Zurich. The Porsche Taycan Turbo S glides smoothly over the Autobahn, the white, snowy peaks of the Glarus Alps shine on the horizon, while the November sky is reflected in the lake. The beautifully named service station "Heidiland", with its practical fast charging stations from Ionity, has established itself as a base for all electrical pioneers on their way to the Graubünden mountains. The fresh alpine air blows around you while having an "outdoor breakfast" with coffee and croissants as the Porsche gathers extra charge for the ascent. After all, you don't want to take it slow on the picture-perfect serpentine of the Flüela Pass with a 761 hp sports car that can sprint to 100 km / h in 2.8 seconds.



High-alpine cornering at the wheel of an electric sports car with brake regeneration also offers completely new joys. With a courageous game of acceleration and deceleration, the energy levels can be depleted and restored time and time again – a surprisingly joyful zero-sum game between sprinting and decelerating.





The high valley of the Engadine is quickly traversed, the sun shines over yellow-gold larches on the way to the south-west. And indeed: If Lake Sils was still shining in golden autumn light a few moments ago, you now dive behind Maloja — at 1,815 meters above sea level — into the blue-tinted darkness of the Val Bregaglia. In just a few moments, you drop 356 meters in altitude as the battery reserve increases with each of the 22 bends. It continues in gentle turns, through deep coniferous and chestnut forests, further down into the valley. Incidentally, the wild nature of Val Bregaglia is not only enjoyed by hikers and mountain sports enthusiasts – it has also recently begun to attract wolves again. A memory that brings a slight shiver to the Porsche driver from the city.



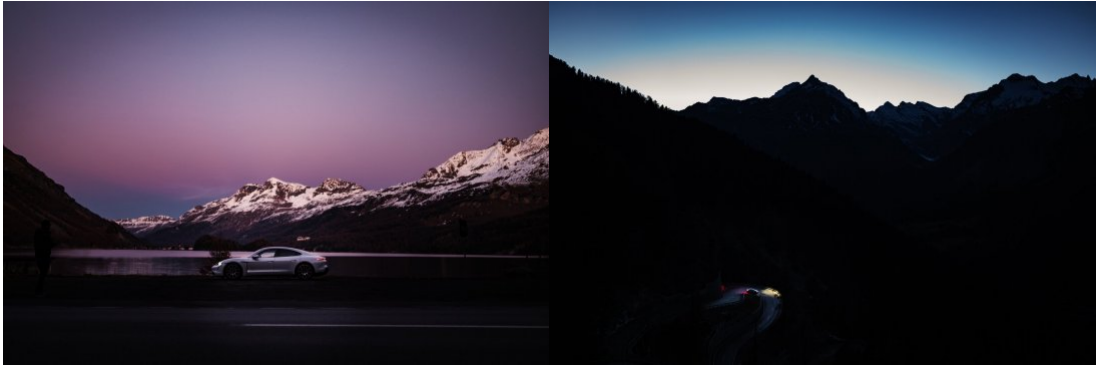
First stop: The Palazzo Castelmur, a magnificent patrician house from the 18th century. Extended with towers and battlements by the Milanese architect Giovanni Crassi-Marliani, based on the Venetian-Moorish model around 1850, the palace bears witness to the Graubünden culture of returnees. In keeping with this, there is a permanent exhibition on the upper floor about the history of the Graubünden confectioners who once escaped the poverty of the mountain valleys - and often returned with riches and cosmopolitan ambitions. From this point, travellers will no longer be surprised at the Rococo palaces and splendid Italian gardens, a rather unusual sight for Swiss mountain villages – especially when a white time machine is parked on the old cobblestones in front of them.



Now, as the shade begins to cool, you follow the road up to the southern slope of Piz dal Märç, where the small village of Soglio is located on a sun terrace at 1,090 meters above sea level. Voted the “most beautiful village in Switzerland” in 2015, Soglio was the seat of the von Salis noble family from Graubünden for centuries.



And so you stroll between stone houses through narrow streets, look into sleepy gardens of Mediterranean splendor, dream of a modest second home – and finally enjoy the homemade chestnut flour gnocchi and braised Gitzi from Soglio with polenta from Poschiavo over a sunny lunch in front of the historic Palazzo Salis. Taking a brief pause here, one is almost inclined to follow in the footsteps of famous guests such as Giovanni Segantini, Rainer Maria Rilke, or Alberto Giacometti and move into one of the 14 charming rooms – and ask for a charging cable for the touring car.



On the other hand, there is a fast charging station at Sankt Moritz, which of course still has to be tested. And then there are the 22 iconic bends of the Maloja Pass, which you absolutely want to cruise through in reverse order before the November sun sets over Lake Sils. And tomorrow is finally a day when you can explore the numerous pearls of Bergell further: the studios of Giacometti and Segantini, and the wonderful Villa Garbald in Castasegna with its futuristic concrete tower by the architects Miller & Maranta.



So you swing back behind the wheel of the Porsche Taycan, look at the mountain peaks in the evening light, and realise you're a little surprised at how adventurous this fully

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electric excursion into the wild Bergell seemed to be. Range Anxiety? From now on it will probably be more like Range Euphoria.

Photos: Andrea Klainguti

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