

Debut with a View

Premiere

The rollout of the new 911 Targa 4 and the 911 Targa 4S concludes the fastest generational change ever in the 911 family. Porsche chose the spectacular panorama of Lake Garda, Italy's largest lake, for the world premiere of these outstanding new vehicles. A debut with a view.

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Targa di Garda:

Precipitous slopes. Tunnel vision. Backwind. Lemon trees in bloom. A sandy beach. Olive groves. The water's edge. Beyond each curve, Lago di Garda presents a different vista. The new 911 Targa 4 changes gears fast—it accustoms itself swiftly to this kind of mind expansion.

Take a look at that:

It's like a fjord. It's like the Mediterranean. Lake Garda's diverse moods are an essential part of its character. But the Targa always remains in high spirits. The glass roof helps to sharpen perception of all the natural marvels.





The driver is taking notes, because the driver is a writer. Bodo Kirchoff, who spends his summers here, is en route to Torri del Benaco: “I think that likening a face to a lake is a valid comparison. After spending months in the city, which is faceless, my drive to the lake already gives me a sense of fulfillment. It gives me a sense of joyous anticipation, even though it is a pretty long drive, and I curse anyone in the passenger seat who doesn’t share this feeling.”

Finally, we’ve arrived. An even happier feeling, because now the real tour begins. Lake Garda attracts any motorist who enjoys spectacular scenery, not just writers. It shares traits of Trentino, of Veneto, of Lombardia. A complex ambience: another reason why our car is headed this way.

As the latest version of the classic Porsche sports car, the 911 Targa 4 and the 911 Targa 4S embody a universal 911 motto: they’ve got it all. That includes the new 3.6- or 3.8-liter six-cylinder boxer engines with direct fuel injection, the fast-shifting Porsche double-clutch transmission (PDK) or the electronically controlled Porsche Traction Management (PTM), and Porsche’s newest all-wheel drive system. Targa enthusiasts know that there has to be one more thing: the retractable roof that lets you connect with the world around you. That’s why we are at Lake Garda, where lake and soul bond. Targa di Garda. The mood, the weather, even the water might change during a pleasure trip. All the better, then, that the car is always in the right mood.

One reason is its ever-present visual highlight: the glass roof that spans a total of 1.54 square meters (16.5 square feet) and consists of two segments: the elegantly styled sliding portion, and the

Bella figura:

The panoramic roof of the new 911 Targa 4 bests even the most stylish sunglasses south of the Alps—and certainly those further north. To see and be seen. The scenic view of Lake Garda is a perfect blend of the romantic and the dramatic.

practical tailgate. Both segments come in special sunscreen glass to shield occupants from UV radiation and excessive heat. In a smooth, synchronous operation, the moving segment slides beneath the tailgate to fully open a 0.45-square-meter (4.8-square-foot) skylight in just seven seconds. Changing the new Targa 4 from a sunroom to a sunporch to suit the weather couldn’t be any easier.

Thank heaven for this midsummer night’s dream. Even in the cobalt-blue dusk it becomes obvious that the only constant about Italy’s largest lake is change. The topographic evidence abounds on the roads around the lake. Sometimes they force the Targa close to the rocky face of the Brescian Alps, and then the valley widens and flattens into a lakeside beach. Impressions inundate the Targa, captivating, memorable. Maximum acceleration is out of the question here. Still, the PDK has many occasions to display its unparalleled gear-shifting speed on this 140-kilometer (87-mile) circuit around the lake, with the start and the finish in ▶

Riva. Down the western Gardesana Occidentale to Salò, and up the Gardesana Orientale from Peschiera along the eastern shore. Accompanied by katabatic winds, whose names sometimes appear in crossword puzzles: the Ora in the south, the Vento in the north. We let them carry us along. Surfing on the Strada, romantic and dramatic at the same time.

Playing with the wind, even without any turbulence in the interior, stimulates the mind. When you're driving, transparency is food for thought. Hot summers, mild winters, the Targa lets you enjoy all the seasons. And it lets the diversity that surrounds you touch you: Mediterranean cypresses, oleander, cedars, olive groves, palms. And, of course, lemon trees, brought here by St. Francis of Assisi. Want to feel like a seagull? The Targa can really move, not just its roof. Depending on the model and equipment, the advanced powertrain can produce up to 8.5 percent more power, use 11 percent less fuel, and emit 14 percent less CO₂ than its predecessors.

The Targa is by nature powerful and purposeful, but with every curve along Lago di Garda it feels smoother and more relaxing. Riva, Limone, Gargnano, Sirmione, Lazise, Bardolino, Malcesine: even the place-names sound like a lilting melody. The new roller shade, designed to provide greater privacy, will feel pretty useless after this weekend with us. There are just too many splendid sights around these 370 square kilometers (143 square miles) of clear alpine water, and too little need for privacy. There must be a special aura around this lake, which found poetic expression even among the ancient Romans.

In this setting the Targa feels at home. It rejoices in driving open, though always with the safety of its integral roll bar, after which this family of vehicles was named. Unpretentiousness and genuine class—these values are appreciated here. *Bella figura!*

Often the best way to relax is to go with the flow. That's equally true for the Targa and for the mind. A flood of impressions, accompanied by the soundtrack of the mountains. And on the precipitous part of the shoreline, often the echo in tunnels. This road had to be cut through sheer cliffs no less than 75 times to complete the circuit around the lake. The resulting play of light and shadow makes the experience all the more stimulating. The rear engine and PTM provide the stable ride that's essential as so many curves follow the shape of the shoreline. The new Targa tracks securely all the way to the lower west shore, where the luxury of old grand hotels blends with Mediterranean casualness. Here the lake of many faces can reveal its noble features. The promenade and the terrace are our destination in Gardone Riviera, where the fjord-like northern half of the lake widens into the Po Valley. To see and be seen, here the visual Targa experience goes two ways. After some sightseeing it's time to relax, which is easy by the lakeside and virtually irresistible in the splendid park surrounding the Grand Hotel Fasano. A great place to learn how to relax in style.

The temptation would be strong to submit to the melancholy of such magical places. But there is always another view beckoning around the next bend with a promise of more and entirely different beauty. So we and the Targa 4 are driven onward. With the same lightness that has attracted more than a thousand different kinds of butterflies to Lake Garda. Give your moments more soul. Give them a Targa. ◀

Technical Data

911 Targa 4 and 911 Targa 4S

(The technical data may vary in different countries.)

Engine:	Aluminum six-cylinder horizontally opposed (boxer), water-cooled
Induction:	Direct Fuel Injection/DFI
Displacement:	3,614 cc (Targa 4) 3,800 cc (Targa 4S)
Power output:	254 kW (345 hp) at 6,500 rpm (Targa 4) 283 kW (385 hp) at 6,500 rpm (Targa 4S)
Max. torque:	390 Nm (287 lb.-ft.) at 4,400 rpm (Targa 4) 420 Nm (309 lb.-ft.) at 4,400 rpm (Targa 4S)
Weight (DIN):	1,530 kg (3,373 lbs.) (Targa 4) 1,540 kg (3,395 lbs.) (Targa 4S)
Acceleration:	0–100 km/h (0–62 mph): 5.2 (5.0)* sec. (Targa 4) 4.9 (4.7)* sec. (Targa 4S)
Top track speed:	284 (282)* km/h (Targa 4) (176/175 mph) 297 (295)* km/h (Targa 4S) (185/183 mph)

* The values in parentheses apply to vehicles with PDK transmission.

Lake Garda

Italy's largest lake lies between the Alps and the Po Valley. It extends 52 kilometers (32 miles) in length parallel to the A22 highway, with a maximum width of 17 kilometers (10 miles). The nearest airport is Verona.

www.gardalake.it
www.goitaly.about.com
www.frommers.com/articles/5158.html

