

# LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION!

We get behind the wheel of Everrati's 500bhp Gulf signature edition 964 to find out if this British firm has succeeded in matching the thrill of the air-cooled driving experience with electrification...

Words Dan Furr Photography Dan Sherwood

**T**he conditions are perfect. It's been raining for most of the month, but today, the asphalt is bone dry and the 964 I'm driving has been equipped with fresh Michelin Pilot Sport 4S black circles. This super-sticky rubber is designed to provide maximum grip in exactly this kind of weather, but I'm going to challenge these tyres – I'm driving this torque-rich 500bhp beast harder than I've driven any car for a very long time. Strong into corners, a tonne of opposite lock, Michelins screaming

in protest, the Porsche sliding sideways. Power on, out of the bend, foot to the floor and away we go. Exhilarating.

I'm aware of the blue flashing lights surrounding me, of course. Uniformed police officers and ready-to-pounce squad cars appear everywhere I turn, but I'm not slowing down. Quite the opposite, in fact. In what might ordinarily pass for a scene in an action flick, I'm planting the throttle in defiance, throwing this 911 into turns and forcing the Michelins to scream as I sail close past the boys in blue, each of them fixing their glare on the Porsche and my grinning face

as I switch back and disappear into the distance, 964 propelling me at full chat like a bullet out of a gun.

This is likely the first and last time I'll get to drive with such aggression in full view of active law enforcement agents without finding myself in handcuffs. Why, then, have I been allowed to get away with it? Being editor of the world's biggest-selling Porsche magazine has got me into this awe-inspiring 964's hot seat, but surely the job doesn't entitle me to flaunt high-speed hoonery in front of the rozzers without consequence? Sadly not, no matter how appealing this



proposition sounds. The truth of the matter is I'm at Heyford Park, a former Royal Air Force base in Oxfordshire. Known for its wide, near two-mile-long central runway, not to mention supporting airstrips and a perimeter track imitating the best B-roads you're likely come across, this former Bomber Command base is my Porsche playground for the day. It also happens to be used by Thames Valley Police for training officers to deal with major terror attacks. During my visit, firearms instructors and armed response vehicles are in action, providing my time behind

the wheel with even more of the sights and sounds you'd expect at the movies. Magnificent.

Why here? Why now? Why this 964? Heyford Park is home to Everrati, creator of arguably the most high-profile electric 911s to date. Based on a box-fresh high-output motor and inverter package (stripped, inspected, control systems updated and a Quaife torque-biasing limited-slip differential added) from an existing OEM application, each Everrati creation — be it a reimagined Mercedes-Benz W113 Pagoda, Land Rover Series IIA, Superformance GT40 or, as we see

here, 964 — is billed as the perfect union of old and new, where the spirit and style of a classic car is married to a thoroughly modern powertrain, ensuring the survival of the vehicle through sympathetic restoration and electric propulsion in a world increasingly at war with the internal combustion engine.

This is, of course, a familiar story. Whether it's a major manufacturer (introducing a 'continuation' model with an electric powertrain) or a boutique converter of tired classic cars, the message is the same: battery power is the future, so why stay stuck in the past?



Surely, they argue, your iconic classic car is a commodity worth preserving, enabling it to be enjoyed long into the future by you and the next generation of automotive enthusiasts? Well, yes, and as I've mentioned in this magazine in the recent past, it's rare to find an electric classic 911 not based on a derelict car saddled with a busted air-cooled flat-six. There is, we must concede, undeniable logic at play in this pitch, but what most companies with skin in the EV game fail to recognise is how, away from conversation addressing charging network infrastructure, battery range, futureproofing and cost, we, as enthusiasts, are primarily concerned with the character of the cars we drive. An EV may be a technological tour de force, but how do you translate analogue into digital and expect to deliver the same feel behind the wheel?

### THE PROTAGONISTS

This is where Everrati comes in. Company CEO, Justin Lunny, the firm's COO, Nick Williams, and Engineering Director, Mike Kerr, are serious Porscheheads, each with a strong history of 911s to their name. Lunny and Williams go way back, counting trips to Le Mans in 4S-badged 996s among their most memorable road trips. More petrol-powered Porsches than we have column inches to mention have occupied their driveways, while Kerr is currently the proud owner of an RS-aping 964. In other words, these guys know what a marque enthusiast is looking to experience when

driving a classic Porsche, knowledge informing the way an Everrati 911 is engineered and assembled.

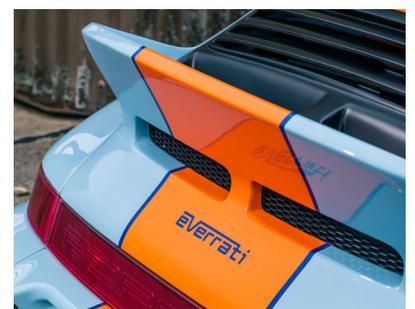
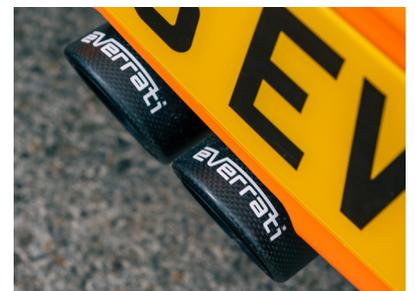
The catalyst for establishing the business was a conversation Lunny — who made his fortune in the technology sector — had with his then eight-year-old daughter after she became gravely concerned about climate change. Registering her dismay, he was struck by the juxtaposition of his child's worry for the environment and her already firm love of classic sports cars. Reasoning he needed to do his level best to ensure the survival of these vehicles for his daughter and even younger generations to appreciate down the line, he and Williams co-founded Everrati, but rather

than simply binning polluting engines in favour of electrification, their mission was to succeed where others had failed: to deliver a concours-level restoration with improved levels of outright performance, refinement and, of course, sustainability through battery power, but to do so whilst preserving the character of the original car. Clearly, a firm focus on chassis dynamics was required. And for an end result as good as Lunny and Williams were hoping for, intense, OEM levels of re-engineering would need to be deployed.

Irrespective of how much seat time and how many miles the pair had enjoyed in Porsches over the years, they sensibly recognised the way to achieve their goal

**Above** Power from the electric motor is immense, but the Everrati 964 feels reassuringly planted

**Below** Tailpipes serve as loudspeaker boosters for synthetic flat-six sounds in built-up areas





was to bring in outside help from the field of top tier automotive engineering. Enter Kerr. With time served working on motorsport applications at Cosworth and Xtrac, he joined McLaren's drivetrain development team, helping to mould the Artura's three-litre V6 plug-in hybrid power unit. Later, he was recruited by Lotus to work with Williams Advanced Engineering on the design of the powertrain for the near 2,000bhp (and 1,254lb-ft torque) Evija electric hypercar. Able to introduce an OEM approach to vehicle design, assembly and testing to Everrati products, Kerr has been integral to the firm's ability to achieve its goals, and then some. To this end, testing doesn't stop, and more than 4,000 hours of development are introduced to each Everrati 964 before assembly. Put simply, this is as close to OEM practice as you can get in the aftermarket EV space. Granted, this level of research, constant development and workmanship doesn't come cheap (prices start at more than three times that of a base model Taycan, plus donor 911), but Lunny is adamant Everrati's exhaustive toil justifies the cost. And on the evidence I've seen, there isn't a shortage of takers only too happy to shell out.

Talking of which, you might be wondering why the logo and livery of an oil company is plastered across an electric Porsche. While

ExxonMobil is partnering with our favourite manufacturer and Siemens on the construction of the world's first integrated commercial plant for eFuel production, and while Andretti Group is installing PowerTap hydrogen fuel pumps at five hundred of its North American filling stations, Gulf Oil International has joined UK venture capital group, Clean

## IT'S DIFFICULT NOT TO GET EXCITED BY THE ICONIC ORANGE AND BLUE LIVERY SO HEAVILY ASSOCIATED WITH THE JOHN WYER AUTOMOTIVE 917s

Growth Fund, in pumping millions into British smart energy company, INDRA. It's a move designed to assist the brand in building the world's first direct EV vehicle-to-grid charger. Significantly, this marks Gulf's first strategic investment into the automotive electrification market. Naturally, the link between Gulf and Porsche is obvious to those of us entrenched in the scene — it's difficult not to get excited by the iconic orange and blue livery so heavily associated with the John Wyr Automotive 917s. This, then, is an officially licensed Gulf-liveried 911 EV making much more sense than one might consider at first glance. And, with Wyr's Le Mans-winning, Gulf-liveried Ford GT40s brought to mind, I won't be surprised if the same legendary battle dress is applied to a signature version of the Everrati Superformance GT40 EV in the not-too-distant future.

At the rear of this wide-bodied electric 964 lives a pair of carbon-fibre tailpipes, initially seeming as much at odds with the nature of this car as the logos of a major global oil company. A swipe of the accompanying smartphone app reveals them to be outlets for loudspeakers generating the sound of an angry flat-six. Those of you yet to experience

time driving an EV might think this naff, but rest assured, this is a key safety feature, introduced to ensure pedestrians with faces superglued to

phones are aware of the car's presence when it's travelling through towns and cities, where the silent running of an electric powertrain may make an EV

**Above** Straight-line sprints take you to 60mph in less than four seconds

**Below** Clever TracTive suspension system provides configurable damper settings to suit all driving environments





**Above** Interior is well equipped, featuring a mass of Alcantara and super-soft leather

virtually invisible to those not paying attention. On the Everrati 964, however, there's more at play than a simple audio file mimicking what came before – tied to changes in rpm, the sound precisely mirrors the noise of a flat-six moving through the rev range, even 'changing gear' when trigger points are reached. It's not a simple case of altering the pitch and volume of a static wave file, either. A huge amount of work has been invested in making the audio as realistic as possible – with valved and non-valved soundalikes available – and although I much preferred driving this boisterous 911 free of the added noise, I can see why it's deemed necessary for slow speed journeys in built-up areas. Incidentally, vibrations generated by the hardworking loudspeakers at the rear travel through the chassis and into the driver's seat, providing the sensation of a

rumbling boxer at the rear. This is likely a happy accident, though helps to remind me of Everrati's mission to make this 911 feel true to the flat-six-powered Porsche it's based on.

**SET THE STAGE**

Stepping into the cabin, I'm greeted by a sea of charcoal Alcantara. Paired with soft black leather and red stitching, the synthetic suede-like material covers everything from the Clubsport steering wheel to the seat centres, door cards, dashboard and centre console, where a neatly installed touchscreen sits ahead of the shift lever (offering me a choice of single-speed forward or reverse). Turning the key to where you'd generally expect a starter motor to kick in sees the screen light up to reveal configurable damper settings for the electronically controlled TracTive suspension system.

Regular readers will know the TracTive name from recent 911 & Porsche World features starring cars making use of the Dutch firm's equipment. The brand's products are now a staple of almost every marque specialist we encounter. Moreover, TracTive has become headline sponsor for various Porsche club motorsport championships, activities it intends to continue and expand into the coming year and beyond.

Into drive and away. I'm not bothering with the smartphone-initiated audio, instead allowing the satisfying sound of the electric motor to whine to its heart's content, with the noise of tyre travel accompanying when I'm up to speed (both literally and figuratively). When manoeuvring in traffic or tight spaces, single-pedal driving is all that's required: foot on the accelerator to move forward, foot off for effective braking. On the

**Below** Five-clock dash has been sympathetically reworked to replace readings for the combustion engine





open road (or runway, as I'm fortunate enough to say on this occasion) with foot to the floor, maximum torque at zero rpm provides super-fast acceleration, with the limited-slipper, those Michelins and the TracTive kit working in unison to ensure no wheelspin as I launch from rest, reaching 60mph in less than four seconds. And the power keeps coming. And coming. The bespoke five-dial dash features a power indicator (measured in kilowatts) where the rev counter usually sits, while the space normally occupied by oil temperature and pressure gauges now provide motor and battery temperature readings. As the day progresses, and as my driving in this car gets ever more animated, I test just how hot the motor can get before power is interrupted (a serious consideration for

any prospective purchasers considering trackday fun), but for now, traction is unshakable and all power is being planted to the ground without disruption. I'm flying.

### JUMP CUT

Even with the throttle only half-pressed, this thing is quick. Really quick. Quicker than any 964 I've driven to date, irrespective of what powertrain is at play. The splits in concrete along the long runway translate through the steering as well cushioned bumps, an indication the TracTive system is doing its thing, countering the harsher ride I'd expected from the eighteen-inch Work split rims, though, as you'd expect, much firmer damping rates are selectable from the TracTive system's full-colour

user interface, which allows any one of five different personalised presets to be dialled in while you're driving. The potential here is massive: imagine you've bought an Everrati 964 and want to test it at a race track. More specifically, you're thinking of hitting Spa or the Nürburgring, where surfaces and weather can change from one end of the circuit to the other. Altering damper stiffness, pitch and roll on the fly gives you an advantage when trying to nail fast lap times, as opposed to having to settle for the usual 'one size fits all' approach. And trust me when I say you'll want to take your Everrati 964 to a circuit. Or, erm, a giant runway.

I'm powering along at breakneck speed, an audience of police officers intrigued by this silent assassin, which I turn into the bend at the end of the

**Above** Heyford Park perimeter track does a great imitation of a twisty B-road

**Below** Weight has been distributed across the car to match the front/rear balance of the original 964





landing strip at force without slowing. The rear end twitchiness you might expect from a classic 911 in these conditions is entirely absent, a result of the clever chassis trickery. Kerr has worked exceptionally hard here, spreading the weight of the 53kWh battery pack cells to match the front/rear split of the original 964 – the majority are in the engine bay at the rear, but positioned forward of the back axle, improving handling without making you feel like you're in a completely different car. The remaining battery cells (about twenty percent of the total) are housed in the 'frunk', along with the inverter unit. The charging port (combined AC and DC fast charging) is tucked into the standard fuel filler flap. Evertati advertises range as being more than 150 miles, but the way I'm driving, I suspect this figure carries a lot of weight.

As mentioned earlier, regenerative braking requires only pressure off the accelerator in normal traffic and driving conditions to suitably slow the Evertati 964, but for today's high-speed attack of tarmac, I'm calling on the big Brembos in each corner for assistance. They're a fantastic match for the unbridled power of this carbon-ducktailed 911, which feels significantly more capable and far more stuck to the ground than any other 964 I've driven, allowing ten tenths at a point you might feel unnerved in the original Porsche. I'm not oblivious to the fact the environment I find myself in allows for 'user error' in a way a

public road doesn't, therefore giving me confidence to kick this 911's head in without fear of retribution, but even on the tight, twisty perimeter road circling Heyford Park, there's colossal urgency about this electric 911, which allows me to slide the back end out whenever I want, rather than when the car feels it's time to get busy. Familiarity is key: in addition to the aforementioned weight distribution, Kerr confirms overall heft is the same as that of a 964 Carrera 4, before Williams reveals Evertati offers four-wheel drive as an option, along with a choice of coupe, Targa or full drop-top 964 body styles.

The car dances through the tight, wide-kerbed chicanes doubling up as service

roads at this former military base. The steering is unbelievably precise. It's clear work intended to retain the original 964's spirit has paid off – even though I'm experiencing vastly optimised handling, traction and power through modern underpinnings, the Evertati 964 feels just as analogue as Lunny and Williams hoped. The fact I don't have a flat-six wailing behind my ears is irrelevant – seat time in this gorgeous Gulf-decorated 911 is so completely involving, so utterly compelling, the absence of engine noise doesn't in any way inhibit the joy of being in charge of this very special Porsche. And with that, I'm off to complete another flat-out lap of Heyford Park. Catch me if you can. ●

**Above** Gulf livery and branding is officially licensed, not only paying tribute to the JWA 917s, but also acknowledging Gulf Oil International's recent investment in INDRA's EV charging technology projects

