

ON SITE

Zuffenhausen has been the cradle of the 911 for fifty years now. A golden anniversary is an excellent occasion to visit the production facilities and project all seven generations of the car onto its facades.

By Thorsten Schönfeld Photos by Rafael Krötz



THE ORIGINAL 911

PLANT 2, BUILDING 1
GUTBROD BUILDING

A classic 911 silhouette on a classic industrial structure: This 911 S 2.2 Targa (built in 1970) takes center stage on the facade of the Gutbrod building in Plant 2—the assembly hall in which the story of 911 production begins. Built in 1953, the hall was initially used to make the Porsche 356. It is named after Swiss-born architect Rolf Gutbrod, whose designs include the Liederhalle Stuttgart, the world's first asymmetrical concert hall, and, with Otto Frei, the award-winning glass-tents German Pavilion at Montreal's 1967 Expo. The original 911 was built in 1963 with a two-liter boxer engine and 96 kW (130 hp), while the Targa came onto the market in early 1967, dubbed a "safety convertible" on account of its fixed roll bar. The top model of the first generation was the 911 Carrera RS from 1972 with 154 kW (210 hp).

THE ORIGINAL 911
PRODUCTION PERIOD: 1963 TO 1973

G MODEL

PLANT 2, BUILDING 10
OLD REUTTER PLANT

In the halls of what used to be the Reutter body shop, Porsche employees worked on 911 car bodies until the end of the 1980s, including the 911 Carrera 3.2 (model year 1984), whose projected image ascends the brick facade. Porsche acquired the neighboring company when 911 production started in 1963, and the era of the old body shell continued until the summer of 1989, when production of the G model was discontinued. This generation of the 911 can look back at 17 years of production, more than for any other 911. Ground-breaking dates for the subsequent history of the model include 1974, which marks the appearance of the first Turbo version. With a three-liter engine and 191 kW (260 hp), it rewrote the definition of acceleration.

G MODEL
PRODUCTION PERIOD: 1973 TO 1989



964

PLANT 5, BUILDING 1
BODY SHOP

A 911 Carrera 4 (model year 1989) on the facade of Plant 5. At nearly the same time as the market introduction of the third 911 generation, the production facilities were augmented by a new body shop on the far side of Schwieberdinger Street. Opened in 1989, this part of the plant makes body shells not on production lines but rather on seven islands, with the help

of fully automated robots. The body shells are transported directly to Plant 2 via a conveying bridge. Type 964 was the first production-series 911 to come with all-wheel drive, and it was also equipped with ABS, Tiptronic, power steering, and air bags.

964
PRODUCTION PERIOD: 1988 TO 1994



993

PLANT 2, BUILDING 41,
ASSEMBLY

Opened in the fall of 1970, this building was used to assemble all seven generations of the 911. Its distinctive aluminum facade, which here shows a 911 Turbo (model year 1996) projected above real 911s of the current model series, houses a production surface of a good 15,000 square meters, spread over four floors. This includes the old paint shop, which was in operation until 2011. Flatter than its predecessor and with integrated bumpers, the Porsche 993 design was received with unbridled enthusiasm by the 911 community. This model series enjoys cult status as the last to have an air-cooled rear engine.

993
PRODUCTION PERIOD: 1993 TO 1998

996

PLANT 2, BUILDING 41A
ASSEMBLY

A red 911 Targa 4 (model year 2003) shines through trees on the wall of Building 41A.

Measuring 100 by 30 meters, this annex to Building 41, built in 1979, offers additional production and storage space, but its primary purpose is to improve the quality of the working conditions and to facilitate the production processes. The core of the building consists of a 4,000-square-meter wing for employee services, including a cafeteria, kitchen, and lounge, as well as washing and changing facilities. As the first 911 with a water-cooled engine, the 996 model series of 1997 was also associated with greater comfort. Its completely new design concept—for both the interior and the exterior—marked the start of a new era.

996
PRODUCTION PERIOD: 1997 TO 2005



997

PLANT 3, BUILDING 20
ENGINE SHOP



The new engine shop was built in 2005, with a direct connection to the brick structures of the old Plant 3. The 911 Carrera S Cabriolet (model year 2006) in this photo is heading, so to speak, toward the old part of the plant. Engine production in the new Building 20 takes place in a 9,000-square-meter hall based on a one-piece flow system, with workers following a single engine to the finish. Like its

predecessors, this sixth generation of the 911 combines tradition and modernity. Its form is once again classic, while its technology is groundbreaking: Porsche Active Suspension Management (PASM), for example, allows drivers to select from three levels. The 997 family will ultimately consist of 22 model variants.

997
PRODUCTION PERIOD: 2004 TO 2012

991

PLANT 5, BUILDING 11
NEW PAINT SHOP

Upon start of production of the current model series, a new paint shop went into operation in the fall of 2011, setting new standards in environmental compatibility. Among other things, an electrostatic separation system for paint mist and a wet-chemical exhaust purification system reduce emissions of solvents and particulate matter to a minimum. This setting is a good match for the current 911, which combines high performance with low fuel consumption. An aluminum hybrid construction lowers its weight, and a new suspension with a longer wheelbase enhances its sports-oriented driving comfort. While this 911 Carrera 4S Cabriolet may not be able to drive up sheer walls, its visuals are simply striking.

991
PRODUCTION PERIOD: SINCE 2011



Light show: These photos of the car models were beamed onto the walls with the help of a high-performance outdoor projector, and photographed in the course of two ice-cold nights.



911 (TYPE 997) **CO₂ emissions:** 275 g/km to 237 g/km, **Fuel consumption (combined):** 11.7 l/100 km to 10.1 l/100 km
911 (TYPE 991) **CO₂ emissions:** 236 g/km to 194 g/km, **Fuel consumption (combined):** 10.0 l/100 km to 8.2 l/100 km