

UAZ-69B:

FROM

RUSSIA



WITH  
LOVE

The Soviet  
equivalent  
of the Jeep

By Jim Allen

Photography: Jim Allen

When the Soviet Union flew apart in the early 1990s, a whole giant motor pool of Soviet military equipment went on the surplus market. This opened an interesting new area of interest for collectors.

The GAZ-69 is an interesting example of the hardware that appeared in this wellspring of four-wheelers. It served as the USSR's equivalent of our

Jeep and was in production from 1952 through 1972. The GAZ-69 replaced the '43-'53 GAZ-67, which was a vehicle heavily influenced by the WWII

▼ The UAZ-B9B service truck has a vintage flair that attracts a second look. While technologically behind the times, these units were solidly built for use in primitive areas. Many thousands are still in service all over the world.





American Jeeps shipped to the USSR under the Lend-Lease program. "GAZ" stands for Gorkiy Automobil Zavod. The GAZ units were built at a huge factory in Gorkiy until 1956, after which they were built in Ulyanovsk and renamed the UAZ-69 (Ulyanovsk Automobil Zavod). A total of 634,256 GAZ-/UAZ-69 units of all types were built. This model eventually was replaced by the '72-current UAZ-469.

The GAZ-69 family included a number of variants, including some built specifically for export. There are two main versions—the GAZ-69 and the GAZ-69A. The plain 69 model is a two-door utility. The "A" model is a four-door, five-seat unit. There are specialty versions of both basic types, including some built to carry the Snapper anti-tank missile, which is a Soviet weapon similar in intent and purpose to the American TOW missile.

Most GAZ-/UAZ-69s were powered by a 2.11L (129ci), 55hp flathead Four. Even with a curb weight of only 3,364 pounds, the UAZ-69 is acceleration-challenged and capable of only 56 mph when it is wound out all the way. The "M" models, built for export, had a larger 2.43L (148ci) four-banger that made a whopping 65 horsepower. The four is backed up by a three-speed manual

▲ Even with the top up, the UAZ-69 personnel carrier (seats eight—two up front, six in back) is a no-frills unit. Uncomfortable transportation is the universal constant among all soldiers, regardless of the flag under which they serve.

▶ The little flathead four might remind you of the early Jeep engines, but it's really quite different. The power-to-weight ratio of the GAZ-/UAZ-69 units, however, is about the same as that of the old flatfender military Jeep.

design, similar to that once used by Timken. By all reports they perform well on the trail and are reliable.

The open-topped unit seen here is a '62 UAZ-69B model, which is a field repair variant and has toolboxes in its bed instead of seats. The canvas-topped rig is a '50s GAZ-69, complete with inward-facing troop seats for six. Henry Williams owns these Russian rigs, both coming from former Soviet bloc countries. He spruced them both up to get them into the condition you see now. Henry reports that parts are not difficult to obtain, as long as you know it will be by mail order from people who speak with an accent. FW



## specifications

### GENERAL

Owner .....Henry Williams, Eureka, California  
 Vehicle model.....'62 UAZ-69B

### ENGINE

Type.....four-cylinder L-head  
 Displacement (liter/ci).....2 1 1 / 129  
 Bore x stroke (in.).....3.23 x 3.93  
 Mfg.'s power rating @ rpm (hp) .....55 @ 3600

### DRIVETRAIN

Transmission.....three-speed manual  
 Transfer case.....two-speed, divorced

### DIMENSIONS

Wheelbase (in.).....90.6  
 Length (in.).....151  
 Wide (in.).....69  
 Curb weight (lbs.).....3,364  
 GVW (lbs.).....4,785  
 Fuel capacity (gal.).....12.7 (main), 7 (aux.)  
 Approach/departure angles (deg.).....45/35  
 Forcing depth (in.).....27