

CLASSIC DRIVER

Is it a bird? Is it a plane? No, it's Romain Dumas getting high in his Porsche!

Lead
Led by endurance racer and adventurer Romain Dumas, a pair of experimental off-road 911s reached record heights on the slopes of Ojos del Salado, Chile, the highest volcano in the world.



The 911 Dakar is one of the most off-road ready sports cars on the market, but Porsche are still looking to find the limits of their rear-engined wonder, and they enlisted the help of endurance racing legend Romain Dumas to do so. In order to go where no sports car has gone before, Porsche set their sights on the highest volcano in the world: Ojos del Salado in Chile.





However, Dumas would't be attempting the climb in a regular 911 Dakar, far from it. To test the 911 to the limit and beyond, a small team of engineers within Porsche in collaboration with Romain Dumas Motorsport built two very special prototypes based on the Carrera 4S. The two cars were first equipped with roll cages, carbon fibre seats and harnesses to add some much-needed safety while ascending the volcano. Next, portal axles were added, increasing ground clearance to an impressive 350 mm. New, lower gear ratios allowed for precise, gentle throttle inputs at low speed, while large off-road tires added to these 911s' all-terrain ability. In addition, the cars are equipped with special lightweight, but extremely tough, Aramid fiber underbody protection to allow sliding over rocks. Suffice it to say, the team wasn't too worried about curbing their wheels.



With Dumas at the wheel, the team traversed bolder-strewn gradients and ice fields, eventually managing to reach a dizzying 6,734 metres above sea level, before impassable walls of seasonal snow and ice high up near the summit brought the test to an end. "This was a truly memorable and special moment in a place that's both beautiful and brutal at the same time - I guess the only machines anywhere in the world higher than us today were aircraft! We were hard on ourselves and really put it in the deep end for its first test, yet it felt at home," reflected Dumas upon the expedition's end. We can't wait to see what obstacle these wild 911s conquer next!

Gallery

