

MOTORING



DGEE TEE

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TEST DRIVE || The new Turbo GT is much more than just another (very) fast Cayenne. The clue is in those two little letters.

IT'S two o'clock in the afternoon and it's raining cats and dogs. And probably some other animals as well as all the cars on the road seem to be slow-moving pylons. All but one. Mine. I am the fastest driver in this place and time by a long margin. And, while I cannot write on this page how fast I was going, I was driving in a perfectly safe manner both for me and my fellow drivers. Because I was driving the new Porsche Cayenne Turbo GT, the most brilliantly pointless SUV Porsche have ever built.

treatment and come out the other side like something spectacular. And well, they are absolutely right. This thing is a riot.

To understand just how good this car is, get this: it's not even the most powerful Cayenne in the range. Usually, the most powerful car is the range-topper. But, just like the 911 Turbo S sits below the GT3 and GT2, the Cayenne Turbo GT is the ultimate Cayenne.

It comes with a mighty 4-litre V8 Turbo packing a 640 horse-power punch, meaning this 2.2 tonne machine reaches 100 km/h in 3.3 seconds. Get your head

Everything looks better and faster with bronze wheels. And a carbon-fibre wing. Enter the new Cayenne Turbo GT, Porsche's latest super SUV.'

You see, this is a Cayenne developed by the motorsport team - hence the GT in the name, the same letters the Germans stick on their high-performance sports cars like the 911 GT2 and GT3 or the Cayman GT4.

Obviously, nobody in the world needs an SUV that is as high-performance oriented as this Cayenne. Porsche definitely didn't need to build it because they cannot produce enough of their other cars to satisfy demand, so why does this thing exist? Well, for the best reason a silly yet brilliant car always does: because yes.

This is Porsche saying that their engineers are so good even a car as big and as heavy as a Cayenne can be subjected to the motorsport



around that for a second. A Ferrari 458 Italia, the best supercar from a decade ago, does it in 3.4 seconds. The Cayenne Turbo S Hybrid - with the same V8 block under the hood, aided by an electric motor and putting out a combined 680 horse-power - can 'only' do it in 3.8 seconds.

Top speed is also 5km/h higher than the Turbo S Hybrid's - 300km/h plays 295km/h. But numbers don't tell this car's story. It's the way it feels behind the wheel and how it defies what your mind believes a car of this size and weight can and cannot do.

The whole thing feels very cohesive, with all the elements working in perfect sync to offer the best possible driving experience. It's something one only sees in sports cars - namely ones with this very same badge on the bonnet.

As any other GT car, the Cayenne looks to save weight in order to increase performance and improve dynamic abilities. That is why this model comes only in Coupé body style and the engineers went to great lengths to shave a few kilograms wherever possible. The carbon-fibre roof, for example, saves 22kg (while also lowering the car's centre of gravity); the titanium exhaust another

18kg and the standard-fit carbon-ceramic brakes are much lighter than lesser Cayenne's steel ones.

An array of small but significant changes aim also to turn up the Cayenne GT to eleven. There are wider tracks and tyres, faster changes from the Tiptronic S eight-speed gearbox, electronic anti-roll bars, a bigger rear spoiler and even a kind of wing atop the rear glass. It rides 17mm lower than the regular Turbo, it uses a three-chamber air suspension adjustable in height working through three independent chambers (yes, it is as complex as it sounds) and the Porsche Torque Vectoring rear differential has a greater locking ratio for a

more agile feeling and faster direction changes.

Inside, changes are not as significant and the Cayenne mixes sportiness with luxury in just the right amount, as usual. I love the Alcantara steering wheel, roof, seats, dashboard and door cards. The tachometer is mechanical rather than digital and it feels great to see that needle rise all the way up to 7000 rpm.

Infotainment is the same as in other recent Porsche models, the sixth generation PCM system. No nonsense, great graphics and always very intuitive. The Burmester sound system will blow you away and happily rob some attention away from the V8 music coming from up front and the titanium exhaust out back.

I will end by saying this Cayenne starts at €270,000 (pause), which means that with an optional extra here and another one there, you can have yourself a €300,000 SUV that for some bystanders will look just like any other Cayenne starting at €115,000. So, I am guessing this is not a car for poseurs. You hear me, poseurs? This car is not for you.

This is a serious car for serious petrolheads (with serious bank accounts, of course) who absolutely know they are buying the best high-riding machine Porsche have ever made (maybe the best anyone has). And even that is selling this car short. It really is quite something.



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