



(<http://www.9tro.com/>)

## SpeedArt SP81-R - Green Beret

Fighting talk from SpeedArt's take on the new Boxster



by Team 9tro ([profile?u=0000000000](#)),  
Fri 19 Apr 2013, 02:45 PM

Taking the concept of Porsche's mid-engined roadster and re-imagining it for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, Porsche design chief, Michael Mauer and his team turned the third generation Boxster into a veritable work of art.

From its sleek snout to the integrated rear spoiler that appears to grow out of its taillights, the new Boxster out-distances all its rivals with the purity and sheer elegance of its design. More than that, its chassis is best in class by a country mile, and its flat-six motor the most charismatic too.

While you could argue that the Boxster lacks the torque of its heavier hitting Carrera big brother, this is simply a function of its position on the Porsche family tree. The fact is that if you are looking for a blank canvas for aftermarket tuning, you will be hard pushed to find a better candidate.

SpeedArt are not known for being shrinking violets when it comes to choosing the colour of their demonstration cars, and the metallic green shade that SpeedArt boss, Bjorn Striening, picked for his Boxster SP81-R is definitely one of those love it or hate it hues. But whichever way the wind blows for you on this, you have to admit that it is an eye catcher.

Look beyond the colour and you immediately pick up on the cars newfound ground-hugging stance. Sitting 30mm lower on its sports suspension, its wheel arches are filled to the brim with massive wheels and tyres.



The matt black spokes of SpeedArt's trademark lightweight LSC-Forged alloys overlap their polished outer rim, making them appear even larger than their 21-inch diameter. They are 9.0J and 11.0J x 21-inch, shod with 245/30ZR21 and 305/25ZR21 Michelin Pilot Sport tyres that look like a band of black rubber poured around the huge wheels.

SpeedArt offer 25mm lower H&R sport springs as well as a fully adjustable track-biased suspension kit. The latter allows you to lower the ride height by up to 40mm from stock, as well as set bounce and rebound control independently. An additional option is a front Airlift kit that raises the nose at the touch of a button to provide more ground clearance for ramps and speed bumps.



The aerodynamic additions are simple but striking. They begin with a front chin spoiler that attaches to the lower part of the front valance. Its design is a bit more radical than we are used to seeing from SpeedArt, with a distinct 'step' that is neatly highlighted by the carbon-fibre detail strip on its horizontal surface.

Unlike its predecessor, the new Boxster has identical air intakes on both its flanks that ingest ram air for the engine bay. They are also more effective as a design feature, and part of a modelling line that runs forward into the doors, giving the car a more purposeful and three-dimensional look.

SpeedArt capitalise on this, turning these intakes into an even stronger design feature using carbon-fibre trim on the intakes and further reinforcing the theme by carrying the lower lead line forwards along the sill tops to the front wheel arches.



Carbon-fibre is also used for the rear valance insert, visually reducing the apparent height of the rear, and providing clear separation from the underbody diffuser. With their boundary layer fences, the two halves of the diffuser help to clean up separating air that would otherwise create drag, while flanking a pair of 98mm diameter stainless steel exhaust outlets that look like the barrels of a very big gun.

So far so good. The one part of the aero kit on which the jury is still out is the rear wing. Some love it, while others say it is too 'Fast and Furious'. Just know that it is optional!



SpeedArt show cars usually have contrasting or colour-coded interiors. The SP81-R, as SpeedArt have dubbed this car, goes down the latter route, with green fabric inserts on the seats and central armrest, green leather on the door grab handles, and matching Alcantara on their thick-rimmed, flat bottomed steering wheel. A fine detail is the colour-coded green stitching on the black leather of the seats, gearknob and steering wheel airbag.

It has become very difficult in recent years to eke out extra power from naturally aspirated production Porsche motors. The factory

tolerances are now so good, the standard exhaust so efficient, that you will spend a lot of money just to gain 15 or 20hp.

Also, due to the intake airflow path to the engines of the mid and rear-engine Boxster and 911, the dyno numbers that Porsche submit for the official specifications are conservative. Take the car on the autobahn, and the ram air effect at high speed will deliver a few more real world horses.

Ultimately, an internal combustion engine is a big pump for burning air and fuel. Thus, the more air and fuel you can burn, the more power you will get at the other end.

With this in mind, SpeedArt have announced power kits for the Boxster and Boxster S, which consist of a free-flowing sports exhaust with equal length headers, 200-cell sports catalytic converters and larger diameter exhaust pipes. This Stage 1 power kit provides an extra 20hp and 20Nm of torque and has the option of a sound switch that lets you tiptoe through town and then go to full noise when you reach the open road.

Stage 2 includes a re-mapped ECU to make full use of the sports exhaust's reduced backpressure. This delivers a claimed 35hp and 30Nm of torque over the S model's output of 315hp at 6,700rpm and 360Nm of torque from 4,500 to 5,800rpm. The resulting 350hp and 390Nm certainly sounds more potent.

The really power hungry will be happy to know that SpeedArt's engineers are working on a bolt-on, low-pressure turbocharger conversion. Designed to provide an extra 80hp with a similar boost to torque, this will deliver enough performance to really test the uprated chassis. For now, the Stage 2 kit on the green car provides a satisfying upgrade.



As I drove through the town where SpeedArt are headquartered, it was clear that the stiffer ride, sharper steering responses and deeper exhaust note have mutated the cars character. While still perfectly tractable round town, it has become a more obviously aggressive driving tool, and you get the distinct impression that it is always hunting for an open road on which to run.

As Rutesheim is a small town, that road appears within minutes and I can start to open the taps more and more as the engine oil warms through. A couple of kilometres later and I am really on it.

The freer breathing motor zings round to its redline with more alacrity, and with the roof down, the free-flow exhaust sounds marvellous as it echoes across open country. It underpins the natural resonance of the flat-six motor, giving it a deeper, more mellifluous soundtrack, and if you can find a tunnel to accelerate through, you will be in hog heaven.

Switching the bypass valve over however, I find the decibel count ramped up to a level I am not personally comfortable with. It might be fine for Dubai or Texas, but is a bit much for conservative European tastes.

Actually, this is not uniquely a SpeedArt issue as the standard factory sport valve exhaust system has the same issues, spitting, popping and crackling loudly on the over-run with similar attention attracting verve.



The SP81-R feels really planted, turning into bends like a scalpel with a roll angle perceptibly lower than the standard cars. The fat, low profile rubber provide seemingly supernatural level of grip, and they make the steering feel heavier. That said, the smaller, chunkier SpeedArt sports steering wheel is likely an equal partner in this latter trait.

As a show car, the green SP81-R has all SpeedArt's available parts fitted to show a prospective customer what is possible. Bjorn showed me a white Boxster in the workshop with the front spoiler lip, rear valance, exhaust, springs and 20-inch wheels. "It is entirely down to the individual," he said, "And that includes the colour!"

Text by: Dr. Ian Kuah  
Photos by: Dr. Ian Kuah

---

## Gallery

---

