

Porsche production in the 1950s: Plant 2 provides additional capacity

The production of the Porsche 356 started hotting up in the early 1950s, with the new Plant 2 enabling larger production volumes.

With order books filling up and production booming, all the signs pointed towards expansion at Porsche's Zuffenhausen base in the early 1950s. However, space was at a premium and Plant 1 remained under the control of the Allies. The hall rented from neighbouring firm Karosseriewerk Reutter was no longer able to meet demand, especially in light of the ever-increasing sales in the USA.

Porsche responded in 1951, commissioning renowned Stuttgart architect Rolf Gutbrod to design a new production hall. Gutbrod had already made a name for himself, not only as a designer of residential buildings but also in the construction of industrial properties. Although he and his colleague Adolf Abel would go on to design the new Liederhalle concert hall in the centre of Stuttgart in the mid-1950s, his focus at this point was on generating capacity for the production of the Porsche 356. Established opposite Plant 1 on Schwieberdinger Strasse in 1952, Plant 2 was named the 'Gutbrod building' in honour of its architect. A building with a clear structure, Plant 2's towering slanted roofs featured glass facades to help flood the assembly stations with a great deal of natural light.

The 10,000th Porsche 356 left the Gutbrod building in 1956 – and number 25,000 followed a mere four years later. Plant 2 naturally also hosted the assembly of the new 911. However, it became clear in the 1960s that even the Gutbrod building was becoming a little cramped. The multistorey Building 41 was added to Plant 2 in 1970, featuring a production area of 15,000 square metres that would go on to accommodate the assembly of all seven generations of the 911. Boasting a length of 100 metres and a width of 30 metres, building 41A was subsequently completed in 1979 to meet the increasing level of demand. This latter addition also contained the social wing, encompassing around 4,000 square metres and including a canteen, washing facilities, changing facilities and break rooms for Porsche employees.

Over the decades, Plant 2 was almost always the site for the collection of new cars from the factory. In later years, this was also combined with a tour of the plant and lunch. As of 2018, the collection of new cars has been relocated to Plant 1. Porsche is currently undertaking further building work on the site of Plant 2 as part of its preparations for Mission E, the first fully electric four-seater sports car in its history.