

Porsche Cayenne GTS

Road Test

by Ian Lamming

POISED on the brink of a rocky precipice there are decisions to be made.

Should I? Dare I? Can this particular 4x4 handle the steep incline ahead. The Cayenne has the proportions of any self-respecting off-roader.

It has permanent four wheel drive. There's even a little mountain graphic on a switch on the transmission tunnel – now that's normally for some sort of low ratio hill control descent contraption.

It's enough to convince me that the vehicle has the capabilities to go off-piste. The thing that is lacking is the courage of the driver. With sweeping bodywork like that, glorious 21ins alloys and a Porsche badge on the front there's no way in a million years I'm going to risk it and it's time to head back to the black stuff where this particular Cayenne belongs.

This is Porsche's latest offering in the Cayenne range – the GTS – and it's oven-ready for the road.

GTS sits below the Turbo but has been given extra oomph and even better road manners to appeal to the thrill seekers. The glorious 4.8 litre V8 punches out a whopping 405bhp and a colossal 500Nm of torque. There is just so much power available from tickover onwards that you would swear you were in the mighty Turbo – until you actually get in the Turbo when you feel you are in a space rocket.

There's something vaguely obscene about a car this big being capable of such speed – whoever said you can't have everything in one package? Cayenne is uncompromising. It offers the supreme practicality of a large off-roader and the dynamics of a very accomplished sports car.

For those obsessed with performance figures, 60mph comes up in less than six seconds and the top speed is 157mph. But it is more about the way that performance is delivered than with its sensationally torquey, spine-tingling character.

The mammoth motor will pull sixth gear from well under 30mph making the six speed gearbox virtually automatic. But use the slick transmission to the full and the Cayenne simply flies. Acceleration in any of the ratios is simply astounding. Off road prowess is diminished by the Cayenne for-the-road suspension. Ride height and ground clearance suffer – but it's all for a good cause, namely handling.

GTS handles a like a giant sports car. It grips, it steers, it corners with majestic confidence and style thanks to steel springs and what Porsche likes to call “active suspension management”. Where normal off-roaders rock and roll, sway and in some cases topple as they struggle with the bends, GTS simply rounds them impeccably railroad-like.



As any good scientist knows speed and weight equals velocity and there is plenty to be had around the Cayenne. Just as well then that the brakes are gargantuan bringing the big Porsche to a halt in quick time.

Inside it is pure opulence; swathes of leather, sports seats, satellite navigation, to name a few. GTS really is a phenomenon. It's a sprinter dressed up in hiking boots, it's a WAG in a cagoule; it's far too upmarket to ever think about driving it off a cliff.



Vital Statistics

Model: Porsche Cayenne GTS

Engine: 4.8 litre, V8

Drivetrain: six speed Manual

Power: 405BHP

Top speed: 157mph

0-62mph: 6.1secs

Insurance group: 20

Miles per gallon (combined): 18.7

CO2 (g/km): 361

Price: from £54,350.00