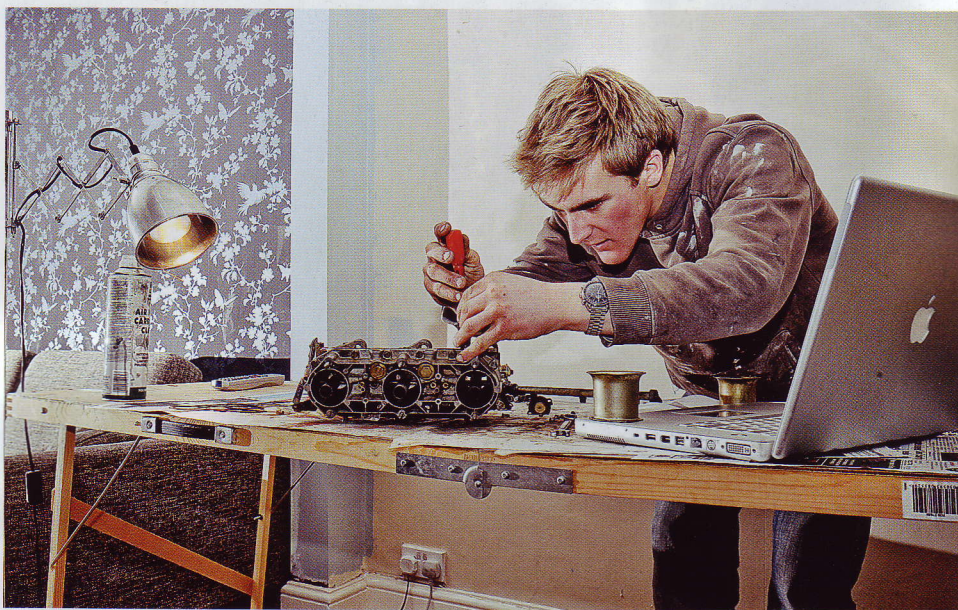


# LONG-TERM *fleet*



## 1972 911T

And there I was, crawling around the Champs Elysees in a Rolls Royce Phantom Drophead, Bentley Azure in tow. I was in Paris on perhaps the most ludicrously playboy job of my career – a mega-money twin test for *Autocar* magazine. And as we crawled through the evening traffic, high on the massive absurdity of the situation, one thought occupied my mind; 'Those... those are nice floor mats'.

They were sisal. Perfectly fitted, and in my mind one of the smartest touches in a car made entirely of unnecessarily smart touches. Suicide doors, brushed steel bonnet and a teak finished yacht-style rear deck are neat, but I really wanted some similar floor mats to replace the originals in my own car.

I wasn't about to steal the mats from the Roller – each was as large as the 911, and probably as expensive. Plus, Rolls Royce UK would probably have telephoned for a policeman on a bicycle to arrest me, whereupon I would have been sentenced to 50 days in the stocks by a judge wearing a monocle. And I'd like to think I was more progressive than that. So on returning home I got sleuthing on the Internet. It didn't take long to discern that really posh car mats are expensive, and that no one makes good sisal mats for a 911. I asked around on my favourite Porsche forum, DDK, and found some people had bought Coco Mats – made from coconut husk fibre, from a guy in South Carolina. Very period correct, as if it really mattered.

In the meantime, I bought a Momo Prototipo steering wheel to replace the beautifully-aged factory wheel which I had meticulously re-stitched only months before; the initial intent being to preserve the original, only to discover the Momo a far better tool for steering the car. Now for a

similar strategy on the original mats, which were looking less 'aged' and more like 'old tat'.

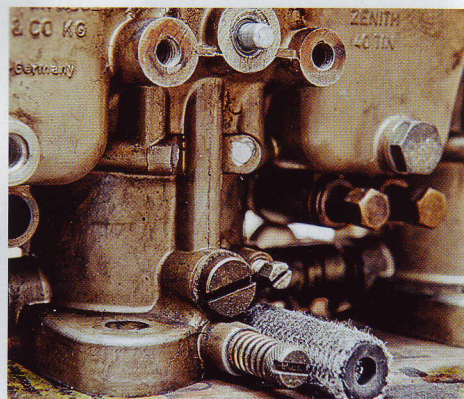
As interest in the mat endeavour escalated in cyberspace, I somehow managed to find myself at the helm of a DDK bulk-order consisting of 15 pairs of similar mats from the Coco mat company in the US. It coincided perfectly with my yearly Christmas-time trip over there, meaning I would be able to collect my mats (thus saving a packet on delivery charges), and the 14 other parties would have their order and payments randomly confused as my brain melted into holiday mode.

Jeff, the friendly Coco mat fabricator, had never done RHD 911s before, but he can make mats to fit any car provided you post him a template to work to, so that is what I did. In the meantime, I went snowboarding, bought some stuff from Pelican Parts and also took delivery of half a 912 engine in individually-wrapped bits, which was to be humped back into the UK for a fellow DDKer's rebuild project.

The mats arrived two days before the flight home, and made my day – beautifully constructed, thick, tough – definitely no good for a lightweight car, almost too good for my base-model 911T Lux, and easily as smart and well-fitting as the really nice mats in the Drophead Roller. So smitten was I, that on arriving back in the UK I immediately took the car for a drive, and was quickly reminded that, no matter how nice your mats or steering wheel, they will do nothing to stop your skanky carburetors from sounding like a redneck hunting party, chasing 1000 furious elk, across a meadow of bubblewrap.

It transpires that the problem lay in each carb's idle circuit – an arcane device which adds fuel to the mixture at tickover, thereby reducing CO2

The 911T has come out of winter hibernation but the 964 and 993 RSs have gone into hiding from the desert sands. The remaining trio of classic 911s on the fleet have all been fighting their own little battles this month too.



levels in order for the car to comply with some prehistoric emissions directive. I can't explain it, and evidently neither can many other people, as the tried-and-tested method for 'tuning' this grotty piece of obtrusive legislative compliance is to lob it in the bin and plug the feed holes as appropriate. I used some fuel pipe and two different varieties of fixings from Ikea furniture, which happened to be the perfect size for the job. Luckily for anyone that asks about this pikey procedure, I am unable to go into any more detail as I carried out the operation in my living room and became so intoxicated from solvent carb-cleaner fumes that I can't remember anything other than watching an elephant documentary and becoming so disorientated and belligerent that my girlfriend had to take me for a midnight walk around the block to calm me down. Unusually though, I did have the foresight to take some pictures, so here they are...

The Coco mats are available from [www.cocomats.com](http://www.cocomats.com) and are custom-made in a range of colours and patterns, now including sisal.

*James Lipman*

