

It's completely reminiscent of the Porsche 911. Not the current 991 or even the 997. This goes back to the last century. Before the 911 got fat. Even though this Cayman GT4 pushes the needle up to 2950 pounds, its handling and acceleration scream out 1973 Porsche 911 Carrera RS, a razor-edge cutting car with *only* 202HP that pushed around *only* 2,150 pounds of total weight. True to old Porsche form, the Cayman GT4 isn't a step up from the Cayman RS or GTS, it's a lightly disguised, mildly tamed and trimmed step down from a GT3 RSR. The GT4 dipped into the GT3 parts bin for its front axle and suspension, wheel bearings, ball joint mounts, shock absorbers, and the steel 15-inch rotors and brake calipers (6 piston-front, 4 piston-rear) brakes. No hybrid tech here, although the GT4 does borrow the carbon seats and steering wheel from the 918 Spyder.

The styling of the Cayman GT4 also reflects the race/track car focus, incorporating a lower ride height, a redesigned front fascia for additional downforce, bigger air intakes at the front feeding the car's three radiators and front brakes and larger side intakes to feed air into the engine. At the rear a larger wing, a smaller spoiler-lip, and diffuser help to stick the car to the road. The GT4 will debut with a respectable 380bhp (45hp more than the Cayman GTS) and the GT4 develops 309lb ft of torque – not far off the 325lb ft of the 911 GT3. The ride is expectedly firm with exceptional body control in Sport mode while Normal mode makes it easily tolerable across less than perfect roads. The electric-power steering (again from the GT3 parts box) is near perfectly weighted and precise and the brake pedal progressive and provides excellent feedback. Comparative evals indicate the standard steel-metallic rotors-brakes to be outstanding. Relatively, the PCCB brakes, properly warmed, never show any sign of fade and are perhaps an over-the-top option. Noise level is slightly up as insulation was deleted from the interior to give the car a more raw feel, and is a welcome soundtrack.

While there is an extensive options list, the Press car (seen here) mercifully came with the few essential bits (and a few not). In addition to the PCCB brakes (\$7400), this Racing Yellow GT4 had the Full Bucket Seat option (\$4730), and the Sport Chrono Package (\$1850). Oddly, Porsche chose to further opt this car with leather interior (\$1090), Deviated (Yellow) stitching on the leather (\$1490), Climate Control (\$760), various painted interior options, and a vehicle-color painted key (\$365). All told, the \$84,600 base jumped to \$104,845, but serious track drivers can



Images: Lee Lichtenstein / ML1 Media 2015

**EXPLOSIVE ACCELERATION...LIKE A 911 TURBO MOTOR, EXCEPT THERE'S NO TURBO ON THIS CAR.**



trim at least \$5000 worth—more if you prefer an aftermarket race seat to the Porsche carbon buckets.

While there are undeniable technical advantages to the Porsche PDK dual clutch transmission, Porsche has made the GT4 available only with the 6 speed manual. The throws are short and precise, with properly spaced gates. As well, the clutch is generously light but engages accurately. A unique option for track use: pressing the Sport button on the center console engages the Cayman's engine management system which senses when you're about to downshift and rev-matches ('blips') the throttle for you, boosting revs as you resume acceleration -such as coming out of a turn. It's not intrusive and seems entirely effective.

There are other driver aids as well. At long last, Porsche allows for a Smart - phone app that can time your laps and collect telemetry allowing you to compare your last lap with your fastest – far more capable than the Sport-Chrono system by itself, and bridging the gap to data loggers that track professionals have long used. If an action cam (GoPro and the like) is mounted to the car, the

app can synchronize with it to provide a dashboard view of your laps complete with telemetry readouts.

And then, there's seat-of-the-pants telemetry. Turn the key and the 3.8 liter, 385hp motor fires with authority. Accelerate past 3500 rpm, and it comes alive. Past 6000 rpm, and you border on time-warping. The engine redlines (power is cut) at 7800. While not quite into GT3 territory for revs and torque, it encourages full use of its brilliant handling.

The Cayman GT4 is a bit of a challenge. While its ideal blend of grip and power makes the GT4 completely competent and fun to drive at normal speeds, it challenges it's driver to push the limits and rewards handsomely when done so. The GT4 commands attention – both of driver and those gawking at it. The faster you drive it the greater the reward. With a package so precise and explosive, perhaps a DOT warning label will get tacked to the sun visors: *WARNING: Objects seen through windshield are closer than they appear.*

John Miller / ML1 Media

**2016 Porsche Cayman GT4**

**LAYOUT**

Longitudinal mid-engine, rear wheel drive

**ENGINE**

3.8-liter flat-six, 385 hp 309lb.-ft. torque

**TRANSMISSION**

6 speed manual

**WEIGHT**

2950 lb (wet)

**0-60mph**

4.2 sec

**EPA CITY/HWY**

18/23 mpg

**MSRP (base)**

\$84,600(base) \$104,845(as tested)