

I Popped My GT3 Cherry The Easy Way

Says **Des Sturdee**

The opportunity to drive one of the finest 911s does not come often, in particular the offer of a 996 GT3 MK1, my favourite variant. But... Chris Burbidge, Managing Director of CLUBGT Cars Ltd, kindly gave me the keys to his for a few days, so as to experience this "Modern Classic" which would be a complete change to my *normal* Porsche. If I had a choice of GT3 and colour it would be a MK1 in Zanzibar; I just so prefer the look to the MKII and love that rear wing, so everything fitted the bill.

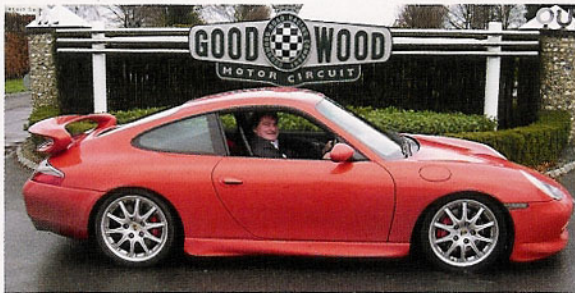
My first impressions were how tractable and docile the car was in London traffic; keeping those revs down while exiting the Isle of Dogs was hard. It sure revs freely, with a lovely sounding exhaust at over 5,000 and I was very tempted to floor the pedal often. The car just seemed to want to be driven through the rev range constantly enticing you. I could instantly see this was a 'Big Track Car', needing good, long sweeping curves and straights to fulfil its purpose.

I was tempted briefly to pop over to the 'Ring or indeed Spa. Don't think Chris would have been impressed, though. But this is what the car was designed for. It is aptly designated

GT for those long European jaunts to European circuits – comfortable and smooth when you want and aggressively quick when the Devil comes out in you. I now understand why so many GT3s adorn my several visits to Spa and the 'Ring. GT surely sums up the character of the car.

I am very much an air-cooled enthusiast, but change is sometimes as good as a rest, so the opportunity that CLUBGT provides will appeal, I'm sure, to everyone in the Porsche fraternity who wants to sample something different without the associated high costs of ownership and maintenance.

Reluctantly I handed the keys back, thinking how a 'Ring/Spa trip is such a must in this car. Overall, too short an experience, but one I would love to repeat in the summer.



The GT3 is just one of many cars available from CLUBGT. You can try a 550 Maranello or Lancia Integrale – whatever takes your fancy. CLUBGT can be found at www.clubgt.co.uk or 020 7935 8485. Chris has promised some special rates for Club members.