

Going for the gold: Porsche Exclusive built seven custom versions of the 959 for a wealthy sheikh—the ultimate in exclusivity



25 YEARS OF PORSCHE EXCLUSIVE

ANNIVERSARY

DREAM-TEAM

Handcrafted refinement ex works—Porsche Exclusive has been making customers' dreams come true for a quarter century. But the history of exclusive Porsches goes back even further than that.

By Dieter Landenberger



Made to measure: Embassy attaché René Jaeger ordered his Porsche 356/2 Cabriolet with a leather dashboard in 1949



Clear vision: German industrialist Alfried Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach always had his Porsche 356 outfitted with rear window wipers



In the beginning there was a dream—one man's dream. That man was Ferry Porsche, and he made his dream come true in 1948 by building a sports car of his own. As he said later, "In the beginning, I looked around and couldn't find quite the car I dreamed of, so I decided to build it myself"—a now-famous quote that would become one of the company's most important principles. From the very beginning, Porsche has made cars that are exclusive and unique—dream cars.

Porsche has always been much more than just a car. No matter whether it is a 356, 911, a Boxster, a Cayenne, or a Panamera, a Porsche is always an expression of individual freedom and a reflection of a driver's desire to find his or her "most personal car." By reconciling outstanding design and performance with the demands of daily use and efficiency, Porsche sports cars have come to stand for more than mere material exclusivity—they have become the ultimate symbol of dynamic driving and a dynamic approach to life itself.

Ever since Porsche started out, it has catered to customers who want to express their individual personality with a car that stands out. When Ferry Porsche began small-series production in 1948 of his Type

356 in Gmünd, Austria, each handcrafted car was one of a kind. And the 356/2 Cabriolets, in particular, are eloquent testimony to the fact that Porsche made accommodating customers' special requests a priority even back then. With special bodywork by famous automotive coach-builders such as Beutler, Keibl, Tatra, and Kastenhofer, these convertible sports cars offered maximum exclusivity. Series production of the 356 began in Stuttgart in the spring of 1950, and the model went on to become a huge success. Six years later, in 1956, Porsche had two reasons to celebrate: the production of the 10,000th Porsche and Porsche's 400th racing victory.

In the early 1950s, Porsche offered a wider choice of engines and body versions than almost any other manufacturer. Five years after the first Porsche was launched, its model 356 cars were available with five different engine options and as a Coupé, Cabriolet, or America Roadster (or Speedster, from 1954). When it came to the interior, customers buying the 356 Pre-A models could choose between leather, heavy-duty wool fabric, and corduroy, and between various shades for both interior and exterior.

The range of choices continued to expand as the 356 evolved with the 356 A, B, and C production series.



Quick count:

Count Gregorio Rossi di Montelera of Martini & Rossi with his street version of the 917 KH (1975)

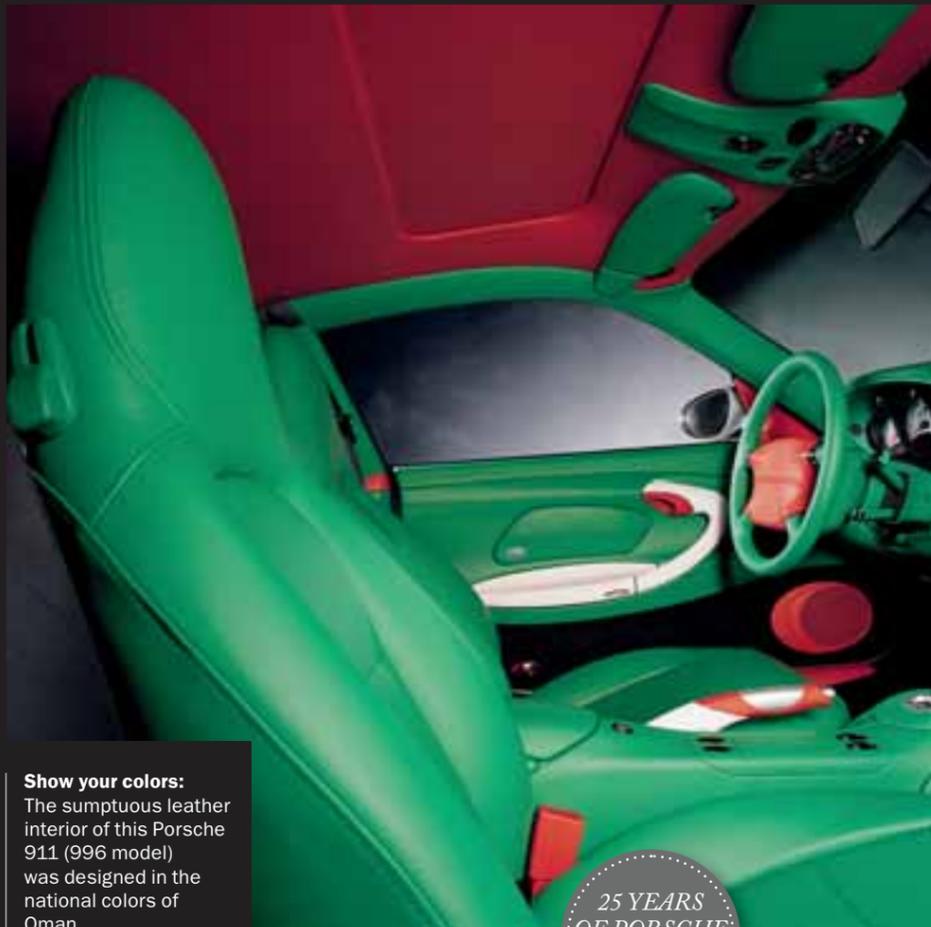
One of a kind:

The road version of the 935 race car (below) ordered by Saudi Arabian-born entrepreneur Mansour Ojje (1983)



Show your colors:

The sumptuous leather interior of this Porsche 911 (996 model) was designed in the national colors of Oman



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911 Sport Classic:

This super-exclusive 911 (below) combines tradition and cutting edge. Its striking look is characterized

by the legendary Fuchs-style wheel rims and a new interpretation of the famous ducktail spoiler



Porsche 356 owners had their choice of eleven colors for the body, which could be combined with interiors in a range of shades. Some of the most popular special options were a leather interior, car radio, and reclining seats. But Porsche also accommodated the more extravagant wishes of its (often famous) customers, such as rear window wipers. From the 1950s on, these special requests were handled by the repair department in the main plant in Zuffenhausen. Up until the 1970s, most special requests were performance-related. Many customers involved in competitive racing asked for modifications to the engine, chassis, and brakes to tailor their Porsche to their specific requirements. In 1971, Porsche established a department for the sale of racing parts, with race driver Jürgen Barth offering support and professional advice to fellow race drivers and customer teams.

The close connection between the factory repair department and motorsports ultimately led to the founding of the so-called customer racing department, which also took over the production of small series like the 911 Carrera RSR and provided technical support for them during the racing season. A special requests department was set up in 1978 to handle custom modifications to series vehicles.

Porsche responded to the burgeoning trend toward auto tuning by taking its special-request program to the next level—sports-car customization. In addition to classic performance-enhancing modifications and suspension lowering, interiors with leather, wood, extensive hi-fi and car phone installations were among the options in high demand. Soon exterior parts like front and rear spoilers and alloy wheel rims were also increasingly requested.

As Porsche's production volume increased and its sales structure became progressively more internationalized, customization ex works developed into a growth business. Consequently, in 1986 Porsche established a special department for customization—the first car manufacturer to do so—which went by the name of Porsche Exclusive.

Since then, customers all over the world have had the option of ordering a unique Porsche individually tailored to their preferences. What began with a simple catalog of parts in the 1986 model year developed into an extensive Exclusive program in the 1990s, offering a wide range of customization options under the motto "handcrafted refinement ex works." Discriminating fans of deluxe details and high-tech solutions can now take their pick from over 600 different spe-



SPECIAL EXHIBITION IN THE PORSCHE MUSEUM

From March 1 to May 1, 2011, the Porsche Museum in Stuttgart-Zuffenhausen will be featuring some of the highlights of the 25-year Porsche Exclusive tradition. In addition to small-series production models and one-of-a-kind cars, visitors can get a first-hand look at the craftsmanship and luxurious materials that go into customizing cars at Porsche Exclusive. Edition Porsche Museum has published a book to accompany the exhibition. Entitled *Porsche Exclusive*, it is available at the museum shop and in bookstores for €14.90.

cial options, including everything from performance-enhancing features, like wheel rims and aerokits, to sumptuous interiors. After a personal consultation, Porsche Exclusive can accommodate virtually any customer request; the only prerequisite is technical and qualitative feasibility. Exclusive specialists use selected materials and the finest craftsmanship when fashioning components and complete vehicles; personal attention and dedication are evident down to the very last detail.

Another Porsche tradition that has flourished at Porsche Exclusive is that of small series. The initial spark was provided in 1983 when the owner of the TAG holding company, Mansour Ojje, commissioned a very special 911: a street version of the 935 race car. Porsche specialists built a one-of-a-kind 935 with 409 horsepower, *Flachbau* (slantnose) bodywork, and an enormous rear wing for the Saudi Arabian-born French entrepreneur. Its interior featured wooden trim, the finest Connolly leather in Crème Caramel, and a state-of-the-art stereo system. The Porsche 935 Street was the crown jewel of the 911 Turbo Flachbau series, which is regarded as the ultimate small-production series of the 1980s. A total of 948 Porsche 911 Turbo were produced in the Porsche repair department between 1981 and 1989, featuring



935-style fenders and spoilers, in most cases combined with door sill trim and rear fender vents.

Retailing at 295,000 marks, the 86 units of the 911 Turbo S Leichtbau (Type 964) produced in 1992/93 represented the very top end of the model program. Not long after that, Porsche fulfilled another customer dream when it produced 15 of the newly launched 911 Carrera Speedsters (964 model) in the coveted Turbo Look. Another special edition of the 911 production series 964 was the 911 Turbo 3.6 Coupé Flachbau, of which only 76 were built. Fourteen Cabriolet versions of the 911 Turbo 3.6 (993 model) were produced in 1995—all of which were one of a kind and sold for more than 300,000 marks (more than \$200,000). An even rarer model is the 911 Speedster based on the last air-cooled 911 production series, the 993. Two were produced (one each in 1995 and in 2000), one for Porsche designer F. A. Porsche and the other for Jerry Seinfeld. The tradition of exclusive small series culminated in the 911 Turbo S, which was also based on the Type 993.

This proud tradition was resurrected in 2009 with the Porsche 911 Sport Classic. Produced in a limited edition of 250 and featuring virtually the entire range of available 911 options, this 911 combined tradition

and modernity and met the exacting requirements of even the most discriminating customers. Another milestone in the history of Porsche Exclusive was presented at the Paris Motor Show in October 2010: the 911 Speedster. In homage to the first Porsche model that bore the name Speedster—the 356 Speedster from the 1950s—the production run for the new (the fourth) edition of the legendary sports car is limited to 356 units. The 911 Speedster not only boasts an exquisitely hand-finished interior, the puristic, open-topped two-seater also stands out from the other members of the 911 family, with its low windscreen and double bubble on the convertible-top compartment lid creating a unique look.

The proud Porsche Exclusive tradition is alive and well—and we can all look forward to plenty more to come from the Porsche “Dream Team.” ●

The author Dieter Landenberger is head of Porsche AG's historical archives.

Collector's item:
The current 911 Speedster model by Porsche Exclusive (limited edition of 356)