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FLAT OUT IN THE AUSTRALIAN OUTBACK

4/15/2015 5:21 EST FILED TO: [PORSCHE 918 SPYDER](#) BY: [SEAN CRIDLAND](#) COMMENT

It's cool to see the 918 lined up next to the latest hyper-offerings from Ferrari, McLaren, Lamborghini, et al at Cars and Coffee. But when I attend these events nowadays, the first things I look at are the odometers. Do their owners really drive them or are they success trophies meant to show off on Saturday mornings? That's why this recent video release from Porsche Australia is my favorite one on the 918 so far. Sure, there are lots of Crocodile Dundee visual references of kangaroos, dingos, horned lizards, or Ayer's Rock. For the Australian market, I'm sure those are de rigueur metaphors for power, danger, and the rock-solid handling of Porsche's super-car for the decade.



Rather, I'm drawn to the film because it depicts the car in a natural driver's element suitable for the performance of the Porsche rather than on some super-slick test track or private driver's club. It's my opinion that urbanity has killed the traditional sports car. Of course, I live way out in the middle of nowhere in New Mexico where I drive on roads like this every day and most of you live in cities, so mine may not be a popular opinion.

THE SPIRIT OF THE ORIGINAL SPORTS CAR

To my point, the spirit of the original sports car was that a couple of well-heeled but adventurous people could take a picnic and go cruising for a day or two or three in the countryside, enjoying the scenery, a few nicely improvised meals and take in some roads less traveled for the sheer joy of it.


Not only was it fun to do in a 356 or an early 911, but when you watched the supercars of the time – the Porsche 917 among them – you got to see the best drivers in the world racing cars on roads very much like the ones you were touring on, if not the actual roads (think Spa, Le Mans, Targa Florio, the original Watkins Glen course).

RACING CHANGED WITH SAFETY CONCERNS


The courses became more artificial and their surfaces were other-worldly smooth. But so did sports cars. Some of the cars we drive – with sound deadening, air-conditioning, sound-booth quality sound systems – have separated us further and further from the elements and from the elemental forces and spirit of spontaneity that made sports cars so much fun to begin with.

No, I'm not suggesting that we all just go hop in our 918s and go for a country ride. There are only 918 people in the world that could read that message with any seriousness. But I am suggesting – as does the video – that putting a Porsche 918 on the road in the "Outback" and driving the hell out of it is what the car is really for. All discussions of technology and performance statistics aside, it's a Porsche, isn't it?


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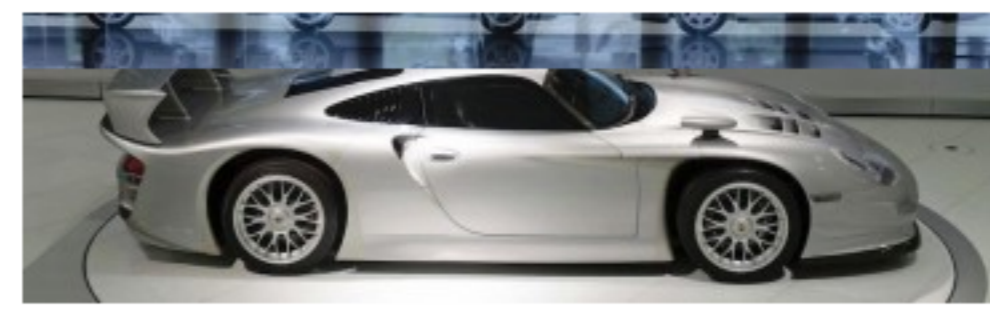
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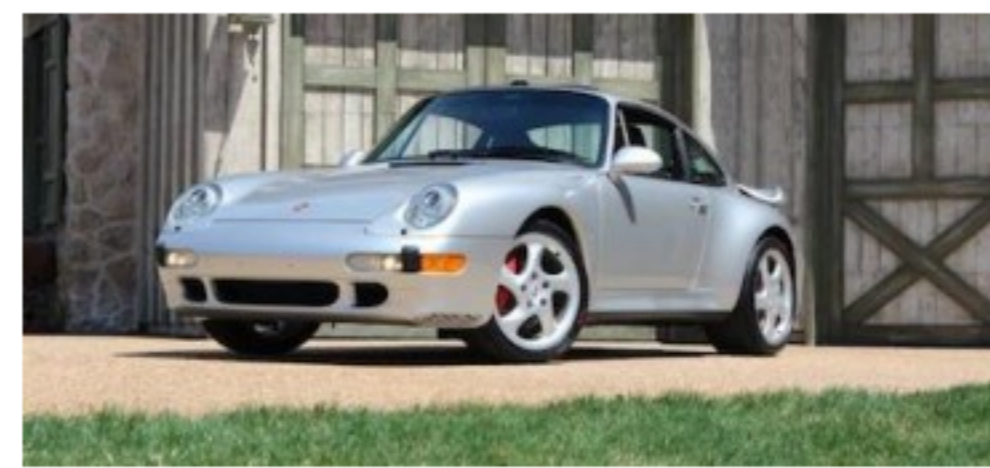
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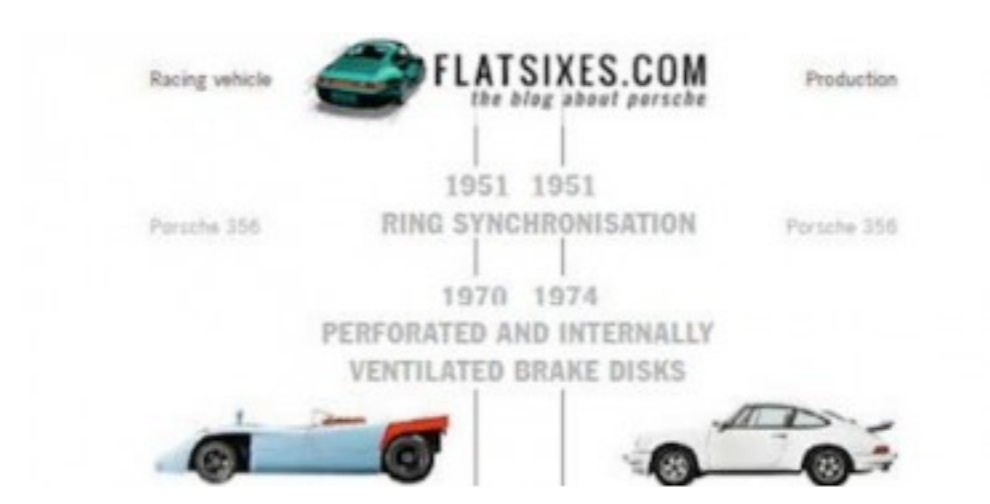
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