

Porsche Sport Driving School

LuK Driving Center Baden-Baden

September 16, 2011



Dr. Ing. h.c. F. Porsche Aktiengesellschaft (Porsche's official name) schedules varied driving related "events" for its customers or anyone else that may be interested.

There are tours, normal and old timer, in Europe, the Americas, even Dubai, I hear.

Various levels of sport driving training programs on tarmac, ice and snow all the way up to the course leading to the official racing license allowing you to participate in [Porsche Carrera Cup](#)¹ or similar races are offered.

The basic and prerequisite class for more advanced courses is the "**Warmup Training**".

We took the 1 day option (there is also a 2 day version) for which they charge 790 Euros if you come with your own Porsche. One can also rent practically any recent model Porsche for a fee of about 5 to 6 hundred Euros depending on the type.

I booked us (Hooshmand L, Saeed E and myself) well in advance at the **Porsche Sport Driving School** near Baden Baden which, being close to Frankfurt and not that far from Villars, was the most convenient location for us.

September 15 - Villars to Baden Baden

Arriving from Tehran with the September 14th flight, Nini and I left Villars for Baden Baden the next day early in the morning so as to be at about 10 on time for a late breakfast with our friend Marianne G at her hotel the [Innere Enge](#)² in Bern.

Marianne and her hotel are a rare combination becoming each other perfectly: both are stylish, elegant and classy in the good sense of the word. At the same time they are simple and unassuming.

Each of the hotel's rooms is uniquely decorated with a famous jazz musician's theme and related artifacts, all in good taste and with refinement.

There is an internationally known Jazz Club In the cellar which is regularly visited by top jazz ensembles. During the summer season the concerts are held in a special tent in the hotel's garden.



Innere Enge

¹ This and similarly formatted text indicate hyperlink; clicking on it will take you to the corresponding website

² Liberally translated into "Inner Place"

Enge is also a quarter in Zurich dating back to the 14th century. It has been formally part of the city since 1893 (Wikipedia)

The hotel is in a park which gives the impression of being in the middle of the forest but is actually only 5 minutes from the city center. If you are in Bern I recommend a stay or at least a meal at the not fancy but excellent restaurant.

After a hearty breakfast for Nini and cups of coffee with honey for me, we bade goodbye to Marianne and continued towards [Baden Baden](#) where we arrived early in the afternoon. We just relaxed and went for some light sightseeing until the evening when I went to the railway station to pick up Hooshmand who had come to join us from nearby Strasbourg.

Baden Baden is a charming clean town in the Black Forest. It has a 19th century atmosphere. The area sprinkled with charming³ little inns⁴ is ideal for hiking, bicycling and horseback riding but also for car and motorcycle tours. Old timer, wine tasting and all sorts of outings are held in season in the Black Forest and surrounding area.

One of the best hotels of Europe, the [Brenner's Park](#), is in Baden Baden.

The small city is frequented mostly by rich german retirees. So even at 62 you still feel young...

comparatively!



park in Baden Baden

For the trip and of course the **Warmup Training**, I took my old but freshly serviced, in perfect condition AND... I may add still beautiful 1985 Carrera 3.2 Coupé. Some say this was the last year 911s were still built by hand; doesn't make them better but adds "*un je ne sais quoi*"!

We hadn't had a chance to be on the german autobahns together for some time. So we both very much enjoyed going all the way up to 250 km/h for a few short stunts - Nini enjoyed it less but was not that upset since I took care of working up the speed, as much as possible, progressively.

September 16 - At the track

I wasn't sure it would be wise to put her ladyship under high stress in the event but the people at the "[Porsche School](#)" told me it was ok for the basic "[Warmup Training](#)". Still I ended up putting her through maybe undue strain: braking full force at up to 120 km/h, sliding on the skidpad and especially following the lead car at race conditions on the track.

Labeled # 301 for the occasion, she went through it all without frowning even though she was by far the eldest participant - No! I was not the oldest student - there were a few with even higher mileage - but they compensated with their cars which were teenagers compared to mine.



the skidpad

³ *Gemütlich*, the Germans say

⁴ Again, I prefer the German word "*Gasthaus*" which describes the place and the atmosphere in one word

The course started at about 8 in the morning⁵ with the presentation of the staff, a short instructional movie, the dividing of the students into groups of max. 8, assigning cars and coffee, pastries, etc... it was followed by a basic class in which the instructors thought us the most elementary things about driving that we all thought we knew but either didn't know at all or at least not perfectly.

An hour or so later we were on the track with practical sessions consisting mainly of full braking sessions at ever increasing speeds while controlling the car at the same time.

The afternoon was devoted to:

- practicing racing conditions, each of us following - we were 4 trainees in our group - our instructor behind the wheel of a GT3 for 2 laps and then moving to the end of the queue. Contrary to what one might expect a very strenuous exercise resulting in a full sweat after just a few minutes
- controlled 4 wheel drifts on the skidpad - few could master it.



the circuit with the skidpad visible on the left side

The last phase and pinnacle of the day was the 2 laps we took individually in the passenger seat, also known as the death seat, with a racing driver in a GT2. He went so fast that I never thought it would be possible to stay on the course. At each turn I was waiting for a roll out or some other mishap to happen. He admitted that some students closed their eyes during this "joyride"!

We all think we are good drivers - the difference was akin to the contrast between walking and a 10 seconds 100 meter dash - beyond what you can imagine. The best description would be to compare it to a car racing computer game at full speed...

The event was not perfect, at least not to Porsche standards, I thought. The criticism I have is that it was not as upmarket or elegant as one would expect from Porsche:

- the self service lunch was "average" certainly not refined as Germans are very capable of preparing nowadays.
- A glass of Champagne or at least Sekt would have been proper at the closing ceremony when the "Diplomas" were given.
- We were about 50 students; they gave only 3 prizes and even those were nothing even remotely special. I admit that I was personally disappointed since I thought my Carrera being a good 20 years older than the other cars, she deserved a special prize.
- Worst was our group's instructor - ok otherwise - who was smoking at every occasion; it was in open air, still I found constantly dragging on a cigarette to be at least inelegant.

All things considered it was a pleasant and instructive day; perfect weather too.

In the evening I took Hooshmand back to the train station. Nini and I drove to Frankfurt to spend the weekend with family and friends ...

Thank you

Masoud G for proofreading

The Porsche Sport Driving School for the photo of the "old lady"

Google for the photos of the Innere Enge, the carriage in Baden Baden and the track

J-M Houtcief