



March SUV Drive: Hillsboro to Astoria

Lined up at Vernonia Lake.

BY TIM ASHCROFT | PHOTOS BY ANDREAS STRAUB AND JEANNINE DOWNEY

We had a full sign-up for this March drive with 19 participants and 11 cars, comprised of eight Macans, a pair of Cayennes, and a 911. The Macans in particular presented us with the wonderful color palette that is available in the Porsche line-up. We met at a large Fred Meyer parking lot in Hillsboro to top up with coffee and make a last-minute bathroom stop, followed

Mandy Chao and Tim Ashcroft. Tim organized the drive and wrote this article for us! Thanks Tim!



by introductions. We had two new members; welcome to Derek Hiser and his fiancé Jennifer Botts. The Tour director then led a safety meeting and discussed the planned drive, which had very few turn instructions, so that navigators could also enjoy the views. If you have never driven this route, then you simply must, and for those who

have, I think you will all agree that no matter how many times you go, it is still a wonderful drive.

The first section from Imbrie Drive and then down twisty Cornelius Pass Road often carries a lot of traffic, but it was not too bad on this morning. The road still curves through beautiful forest and then heads down to the Willamette River and towards St. Helens. Here the road opened up and it was marvelous to see all the cars behind me in a row with many onlookers gaping at all the Porsches.

When we turned onto the Scappoose-Vernonia Highway, the drive really began. The road adjoins sections of wide open fields and climbs upwards through the forest with some great curvy sections to enjoy. The sun truly showed itself with beautiful blue skies, but the forest roads sometimes shaded the cars as we wound our way higher, adding to that Spring-like feeling. This is a fairly long section so it was easy to follow the train of Porsches for about

Enjoy the photos. There are more on SmugMug: <https://orpcapix.smugmug.com/2024-ORPCS-EVENTS/March-SUV-Drive-03302024>

Great lunch at Bridgewater Bistro!



20 miles with but one turn instruction and then we all regrouped at the Vernonia Lake City Park. The lake was beautifully clear, and we all got to stretch our legs and use the real flushing toilets! Many of us brought along four-legged furry friends who got to stretch their legs. Lots of smiling, happy human faces enjoying the great roads, and then admiration from all on the tour for all the cars, along with positive looks from local onlookers out for the Easter break.

The second section repeated the first four miles back from Vernonia toward Astoria and then onto the 202. This again was a long section with no turn instructions for navigators to have to read, with 35 miles of scenery to soak up and enjoy. There were

many such sections, broken up with multiple twisties as we wound higher. Traffic was fairly light and the vistas included natural views along with forested sections showing hundreds of freshly cut trees. On the downward side, there was a lot more wildlife. We did not see elk this time, but horses, lamas, sheep, goats, and some cattle. To mix up the route, we took a loop from the main road and saw Texas Long Horn cattle and many other bovines as we wound around a small lake. Climbing a hill, we encountered two deer as they paused, looked at us, and then crossed the road and sprung over the fence. We got closer to Astoria and the sun continued to warm us, even at the coast, and traffic began to pick up as we joined Highway 101. Then it was only a short drive to the picturesque Bridgewater Bistro for a sumptuous lunch and regaling stories of the drive with our newfound driving buddies.

NOTE: Thanks to Jeff Gasparitsch for coming up with the drive route and lunch location. Thanks to Jim Goetsch for his help in leading the tour and a big shout out to Valen McNish and his girlfriend Brenda Belden who went above and beyond to help fellow tour participants! ■

Jim Goetsch and Valerie Menely enjoying the beautiful weather!

