

997.1 GT3 RS

Just in case the standard GT3 wasn't quite enough, Porsche added the fabled Rennsport tag to this special 911. When it comes to buying one, Total 911 is on hand to advise

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THE SECOND-GEN 997 RENNSPORT

Given the desirability of the car you see here, it's no real surprise that the second-generation 997 range would include a GT3 RS. It was no mild refresh though, as the new model would receive some substantial changes, not least of which was a 3.8-litre motor that sat on active engine mounts. With power and torque both increased – to 450hp and 430Nm respectively – the 0-62mph time was cut by 0.2 seconds to 4.0 seconds dead, and both response and mid-range shove were boosted. VarioCam Plus and a higher 8,500rpm redline also featured. Further revisions included gorgeous new centre-lock wheels and suspension that featured stiffer spring rates and tweaks to the anti-roll bars. Externally, the new model boasted various subtle changes, including redesigned air intakes, and there was a new aero package to improve downforce. 1,500 examples were produced before the 997 disappeared in 2012.



WATER-COOLED RS TIMELINE

2004

The 996 GT3 is the first water-cooled Neunerler to get the RS treatment. The 3.6-litre engine produces 381bhp, enough to despatch the 0-62mph sprint in just 4.4 seconds. 682 produced

2006

Porsche follow up with the 997 GT3 RS, with essentially the same engine as the 996. Power is raised to 415bhp though, and a weight-saving regime saves 20kg. 1,106 produced

2009

It's the turn of the Gen 2 997, this time the RS getting a larger 3.8-litre engine with 450bhp that cuts the 0-62mph time to just 4.0 seconds. Aero tweaks and dynamic engine mounts feature. 1,500 produced

2010

A sure-fire future classic arrives in the shape of the 997 GT3 RS 4.0. Boasting a stunning 500bhp, it's the quickest RS yet. 600 produced

2010

It's the 997 GT2 that gets the RS treatment. There's 620bhp from the 3.6-litre engine, a 205mph top speed, and plenty of tasty carbon fibre bits. 500 produced

2015

Huge road presence marks out the RS in 991 GT3 form. Substantially lighter than Turbo variants, the 4.0-litre engine makes 500bhp. 42 sold in the UK last year

You have to head back a little over a decade, to 2004 in fact, to find the first GT3 to benefit from the legendary RS suffix. Then, it was attached to the rump of the 996 with around 680 lucky buyers getting to experience the delights of a 381bhp flat six allied to a useful weight reduction.

It would hardly come as a surprise, then, when Porsche announced that the 997 GT3 would also get the Rennsport treatment, although this time both models would arrive together in August 2006. 996 buyers had to wait five years or so for the same development. Even with an eye-watering £94,280 price tag, this new generation would prove immediately popular, so much so that 1,106

examples would leave the production line before the Gen2 version arrived three years later. Like the 996 incarnation, the first 997 GT3 RS was all about weight saving. The first-generation GT3 RS featured the wider rear bodyshell of the Carrera 4 and Porsche shaved a healthy 20kg off the weight of the Gen1 GT3.

The diet was assisted by using carbon fibre for the adjustable rear wing and engine cover, and plastic instead of glass for the rear screen (saving almost 3kg) and, given the cost, it's worth ensuring parts are undamaged on the example you're looking at. At a gulp-inducing £5,900 for the rear wing, the need for care is obvious. The ten year anti-corrosion warranty means that rust shouldn't be a concern, but it's worth checking whether a previous owner has added

paint protection film to the front end as the nose is susceptible to stone chips. If not, ask whether there has been any paint rectification work to the panels and bumper.

Far more important, though, is whether an RS has seen action on the track and while soaring values make it a little less likely today, that wasn't always the case. Aside from the fact that pounding over kerbs can prematurely age the bodyshell - listen out for unusual creaks - there's the risk that trips through the gravel trap has resulted in damage to the underside panelling. A specialist will check for this, of course, but otherwise it's worth a thorough examination of the undertrays and front splitter for grazing. And it goes without saying that you need to be sure of the car's history, looking for any evidence of



The 997.1 GT3 RS standard specification included 350mm steel discs clamped by six piston monoblock aluminium calipers at the front, and four piston items at the rear. Customary front bonnet vents and carbon rear wing aids downforce

“It certainly looked the part, but it’s what was hidden beneath that composite engine cover that really captured the imagination”

Model 997.1 GT3 RS

Year 2006-2007

Engine

Capacity 3,600cc

Compression ratio 12.0:1

Maximum power 415bhp @ 7,600rpm

Maximum torque 405Nm @ 5,500rpm

Transmission Six-speed manual, rear-wheel drive

Suspension

Front MacPherson struts with coil springs and anti-roll bar

Rear Multi-link with telescopic dampers; coil springs; anti-roll bar

Wheels & tyres

Front 8.5x19-inch; 235/35/R19

Rear 12x19-inch; 305/30/R19

Dimensions

Length 4,460mm

Width 1,808mm

Weight 1,375kg

Performance

0-62mph 4.2 secs

Top speed 194mph



PARTS PRICE CHECK

• Front bumper	£4,458.70
• Rear wing blade (carbon)	£5,921.53
• Exhaust system (exc. Cats)	£5,712.16
• Front damper	£480.60
• Brake disc set (steel)	£1,179.24
• Front wheel	£1,835.57

Prices are inclusive of VAT and come courtesy of Paragon Porsche

997.1 RS VALUES

As mentioned, prices for the RS have slowed recently, marking an end to a period of strong growth for the model. That's not to say they aren't going to rise in the future, of course (as they almost certainly will), but it's likely to be slower this time around. Left-hand drive examples are worth a little less than the values quoted here.

• Project	£140,000
• Good	£150,000+
• Concours	£190,000



“An over-rev check is an important indicator of past use and especially vital on track-focused 911s”

major accident repair. It's also worth mentioning that the RS was available in some pretty extrovert colours, so you might want to consider whether you'd be happier with black or silver rather than the Orange or Viper green! That said, it seems buyers are happy to pay a small premium for their RS to stand out.

It certainly looked the part, then, but it's what was hidden beneath that composite engine cover that really captured the imagination. A revised version of the unit found in the 996 GT3, the 3.6-litre engine produced 415bhp at 7,600rpm and 405Nm of torque at 5,500rpm, and could safely rev to a stratospheric 8,400rpm. Featuring VarioCam

variable inlet valve timing, titanium connecting rods, and a revised dry sump lubrication system, it shoved the RS from 0-62mph in 4.2 seconds and on to 194mph. The good news for buyers is a depth of engineering that rendered it bulletproof in the eyes of most specialists, although it pays to undertake some careful checks before taking the plunge. Oil and filter changes were at 12,000 miles, and while particularly careful owners may well have shortened the interval, you certainly don't want to find any gaps in the service history. And, while regular maintenance is slightly higher than for the GT3, it's not by a great deal, so budget around £370 and £800 for a minor and major

check respectively at a specialists such as RPM Technik.

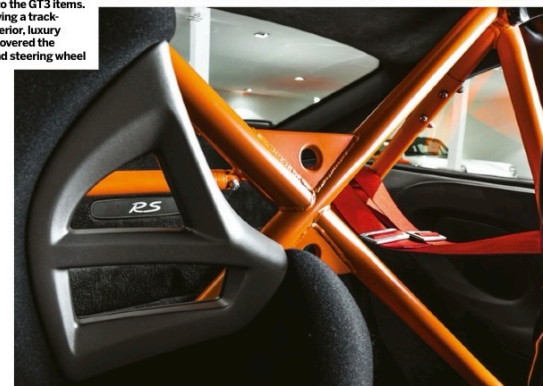
More crucial, though, is an over-rev check, something that a reputable specialist will already have done. It's an important indicator of past use – and especially vital on track-focused 911s – as you'll want to know how often the motor has nudged that lofty redline. A cylinder leakage test will provide further reassurance that nothing serious is awry within the flat six. Otherwise, it's just a case of examining the unit for any signs of oil leaks from the cam chain covers and between the engine and transmission, the latter indicating a weeping Rear Main Seal; expect to pay around £1,100 to have this rectified at a specialist such as Parr Motorsports.

The RS used a single mass flywheel, so that's one less thing to worry about, but expect to reach around 30,000 miles before the clutch requires replacement, an engine-out job that will cost in the region of £1,300. A noticeably high biting point is a sign that renewal isn't far away, so

haggle accordingly. The six-speed transmission is strong, though, benefiting from beefier internals and an additional oil cooler, and it would take particularly ham-fisted track use to cause any issues. Likewise for the limited-slip differential, although an obstructive gearshift or any odd noises from either unit would need further investigation as replacement is extremely costly.

You certainly shouldn't have any problems hauling the RS down from speed, though, thanks to the impressively powerful brakes. The standard specification was 350mm steel discs clamped by six piston monoblock aluminium calipers at the front and four piston items at the rear, and they are more than adequate for road use. Any problems are likely to be a result of overheating, so examine the discs for any sign of cracks appearing around the cross-drilling. A replacement set costs around £1,200 but a previous owner may have gone down the aftermarket route for replacements, so check what's fitted. The alternative option was the PCBB

Lightweight carbon-shelled seats in flame retardant fabric came as standard and saved around 10kg compared to the GT3 items. Despite having a track-focused interior, luxury Alcantara covered the surfaces and steering wheel



BUYING TIPS

With the earliest examples barely seven years old, it's reasonable to expect that any car you find should be in good shape, both bodily and mechanically. There are no guarantees, of course, so tread carefully, but strong build quality ensures that this is one of the easier 911s to inspect.

- **History:** A track-focused nature means that extra care is needed. Diligence is crucial to ensure you're not looking at a tired or crashed trackday warrior.
- **Bodywork:** Corrosion isn't a concern, so spend time examining the panels for any sign of previous repair or replacement. Ensure there's no damage to the RS-specific carbon fibre parts, and look for evidence of damage to the undertrays, which points to circuit-offs.
- **Engines:** If it's been religiously maintained, there's little to worry about. Check for oil leaks and make sure you see the results of a recent over-rev check.
- **Transmission:** The gearbox is tough and shouldn't be suffering from weak synchro mesh unless abused. More likely is clutch wear, so check the history to see if it's already been done as it's not a cheap job.
- **Brakes/suspension:** Hard use will take its toll on the brakes, so be sure to check their condition carefully; extensive cracking around the cross-drillings indicate a hard life and imminent replacement. Adjustable suspension may have been fiddled with, so an alignment check is advisable.
- **Interiors:** Aside from being sure you can live with the Clubsport arrangement, the interior wears well. Just look for scuffed trim and overly-smooth Alcantara.

carbon items, identified by yellow calipers. While they might have saved a substantial amount in unsprung weight – they were around 50 per cent lighter according to Porsche – replacing them costs in excess of £10,000. As we've said before in these guides, think long and hard about whether you really need them.

Suspension-wise, Porsche Active Suspension Management (PASM) was standard and the RS benefited from a five-millimetre increase in wheelbase and the fitment of split rear wishbones to allow greater camber adjustability. Owners could also make changes to the ride height, toe angle, and anti-roll bar settings, but inexpert tinkering could have resulted in a less than optimum setup. Any doubts about how the car feels on the road, or evidence of uneven tyre wear, points to the need for a specialist alignment check; RPM Technik charges £264 for this, so it's an inexpensive way of ensuring all is well. There are no issues with the hydraulically-assisted steering, but do check the condition of the 19-inch wheels. Refurbishment isn't too pricey, but replacing them is around £1,800 for a front one.

Head inside and you're left in no doubt about where this 911 was intended to spend time.

The RS came with the Clubsport package as standard, which bought a roll cage in the rear, fire extinguisher prep, a six-point harness, and wiring for a battery master switch. Also standard were

a pair of lightweight, carbon-shelled seats that saved around 10kg compared to the GT3 items and they were covered in flame-retardant fabric. It's a pretty hardcore arrangement for regular use, so you'll want to be sure you can live with it before committing. Despite the track-focused specification, there was luxury on offer, too, with plenty of Alcantara covering the surfaces and steering wheel (which got a straight ahead marker at the top of the rim). Significant wear isn't very common but it's worth checking that a clumsy previous owner hasn't scuffed the seat or door cards. Porsche didn't skimp on the standard kit with the RS, and there was a lengthy options list to dip into, so make sure you establish the specification of the example you're looking at, although everything should work. Also, ensure the air-conditioning is blowing cold as corrosion could attack the nose-mounted condensers, although the system could be deleted entirely which saved a further 20kg.

Ultimately, the 997 generation is renowned for its usable, reliable nature and the GT3 RS does nothing to dispel that view. Yes, it was designed for the ultimate in thrills on road or track but the quality of its construction means there's little to worry about if you're considering buying one today. Find one that has been maintained regardless of cost and it'll prove an immensely rewarding experience. **911**



OWNING A 997.1 GT3 RS

- **Price new:** £94,280
 - **Total numbers sold:** 1,106
 - **Service intervals:** One-year/12,000 miles
 - **Service costs minor:** £368.49
 - **Service costs major:** £798.64
- (Figures are courtesy of RPM Technik)

SPECIALIST VIEW

"Any 911 with an RS badge is highly sought after, and the same definitely applies to the 997.1 GT3 RS. They've got a strong following, which is to be expected given their ability and the fact that they are reliable, too. Prices have settled a bit of late, which given their meteoric rise in the past three years is no surprise. Ultimately, an RS like this one will still represent a really good purchase as a machine to get in and enjoy, as

Greig Daly,
RPM Technik

