Bmw Z4 Coupe or Porsche Cayman?

by Hiteshbhoi

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Among the compact sports cars, the BMW Z4, Porsche Cayman and Porsche Boxster stand out. But which is you? And why did BMW and Porsche wait so long before making the coupes? There is no Boxster coupe, but the Cayman is almost the same thing â€“ but uprated.

It might seem odd that the two German companies, well-known for high-performance and sporty cars, waited to announce their coupes at the same time. The answer lies in why they introduced the roadsters in the first place.

Porsche wanted a new, smaller model to increase its market coverage. Not everyone likes the 911, and not everyone wants a coupe. So it made sense to opt for the mid-engine layout - the 911 is rear-engined - and the better balance that gives in designing the Boxster. At the same time, the addition of an open-top roadster would also increase sales. And both tricks worked.

But what about BMW? Well, BMW wanted to build cars in the USA, and did not want to build the same cars it built in Germany as that would increase costs. So it decided to build a roadster for the US market, although it would be marketed elsewhere.

At that time there was more potential volume for a boulevard cruiser type of two-seater than an out-and-out sports car in the USA, so the BMW Z3 was born. It was a rather tall car for a sports car, and although a hardtop was offered, it looked odd, making the car look even taller than it was.

Z4 more sporty than Z3

The BMW Z3 did not really catch on in Europe, so the Z4 was designed as a more sporty car than the Z3, and with its 3-liter engine which develops 265 bhp, is a good match in performance for the Porsche Boxster. Meanwhile, Porsche decided to fill out its range with an extra model, to be priced between the Boxster and the 911. In fact, the Cayman is based on the Boxster, but has more sporty suspension, and has a larger engine. Now, though you can get a Cayman with a 2.7 liter engine as well as the 3.4 liter job. The Boxster gets 2.7 and 3.2 liters.

Because Porsche makes flat-six engines, it can easily produce engines of different capacities from 2.7 to 3.8 liters, and many parts are common to all of them.

If you are looking for a sporty car, then you will want to look at the Z4 3-liter, which produces 265 bhp, and reaches 60 mph in 5.5 seconds, a time matched by the Boxster 3.2. The Cayman is a fraction quicker, getting to 60 mph in 5.3 seconds. Mind, if you want maximum performance from these cars, you can get the BMW Z4 M, with over 300 bhp on tap.

Choosing between Z4 and Cayman

But when it comes to the choice between the Z4 and Cayman coupes,you will be influenced by which one looks better. Although the Z4 looks a lot better than the Z3 it does have a few quirky lines, which don't appeal to everyone, and the coupe is no better.

The Cayman has the usually slick Porsche lines, with a long tail and built-in spoiler which looks pretty good. On the road performance is not much different, and both have super engines and gearboxes, but they don't do things in quite the same way. The Cayman is a beautifully balanced car that can be driven fast with confidence, but if you want to hang the tail out, the Z4 might be more

to your liking.

Both are great sports cars, and will give you a lot of fun. What else should you consider? Nissan's 350Z is also quite a car, with a lusty V-6, the Mercedes-Benz 350 SLK 350 and new Audi TT are also worth looking at.

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