

Return to Zuffenhausen

Porsche returned to the Zuffenhausen district of Stuttgart in 1950, continuously expanding its headquarters there over the following years.

In 1944, the Second World War compelled Porsche K.G. to relocate its administration unit, design team and parts of its production department. These activities were moved from the company headquarters in the Zuffenhausen district of Stuttgart to the town of Gmünd in the Austrian state of Carinthia. Allied air raids subsequently reduced large swathes of Stuttgart and its highly industrialised suburbs to rubble. From 1947 onwards, Gmünd played host to the development of the Porsche 356 under the direction of Ferdinand 'Ferry' Porsche. When it came to embarking on series production, however, there were many strong reasons for a return to Stuttgart. As the site of the engineering office founded in 1931, the city was a known quantity in which the company had established its roots – and both the production conditions and delivery situation there were positive. Nevertheless, the buildings belonging to Porsche Plant 1 were under Allied control and being used by American forces.

The company ultimately took its first step back in the direction of Stuttgart by establishing an office in the family villa in September 1949. In the November of that year, Porsche rented a hall in Zuffenhausen from neighbouring Stuttgart firm Karosseriewerk Reutter. This facility subsequently hosted the production of Porsche engines for the bodies manufactured in Reutter Plant 1 in west Stuttgart. These were delivered on a daily basis to Zuffenhausen, which was also where the cars were completed. The first German-made Porsche left the production halls on 6 April 1950, with nearly 300 further units of the 356 being completed in Stuttgart and Zuffenhausen by the end of the year. As production grew continuously, so too did Porsche as a company: the 500th Porsche 356 left the Zuffenhausen plant on 21 March 1951, with Porsche purchasing buildings from Reutter in the same year. 1952 subsequently saw the construction of a new building that was to become Porsche Plant 2, based on a design by Stuttgart-based architect Rolf Gutbrod.

Plant 1 was officially reopened on 1 December 1955. While production, purchasing and the spare parts supply remained in the 'Gutbrod building', the design department, the commercial staff, the repair department for company and customer cars, and the testing and development department for racing cars moved to Plant 1. Body production also moved from the west of Stuttgart to Zuffenhausen, where Reutter and Porsche worked side by side to produce the majority of the 78,000 or so Porsche 356 units that were completed.