Gentle Giant

Imagine growing up in a country of 150 million people with a GDP of $3.5 trillion yet manufactures just one automobile that virtually everyone in the country drives.

Sounds like something out of SciFi film, huh?

Not quite.

When Vadim Fedorovsky was growing up Soviet Russia in the 1970s, the communist nation manufactured just one automobile -- Volga.

Still does today.

"Most people *have never even heard* of Volga*,"* Fedorovsky says with a laugh.

For Americans, Germans and Brits – whose countries are the world's premier automakers – a nation like Russia producing just one vehicle is quite strange -- yet it is not a surprise when you consider…

"In Russia, if you need milk and you get to the store five minutes after it opens at 6 a.m., there won't be any milk left for your family," Fedorovsky says.

That's quite difficult for most Americans to comprehend.

"One of the jokes about Russia is that we have 100 TV stations – Channel 1 is propaganda and Channel 2 to 100 is a KGB agent saying in a low, husky voice, 'Go back to Channel 1,'" Fedorovsky says with a hearty laugh.



At 6-foot-2 and 265 pounds, Vadim Fedorovsky is intimidating at first glance, but as Jaguar Land Rover Anaheim Hills GM Sven Larson says, "He's a gentle giant – a sweetheart of a guy."

Despite Russia's lack of automobile ingenuity, Fedorovsky was a passionate car enthusiast – as passionate as anyone can be. Whenever he'd see a car magazine, which was about as rare as Russia changing leaders, his eyes would near pop out of his head.

He devoured each and every American and British car magazine he could lay his hands on. He was obsessed with the styles, designs and engineering of the vehicles.

When it came time to "register" for a profession as a young teen, Fedorovsky, to no one's surprise, choose automobiles. He worked on Volga day in and day out. He built them, repaired them, rebuilt them and

tore them apart, piece by piece.

No one, it turned out, knew the inner engineering workings of an automobile better than Fedorovsky.

By the early '80s, the Fedorovskys wanted a better life for them and their young son, so they petitioned to come to America. The petition was approved – then suddenly revoked. The family was crushed – not only because their petition was rescinded but also because they had already left their jobs and home, as is required by the Soviet government.

They were now what Russia referred to as "Refusniks."

"For two years – two terrible years -- we were in limbo," Fedorovsky says. "When you apply to leave Russia, the government makes you resign from your job and sublease your apartment. Basically, they turn your life off. We fell in between legal and non-legal status. It was illegal for us to even work."

Luckily, the Fedorovskys had an "out" plan: Vadim's grandmother's sister lived in England in the early 1900s and had 13 children. They all wound up having 10+ children. One of them petitioned the Russian government and the Fedorovsky's were granted their exit to England.

By 1981, the family was in Chicago then four years later they moved to California, where Fedorovsky's father landed a job as a mechanical engineer at the Fluor Corporation, one of Orange County's most decorated companies.

Meanwhile, Fedorovsky's passion for cars never waned. He made it his career. He wound up owning and operating three body and auto shops for high-performance race cars from 1995-2007. He then ended up selling and going into sales and management. Today, he is flourishing at Jaguar Land Rover Anaheim Hills, consistently ranking among the dealership's top producers.

What makes Fedorovsky so effective at his craft is his knowledge of the engineering and technology of the high-line vehicles. Most sales associates are not equipped with such expertise and skill.

"I have not seen anyone in sales with Vadim's knowledge and skill set," says Khalid Omar, the General Sales Manager at Jaguar Land Rover Anaheim Hills. "He's very rare in this business.

"He's has tremendous knowledge of the mechanics of cars, which isn't surprising since he has built his own performance cars," Omar adds. "He's tuned up the best of the best – Land Rover, Jaguar, Porsche and Audi, to name a few. If someone wants to know how a Land Rover and Jaguar is built – or any other car for that matter – and learn the process of how an engine works and what makes an engine more effective than another, Vadim can do that. He's that technical. He's truly a 'car' guy."

At 6-foot-2 and 265 pounds, Fedorovsky is intimidating at first glance, but as JLRAH General Manager Sven Larson says, "He's a gentle giant – a sweetheart of a guy.

"He is the quintessential car enthusiast," Larson adds. "His interest is automatic, genuine and runs very deep. He transfers all of that enthusiasm and knowledge to the sales floor.

What impresses Larson as much is that "Vadim is not your typical car guy. He is not just passing through. This is his career. People like Vadim are true car people. I have no interest in people who are passing through versus ones who make this their career."

"He's also a pleasure to work with and he's a great family man," Larson concludes. "He loves coming to work. He's focused and is very proud of the work he does and his production. No one is better than Vadim at following up with customers. If he says he is going to do something, he does it. He has a really strong work ethic. He's very appreciative of the opportunity he has with the dealership. He's going to be very solid in the JLRAH community for years to come." —

By Rick Weinberg, Editor, California Business Journal

Copyright © 2015 California Business Journal.
All Rights Reserved

Contact:
Vadim Fedorovsky
Jaguar Land Rover
Anaheim Hills
5425 E La Palma Ave.
Anaheim Hills, CA 92807
(714) 693-4646
www.jlrah.com
VFedorovsky@jlrah.com