

Not everyone's cup of tea,
the Porsche is still
one of the most "in" cars a man can drive

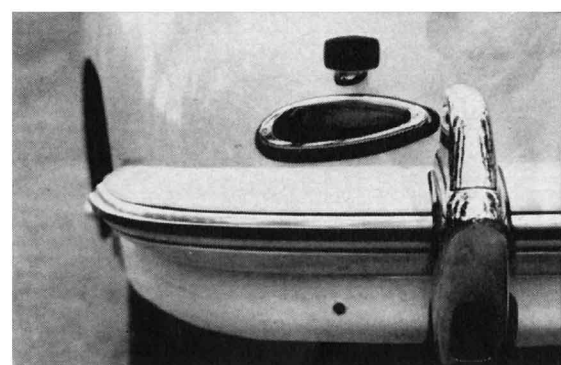
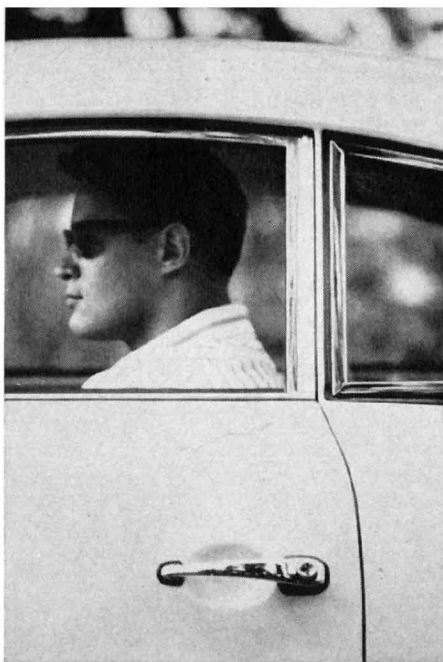
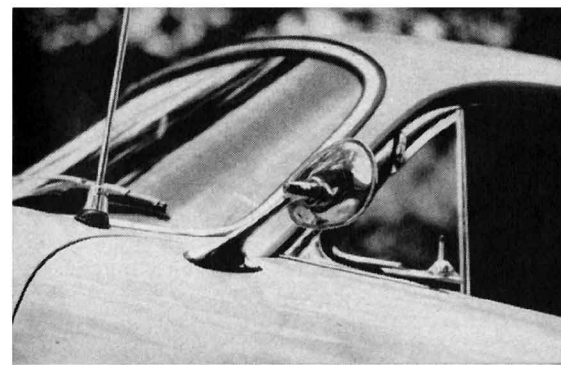
PORSCHE 1600-S

Expensive? Only a few years ago you could pry a Porsche Speedster loose from a showroom for a shade under three grand. It seemed like a bargain. Our test car—a '63 Super coupe—carries a basic price tag of \$4408. But consider—the Speedster was an adolescent, as were most Porsches of yore. After a wildly sporting youth, Porsches have at last settled into silver-templed maturity, bringing refinement and sophistication to the marque and, indeed, to the clientele.

Expensive? During the process of its evolution the Porsche has become a different automobile and a more costly one, but it is an incomparable car in the literal sense; there's nothing like it at *any* price.

In our Road Research Report on the Porsche Normal and Super 90 (May, 1960) we said that the Porsche "is not so much a 'car' as a sealed 'machine for traveling.'" In this sense, the Porsche is the simplest definition of the term *Gran Turismo*—a machine that is "grand" for "touring". Most assuredly, it is not a GT in the same sense as a Ferrari GTO or an Alfa GTZ.

Today, a well-tuned Mini Cooper S could easily trim the acceleration figures of our test car. Scooting along



in a Mini, cooped up like the Jolly Green Giant in a soap box, is not touring in the grand manner, whereas driving cross-country in superb comfort and total controllability in a Porsche is.

Porsche didn't quit the race until they felt their car had adequate performance. Displacement went from 1100 to 1600 cc and horsepower from 44 to 102. (The 130 bhp 4-cam Carrera engine is *very* powerful, but not a best-seller with non-racing customers.)

When the opposition got white-hot and ultra-light it also got high-strung and temperamental. Porsche wisely shied away from this trend; the emphasis veered from the stark semi-competition car to the luxurious "businessman's express". Which brings up a point: the Porsche does what the Thunderbird would like to do—it's a very "personal" car and a status symbol of connoisseurs who know automobiles and appreciate fine points of design and craftsmanship. It also does everything most sports cars try to do, representing the ideal they are all striving after.

Our test car is the personal property of O. Erich Filius, president of Porsche's American operation, and

while he was generous in loaning us the car, he didn't want to be without it for too long. We picked up the ivory coupe on a Thursday knowing it had to be returned Monday. After a few hours with the car we couldn't leave it alone—it was in continuous use for four days. Parking it seemed a waste; so any opportunity was seized as an excuse to drive it somewhere. Around the test track once more. Back to the city. Back out to the country. Dinner in town. Expressways. Back roads. *Anywhere*, and always with the same unbridled enthusiasm and admiration. It's that kind of car.

The biggest changes, compared with Porsches of old, have been wrought in the handling department. With an old Porsche, sailing into a turn over your head meant the tail would start describing a great wiping arc, lots of crossed-arms unwinding of the wheel was necessary to keep it from looping or running off the road backwards. Porsche buffs were nuts about this untidy technique; they prided themselves on their ability to "wischen" around corners as sideways as the tires would permit. It looked fabulous to the racy set but scared the bejeezus out of all those timid souls standing

PORSCHE CONTINUED

around, cash in hand, ready to buy something less dicey.

So unerring German technology was brought to bear on the amount of rear wheel camber, torsion bar thickness, shock settings, suspension geometry, roll couple, anti-roll bar stiffness, tire design and the like. The renovation brought about a car that has virtually neutral steering characteristics; handling so safe that only the most hapless, witless, inept driver could let the car get away with him (or, significantly, her—the Normal is called the "Ladies" model in German).

Going from a leading to a trailing throttle in the middle of a turn causes an almost ignominious loss of speed; the tires scrub off forward energy until it is going slowly enough to track around. Full throttle in a turn makes the rear end squat down and the front end lift slightly as it digs in. It will give two-weeks notice on any incipient slide and, once it arrives, a stable "drift" can be maintained over a wide speed range (say, another 15 mph in a nominally 60-mph turn). If you boot it up to 11/10ths, you'd probably run out of gas before you discovered it can run out of road. (Incidentally, the test car gave 28 mpg under conditions as close to continuous full-throttle as we could swing it.) In a racing car, such excellent road-holding would be a great advantage; in a touring car, it is sufficient to remove all dangerous vices.

Maybe we should mention that all the old Porsche traits are revived when it's driven too fast in the wet with high (32/36 psi) tire pressures. Fun . . . in a way.

A large measure of the car's excellent controllability is due to the command the driver has over his machine. The pedal relationship is faultless, inviting you to heel-and-toe it into a lower gear than you probably need. For some, the clutch throw is too long; we've seen driv-

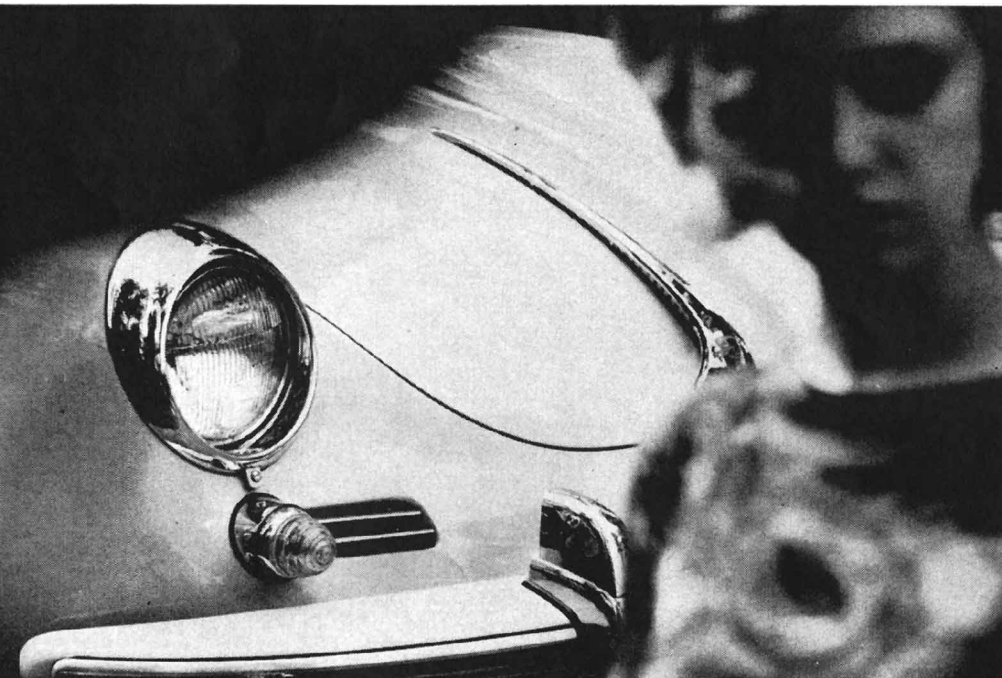
ers build up the pedal with rubber blocks. Like the VW—and for the same reasons (the similar unit-construction body shell), there is no good place to rest or brace the left foot.

The fully-reclining seats are firmer than they used to be, and not as cradling, but the range of adjustment remains enormous: fore-and-aft in small increments; seat rake angle in larger steps. Any mechanic can make limited adjustments to the length of the clutch and brake pedals. The shoulder-to-steering wheel distance depends on the seat rake and is usually adjusted to a relaxed "straight-arm" driving style. The gearshift lever is a stout affair with a short throw.

Porsche's detractors would have you believe that it's impossible to get in and out of easily, but once the proper sequence of movements is learned, entry and exit to anything but the rear seats is not taxing. Every neophyte who wriggles into the Porsche's padded bathtub of an interior for the first time can't stop exclaiming about all the foot, hip, elbow and head room—it's much better than most American cars in these dimensions and you have to be built like King Kong before you are in any discomfort.

Long distance work is the Porsche's forte and the redesigned front compartment, (with a lower gas tank) notwithstanding, the boot isn't what you'd call capacious. Treated as a small sailboat, the Porsche can carry about half-a-ton of personal and household gear, though it does take a while to pack it all in.

Among the many refinements in the latest Porsches is the new visibility. The rear window looks about half-again as big and the only blind spot is between it and the rear quarter panels. The first 356-Bs (which had the new-look fenders but the old body's "greenhouse") featured higher headlight mountings which gave better roadway illumination at night. Mr. Filius' coupe has a



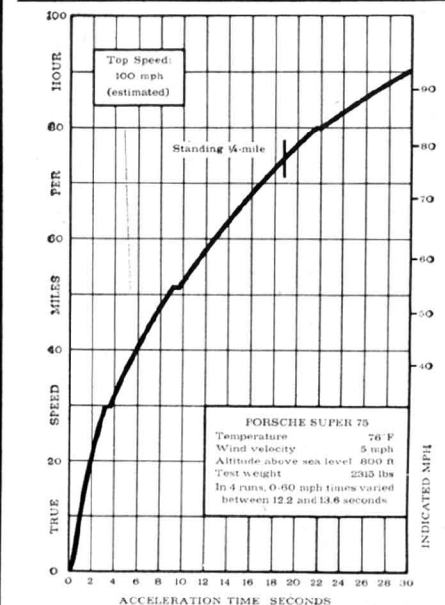
PORSCHE 1600-S

U.S. Company: Porsche of America Corp.
107 Wren Ave.
Teaneck, N.J.

Price as tested: \$4,408 P.O.E. (N.Y.)

ACCELERATION:

Zero to	Seconds
30 mph	3.8
40 mph	6.1
50 mph	9.0
60 mph	12.8
70 mph	16.6
80 mph	21.8
90 mph	29.4
100 mph	41.3
Standing 1/4-mile	18.9



new accessory which gets the sealed beams out from behind the headlight lenses and into the open, sitting in a Detroitly-chromed retainer. It doesn't do much for aerodynamics or aesthetics, but it sure did brighten up the night. Combined with the new dimmer switch (operated without having to remove a hand from the wheel) and a variable-speed windshield wiper it makes night driving a new pleasure.

All the instruments and switches are in their accustomed locations; the only change is the addition of a fresh air ventilation system controlled from the center of the dashboard. A grilled intake just forward of the windshield leads to outlets beneath the dash and through the heater-defroster ducting.

The 88 bhp (SAE) engine is wholly satisfactory and utterly without quirks. It starts right up whether the engine is hot or cold, always idles at 750 rpm, never coughs or spits or runs hot, and winds smoothly up to the red-line—and beyond—with no flat spots or hesitation. Low-speed torque is good, passing ability is good, it will cruise at the legal limit all day, and the top speed is over 100 mph.

For cruising anywhere but the lone prairie we feel third and fourth gears are too long; shortening them would also reduce the middle-aged spread between second and third in the standard ratios. One of the loveliest things about writing up the purchase order for a Porsche, however, is the fact that you can specify (or later add) any set of gear ratios you fancy. Two first-gear layshafts are available and over them you can slip whatever combination of about 12 ratios for second, third and fourth that suits your purposes.

Shifting the latest (Type 741) gearbox is a crunchless joy; you can't beat the synchro action and the feel is that of a greased, precision-made knife-switch.

The brakes are as good as ever; they don't even

squeal on a cold, humid morning (new linings?). Under normal driving conditions, fade is out of the question; nor could we detect any tendency to judder or any increase in the moderate pedal pressure. All well and good, but not good enough for the factory—the '64s will have Dunlop disc brakes (with the calipers gripping from the outside, unlike the inside-out set-up on the Carrera 2). The handbrake is *still* under the dash.

Of course Porsches are no longer built by hand; the kindly-faced Old World mechanic is no longer responsible for each engine bearing his personal stamp. In fact, Porsche's production facilities are among the most "rationalized", modern and integrated in Europe. This has had a slightly detrimental effect, mainly on bodywork, which was hitherto done by outside firms. Porsche's recent acquisition of the Reutter body factory should mean tighter control over quality. Not that quality was ever below a high average; Porsche's cleanly executed design, excellence of engineering and flawless workmanship have always been the largest single factor in attracting customers in the first place and then keeping them in the Porsche fold.

Many so-called Grand Touring cars are a wow to drive when they're running right and hell to own when they're not. Their laconic construction soon makes them an annoyance; a source of worry and fatigue. A Porsche's excitement is as much intellectual as visceral; the pride and pleasure of ownership comes not only from its characteristic comfort, controllability and roadability, but also its freedom from temperament. Simply: the absence of pain. Its dependability can be taken as much for granted as that of a Chevy station wagon—you can toss in a girl and some luggage and shove off, never having any trepidation about the romance of the car, the road, the girl, being punctured by mechanical disaster. It's that kind of car.

C/D

ENGINE:

Air-cooled horizontally-opposed four, 4 main bearings.
 Bore x stroke 3.25 x 2.92 in, 82.5 x 74 mm
 Displacement 96.5 cu in, 1582 cc
 Compression ratio 8.5 to one
 Carburetion Two Zenith NDIX double-throat downdraft
 Valve gear Pushrod-operated inclined overhead valves
 Power (DIN) 88 bhp @ 5000 rpm
 Torque 86 lb-ft @ 3700 rpm
 Specific power output 0.91 bhp per cu in, 47.4 bhp per liter
 Usable range of engine speeds 800-5500 rpm
 Electrical system 6-Volt, 84-Amp-Hr battery, 200W generator
 Fuel recommended Premium
 Mileage 26-32 mpg
 Range on 12.5-gallon tank 325-400 miles

CHASSIS:

Unit-construction all-steel structure integral with platform-frame
 Wheelbase 82.7 in
 Track F 51 in, R 50.0 in
 Length 158 in Width 65.5 in Height 52.5 in
 Ground clearance 5.9 in
 Curb weight 2,060 lbs
 Test weight 2,315 lbs
 Weight distribution front rear 43/57
 Pounds per bhp (test weight) 3.24
 Suspension: F: Ind., trailing arms and transverse laminated torsion bars, anti-roll bar
 R: swing axles, trailing arms, transverse round-section torsion bars
 Brakes Ate 11-in drums front and rear
 Steering: ZF worm and peg, hydraulic damper
 Turns, lock to lock 2.5
 Turning circle 34 ft
 Tires 5.60 x 15

DRIVE TRAIN:

Clutch Häussermann 7.1-in single dry plate
 Transmission Four-speed all-synchro gearbox

		Mph	
		Over-all 1000 rpm	Max
Rev	3.56	15.77	-4.9
1st (B)	3.09	13.69	5.4
2nd (B)	1.76	7.81	9.4
3rd (B)	1.13	5.01	14.6
4th (D)	.85	3.61	20.3
Final drive ratio			4.43 to one

