

THE SINGER PORSCHE COUPLE



CELEBRATING THEIR LOVE & THE BEAUTY OF PORSCHE'S 911

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It was the Sunday of Rennsport VI, the day I met Mark and Rita. After four straight days of all things Rennsport Reunion, I was still in the throes of Porsche overload and smelling of exhaust fumes when I got the call from Deb Pollack, ace automotive publicist, who mentioned a couple of cars I might be interested in seeing. That's never a bad call to get in my experience, so I quickly made my way over to the Singer Vehicle Design house in the hills of the Del Monte Forrest in Monterey, California.



So, the transition from 80,000 patrons at the track, which included legendary Le Mans drivers, crowd-pleasing Porsche tractor races, and a marque celebration like no other to half a dozen Singer staff members at a private home should be a breeze, right? Pulling up through the long driveway I couldn't help noticing how quiet things were. No loudspeaker alerting me of cautions on turn 10, or 935's firing up in the paddock – not even friends and clients calling for me as I passed through rows of outlaws. It was calm and still. That is until I saw the pair. His and Her Singers sitting side-by-side with the backdrop of fall foliage and a perfectly manicured lawn. Quite the contrast to thousands of cars squeezed onto blacktop.

I knock on the door which was answered by Rob Dickinson himself, the driving force behind the brand. Sporting cargo shorts and his habitual flat-hat, he casually asked if I wanted anything – coffee, water, or bowl of soup? What kind of soup – well, no thank you. I was on a mission to meet the owners of the fantastic machines sitting outside. Soon pleasantries were exchanged upon meeting Mark and Rita. Instantly I was in their world of relaxing, playing with their dog and unaffected by the happenings at Laguna Seca.

Mark escorted me to the driveway and immediately drew me into his world – one that consisted of driving and driving hard. He was upbeat and quite excited to tell me all about the restoration and why every detail did in fact matter to him.

"The process was really easy, but I received a lot of help along the way. Rob picked out the wheels and he simplified my thoughts to get it right. Every bolt is perfect, every hose is perfect. Even the name is perfect,

Tonopah – which is a small town of about 1,200 people but where our favorite drive is."

Tonopah is stunning at any angle. Sporting Singer's own GT Silver with nickel bumperettes, blue blood colored painted stripes harmonizing with thin, blood red lines along the striping. Inside the cockpit you'll find a sharp navy blue interior with a custom horizontal stripe weave with Oxblood, early 911 gauges with navy blue backgrounds, an Oxblood red tach – all with cream markings. The harness bar is wrapped in navy blue with stitched Oxblood, which matches the tool-hoop. Same goes for the steering wheel to keep the theme's continuity. Add in the external center fuel and oil-filler cap and you have your classic Singer package. Also, of noteworthy mention is the aluminum floorboards, which is the first example to ever sport this option.

Then of course, there's the engine – a 4.0 liter 6-speed monster built and tested by Ed Pink Racing Engines. Carbon ceramic brakes, Olhins suspension upgrade, vintage Becker radio, Dyna-audio sound system with 'turtle shell' sub in back seat makes this a well-rounded car. Originally a 1991 911, this donor car pulls just as much power as it evokes emotions. The sounds and feels are of nostalgic origins for Mark.

"It was my dad's car – a 1982 911 that I used to steal every time my parents went out to dinner. When I came back the car would be burning up, the garage so hot, but he pretended not to ever notice. I always loved cars and just wanted to go fast."

While Mark was lively and open, Rita was more shy at first. However, when asked about her favorite qualities of the car, she knew exactly why this car raised her eye-







The interior has a saddle tan weave with 'black piano' on front seat backs – both being a bucket style track seat as well. Exterior presented in blue blood colored paint with ghosted pink stripes and nickel bumperettes. There were a few 'special wishes' add-ons when the car went through its recommissioning for Rita such as a custom front plaque, a pink 'Screaming Rob' tach, blue blood-colored fuse covers, pink decklid letters, pink carbon ceramic brakes and pink calipers. Get lost in the details and you might miss the "Rita" embossed leather which is a personalized monogram for Rita, in the design of the Ritz Carlton, where they were engaged.

"Without question, my favorite thing about this car is that it was a wedding gift. The car is the same year I was born, which makes it even more special," said Rita. "Hobbs loves it too and always sits in the front seat. His little butt fits right in the bucket seat perfectly."

It's obvious they were both ready to hit the road at any hour of the day, on any road available. They both mentioned how their love for driving embedded deeply into their relationship early on and shows no signs of slowing down.

"Her car is the one and only car I'll ride shotgun in. It's quite an experience watching her drive this old school Porsche while I take it all in and listen to the engine. Not something anyone else can say, really," Mark says with a grin.

Now with the ultimate 911's, and the ultimate car power couple, it's just another step in the progression. Having the first female Singer owner – another step in the progression. Mark and Rita are looking forward to the newest Singer restoration – a result of the company's Dynamics and Lightweighting Study - they have on order and possibly more on the horizon with Singer. What's next in this line of progressions? Only time will tell.



brows day after day. It's a daily driver for Rita, and the same goes for their beloved Golden Retriever Hobbs. Each day they hop into the car, twist the key left of the steering wheel, stare into the pink center gauge, push down on the automatic button, put it in gear and drive off in the very first commission fitted with a Tiptronic transmission.

"I go to Starbucks every morning in it – and people do a double take. Is that a Singer? The days I don't bring it, people always ask where it is, and I just can't get enough of that."

Because Mark originally found the car from an existing restoration, he saw this as a perfect opportunity to take what was already from the Singer playbook and make it special for his soon-to-be-bride. They now refer to the car as 'Vegas,' Rita and Hobbs have one outstanding daily driver.

Her car was upgraded from a 3.6-liter to a 3.8-liter Tiptronic transmission – the very first restoration to do so. With a dual distributor system, this stroked Tiptronic engine produces around 280 HP and is actually 600 lbs. lighter than its counterpart.

