



An '80s rock star and her classic 911

By Pablo Deferrari

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She's walking out of the liquor store laden down with her handbag on one hand and a case of Pabst in the other. A couple of good ol' boys leaning up against a pickup truck nearby watch her. As she puts the case down to open the door on her 993, she looks up and notices them gawking at her. They make eye contact and then one of the guys bobs his head up and down with a smile and gives her a thumbs-up. This is just another ordinary day.

Now, how often do you see a beautiful woman behind the wheel of an air-cooled 911? I can count those moments on one hand, but then again I don't live in sunny California where this is probably a common occurrence. Here on the East Coast, it's a sight to cherish.

She drives a Guards Red 993, lowered and sporting Supercup wheels. It's a cup car look-a-like and she totally digs it. This combination is arguably the sexiest look for this car — it somehow seamlessly blends aggression with sophistication. Simple, clean, to the point, it's devoid of any the extra silly bits or gaudy accessories that children and simple people like.



A shot of the Guards Red 993, lowered and sporting Supercup wheels.

This brings me to an interesting observation while on the subject of women and Porsches. I can vividly remember how lots of my Porsche posters I had as teenager contained a scantily clad girl draped over say a 911 or 959 (maybe even a 944 or 928). But things have changed. These days, it would be considered politically incorrect to pair the two in such a way. In fact, if you see this sort of thing now, it's usually done in a more tasteful manner, as it should.

Our 911 pilot, however, is very sophisticated. She has transcended all of these natty bits of politics and issues of exploitation. In fact, she finds such things to be humorous these days. The way she sees it, she's just another person who happens to love Porsches. Gender is completely irrelevant — and she's right.

To her, the 993 is nothing short of an example of fine art. She's attracted to the shape and feel of this last of the air-cooled 911s. The wide, muscular fenders, the mechanical symphony taking place behind her, the whine of the fan, the roofline and interior layout virtually unchanged since 1963, the precise thwack when closing the doors — elements of a bygone era. It's as if it was an '80s 911 made of chocolate and left out in the sun to melt for a bit to give it its shape.

Modern, kitted with airbags, proper air conditioning and heating, and remote keyless entry, this 911 carries lots of the old-school charm with loads of things suited for modern-day driving. The upside-down pedals perfectly suited for feathering the clutch with 6-inch heels, the pizza pie-sized tach, and the huge analog clock off to the right to keep her on track with her schedule is the icing on the cake.

Lift throttle oversteer? She'd look at you as if you still possessed a Motorola "brick phone." This 911 leaves that worry far behind. She doesn't need the extra drama, and besides, the torsioned-bar trailing arm setup of yesteryear is something she'd prefer not to worry about these days when sharing a rain-soaked off-ramp with less sophisticated drivers.

She loves the intimate connection she gets with this 911. It's a visceral experience. Pulling the small knob on the far left of the dash releasing the fuel filler flap when she eases up to the gas pump, checking the oil gauge to make sure it hovers around 3 o'clock while she's there, lifting the decklid to see that the belts aren't fraying. She'll even check the engine oil dipstick while keeping her blonde locks clear of that giant fan sucking gobs of air to cross check the gauge — she's good.

She's in tune with this car she deems organic. Like winding an Omega Speedmaster, there's a level of involvement that is never a bother but more of a connection, like a pilot doing the preflight inspection walk around his aircraft. You love the thing so much, that you look forward to such moments. It's never a bother, it's a pleasure.

She's had newer Porsches that didn't need this level of intimacy. Some would say her current choice is too much to bother with, why go through such trouble when a newer variant looks after her more than she it. And therein lies the problem. Connection. With modern Porsches, there's really not much to fuss about. A bit of the intimacy has vanished; things are made to simplify the driving experience these days.

Her 993 becomes a part of her daily ritual, and she prefers it that way.

After spending countless sessions, not only as a bass player, but minding her cantankerous band mates to perfect the Howard Stern theme song, lining up venues at CBGBs, The Great Gildersleeves and The Bitter End during New York City's decadent years, she's used to looking after what's important. It suits her nature. That's why she can handle a vintage 911.

Just who is this former rock star in a decade that if you remembered you probably weren't there? My wife, Diane. The Pabst, by the way, was for me. The 911 needed her 12 spark plugs changed.

A dyed-in-the wool, air-cooled 911 junkie, Pablo Deferrari doesn't discriminate against other Porsches. He is fascinated by the company, the people behind these great machines and how every model's existence had unmistakable DNA from the model before it. The stories behind each car and how they all in some way saved Porsche from the brink of extinction every time are inspiring. Contact Pablo at porschepatina@gmail.com.



Here is Diane from her bass-strumming days with the band Fetish. She is flanked by guitarists Dave Schwab (right) and John Gagliano in this 1987 photo.

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