

# Porsche 993

## Part 4: Good, good news and bad, good news

From the onslaught of letters and e-mail regarding the Project 993 series, it's evident the car's absence from the pages of *European Car* has been noticed by quite a few readers. Well, there is good good news and bad good news.

First, the good, good news. The 993 is out of the body shop and looking great. Its excursion to the panel doctor was, I'm relieved to say, the outcome of the owner's desire to verify what the U.S. Department of Transportation has spent a quadrillion dollars trying to prove to the public:

package, it was lowered to increase handling and stability. Hunkered down over new Fikse wheels, which benefited its looks, the new, low-slung airdam has given the normally aspirated Porsche an aggressive, eye-catching posture.

Now for the bad, good news. I've discovered the 993 makes for a lousy project car. Before you start scratching your head wondering why I've invested time and effort into a car that doesn't lend itself to tinkering, let me qualify the last statement.

been the H&R Spring suspension package, which drastically changed the car's handling dynamics, as did the incredibly aggressive Brembo brake system.

Had the 993's owner not been a performance maniac and club racer himself, the stiffer suspension and neck-wrenching brakes could easily be judged as crossing the comfort limit. This

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supports lessons learned from other projects cars: At some point, performance and comfort become inversely proportional.

What I have come to appreciate about the 993 is that this Porsche is a remarkable sports car right out of the box. And 10 years after its introduction, it remains a formidable contender to anything that might challenge it on a canyon road.

Of course, I have no intention on giving up on the project. We are all car fanatics here, wrenching on anything that has four wheels and even more so with vehicles we should clearly leave alone.

Cellular communications and automotive deployment are highly technical procedures and should never be conducted simultaneously. This is especially true if the vehicle in question is a 200+ bhp sports car with a six-speed manual transmission.

That said, the spontaneous study in vehicular multitasking did benefit the project as the 993's bodywork has now been upgraded with the front bumper of a 1995 993 Turbo. It also required a new right fender as the original had become imprinted with the silhouette of a tow-bar rig from under a Ford F-150 pickup truck.

As the Turbo bumper for the 1995 model was interchangeable with the stock component, there was no need for additional fabrication. To further enhance the new airdam, however, European-style driving lights and a set of micro PIAA foglamps were added.

Early on, when the car was equipped with the H&R Springs high-performance suspension

At the outset of this particular project series I set very narrow guidelines on how much to indulge the 993 with aftermarket hardware. I (and the owner) wanted to move the performance up a few notches but the car was always to remain comfortable, dependable and streetable.

Regardless of the F150-induced changes, there were never any plans to stretch the fenders or add wings. And I was familiar enough with Porsches to shy away from delving into the motor or transmission's inner workings. As anyone Porsche owner can attest, the cost of labor and parts for these vital components can be astronomical.

So far, I've upgraded the exhaust system, the engine management program, and the clutch and fly-wheel assembly. Each of these has eked out a tad more performance. The most rewarding addition has

For the next installment, I'm looking at the interior. It might come as a surprise but there are upgrades to be done inside the cockpit that can enhance the driver's communication with the road. After all, the carbon-based component seated behind the steering wheel still has a lot of influence on performance, no matter how great the car may be. ☒

