

# The Colors of Summer



SHAKING OFF THE WINTER DOLDRUMS WITH THREE BRIGHTLY HUED 993 CABRIOLETS.

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**WHAT SAYS SUMMER** fun more than a Porsche on a deserted country road? How about a Porsche on a deserted country road with an open roof and brightly colored paint? Porsche has always embraced color. Certainly, much can be said about the stark simplicity of white, the elegant menace of black, or the traditional brilliance of silver, but throw a bit of Lizard Green, Racing Yellow, Maritime Blue, or Zanzibar Red into the mix and see how heads turn. Colors are fun.

After a run of bland conservatism in the 1980s, Porsche reintroduced a splash of color in the '90s. Whether or not it started with a happy Porsche technician showing off his yellow socks in an early 993 commercial is hard to say, but who can stifle a smile when looking at a colorful cabriolet? The softly flared fenders and smooth backside of the 993 perfectly complement brighter hues. Just ask the PCA members profiled here.





Offered as a standard color for the 911 from 1970 to 1972, Conda Green was a paint-to-sample choice on this 1997 C4. The green deviated stitching contrasts perfectly with the dark blue interior. Driven only 29,000 miles, this 25-year-old 911 looks as if it is barely broken in.



**THE CONDA GREEN** 1997 993 C4 Cabriolet, which owners John and Honore D'Angelo call Kermit, would make ole "Yellow Socks" smile for sure. The color is stunning, and is "one of the most desirable long-hood 911 colors because it's so evocative of the period in which it was offered," according to PCA's [rennbow.org](http://rennbow.org) color wiki.

Purchased in the midst of the 2020 pandemic from a retired doctor in Chicago, the striking car is enjoyed by the D'Angelos, whether showing it off at a local Cars & Coffee or driving along the coast on Highway 1. A blue leather interior highlighted with deviated green stitching pulls the Conda Green exterior into the car.

"This [993] was sort of an afterthought," explained John. "I was going to order and take factory delivery of a 718 Spyder, but this popped up on the PCA Mart. It got me thinking how much fun it would be. My first Porsche was supposed to be this color. That 1970 911S is the one that got away. Anyway, it's my fourth 993."

The original owner, Merv Rosen, was a long-term PCA member, joining in 1964 after purchasing his first Porsche, a 1964 356C. He won his first gymkhana at the Colorado Springs Parade in 1966, an event that pushed him toward a successful amateur racing endeavor that included competing with his 906 at Sebring in 1969.

Merv had a long-hood 911 in

Conda Green in the early '70s and a paint-to-sample Conda Green 930 (now owned by his son), so his 993 fell into that natural progression. Where the idea for the blue seats and green stitching came from remained a mystery; perhaps it was an impromptu action from the Sonderwunsch (special request) program. In any case, Merv picked it up at the factory and toured Germany for a while before shipping his car to the States.

"Meeting Merv was a total bonus from the whole experience. I love it when PCA brings me in touch with people that I never would have met otherwise. So cool," concluded John. As always, PCA's slogan about cars and people rings true.





What's more traditional (and more sporty) than Guards Red over Cashmere leather? Despite a short driving season, Greg and Karlene keep the top down regardless. Motor Sound adds a bit of aural bluster.



**WESTERN MICHIGAN REGION** members Greg and Karlene Currie own a 1997 993 Cabriolet in glorious Guards Red with a Cashmere leather interior that they bought in 2000. But this wasn't their first Porsche. PCA members since 1997, Greg and Karlene were introduced to Porsche by a friend who drove a white 944, which led to them buying a Guards Red 944. Details of their 993 purchase reflect how used-car transactions have changed over the years. "We found a person in Utah whose business it was to find cars for buyers," recalled Greg. "This was before the internet made such searches simple. Anyway, I told him what I was looking for and he got busy. He located this car at a Porsche dealership in Virginia and

called us with all the pertinent details. It had low mileage, about 12,000 miles, with all the options we wanted. We bought it sight unseen, flew to Virginia, picked it up at the dealership, and drove it home to Michigan after a side trip to Washington, D.C. We never met the person who found the car for us, but we were very satisfied with his service. We paid him his finder's fee, and that was that." Why Guards Red? Like thousands of other Porsche owners, Greg and Karlene think that Guards Red is the ultimate color for a Porsche. As *rennbow.org* explains, "It's hard to know where to start with a color as iconic as Guards Red. It's one of the most popular Porsche colors of all time. Every Porsche that we can

think of looks great in Guards Red. And that, in a nutshell, likely accounts for its extreme popularity." Greg and Karlene are as active in their PCA region as they can be, although they are logistically challenged. "The Western Michigan Region is primarily in Grand Rapids, which is two and a half hours south of us. But they always have a spring event and a fall event, and we are involved in those. Our best friends are club members so we really make an effort to meet up with them. We also host events when the gang comes up to Traverse City." What is it that they like most about their 993 Cab, besides the color? "It's a great-looking car. We had not driven a 911 Cab before but saw one in a

movie, *Against All Odds*. We love the fact that it's a convertible. We never have the top up. The top is like brand-new because it's never used. And the car sounds good. One of its options is Motor Sound. Everyone who follows us on one of our drives comments on the sound. They love it." Any other reason to like the car? Karlene offered her two cents with perhaps the best comment yet. "I look good in it!" What more needs to be said? As for other Porsches in their future, Greg thought a Cayenne might find its way into their garage, while Karlene offered a different thought. "Well, maybe if one of those new Targas in a bright blue color became available, we just might..."





Striking whether it is parked near a railroad siding or cruising the highway, the 911's Zenith Blue option was a "must have" for the Schneiders. The radio faceplate belies the bellicose sound system lurking in the frunk.



**ROBERT AND SUSIE SCHNEIDER** own a 1998 Zenith Blue 993 Cabriolet. Of the 89 different blues that Porsche has offered, Rennbow says that Zenith Blue is among the more striking of the metallics, and that in some lights it has a strong purple cast.

Robert described his long-time affinity for Porsches. "We've been Porsche owners for a long time and PCA members since 1987, when we bought our first one," he said. "As a teenager, I hung out at the local Porsche dealership in Louisville, Kentucky until the staff would shoo me away. I still have sales brochures from back then."

After a string of Volkswagens and BMWs, including a 1974 2002 ti that he wishes he'd held onto, Robert

made a move on a white 911 SC Targa while on an out-of-town business trip. He called the dealership, gave them a credit card deposit, and visited the next week to pick up the car. Unfortunately, says Robert, "The dealership sold the car out from under me while I was traveling. I thought it was criminal of them. Anyway, I found a 1984 Targa, white with a red interior, in Louisville, Kentucky and bought that one."

"We also owned a Honda NSX that got a lot of looks. We knew the air-cooled cars were going out of production, and we were solidly Porsche people, so we sold the NSX and ordered this 993 Cab. We added very few options but had to have Zenith Blue. It contrasted nicely

with the black top and black Recaro sport seats. We've had the car for 23 years and put 44,600 miles on it."

Their Porsche is virtually stock with two exceptions, one rather boisterous. "We replaced the factory Bridgestone tires with Michelin Pilot Sports because we've had them on other cars."

Then there's the stereo. The Schneiders couldn't really find anything wrong with the factory Blaupunkt radio, but they thought that with the top down they needed a little more oomph. "We found a high-end place in Southwest Houston that was doing Ferrari, Lamborghini, and Porsche installations. They knew what they were doing. When I saw a photo of Clint Black on the wall with





his car they'd just done, I knew I was in the right place. After discussing what we were looking for, we decided on an Alpine head unit with a removable faceplate so I can just pop it off and put it in the glovebox. We have a McIntosh amplifier in the trunk. We used MB Quart speakers but kept the original speaker covers so everything looks stock."

All of Robert and Susie's cars have had manual transmissions. "I think the first question I asked her when we began dating was if she could operate a manual transmission," he laughs. Both Robert and Susie get right arm exercise enjoying rallies, tours, and spontaneous week-

end drives. With homes in Louisville and Houston, they ship their 993 back and forth to keep it close.

Although the Schneiders' current project is building a sweet 356C coupe in a brilliant silver with a CanCan Red interior, their Zenith Blue 993 standout will remain a resident in their garage, wherever that garage may be.

**THE BOTTOM LINE** is that, no matter which Porsche you own, you can bring out some of your car's—and your own—personality by choosing a unique, unusual, or eye-catching color. Just ask the owners of these head-turning 993 Cabriolets. 🍌

## But What Fun Would That Be?

"IN THE EARLY 1990s, sales figures showed that customers were becoming bored with the shape of the 911—certainly in the form of the then-current 964 model. It was okay for the real enthusiasts, of course, but overall sales showed that it just wasn't exciting enough. That was why we went in the direction of the 993. It had more of a high-performance look about it. It was more muscular with its big fenders, and everyone loved it." So said Harm Lagaij, Porsche's head of design at the time.

Plagued by flagging sales, a stodgy model line, and an image clouded by misconception, Porsche needed to shake things up. The 993 model was poised to address one of those issues. And how about the other two?

To quote Joel Ewanick, general manager of marketing at Porsche Cars North America from 1990-'98, "One of our problems was that we took ourselves too seriously. We needed to back off that."

Consequently, a new advertising agency, Goodby, Silverstein &

Partners, was brought in to do the shaking. Jeff Goodby and Rich Silverstein, together with Jeff Zwart, who served as film director and producer, and actor Patrick Stewart, who did the narration, created some of the most memorable Porsche commercials and print ads ever. Who can forget the tag lines: "Kills Bugs Fast," or "Like Peanut Butter to the Roof of Your Mouth."

Porsche's TV commercials also displayed an upbeat, personal tone. Real, honest-to-goodness Porsche factory workers were featured in spots. "If Reinhold likes your car, we're pretty sure you will like your car," said one ad. And how about, "The 911 is still available in red, black, and white, but what fun would that be?"

Jeff Zwart reminisced about those times and the processes they used. "Jeff [Goodby] and Rich [Silverstein] were so hands on. There was such great collaboration not only with Porsche Cars North America but in this case, we shot all of the commercials in Germany. We had a lot of cooperation from Porsche AG.

That series of commercials emphasized that the cars were really hand-built. The workers' hands actually touched the cars. Also, we wanted to show the customers' ability to choose options, one of which was the Paint-To-Sample (PTS). Back then it was really paint-to-sample. You could provide a sample of the color you wanted and they would do it. That's what that commercial was all about."

"That was really the golden era of advertising," he reminisced. —DM



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