



Porsche 911 Carrera 4

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THIS GERMAN sports car maker seems to stir up my childhood memories. I had handfuls of Corgi and Dinky cars and the Porsche models were always the ones I cherished the most. I even had a 911 police car as part of my 'Race and Chase' game – an iffy imitation of the far superior Scalextric slot-car set.

So, even though I can't afford one now I'm all grown up with kids of my own - I never pass up the opportunity to borrow a Porsche. The 911 in particular seems to leave an impression on everyone. Why is this? Well, I reckon it's the classic coupe shape - and the pure 'racing car' yowl the rear-engined beast makes when it comes 'alive'. It's an iconic sports car - simple as that.

The current Carrera 4 builds upon the legend further by providing all-wheel drive. The four-by-four grip is supplied via wizardry known as Porsche Traction Management (PTM). This dispenses power to the front and rear axles as road and driving conditions change - making for a thrilling, responsive, yet stable drive.

Unbelievably, despite the shot of adrenaline the 911 Carrera 4 gives you every time you go out for a spin, it doesn't wolf down fuel. On a 100 mile trip from the Midlands to Norfolk I averaged 30mpg. That isn't bad when you consider a 3.4 litre slab is shoehorned into the car.

Behind the wheel, that powerhouse enables the supernatural to happen every time you depress the accelerator. Fuel is injected fractions of a second prior to combustion, the engine responding spontaneously to even the slightest movement of your right foot. This isn't only the case when picking up the pace, but also when lifting off.

The seven speed manual transmission adds to the entertainment mix. Its slick action soon makes it seem entirely natural to shift all the way up to that seventh cog on the straights.

As for looks - well I've touched a little on those already - the outline of the 911 is the 'meat in the sandwich'.

Aside from brute force, it's why you buy the car. So, subtlety is what the present Carrera 4 is all about. You'll see modifications to the nose and tail and the more overt use of lighting technology: bi-xenon headlights and gorgeous, sparkly, LED daytime driving lights are fitted as standard. The 911 Carrera 4 is also wider across the rear wheel arches than its two-wheel drive sibling. And further definition is added courtesy of a reflective trim that spans the width between the striking rear lights.

The present-day Porsche 911 Carrera 4 is priced from £77,924, but you could end up spending thousands more on all the option packages available.

Rest assured though - your pricey pride and joy won't go missing very easily. Fitted to every 911 is a Porsche Vehicle Tracking System (VTS) - a

highly developed vehicle security package approved to Thatcham Category 5 standard. Can't be bad, eh?

PROS 'N' CONS

- **Iconic looks** ✓
- **Rapid** ✓
- **Grip** ✓
- **Fuel economy** ✓
- **Expensive options list** X

FAST FACTS

- **Max speed: 177 mph**
- **0-62 mph: 4.9 secs**
- **Combined mpg: 30.4**
- **Engine: 3436 cc, 6 cylinders, 24 valve, petrol**
- **Max. power (bhp): 345 at 7400 rpm**
- **Max. torque (lb/ft): 288 at 5600 rpm**
- **CO2: 219 g/km**
- **Price: £77,924**

