

Driving

DUNE BUGGY

Before the new Cayenne comes on the market, it has to pass the merciless Porsche version of the German Technical Inspection (TÜV). Its tour through Dubai is therefore no joyride. But the development team returned in high spirits. An invigorating endeavor in an impressive part of the world.

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Feverish excitement. The heat is precisely why we're here, in the middle of the desert in Dubai. Dunes that stretch a good 80 meters (260 feet) toward the sky. Real monsters. But no problem for the power that resides in this particular caravan. Concentrated, dark, strong. Like a mocha in the morning. Red sand swirls around our hill-climbing tour, shooting up in spray like the finest powdery snow. The trio of vehicles clearly signals stature and power: Porsche, even in the absence of insignia on the hood and rims. Other signs are hidden as well, by the external shell of applied plastic and by a few strips of adhesive as camouflage. The steep new back end, for example, the characteristic features of the front end, and the rising center console in the interior are all covered. If the camels on their way to Oman were interested in a more dynamic means of locomotion across their terrain, they might realize that the next generation of the Cayenne is out on a test-drive before their eyes.

But this is no time for vanity. The Cayenne is expected to display primarily its technical highlights, so adjectives along those lines will suffice. The team wants to use the comparative cool of the early morning hours, as the thermometer has not yet passed the 40-degree Celsius (104-degree Fahrenheit) mark as its minimum reference point. This will be a special trial that takes place shortly before the new model enters series production. The Porsche version of the German Technical Inspection (TÜV) is more ruthless than the worst nightmares of Germany's car owners, whose vehicles have to pass the country's strict safety test every two years. Engineer Rolf Frech, who directs overall vehicle development at the Weissach Development Center, and Jürgen Kern, the director of testing, know no mercy. Their technical expedition forms the advance guard for the final acceptance by Wolfgang Dürheimer, Porsche's head of development. In the punishing heat on this tough terrain, everything that the Cayenne's technology offers in terms of stability will be demanded. Heavy traffic in the metropolis of the United Arab Emirates is a comparatively pleasant aspect of the tour, for the sporty SUV is also expected to handle sustained stop-and-go tasks under extreme conditions. For the test team, this phase of the trial might be called "perspiration exceeds inspiration."

Inside the car, the air-conditioning system ensures the requisite coolness during this "trial by fire." As old hands, Frech and Kern are not easily rattled. But a healthy bit of tension cannot be overlooked in this final phase, for that is part of what motivates them in their job. It's been 48 months since the development process for the new vehicle began, and the Cayenne has long ago passed the major quality gates. The Porsche experts know in their hearts that there's nothing that can really go wrong now. But they want to be absolutely sure. Reliability, durability, and endurance: that's what all models that seek permanent membership in the Porsche vehicle family must demonstrate. "These types of trials let us know that we're on the right road," says Kern. Having some distance to one's own product is of paramount importance. The only way to get the right answers is to call everything into question. ▶



**No escaping the challenge!
The new Cayenne stirs up sand and sensation. Shortly before entering series production, the next generation of this sporty SUV undergoes a special trial.**



Concentrated, dark, strong! Like a mocha in the morning. On its hill-climbing tour, the vehicle zooms up dunes 80 meters (260 feet) high. The new Cayenne doesn't reveal every last detail, but it does display its full range of ability.

The dune on which we're standing has a broad crest, but the Cayenne has reached the peak of its developmental pyramid. It was built up over a period of four years, and everything that is now being tested in the metal has already passed its digital preliminary trials with flying colors. But still, nothing can surpass driving. And this in turn will form the basis for even more simulations. A whole Cayenne is stuffed to the gills with measurement technology. All relevant data are immediately transferred home during these final demonstration drives. The test cars have a diagnostic button; pushing it saves the data in the greatest possible resolution at crucial moments. "This is extremely target-oriented research," says Frech. With all of its imponderables. Loaded with heavy equipment, a pickup truck with the inscription "Arabian Adventures" accompanies the Porsche caravan.

The Cayenne presents itself not only in new garb. "It's a really big step," says Frech. "Both our demands and those of our customers are increasing all the time." Under proportions that appear rounder, there is a newly strengthened body that has gained 45 millimeters (1.8 inches) in length. That means yet more space in back on the folding rear seat. Despite that, this new version of the successful Porsche SUV has lost nearly 200 kilos (440 pounds) in comparison to its predecessor. In automotive construction, that's a powerful statement. "We worked on every single component," says Frech, who supervised the vehicle's diet. As a result, the Cayenne exhibits a large degree of evolution, with the Panamera development process having blazed the trail. Among the completely new features is the eight-speed automatic transmission with start/stop function and the hang-on all-wheel drive. "It's very, very pleasant to shift," says Frech approvingly during our trek through the desert, which also translates to "very, very fast." ▶

**Eye-to-eye:
Encounters in the sandy no-man's-land of Dubai**



Fuel consumption is an important factor, even in regions that are home to oil. The Cayenne has internalized the message along with the solutions, especially in its hybrid version. The V6 hybrid combines the power of an eight-cylinder engine with the fuel consumption of a four-cylinder variant. This model can achieve about 9 liters/100 km (26 mpg). Its CO₂ emissions amount to fewer than 210 grams/km (130 grams/mile)—that's around 20 percent less than a conventional vehicle with comparable power.

Even in its disguise, the new Cayenne seems to swing its hips with yet more audacity—marking it as a true member of the Porsche family. It can hardly wait to show the irresistible form it has taken. Its camouflage against overly inquisitive attention and premature recognition underscores the significance of the mission in Dubai: here, it's not just a matter of seeing the beauty, but also the beast. A roller-coaster ride seems less than spectacular in comparison. Thinking outside the box, steering to the limit, maximum inclination, steep angles, tight sweeps. In this blazing no-man's-land, an arduous agenda poses the final test of character. "Hunting of wild animals is prohibited," read signs on the roadside. But a new Porsche enjoys its own type of protection. The only navigation system here is a track in the sand. The new Cayenne powers itself through this last mountain of work as well. ◀

The center of Dubai's million-strong metropolis becomes a promenade for the new Cayenne: the car can hardly wait to show the irresistible form it has taken.

