



The subtle aero kit, bigger wheels, and lower stance give the TechArt Carrera S a more purposeful look.



Gray Matter

TechArt gives the rapid new 2017 911 Carrera S an all-round boost.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY IAN KUAH

With even the 370-hp entry-level version now providing enough performance for most people, Porsche's 2017 911 (991.2) Carrera has rewritten the rules. But this is not just about raw horsepower. The healthy spread of torque encouraged by a pair of turbochargers is the real game changer here. While both the Carrera and Carrera S versions of the 911 have the same 3.0-liter 9A2-generation flat-six engine, bigger turbochargers and other finessed components ensure that the S version earns its keep as the flagship Carrera model until Porsche launches the inevitable GTS variant.

There will, of course, always be enthu-

siasts who want more than the \$103,400 Carrera S has to offer but are not yet ready to step up to the \$159,200 Turbo or the \$188,100 Turbo S plate. For those who inhabit this middle ground, and want to declare their individuality, tuner TechArt now offers their Carrera personalization program, which consists of a power infusion, aerodynamic styling, alloy wheels, and a custom interior.

While the move to forced aspiration was inevitable in the search for lower emissions and improved fuel consumption, we always knew that factory turbocharging would unlock a whole new world for the aftermar-

ket tuners. The TechArt Carrera S 991.2 is living proof that a new era of Porsche tuning has dawned.

The heart of TechArt's Powerkit TA 091/S1 is their TechTronic piggyback engine control unit (ECU), which kicks in when the driver selects Sport or Sport Plus mode. Then, the remapped fuel, ignition, VarioCam, and boost parameters conjure up an additional 60 hp and 60 lb-ft of torque, bringing the big numbers to 480 hp and 428 lb-ft, which compares favorably with the 540 hp and 523 lb-ft of the latest Turbo, and falls roughly midway between this and the stock 420-hp/368 lb-ft Carrera S.



2017 TechArt 911 (991.2) Carrera S Specs

Drive	Rear-wheel drive
Layout	Rear-engine
Wheelbase	96.5 inches
Engine	3.0-liter twin-turbo flat-six
Transmission	7-speed man. or PDK
Horsepower	480 hp
Torque	428 lb-ft
Weight (Man./PDK)	3,175 lbs/3,219 lbs
Power-to-Weight	6.6 lbs/hp/6.7 lbs/hp
0-62 mph (PDK Sport Chrono)	3.7 seconds
Top Speed (PDK)	193 mph

A fixed rear wing and four exhaust pipes in the middle give the business end its aggressive look.

In stock form, the Carrera S is no slouch out of the box. In fact, it is significantly faster than the 408-hp 1997 911 (993) Turbo and 450-hp 2005 911 (996) Turbo S, both of which were very rapid machines in their day. The 480-hp TechArt car delivers a 0-62 mph time of 3.7 seconds and a 193 mph top speed, putting it on an equal footing with the 3.6-liter 2007-2009 911 (997.1) Turbo. Thanks to the far superior 991.2 chassis and aerodynamics, however, the new car has the overall edge.

For a driver's car like a Porsche, how it feels is just as important as what it does, and here the TechArt Carrera S really scores. Power delivery is just as smooth and progressive as the standard car, but it packs a much bigger wallop that is felt as a perceptibly bigger push in the back as the car is fired relentlessly down the road.

And it sounds good, too. Helping the power output and throttle response through lower backpressure, the TechArt sound-valve-control Sport exhaust with four titanium outlets covered by matte-finished carbon-fiber trim pieces has a snappier soundtrack than the stock exhaust. Of equal importance, it only makes itself heard when you want it to, otherwise, it is as reticent as the stock exhaust in light throttle cruise.

Porsche always makes sure that their chassis are well suited to the available engine power, and even in standard form the revised Carrera S suspension and brakes have enough in reserve to handle the extra grunt of the TechArt Powerkit.

To use it to maximum advantage, however, the TechArt Sport suspension upgrade is a must have along with their matching wheels and tires. These are the

TechArt Formula IV style in 9.0J and 11.0J x 21-inch sizes in satin black, shod with 245/30ZR21 and 305/25ZR21 tires front and rear respectively. For urban dwellers, a useful option is the front lift kit that raises the nose 2.4 inches at the touch of a button to clear ramps and speed bumps.

The ride is a bit firmer, as you'd expect, but the car also rolls less and feels more agile and confidence-inspiring in fast cornering. It is a good match for the invigorated engine's power.

TechArt's AeroKit 1 was developed in the wind tunnel to both look good and make the car even more stable at high speed. It consists of a two-piece front spoiler with a splitter and air outlet in matte carbon, headlamp surrounds, side sills, rear diffuser, door mirror covers and roof spoiler in matte carbon, and the Type I rear wing.

Custom interiors were the unique selling point that helped to build TechArt's reputation in the early days, and remain an integral part of the company's personalization programs. This is also a draw for customers who want a completely unique car along the lines of haute couture tailoring. In this demo car, however, rather than simply recover the factory interior in higher quality leather as so many tuners do, TechArt elected to remodel the seats for a fresh look and then applied a special perforated black and graphite blue leather trim.

Neon orange decorative stitching sets off this sober background color palette, with this visually disruptive orange highlight appearing again on the steering wheel stitching, instrument faces, gear lever, and the brake calipers. The finishing touch is provided by matte carbon-fiber trim inserts on the doors, dashboard, center console and seat backs and the aluminum foot pedal set.

The new seat pattern is reminiscent of some Mercedes seats of the 1980s and therefore conveys a look inclined more towards luxury, superimposed on sports seats that hold their occupants well in fast cornering. It is an interesting approach to the interior design of a road rather than track biased 911, and stamps a unique personality on this car.

If there is anything I would change about TechArt's show car it is only the color. The gray hue from the factory color chart is too drab for a car that is such a hoot to drive. The TechArt Carrera S needs to look bright and happy to reflect the big smile it puts on its driver's face every time those 480 horses stamped. ■