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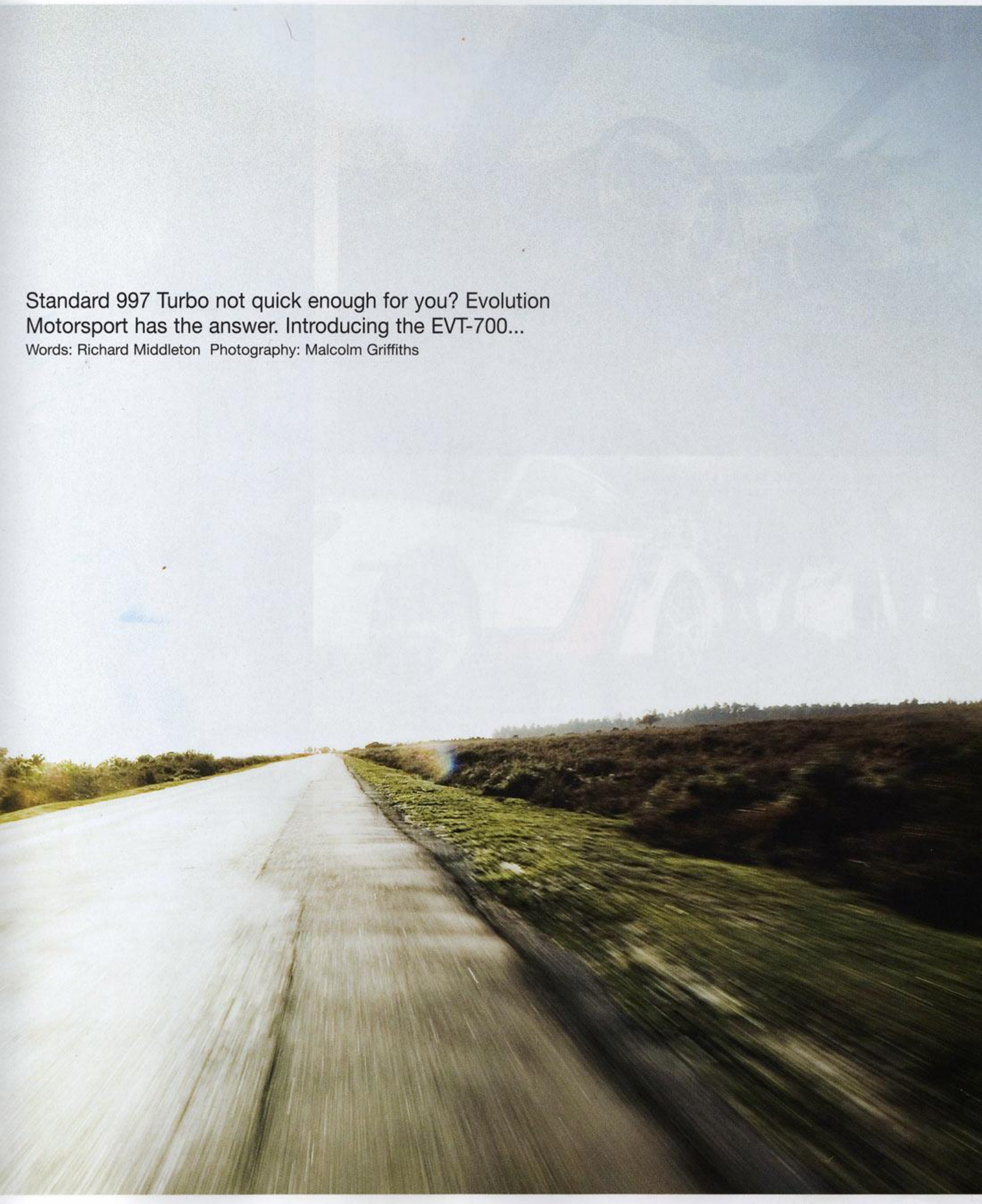
EVOLUTION

OF THE SPECIES



Standard 997 Turbo not quick enough for you? Evolution Motorsport has the answer. Introducing the EVT-700...

Words: Richard Middleton Photography: Malcolm Griffiths





Four-wheel drive grip and 700hp make this a truly epic 911. Cabin identical to standard. Performance, however, is not

Tornadoes are one of nature's many fascinating forces – powerful, destructive and magnetically intriguing. However, until recently, trying to fathom what it might sound like inside or even near the eye of one of nature's greatest forces has proved incomprehensible.

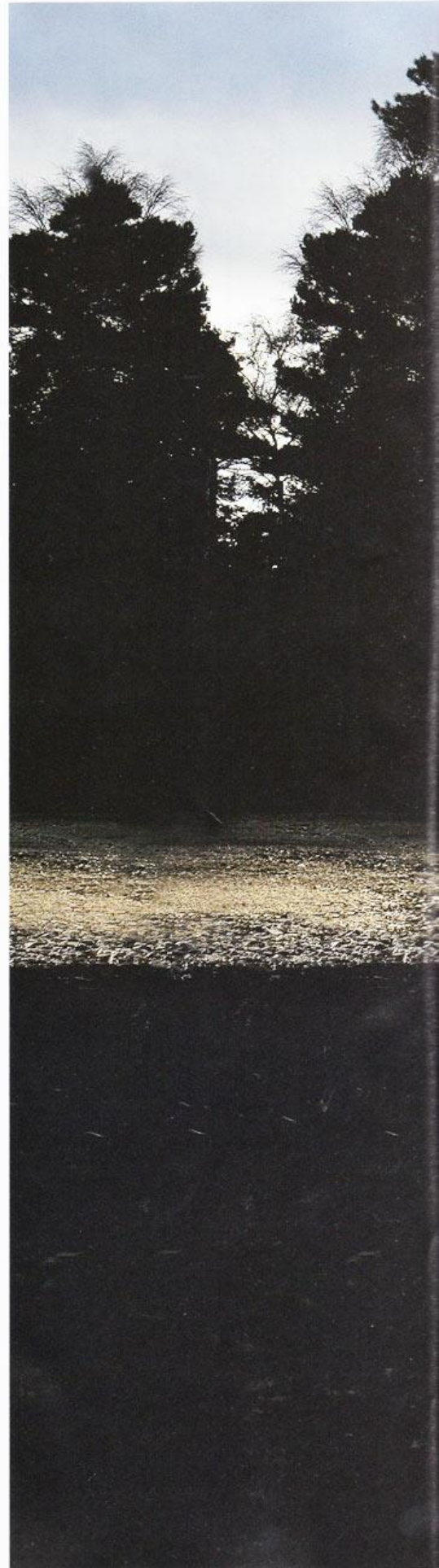
Perhaps it's rather fitting then that the man behind another great force to be reckoned with, Arizona-based tuning company Evolution Motorsports, has earned a reputation for building and competing with some of the toughest tarmac scorching Porsches the world over. Company president, Todd Zuccone, proves his company's staple by competing with considerable success in America's Texas mile: a show of brawn and speed that separates the men from the boys.

Strapping most drivers into the passenger seat of a 911 Turbo and giving it the full beans will alter their fundamental perceptions of what constitutes a quick car. One can scatter the page with all the adjectives of speed conceivable but until you've actually experienced the mind-boggling performance of Porsche's all-weather supercar, its turn of pace is difficult to convey. So when we were invited to drive the EVT-700,

based on the current, fastest and most accomplished 911 Turbo yet, it heralded a significant amount of excitement.

There's an icy chill in the morning air, a light dusting of ground frost shimmers in the bright morning sun and 700hp of 911 beckons to be driven. A frosty reception from the British weather isn't going to deter an eager journo though. Off the record, however, I'm mildly apprehensive. There's nothing subtle about the appearance of this Martini-themed 997 and as we make our first acquaintances, you kind of get that 'Here's Johnny' vibe.

Believe it or not this tantalising machine started out life as a black 997 Turbo with the standard swell of 480 Stuttgart horses. Now, however, having been treated to the EVT 700 engine upgrade it's producing a jaw-dropping 700hp and 703lb ft of torque. Modified turbochargers, high flow intercoolers, stainless steel headers and a high flow exhaust system are all part of the extensive tuning package. It's fair to assume that my expectations for this car's performance are pretty cataclysmic and as I slip into the Stuttgart crested driver's seat; I can't help but pinch myself at the opportunity to let this thing rip.









The modified 3.6-litre twin turbocharged flat-six produces 700 horsepower, giving the EVT-700 startling performance

Once immersed in the surrounds of the completely standard interior there's no real indication of the fettled flat-six's epic potential nestling at the rear. No one in their right mind would describe the 997 Turbo's out-of-the-box performance as anything other than epic, but it's only after stepping out of a factory 997 Turbo Cabriolet – admittedly equipped with the glacial-pace changing Tiptronic S transmission – that it makes the standard machine seem a tad tame. And that's no exaggeration. I approached this car expecting fireworks and under full throttle acceleration, correction, half throttle, the EVT-700 picks a point on the horizon and gets there as if it's bending space-time itself.

There's a marginally deeper thrum upon awakening the 3.6-litre twin-turbocharged flat-six and the upgraded clutch, although not heavy in its operation, requires a bit of concentration around biting point to make a clean getaway. Other than that, initially, it's business as usual. With first gear engaged a squeeze of the throttle reveals the tuned nature of this forced-induction engine. The car ventures forward with little inertia, and with the extra urge comes a more dramatic soundtrack from the engine.

Yet, as we venture out onto the dual

carriageway toward the New Forest, it seems the standard car's useable supercar tag still remains. I'm seeing an indicated 22mpg – much more than I achieved in an Evo X on loan to GT's sister title, *Performance Car*, which with 400hp less was about as relaxing to drive as a root canal procedure.

Off boost the car seems happy plodding along in the inside lane with just a slight whiff of exhaust resonance around 2000rpm, but as soon as the oil comes up to temperature and the photographer makes a sudden dash off the motorway, the EVT-700 displays its stupendous acceleration. Around 4000-6000rpm in third gear the car dispatches 60-100mph in a blink of an eye with a truly savage bombardment of noise, speed and adrenaline, all delivered in one menacing hit.

The power delivery is quite different to the factory car's fairly seamless power curve. There's a noticeable albeit small pause where the engine's torque is held back by the ECU, but once the needle hovers around 3500rpm and you stay committed the acceleration proves shockingly rapid. There's a minute amount of numbness in the steering through the first few degrees of lock, but as the speed builds the

Turbo's four-wheel drive chassis simply eats up corners; tyres gripping the asphalt with a python like conviction. Its perpetual turn of speed is hugely addictive, rifling through third, fourth and fifth gears like a knife through butter.

So is there any compromise for the extra power? In earnest, I approached this car with a few doubts. Could there be a case where the Turbo's 480hp proved insufficient on UK roads? In reality, there isn't. But once you've tasted the power of the EVT-700, you'll want to experience it time and time again, and by that point you'll probably be in serious amount of trouble with the law. Porsche's four-wheel drive system copes with the extra power with no hysterics, the 997 still remains the manageable, mind-warping point-to-point supercar.

With the windows down and the accelerator flattened to the bulkhead, as we pass under a short tunnel, the acoustical experience must be similar to the eye of a tornado. It's frightening, astonishing and addictive in equal measures ○

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