Your 996 Buyer Report

2002 Porsche 911 Carrera, 6-speed manual, Seal Grey

Sample report. Written 25 October 2026 from public listing information only. I haven't seen this car in person.

Listing: PA Euros, Downingtown, Pennsylvania · VIN WP0AA29982S623615 · Asking $50,498

Your video note from Joe: every paid report comes with a short video of me walking through the listing photos and telling you what I'd do. (Not included in this free sample.)

My take

I like this car, but I wouldn't pay $50,498 for it, and I wouldn't book an inspection yet.

On paper it's the 996 most people want: the facelifted 996.2 with the 3.6 engine, a manual gearbox, 41,896 reported miles, and a plain, original-looking spec. The problem is the price. The two closest sales I could find this month were **$40,000** and **$41,250**. The dealer is asking about $9,000 more than that, and the ad doesn't say a word about the IMS bearing or show any service records.

So my advice is to email the seller first (I've written the message for you below). If they can show records and come down toward the market, the car is worth a $500 to $800 inspection. If they won't move or won't share records, walk away and look at the alternatives I've listed.

What I'd pay: my starting point would be the low-to-mid $40,000s, depending on what the records show. I'd go higher only with strong history: an IMS retrofit with an invoice, a healthy clutch and a dry engine.

What it's really worth

Here's what similar cars (996.2 Carrera coupe, manual) did this autumn, from the CLASSIC.COM market page:

When	Car	What happened
22 Oct 2026	2002 Carrera	Sold for $40,000
17 Oct 2026	2002 Carrera	Sold for $41,250
15 Oct 2026	2003 Carrera	Sold for $33,000
15 Oct 2026	2004 Carrera	Didn't sell at $49,777

30 Sep 2026	2003 Carrera	Sold for $27,246

Worth mentioning when you negotiate: a 2004 failed to sell at $49,777 last week. That doesn't prove the car was worth less, since auction reserves vary, but it shows nearly $50,000 isn't an easy number to hit.

To be fair to the seller, low miles are worth something, and a car with a documented IMS retrofit and full history can sit at the top of the range. But nothing in the ad explains a $9,000 premium. This is a small set of sales, and not all of them show mileage, condition, options or buyer's fees. Treat my number as a starting point for negotiation, not an appraisal.

Message to send the seller

Copy this, change the name, and send it before you book anything.

> Hi, I'm interested in the 2002 Carrera, VIN ending 623615. Before I arrange an inspection, could you help with a few things?
>
> 1. Has the IMS bearing been replaced or upgraded? If so, which kit and when, and do you have the invoice?
>
> 2. When was the clutch last done, and was the rear main seal replaced at the same time?
>
> 3. Could you send the service records and tell me how many owners it's had?
>
> 4. Is the title clean with no lien, and has it had any paint or accident repair?
>
> 5. Would you allow an independent pre-purchase inspection, including a bore scope and an over-rev report?
>
> I'll be honest about price too. The two most recent comparable sales I can find are $40,000 and $41,250, and a 2004 didn't sell at $49,777 last week. If the records are good, I'd be in the low $40,000s, subject to inspection. Happy to talk.

If they come back with good records, book the inspection. If they won't share records or allow an inspection, I'd move on.

Where to get it inspected

The car is in Downingtown, Pennsylvania. These are independent shops in the area that work on Porsches. Call ahead, confirm they'll do a 996 pre-purchase inspection, and ask what it costs and what's included.

Shop	Where	Phone	Why I'd call them

Performance Automotive	Malvern, PA (about 12 miles away)	610-695-9545	Advertises a pre-purchase inspection for sports cars; owner reviews mention Porsche experience
Leading Edge Autosport	West Chester, PA (about 8 miles away)	610-431-8459	Porsche repair shop that lists PPIs
The Porsche Specialist	Broomall, PA (about 20 miles away)	610-544-9967	Long-running Porsche independent serving the Philadelphia area

Distances are rough driving estimates. I haven't used these shops myself, so check reviews and ask how many 996s they inspect.

What to ask the shop to do (send them this list):

- A bore scope of all six cylinders, with extra attention on cylinders 4 to 6. That's where bore scoring usually shows up on these engines. Ask how they scope and to grade anything they find.
- An over-rev report. A 996 records two ranges. Range 1 logs ignitions just over the normal rev limit, and some counts are common. Range 2 is higher and often points to a mechanical over-rev, like a missed downshift. It doesn't prove damage on its own, so ask for the counts and the engine hours when they happened.
- Cut open the oil filter and tell you what, if anything, they find.
- Check for leaks at the rear main seal and the IMS cover.
- A cold start, listening for rattles and checking for smoke.
- Pressure-test the cooling system and look at the front radiators.
- Check clutch engagement and the flywheel.
- Read the stored and pending fault codes.

Budget roughly $500 to $800. A full six-cylinder bore scope sometimes costs extra, so confirm before you book.

Send me the inspection results

This part is included in your report. Once the shop finishes, send me their report, photos and the over-rev printout. Within 24 hours I'll reply with:

- What each finding means in plain English
- Which issues matter and which are normal for a car this age
- A rough cost for anything that needs fixing
- My final call: buy, renegotiate (and by how much), or walk away

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The risks on this car

This is a 2002, so if it still has its original engine, it left the factory with the **single-row IMS bearing**. That's the version 996 owners worry about most, and the IMS is the most-discussed topic on Rennlist's 996 forum. Ask whether the engine is original, and ask for an invoice if the bearing has been changed. That's the only way to know what's in it now.

The other things I'd keep in mind:

- **Bore scoring.** More common on the 3.6 than on earlier engines. If it's there, you're usually looking at an engine rebuild, often $20,000 or more.
- **Clutch.** Normal wear at this age. If there's no record, have the shop check engagement. Doing a clutch, rear main seal and IMS retrofit at the same time saves paying twice to remove the gearbox. Owners often report roughly $4,000 to $6,000 for the combined job.
- **Cooling parts.** This car is about 24 years old. The expansion tank, hoses and front radiators age even when a car sits. Budget a few hundred dollars for the small parts, more for radiators.
- **Air-oil separator and ignition coils.** Both commonly fail and are fairly cheap to fix. A brief puff of smoke at startup can be normal, so let the shop diagnose anything they see.

The cost figures are rough 2025–26 US independent-shop numbers from owner threads on Rennlist and r/996, plus LN Engineering's labour guide. Your quote will depend on where you are and what you have done at the same time.

If this one doesn't work out

These are other 996.2 Carrera manuals for sale right now. I'd look at them before overpaying for this one.

Car	Miles	Asking	Where	Why it's worth a look
2003 Carrera, Blue over Grey	27,518	$49,900	Portland, OR	Fewer miles than this car, slightly cheaper, and a less common colour. The best like-for-like alternative.
2004 Carrera	23,154	$50,995	Glenpool, OK	Lowest miles of the group and the final 996 model year, for about the same money.
2003 Carrera	53,029	$35,975	Evansville, IN	About $14,500 cheaper. If it checks out, that difference pays for an IMS and clutch job with plenty left over.

All three would need the same checks: records, IMS history and an independent inspection. If you want, send me any of them and I'll do the same report.

What this report is and isn't

This is my research on a public listing, to help you decide whether the car deserves an inspection and what to check. It isn't a mechanical inspection or an appraisal, and I haven't checked title, liens, accident history or authenticity. Run a vehicle history report for those, and always get an independent pre-purchase inspection before you buy. If I ever recommend a paid service I'm connected to, I'll tell you.

Sources: CLASSIC.COM listings and 996.2 Carrera coupe manual sales (accessed 25 October 2026); Rennlist and r/996 owner threads; LN Engineering on IMS labour and bore scoring; Cult Automotive and 911uk on 996 over-rev ranges; shop websites for contact details.

Joe Armstrong, Renn Driver