

# SharkTank

WHEN FACED WITH A SCHOOL OF 928s AT WERKS REUNION, WE CHOSE TO DIVE IN.

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**"IT MAKES ALL** other Porsches old-fashioned." "It's as if all other Porsches have just been practice exercises for the men who designed this car." "The 928 represents remarkable technological and stylistic progress, not only for the sports car but also for the automotive world as a whole." These were just some of the reactions from automotive journalists when the 928, Porsche's designated successor to the venerable 911, was introduced.

It was heady stuff, but then again, why wouldn't it be? The 928 was a clean-sheet Porsche creation. The design was not compromised. There were no shared or off-the-shelf components. A big, beautiful, front-mounted 4.5-liter V8 and rear-mounted transmission provided perfect balance. It had the Weissach axle suspension, plus aluminum front fenders, hood, and doors, a sultry shape, pop-up





**Top: Scott Martin (on the left) with Howard Wright and his son standing next to Scott's Arctic Silver GTS. Pop-up headlights were a defining characteristic of the 928.**

headlights, and a psychedelic Pasha plaid interior available to those who were not faint of heart. The 928 was a highway cruiser designed to keep the Mercedes-Benz SL and Jaguar XJ-S in the rearview mirror.

Nearly 58,000 928s were manufactured from model year 1978 through model year 1995. Each iteration had its fans—the OB (original body) and its sleek simplicity appealed to many. The mighty GTS, with flares and wings and bulges galore, was well suited to those craving neck-snapping power and exclusivity. Special-interest groups, clubs, and events for the 928 proliferated.

One such noteworthy gathering was “Rendezvous 928: Sharks Circling Amelia Island,” which took place this past May at the 2021

Werks Reunion. Fifty-one owners and guests (many of the more rambunctious from the 928 Buckeye Landsharks) piloted 32 Porsche 928s. They celebrated on the streets of Fernandina Beach, the fairways of Amelia River Golf Club, the parking lot of the Aloft Hotel, and within the Shuckers Oyster Bar & Grill. That Rendezvous 928 was one of the largest 928 gatherings in recent history, drawing Sharksters from as far as Washington State. Every model was represented.

So what changes occurred during the 928's life cycle, and why did a particular iteration appeal more to one owner than another? We interviewed several 928 owners at Werks to get their thoughts on the cars that they own and love.

### 1978-1982 928

- 16-valve 4.5-liter V8
- Bosch Continuous Injection System (CIS)/K-Jetronic FI
- 220 horsepower (U.S.)
- Curb weight: 3,197 pounds
- Three-speed automatic/five-speed manual
- Softly rounded rear end without front or rear spoilers
- Phone-dial alloy wheels

Alex VanDamme, MY 1979: “I prefer the lighter, early body style, especially the original CIS cars, meaning 1978 and 1979 for U.S.-destined cars. The CIS cars are harder to tune and use more fuel than the later L-Jet FI systems [starting in the 1980 model year for U.S. cars], but are much more fun to drive with better throttle response and punch. The cars are also lighter and certainly more tossable, with a more nimble spirit than the heavier, albeit more powerful, later iterations. A well-sorted early car with the manual is a real treat to drive, whether on a track or on a high-speed long-distance cruise. I also prefer the original cleaner look of the early cars, with no side moldings, no sunroofs, and no spoilers or wheel flares.” Affectionately known as MOKKA, Alex's 928 is Mocha Brown with a Cork interior and factory bronze window tint.

### 1983-1984 928S

- 16-valve 4.7-liter V8
- Bosch LH-Jetronic FI
- 234 horsepower (U.S.)
- Four-speed automatic/five-speed manual
- Curb weight: 3,197 pounds
- Black polyurethane front spoiler and “Mary Stuart collar” rear spoiler, side molding strips painted in the exterior color, and side turn signals
- 16-inch slotted “flat disc” wheels

Shawn Stanford, MY 1982 and 1984: “I like early 928s, what we call OBs, or Old Buggers. These are the cars before the redesign of the nose and tail, and without the flared fenders of the late cars. Personally, I prefer a car in its original and most pristine form. There are no bad angles for that early shape; it's beautiful no matter how you look at it.”

“I use my 928 for that which it was made: high-speed, long-distance transportation. The 928 is never happier than when it is on a smooth strip of asphalt eating miles. Many times I've been happily covering ground and suddenly realize the car feels too smooth on the road. That's when I need to lift my right foot because I've drifted into truly eye-popping speed. The car really feels connected and capable when things get fast.”

### 1985-1986 928S

- 32-valve 5.0-liter V8
- Bosch LH-Jetronic FI
- 288 horsepower (U.S.)
- Four-speed automatic/five-speed manual
- Curb weight: 3,417 pounds
- Visually the same as the earlier 928S

Dan Garner, MY 1986.5: “I thoroughly enjoy everything about these cars and currently own three—an '83, '85, and the '86.5. I like the S models from 1985 through '86.5 for the body style and simpler mechanics. The '86.5 designation is unique: it has the 1986 motor and body with the '87 S4 suspension and brakes. All '86 models after VIN 1001 were made this way. The 928, while advanced for its time and somewhat complicated, is not impossible for the average person to work on if you use the workshop manual and get involved in the online communities when you need help.”



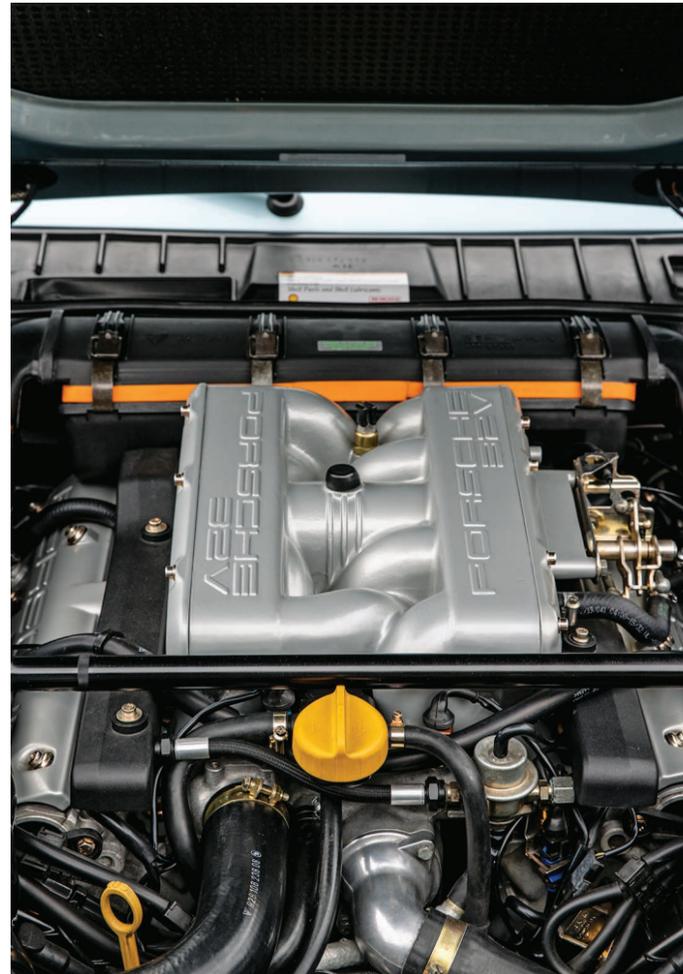
### 1987-1991 928 S4 and 928 GT

- 32-valve 5.0-liter V8
- Bosch LH-Jetronic FI
- 316 horsepower (U.S.)
- Four-speed automatic/five-speed manual (Note: For 1989-1991, the five-speed manual version was bumped to 326 horsepower and badged the 928 GT. The four-speed automatic version remained 928 S4.)
- Curb weight: 3,549 pounds (928 S4), 3,505 pounds (928 GT)
- Both the 928 S4 and 928 GT feature a sculpted front fascia and a hatch-mounted rear wing, rather than front and rear spoilers. The 928 GT had no side moldings and unique forged light alloy wheels.

Trey Johnson, MY 1988: “I purchased the 1988 S4 four years ago at my wife's insistence. It is a rescue car that received a reasonable amount of rehabilitation before taking any trips. However, it made up for lost time as it carried me on a 6,800-mile road trip from Florida to South Dakota for Rendezvous 928: Sharks in the Badlands last summer. This journey saw me travel through 21 states in 16 days. Some of those days were in excess of 700 miles. The car simply didn't miss a beat. Driving a 928 across the country during the pandemic might have been the ultimate way to socially distance!”

Nothing says “psychedelic '70s” more than a Pasha interior. Shawn Stanford (above) makes parking lot adjustments to his white-striped 928S—an occasional occurrence when dealing with a 40-year-old car.





The 928's interior was designed for cruising comfort. The "folded knuckles" intake plenum of the 32-valve V8 differs significantly from the "spider" plenum of earlier models.

"The 1988 S4 manual gives me full control of the rpm band of the car. It makes it feel faster because I'm controlling the shift points and selecting gearing for acceleration and deceleration. The S4 is probably a bit more fun to drive because of this."

Jim and Sue Corenman, MY 1990: "Our GT will have somewhere around 298,000 miles when she gets home, and yes, we drove it to Amelia Island—something like 3,100 miles from home—about as far from Florida as you can get without a passport. It was a great drive, particularly the western half of the trip where the roads had curves, the posted limits were generous, and the traffic was light. We still very much like the GT of all the 928 variations, especially with an extra liter of displacement. And it's comfortable, even after sharing the driving for 10 or 12 hours."

### 1992-1995 928 GTS

- 32-valve 5.4-liter V8
- 350 horsepower
- Bosch FI
- Four-speed automatic/five-speed manual (Only 407 were imported to the U.S. from 1993-1995, and fewer than 40% had manual transmissions.)
- Curb weight: 3,638 pounds (automatic), 3,594 pounds (manual)
- Flared rear fenders, rear wing painted in exterior color, exterior mirrors in the Cup design
- 17-inch Cup rims standard.

Mike Buccicone, MY 1993: "The performance is outstanding and the handling is superb, the benchmark for grand touring. The car inspires confidence at speed and feels as if you're practically riding on rails. The GTS still looks like a modern car almost 30 years later. The car sported cutting-edge technology, light years ahead of anything Porsche had

ever designed, with the exception of the 959, and came loaded with standard features such as automatic HVAC, passenger and driver airbags, Porsche computer-controlled limited-slip differential (PSD), and tire pressure monitoring not seen in other production cars until almost two decades later. The GTS with a five-speed manual transmission and PSD differential is the most exclusive of all 928s, making it *the* most sought after example." 🍷

Note: Because of the significant changes made to the 928 from year to year (and frequently mid-year), technical specifications vary from source to source. To compile the most accurate information possible, the following sources were used in this report:

*Excellence Was Expected*  
*PCA Model Guide: The 928*  
*Excellence Buyers Guide 2020-'21*  
*Porsche.com*

# Impurist

NOT EVERY owner who pounds, patches, and polishes his/her 928 is a purist. Consider Joel Roberts and his 928. Acquired from fellow club members who simply ran out of gas, Joel took over a three-year restoration project. His 1984 928S, in a shade somewhere between Porsche's Hellbronze Metallic and Mazda's Minivan Metallic Beige, came together, literally, with the help of many 928 Buckeye Landsharks members. "The car had just come out of the paint shop and was in effect a rolling shell, albeit a sparkling, golden shell, together with a multitude of boxes, bags, and plastic pails overflowing with 5,000 loose, unmarked, and un-tagged pieces, parts, and all the fasteners," said Joel. "The windows, trim, bumpers, interior, lights, electronics, and everything that makes it a 928 were lying in a pile under three inches of body shop dust. The club rallied together and in four months we had a running and driving car."

He continues: "My 1984 928S is a Rest of World (ROW), commonly referred to as Euro, and for that reason it is a highly sought after model. It came stock with a 310-hp, 16-valve 4.7-liter engine with an old-school spider intake and plenum (my favorite of the three iterations) and a four-



speed automatic transmission.

"My 928S has more than 137,000 miles on the clock. It features 'shaved' body panels, three-piece Cup wheels, an aftermarket rear spoiler, and an audio system in the back where once was the back seat. No one actually sits in the back seat of a Porsche anyway. What was a 5,000-piece puzzle is now a rolling work of

art, admired by everyone who lays eyes on her. I often invite them to take a seat behind the wheel for photos.

"The greatest thing about the 928 is the community, bar none the best bunch of car nuts on the planet. Any of us would drop what we're doing and drive an hour to help a 928-er we barely know." —DM

