



# Open road

'There are a million books about cars, but none about driving, so why don't you write one?' challenged Peter Schindler's wife, Angie. The result, *On the Road: Driving Adventures, Pleasures and Discoveries*, looks set to become a classic



Nostalgic: Helmut Thoma

In my lifetime and careers as a racing car driver, IT and telecoms executive I have covered more than a million kilometres of roads and racetracks in Europe, Asia and the USA.

For my birthday a couple of years ago, my wife Angie gave me a book called *Pininfarina 1930-2000: Art and Industry*, confessing that she had looked everywhere, but simply couldn't find any books about driving itself, which is what inspires me.

This thought intrigued me, so I scoured the internet and bookshops. She was right. There were countless volumes on cars, racing, races and racers, historical facts and technical details and those extolling flared fenders and smoking wheels – but none about the sheer pleasure of driving. So I decided to write one myself. And what an adventure it's been...

Although I gave up racing aeons ago, I have never stopped loving driving, at any time of the day, in any season, on any kind of surface – hot or wet tarmac, gravel, and especially snow – and in any country. However, crossing borders has always posed a challenge for me as I was born in Austria, live in Hong Kong, my car is registered in Austria, my passport is Swiss, my driving licence is from the US and my marriage certificate says that my Malaysian-Chinese wife is Australian.

### Wheel pleasure

Being behind the wheel has always made me feel free and relaxed, and able to live life to the fullest. When I drive on an open road towards the horizon, I quickly forget my daily worries: the distance beckons me with the promise of something new, different and previously unexplored.

In my book I have chosen stunning images of magnificent roads, breathtaking landscapes and people at one with their cars to reflect my thoughts and feelings. *On the Road* is not



Nostalgic: Gert Pichler



Getty: Joe Cornish

about speed, anorak facts or machismo, but about freedom, adventure, camaraderie and romance. I hope it takes the reader on an unforgettable journey discovering (or re-discovering) how beautiful and refreshing driving, and life, can be.

Many years ago, *Autosport* magazine heralded my victory in the European Super-V Championship at Silverstone with the headline *A Star is Born!* Looking back at my decision to quit motor racing in 1982, I've often wondered what would have happened had I taken that star and made it rise.

Writing this book has been a real challenge for me, but one which has been endlessly fulfilling and enjoyable. I can only hope that reading it gives you as much pleasure as writing it has given me.

Here's what others say about my book:  
*'The freedom, desire and passion expressed in this book could turn even the most hardened cynic to a love of driving'* – **David Lewis, Commercial Director, Royal Automobile Club**  
*'There are still many opportunities on this crowded planet to enjoy the pleasure of driving for driving's sake, and this book memorably records how, when and where this can be achieved'* – **David Wakefield, Co-Founder of Caterham Cars**

*'This book, conceived and illustrated with a keen eye, celebrates the passion of cars and the pleasure of driving. The more I read it, the more it makes me want to get in my car, and leave behind a note 'Gone driving''* – **Robert Peugeot, Executive Vice-President, Peugeot Citroën**

*'A delightful book that cleverly matches the fun of driving with a personal account of life's journey in a witty and enjoyable read'* – **Alastair Florance, Group PR Manager, Lotus Cars**

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