



July 2009



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Porsche Road Force Tire Balance Special



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CONTENTS

- Premium Luxury Pre-Owned Specials
- Vehicle Spotlight
- Vehicle Spotlight
- Central Market Recipe of the Month
- Porsche New Car Sales Specials
- 2010 Porsche Panamera Arriving October 17
- Four Season's Tip of the Month
- Get Hooked on Water Exercise

Porsche Revs Up a New Cayman for 2009

Here's one sportscar that has earned its name.

You might think that a car's name should tell you something about its character. By that logic, a sportscar named for a cousin of the crocodile had better have some real teeth out on the road. So, how hard does the new, second-generation Porsche Cayman bite?

Without naming names, it's easy to recall bird-themed cars from the past that were too slow or awkward to fly, and some named for cats that were about as agile as elephants – not to mention cars named for races, but that never placed a wheel on a track. There's no doubt, though, that Porsche knew what it was doing when it named its mid-engine Cayman. For 2009, this reptilian road warrior has even sharper fangs.

The Cayman coupe is a youngster in the Porsche family, launched for 2006 and sharing much with the Boxster roadster. A makeover for 2009 is more than skin-deep and was enough of a change that Porsche calls it a second-generation model.

The Cayman body is updated with new front styling including larger air intakes and new "two-tube" headlights inspired by the brand's now-discontinued mid-engine Carrera GT supercar. Rear styling is refreshed with new LED taillights. Inside, the available Porsche Communication Management multifunction touchscreen system has a larger screen, fewer buttons and new iPod connectivity. A 10-speaker BOSE audio system is available.

Chassis tweaks include retuned suspension and steering and wider wheels for even sharper responses than before – as if the competition needed to hear that! Both the Cayman (MSRP \$50,300) and Cayman S (MSRP \$60,200) can be ordered with Porsche Active Suspension Management (PASM), an electronically controlled damper system.

Both the Cayman and even feistier Cayman S sport brand new six-cylinder engines for 2009. These new power units, which share design and technology with the 911 Carrera engines, are stronger in both the structural sense and in the power sense.



The Cayman engine is now a 2.9-liter with 265 hp (up from the 245 hp 2.7) and the Cayman S sees a growth spurt from 3.2 liters to 3.4 along with new direct fuel injection. The S now slithers down the road with 320 hp versus 295 before.

A little more power is always fun. An all-new transmission that brings real racing

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technology to the road is even more fun. In the 2009 Cayman models, the previous Tiptronic S automatic transmission, which offered manual control, is replaced by the all-new seven-speed PDK transmission. That’s English shorthand for “Porsche Doppel-Kupplungsgetriebe.” PDK is a lot easier to say.

Nobody transfers racing technology to the road like Porsche does. The PDK is a new generation automated manual transmission, a technology Porsche first used in the 956 racecar in 1981. Modern electronics now make it possible to use it in a road car.

The PDK is a dual-clutch manual transmission, but without the clutch pedal. Electronics and hydraulics take care of that for you. You can either shift gears manually using steering wheel controls or choose fully automatic mode.

Just as in racecars, the PDK produces lightning-quick shifts in the Cayman with no interruption in engine power as happens when you lift on the throttle to shift in a conventional manual transmission.

Regardless of the transmission you choose, the Cayman is one quick little creature, doing the zero-to-60 run in just 5.5 seconds for the Cayman and 4.9 for the Cayman S. Subtract that tenth for the PDK, and then another two-tenths if you use the “Launch Control” button that comes with the optional Sports Chrono Plus Package.

The PDK transmission also helps boost fuel economy. Both the Cayman and Cayman S achieve an impressive EPA-rated 29 mpg on the highway with the PDK, compared to 26 mpg and 25 mpg in the 2008 models with the Tiptronic S transmission.

The Porsche Cayman did not get to join its Boxster sibling on *Car & Driver* magazine’s annual Top 10 List three times in a row just for its acceleration. In the December 2008 edition, the editors said, “This is the essence of the car-and-driver connection and few sportscars do it better.”

That was before they had a chance to drive the latest Cayman models with their new engines, retuned suspensions and steering and the amazing PDK transmissions. Want to bet the Cayman makes the list again?

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