

# HER

# WAY

RETURNING TO PARADE IN A  
LAVA ORANGE 2017 TARGA 4S.

STORY BY **DAVID MATHEWS**  
PHOTOS BY **MICHAEL ALAN ROSS**





*“I’ve lived a life that’s full.  
I traveled each and every highway.  
And more, much more than this,  
I did it my way.”*



If you could put a face to Frank Sinatra’s classic song “My Way,” Patty Reilly’s would be a good choice. With auburn hair tucked behind her ears, a sprinkle of freckles across her cheeks and nose, and a disarming smile that conveys genuine goodness with a touch of Irish feistiness, she’s the real deal. As concours judging at the 2019 Parade was about to begin, Patty wiped that last bit of dust from her 2017 Lava Orange Targa 4S, a car she drove 2,700 miles—solo—from Long Beach, California to Boca Raton, Florida. One could immediately tell this Grand Prix Region founding member is also a determined sort. Indeed, Patty believes in doing it her way.

A veteran of 14 PCA Parades, most of which were attended with her husband John—“I always called him J”—Patty had not been to a Parade for several years. Her husband’s death in 2015 and Parade dates that conflicted with her family’s traditional July 4th celebration precluded her attendance. However, the late July 2019 Boca Parade provided her the opportunity to get back into the swing of things and put a few miles on the Targa. “J and I always drove our Porsches to Parade,” exclaimed Patty. “What’s the fun of going to Parade if you aren’t driving a Porsche?” Sound reasoning, yes? And another thing, “We always did the concours. I did most of the cleaning and J did the inspecting. ‘Okay,

you missed here, here, and here.’ I didn’t like it [his criticism] at first, but soon realized that a fresh set of eyes sees things.”

As any concours contestant will attest to, preparing for judging demands hours of work. But occasionally the stars align. “When we attended the Charlotte Parade in 2008, we entered our Cayenne Turbo,” recalled Patty. “I was busy working on the car—it had been a long trip—when a couple of the judges came up to me and said I didn’t need to do all that cleaning. I ignored them, but when it came time for judging, I understood what they were driving at. Ours was the only car in the class. We won by default.”







**PATTY FIRST CONTRACTED** Porsche fever from her husband immediately after their marriage. “He seemed to always have a Porsche and was already a PCA member, which meant of course that we always seemed to have a Porsche,” said Patty. “Every speeding ticket I got was his fault. He hooked me on Porsches. J’s first was a 1968 Tangerine 911 soft-window Targa.” Previously owned by Hall of Fame pitcher Tom Seaver, the car was purchased by J at Malcolm Pray’s dealership in Greenwich, Connecticut.

One of the many Porsches the Reillys owned throughout the years stands out, another testament to Patty’s doing it her way. “In 1983, J sold his 1978 Turbo so that we could pick up our 1984 Carrera Cabriolet. We ordered the car and then went on a Treffen to pick it up in Germany. But once I saw it, I turned it down,” she told us.

Needless to say, declining a delivery at the factory is, well, rare. “I’d ordered Chiffon White with a brown top and brown interior, and the car they had for me was Grand Prix White,” she continued. “The car was in my name so I had to sign for it. I came down to see the car, and J was standing next to this Grand Prix White Carrera. I walked past him and he asked, ‘Where are you going?’ I told him I was looking for my car. He said, ‘Here it is.’ But I said *nope*. I’m not taking that car. It’s not what I ordered.

“Well, a delegation from the factory marched out and informed me the mistake was done by my dealership, that they had ordered the wrong color.

“I had our paperwork showing what was ordered. It

turned out to be a keypunch error. Chiffon was P2; Grand Prix was P5,” she explained. “So anyway, they apologized and said they’d remake it for me. ‘And while you’re here, go over to Weissach to choose the options you may want.’ Recognizing their peace offering, we went. I chose the last door frames with the wing windows and a leather-covered factory roll bar, and ordered seats like the 944, with fabric insets. Cooler in the summer. It was a great car—when we finally got our hands on it.

“While we were in Germany, Peter Schutz, head of Porsche at the time, gave us his red Cab to drive. It was the most fun I ever had, and my husband told me I was probably the only person to refuse a factory delivery. But, darn it, it wasn’t what I wanted. We kept the Cab for 25 years, then sold it when we bought the Cayenne Turbo.”

**WERE THERE ANY** Porsches that Patty wished she’d kept? “Oh yeah, that ’84 Cab. I loved that car but understood why we needed to sell it. So we put it on consignment and immediately got an offer at our asking price. But we were on a trip with no cell phone, so we couldn’t get back to them right away. The next voicemail was from our agent. The buyer had upped his offer by \$500. It was funny. We didn’t even try to negotiate and got a better price than we were asking. The buyer was from France.”

After the Carrera came the Cayenne Turbo, which Patty apparently enjoyed driving. “Funny thing, after we went to the Salt Lake City Parade [2012] I wanted to visit

**Pops, doesn’t it? Twenty-inch Carrera Sport wheels, the matte silver targa hoop, and striking Lava Orange finish are fitting tributes to J’s 1968 soft-window Targa.**





the Bonneville Salt Flats. Well there wasn't much to see. So on the way back—and I was going pretty good, maybe a little daydreaming—the Cayenne suddenly lowered. I thought, oh my, what have I done? Then I noticed a message on the dash indicating the car lowered for speed. Whoops! I do have a heavy foot.”

A few years later a 2014 Panamera S E-Hybrid joined the Reilly family. “For me, the Panamera was a great car. A beautiful car to drive. We drove it from California to New York, and back again.”

Was there ever a time when Patty and J did not have a Porsche? Nope. They owned a 914 for a short time before the Cayenne and the Panamera. Emphasis is placed on short. “While we were stopped at a light, we were next to a big truck. Because I could count the lug nuts on that truck's wheels, I told J that this one [the 914] might be too low.”

**AND THEN CAME** the beautiful Lava Orange Targa that Patty drove to Boca. “In 2015, our lease was coming due. J was concerned about his ongoing membership in PCA,” said Patty. “I told him, rest assured, I will have another Porsche. So at the 2016 auto show, I saw Porsche had a Targa. I considered both a Cabriolet and the Targa. When I saw the Targa, I thought, this is such a great-looking car, and it gives me what I want. When they came out with the 2017 colors, Lava Orange was there.”

“So I sat down at the computer and spec'd out the whole car, and then went to Walter's in Riverside to meet with the general manager. He looked at my order and said, ‘Why come here? You could have placed this order yourself. You've got it all.’ I went with the 20-inch Carrera Sport wheels because they have the look of the original Fuchs wheels. So I returned in July [2016] to ensure I

had a slot, because I wanted the car to arrive in January 2017. It came in on January 17th.” It was Patty's way of acknowledging John's first Porsche, that 1968 Targa.

The trip to Boca underscored Patty's independence. When she told fellow Grand Prix Region members that she planned to drive to Florida, there was a flurry of offers to ride with her. “When I first told friends that I was going to do it, they kinda looked at me, and when I told them I planned to concours, they really thought something was wrong with me. I had plenty of offers for passengers, suddenly had 20 ‘big brothers’ concerned about my welfare, but I said no. I wanted to do this on my own.”

There was another reason she wanted to do it herself. “I love to sing, but I can't carry a note. So driving cross country by myself, I could sing like I wanted, as

loud as I wanted, and no one would tell me to shut up.” One of Patty's favorite artists? Frank Sinatra, of course.

Because she planned to compete in the concours, and considering that Patty did significant cleaning before her trip, she kept the Targa top closed on the drive. She also shipped her extra clothing and gear to Boca so there was no chance of “contaminating” the interior. However, the return to California included plenty of fresh air. Always the planner.

So, Patty Reilly's Boca experience? Concours judges found a bit of this and that—as they always do. But driving from California to Florida, participating in the concours and autocross, and immersing herself into the frenetic frenzy that every Parade offered made it all worthwhile. As Frank Sinatra might sing: “And more, much more than this, she did it her way.” ● →

**Patty's choice of interior color, Espresso Brown, complements the hot Lava. Although not Butzi's initial preference, the fastback shape of this 991 Carrera is a piece of art.**







PHOTOS PORSCHE



Generational changes in the Targa brought practical improvements—and higher price tags.

# Targa: A Synopsis

“THE WORLD’S first safety convertible.” As with many successful innovations, Porsche’s targa concept was born of necessity. Open cars were a part of Porsche’s DNA from the onset. Because convertible variants of the 356 contributed to 16.5% of total sales volume, Porsche recognized the need to offer an open-air model when the 356’s replacement hit the market. What form it would take was the question.

Development cost of the 900-series was high, and money was tight. Consequently, accountants and bean counters pushed for the use of the coupe’s rear structure and body panels to be shared with a convertible. The company was also mindful of changes in safety regulations that threatened to eliminate true convertibles in the United States—a market Porsche could ill afford to lose.

Despite the distaste Butzi Porsche had for fastback convertibles, he began to work on a solution. The renowned designer came up with an exposed hoop or roll bar affixed immediately behind the doors. The roll bar was dolled up in stainless steel to accentuate the feature, rather than diminish it. A removable fabric half-roof was latched to the windshield frame on its leading edge and to the exposed hoop on its trailing edge. Furthermore, a heavy plastic rear window zippered into place on the trailing edge of the exposed hoop. When the half-roof was removed and the rear window unzipped, wind flowed freely through the car, just as in a true convertible. This design also provided the lateral rigidity

necessary to comply with safety regulations.

Perfection? Not quite. The front part, the section between the roll bar hoop and the top of the windshield, initially presented a challenge. The fabric top blossomed at speed, giving the appearance of a balloon ready to burst. Porsche came up with a design that incorporated a rubberized fabric, supported by side frames and cross-braces, that when extended provided rigid, weather-tight protection to the passengers.

Also, the plastic window had a tendency to shrink in cold weather, eliminating any possibility of re-securing the darn thing when temperatures dropped below 60 degrees Fahrenheit. To resolve that issue, Porsche replaced the zip-out plastic window with fixed glass in 1968. Porsche named this “sort of” convertible model the Targa, capitalizing on the company’s successes at the Targa Florio road race. The result—an immediate marketing success. Production soon increased from seven to ten Targas per day in late 1967. Butzi would eventually receive international recognition in 1968 for the achievement.

The basic targa-top design, a removable roof section that was folded and stored when not in use, remained until a totally new system was introduced in 1996. Built by Webasto, an important Porsche supplier, this modular unit was fitted to a reinforced cabriolet shell on the factory floor. The greenhouse-inspired unit was basically two large sheets of glass, with the rear sheet fixed and the front sheet designed to slide under the rear, creating what was basically a large sunroof. The new Targa featured the same

sultry shape of the 993 coupe.

Sun and wind came at a cost, however—the new Targa was priced \$7,000 higher than the coupe. Along with the higher cost came increased weight and an occasional rattle. The Targa was nearly 70 pounds heavier than the coupe, with most of that heft above the driver’s head.

The 996 Targa, introduced in 2002, matched the silhouette of the coupe and retained the sliding glass roof concept of the 993, but with significant improvements. The Targa model used a reinforced coupe body; no longer was it tacked onto a cabriolet shell. This change resulted in more rigidity, virtually eliminating rattles. The 996 Targa also answered the call for access into its rear storage area. The rear window could be opened when the roof was closed. Because of the added reinforcement below and the huge chunks of glass above, the 996 Targa weighed 200-plus pounds more than the coupe. The up-charge for this newly improved Targa? About \$9,000.

In 2016, Porsche introduced its latest Targa, taking a cue from Transformer action figures. With one push of a small button on the center console, motors began to whine, gears engaged, the greenhouse back section raised and arced back, and then the fabric roof panel ahead of a beautiful stainless steel hoop lifted up before being securely stowed behind the back seats of the car. And with that, the rear glass back section returned to its former position, tight and tidy, all in 19 glorious seconds. No muss, no fuss, and just \$13,000 more than the coupe. —DM



First introduced for the newly developed 356, Coco Mats were the original factory accessory floor mat. New and improved, Coco Mats are the only period correct auto mat that will complement any classic Porsche®. Available for 356’s to 991’s.

www.cocomats.com 1.800.461.3533

**COCO MATS**  
The Original Auto Mat.