

Why is the government lowering mpg goals?

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Alfa bet.

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So long, 200.

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Times Union Car Show postponed.

Turns out t-storms and classics don't mix.

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## TEST DRIVE

# Icon, Upgraded

## 2017 Porsche 911 Carrera 4S Cabriolet PDK

DAN LYONS | text and photos  
Special to the Times Union

While the 2017 Porsche 911 gets a fistful of upgrades for 2017, none are likely to get more attention than the changes in the engine compartment.

Much of the 911's storied reputation has been based on their flat-six cylinder engines. The 2017 edition stretches 15 models wide, and while all are still six-cylinder, all but two are now turbos.

Setting the lineup, the 911 is offered in three body styles (Coupe, Targa, and Cabriolet), with rear and all-wheel-drive models. Prices for Porsche's sports car

**2017 Porsche 911 Carrera 4S Cabriolet PDK**  
MSRP: \$122,600 · As Tested: \$150,925

flagship range from \$89,400 for a Carrera Coupe, to \$200,400 for a Turbo S Cabriolet.

My test car was a Carrera 4S Cabriolet. The "4" signifies all-wheel-drive, and the S means that this Cabrio trades the "base" 3.0L turbocharged flat-six engine (370 h.p., 331 lb.-ft. of torque) for a hotter version that's rated at 420 h.p. and 368 lb.-ft. of torque.

Porsche says the 3.0L twin-turbo flat-six will make it to 60 from a standstill in 3.8 seconds, with a top, track speed of 187 mph. It's an exceptionally lively engine, responsive at all rpm ranges and lag-free in acceleration.

The last bastion of stick shift loving purists are sports car drivers. Porsche is one of the few automakers that



**SPORTY AND CIVILIZED.** The price tag on the 2017 Porsche 911 Carrera 4S puts it in the sport/luxury class. And though it is very civilized, its attitude comes down decidedly on the sporty side of the class.

remains committed to offering manual transmissions. Dwindling take rates and the savings to be had from simplifying powertrain combinations have chased most manufacturers away from building stick cars. That said, my test car was fitted with an automatic, and while it's always disappointing to drop into a sports car and find only two pedals, the consolation is Porsche's PDK automatic — one of the best in the business. It switches fluidly from automatic to manumatic mode, and posts RightNow response times to paddle shift requests.

As with the advent of electromechanical steering on Porsche models a few years back, some traditionalists

will no doubt harrumph loudly at the proliferation of turbos on the new generation 911s. But you really can't argue with the results. The motors are fast, free-revving and (if anyone cares) more frugal than the ones they replace.

Forgiving, too. To the extent that it could be explored on public roads, I found the 911's handling to be exemplary. The adjustable, PASM suspension is standard on all models and can be dialed stiffer or softer to suit the driver. My car was equipped with the Sport Package

(\$6,810), which includes rear axle steering. Absent a car without this option to compare it to, it's hard to say how much a part this plays in the car's considerable,

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