



British car production has hit a six-year high with 1.5million cars produced in 2013 and the growth is expected to continue to 2017

Try d-icing with death in Sweden

ICE DRIVING ATTRACTS PETROL-HEADS AND FIRST-TIMERS ALIKE AND IS AS MUCH FUN AS YOU CAN HAVE ON FOUR WHEELS, SAYS ADAM HAY-NICHOLLS

I'M feasting on reindeer stew in a room full of stuffed prey lit only by an oil lamp. The hunting lodge in which I'm sitting is in northern Sweden, and it's -17C outside. A raging log fire and several layers of thermals protect me from the cold; that and the inevitable adrenalin rush from the winter games I'm here to experience.

Below Zero Ice Driving is run by rally specialists Tuthill Porsche and each winter offers ice-driving experiences on Lake Kall overseen by experienced racers using 1970s and 1980s-era cars. It attracts petrolheads and first-timers alike, at a cost of £1,750 per person per day. Owner Richard Tuthill gets a lot of father and son clients.

Between my wheels and the lake's freezing depths is 40cm of ice and a coating of snow. With more than 280bhp, these competition-spec rear wheel-drive Porsches are a handful but after a morning's instruction from 2003 Production World Rally champion Martin Rowe, I learn how to drift between the snowbanks fully in control of the car's power and traction.

Having never driven on ice before, though, I was keen to

start slowly. The 911 is notoriously tail-happy due to having its engine at the back. My lesson starts on a slalom course with small 3mm button-studded tyres, which teaches you the sensation of low-grip at slow speed and the pendulum-rhythm of drifting. Weaving between flags, I learn that by pressing the accelerator as I turn, the back end comes around, which you counter by turning the wheel into the

even if the cars are worth more than £80,000 each.

A 7km racetrack winds around the lake; a mix of short straights, wiggles, kinks, sweepers and horseshoes that will leave you exhausted. Inside the cockpit, it's like a washing machine as you're thrown from side to side, albeit strapped in with a harness.

Upgrading to 7mm titanium-studded WRC-grade tyres is a revelation. Suddenly your confidence – and speed – grows. Sections of the course are taken at up to 100mph. For the most part you remain in second gear, turning into each corner with your foot off the throttle to let the front wheels bite, or else you'll plough straight on. Then, once the car is steering where you want it, apply the throttle and drift. The sensation is like a violent, noisy sub-zero ballet.

The sun in Sweden sets at 3.30pm but before then I am let loose alone in the car.

Tuthill then takes me out on one of the six special stages that skim the perimeter of the lake, hitting the absolute limit as we fly over bumps and handbrake turn round hairpins. It's a fleeting glance into the skill and danger of rallying and shows where one's first experience of ice driving can take you. I am officially hooked.

www.belowzeroicedriving.com



Safety: Drivers are strapped in with harnesses

slide. With no power steering, it's a frantic experience of flailing hands and the feathering of the gas but that's how you keep it pointing forwards.

The key is to be relaxed and you won't be if you're constantly told off. The instructors recognise this; there's no long list of rules or lectures before you start and the inevitable spins and snowy shunts are laughed off –



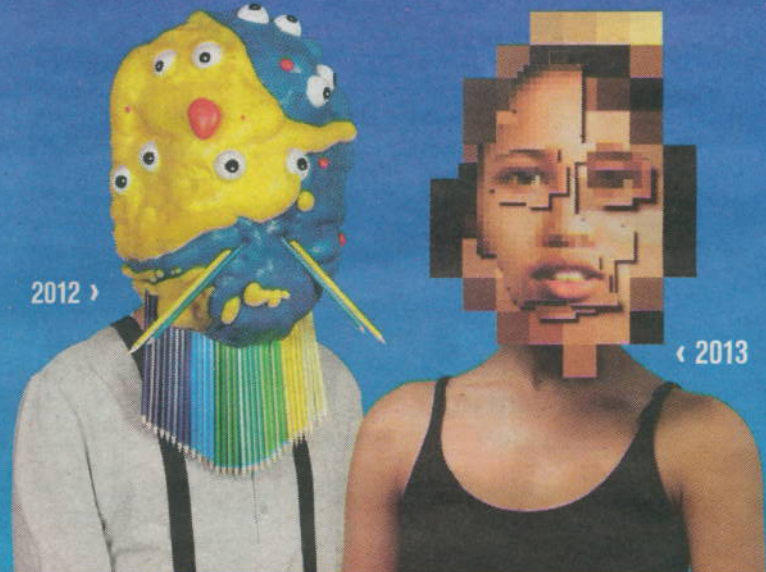
Vintage fun: Enthusiasts get to drive Porsches from the 1970s and 1980s

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ICE DRIVING TIPS

Fit winter tyres, which are designed to work below 7C and dramatically improve traction, cornering and braking.

Drive as smoothly as possible. Accelerate gently. Pump the brakes lightly to avoid locking the wheels.

Think ahead, slow down and leave three-times as much distance to the car ahead as you would in the dry.



Look for colours on the road ahead: shiny black is probably ice. If you're braking on a snowy road, aim for the fluffy snow as opposed to polished snow or black surfaces. Slush can cause aquaplaning.

If your car begins to slide, steer into it. If the rear skids to the left, steer to the left. Look at the direction you want to go, rather than where you're actually going.

