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Motoring Feature

Petrol vs electric: Head to head

Petrol has long been the go-to performance fuel, but could electric take its place? Darren Cassey put both to the test

ASK most car enthusiasts for their propulsion method of choice and they'll probably say petrol. This fossil fuel has powered some of the greatest engines known to man, and has fuelled engines with the power to catapult tonnes of metal to inconceivable speeds in a matter of seconds - sounding great while doing it.

However, with climate change now at the forefront of people's minds, the role of heavily polluting fossil fuels is quickly dying out. That means we need an alternative, and it appears electric will be the

Porsche is at the forefront of both old-and new-school technology, epitomised by the 911 Turbo S and Taycan Turbo S. While they might not seem like natural competitors – a two-plus-two, petrol-powered sports car and an electrically powered four-door saloon respectively - on paper they make for an intriguing comparison.

We were given the chance to test drive both back-to-back, and it made for a fascinating and thought-provoking day. Here's

The facts and figures

Porsche 911 has long been one of the best sports cars on the market, and this newly released Turbo S version sits at the very up and fuel is dumped into the cylinders towards the horizon. What's incredible fore laughing hysterically once you regain top of the range of this latest generation.

Its 3.8-litre, six-cylinder, twin-turbo- away, you're really away. charged petrol engine makes 641bhp and 800Nm of torque, with a top speed of 205mph and a 0-60mph time of 2.6 seconds. It also emits 257g/km and achieves fuel economy of 25mpg. UK prices for the coupé start at about £155k, or £165k for the con-

The Taycan uses twin electric motors (one on each axle to provide all-wheel drive) that produce a combined 616bhp and 1,050Nm. With launch control engaged, that figure goes up to a scarcely believable 750bhp, contributing to an identical 0-60mph time of 2.6 seconds and a lower top speed of 161mph. It emits no CO2 and has a range of about 250 miles between charges. The Turbo S starts at £138,826, but the one we tried had been specced up

Which feels faster?

Both are fast enough to scramble your brains. Put your foot down in the 911 and ■Inside the 911 Turbo S



There's a perceptible shift of the car's

to get the pistons firing – but once you're is that the higher your speeds and the your composure. further round the tachometer the needle spins, the harder the car accelerates. The bles your brain in a completely different

The Taycan, on the other hand, scramsimilarly effective, manner. Electric motors are different to petrol and diesel engines because while the latter builds power with revs before tailing off, electric motors have 100% torque available from 'zero' RPM. They then consistently lose power as speeds get higher, hence the low-er top speed. (This also has to do with the fact electric motors work over a broader rev range than traditional engines, so don't need multiple gears... but that's a story for another 10,000-word article.)

The result? The Taycan and its 750bhp hit you like a freight train. The 0-60mph times might be identical, but the 0-30mph is surely heavily in favour of the EV. Even with this jaded journalist's experience of fast cars, that first couple of seconds of acceleration in a Taycan takes the breath

The difference between petrol and elecric is like the famous quote from The Inerview: 'Same, same; but different.' Both cars do a great job of accelerating faster







■ The 911 and the Taycan (right) feel fast when opened up on the road. The acceleration of both cars will scramble drivers' brains, but in slightly different ways

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■'I also adore the Taycan's looks to the point where it could be awful to drive and I'd still want one

The driving experience

to be driving at silly speeds to get the see that when I got back and dived deeper mon enough that you won't turn too many most out of it on the road. We tested the into the numbers, but the 911 is 1,880mm heads. (Though if nimble performance is ning costs. going to be less sharp than an equivalent coupé for reasons of weight and weight distribution – but it just felt a bit 'too much' for the road. Especially narrow, unsighted Which one's better?

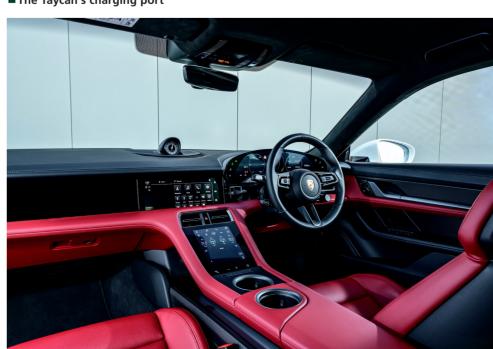
The Taycan, on the other hand, felt more

all the weight is down low, and the Taycan actually has the lowest centre of gravity of any Porsche road car, which helps in the looks to the point where it could be awards. Porsche's boxer engines are iconic, handling department. The 911 convertible ful to drive and I'd still want one. has a roof and roof mechanism up around

capable of cornering hard, but you'd need er than the 911 Turbo S. I was shocked to is your thing, the 911 is just about com- to fast fun. It just means you can go fast Cabriolet – models that are almost always wide and the Taycan is 1,966mm. It's amaz-

nimble and compact. It had more immedi- Now that's an impossible question – but ate turn-in and felt less like it was filling a one that I'm going to try to answer. For





than the human body could ever be pre-full lane on the road, even if the odd brush me, it's the Taycan, because it offers all what you're after a 911 GT model will leave pared for, they just do it in different ways. with an overreaching hedge told a differ- the performance of the 911 but feels more both in its dust on a twisty road.) The result in both cases is fantastically ent story. With the batteries in the floor, nimble on a fun road. That said, it's also It's also got utterly addictive perfor-

The 911 Turbo S couldn't be closer be-bad way to go out. Where the difference lies is more in the corners. The 911 Turbo S feels like a big old brute that's heavy in the corners. It's though, is that the Taycan is actually wid
where the difference lies is more in the corners in the rear seats. That's not light.

What's particularly interesting here, the fast one', so if flying under the radar tric vehicle doesn't mean saying goodbye.



MOTORCYCLES + MEXICAN

RIDE OUT TO THE RAMP THIS SAT Domingos Food Truck will be serving tasty Mexican and Spanish street

food from midday



■The EV's interior