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Mark Kramer at his Arcadia home with five of his nine Ferraris

# Great Garages

## MARK KRAMER CELEBRATES 70 YEARS OF FERRARI

written by David M. Brown  
photos by David Urbanic

Mark Kramer, 71, saw his first Ferrari in August 1962. He was 15 and had seen car heaven.

"It was a 250 Spider, and I saw it on the Via Veneto. A young Italian guy got out with a beautiful girl, and I fell in love with the car and the cars of Ferrari," says Kramer, a Phoenix resident who notes that he's called by his last name, the character on the Seinfeld sitcom.

Today, he enjoys his collection of Prancing Stallions at his Arcadia-area garage, dating from the earliest, a 1972 365 GTB/4 "Daytona," through the most recent vintage, a 2009 California. Every day, he celebrates this year's 70th anniversary of Enzo Ferrari's immortal marque.

"I can't complain. I had polio when I was 4 and spent three months in an iron lung and today I have nine Ferraris and my daily driver is a supercharged 2016 Corvette ZO6 Roadster, which is actually faster than all of the Ferraris," he says. "I'm happy."

**Richard J. Daley and Ray A. Kroc**

Born in Chicago, Kramer worked for his dad, who owned five Pickle Barrel restaurants, with venues strategically located citywide.

He moved west after high school to attend the University of Montana in Missoula, where he majored in journalism and then transferred to Arizona State, double-majoring in sociology and journalism.

During his college summers, he worked for the Chicago Park District, a job his dad helped him obtain through friendship with the legendary Mayor Richard J. Daley, whose son later also served as mayor. Kramer worked for the Chicago Park District for three summers and the city's refuse department.

"The summer I collected trash was perhaps the most fun I've ever had on a job," he recalls. "The third summer I enjoyed a night job with a park district truck watering the



greens at Waveland Golf Course, between Lake Michigan and Lakeshore Drive.”

His first Vette was a 1969 350 cid/350 horsepower. Next he acquired a 1972 and a 1975, both with T-Tops, then two formidable 1966 427-cid coupes. Three Porsches followed, a 924 and a 928 and a 911 SC. All of these cars he has since sold.

His first Ferrari? That came with his first two McDonald’s franchises. And he went right to the top for that opportunity.

One of the Pickle Barrel locations Kramer managed for his family was once an experimental McDonald’s cafeteria-style burger restaurant that didn’t cut the mustard with the public. Ray and Joan Kroc, who developed McDonald’s into a mega-company through the 1960s and 1970s, were regular customers of the Pickle Barrel and spoke often with him.

“How would you like to own a McDonald’s?” Kroc asked him in 1973.

“I told him I’d love to if I could afford it,” Kramer replied, with a smile. “If I can, I’d love to go back to Phoenix.” Here he loved the weather and the business atmosphere because of his time at ASU and just after graduation as a Scottsdale police officer.

Kroc said, “We’ll make it happen.” After some wrangling with the district vice president for a location in the West and a final directive from Kroc, the 83rd Avenue and Indian School location on the then farmlands west side was his. “It was the first business out there,” he recalls.

“I went to Hamburger High School and was first in the class and then was first in my class again at Hamburger

U,” he adds. This management training is required for all McDonald’s franchisees.

Following the acquisition of his second franchise, at Cactus Road and Tatum Boulevard, he thought about that Ferrari he had seen when he was 15.

“I traveled to San Diego for business and stopped by the Ferrari dealership downtown and told the owner, David Rose, an American Airlines pilot, that when the time comes, I’d buy my first one from him,” Kramer says. It was 1979.

Two years later, his second franchise running strong, he returned to purchase a 1981 308 GTSi, selling his 1975 Vette to partially fund it. “I told the owner I can afford a Ferrari now. When it trucked in from Long Beach, we all celebrated with a champagne cocktail hour, and I drove it home to Scottsdale.

“David thought the Boxer paint job I selected, red over black, was not going to be attractive, but everyone came over to admire it,” he adds. This “pride and joy” was a daily driver for 140,000 miles, and an engine overhaul is now being done. The production run for the three-liter eight-cylinder 308 GTSi was 1,749 for the initial production run, 1981 and 1982.

“My collection is unique. I have the last of the great 12-cylinder front-mounted carbureted Ferraris in the Daytona, then the 1984 512 BBI “Boxer,” the first mid-engine fuel-injected 12-cylinder Ferrari, and a 1995 F512M, the last of the flat-12-cylinder mid-engine cars,” Kramer says.

“Then there’s the 1999 550 Maranello and 2003 575M, both 12-cylinders. And, with the 308 GTSi, I have the first



2016 Corvette Z06 Roadster

of the mid-engine fuel-injected cars and the very last of the series, the 308 GTS QV, and one of my favorites, the 1996 eight-cylinder F355 GTS. Finally, a 2009 California, with an automatic, which is really easy for me and the lovely lady in my life, Marie, to drive around town.”

He also has a 1988 Turbo Porsche, one of 250 factory cabriolet turbos built, and the last 1994 oil-cooled Targa before the body style was changed. In addition, he has three Fiat two-cylinder Jollys, including one which he’s just redoing, with a canvas surrey top. “They get 45 mpg and they’re fun cars to drive around.”

Wish list? A California Turbo, an F430 16M, 458 or a 488 Spider. And, I always wanted a 275 GTB4, and could have had one once for \$30,000. I just love everything about it, especially the sound. You know when you hear one coming.”

“Coulda, shoulda, woulda”? “My second Ferrari I could have had a 1985 288 GTO at a very good price. I did not buy, and today, they’re fetching \$1.5 million. Oh, well.”

**The Drive for Iconicity**

Kramer’s Ferrari passion is particularly intense this year, the 70th anniversary of the first car. His feeling is shared worldwide.

In 1947, Enzo Ferrari was 49 years old. He had been a successful driver, team manager and machine tool manufacturer.

“His first car was the Ferrari 125, powered by an exquisite 1.5-liter V-12 engine, producing 118 horsepower,” says Gary Simon, Ferrari brand manager at Scottsdale Ferrari-Maserati, a Penske Automotive Dealership, in a recent speech. Not only marque fluent, Simon has taken passion in it for decades, including participating a number of times in the great Mille

Miglia in Italy.

That Ferrari won its first race less than three months after leaving Enzo’s Workshop and by the end of 1947 had secured five more victories.

He built two cars in 1947, and ten years later the number was just 389. In 2016, production was a record 8,014 cars, but fewer cars than Mercedes-Benz builds daily, Simon continued.

“Think of the audacity of Enzo’s passion. The industrial world was littered with the broken dreams and fortunes of talented, wealthy men who were convinced they could build automobiles. His friends thought him foolhardy, his business associates turned their backs on him.”

Enzo believed. “Not only believed, but believed with such passion that he was able to attract and inspire some of the most talented engineers and mechanics in Italy to help bring his passion to life.”

In the seven decades since that first victory, Ferrari has grown to be one of the most powerful brands on earth. After all, they’ve won more races and more championships than any other automobile manufacturer.

“Name a famous race,” Simon explains, “Ferrari has won it: The 24 Hours of Le Mans, the Targa Florio, The Tour de France, The Mille Miglia. Name a famous race track and Ferraris have dominated it: Monza, Nürburgring, Spa, Monaco. Name a legendary driver, Ascari, Fangio, Surtees, Lauda, Schumacher, and that driver has honed his skills driving a Ferrari.”

The street cars funded his racing program.

Today, they are attracting the highest resale prices in the world, privately and at auction. “The most valuable cars on earth are Ferraris; the highest auction price ever for an



The rear-engine 1995 F512M attracts eyes, crowds and applause wherever it appears





2003 575 Maranello



automobile was for a Ferrari GTO,” Simon notes. That 1963 GTO brought \$38.1 million at Bonhams Quail auction, and private sales have almost certainly exceeded this.

“Why? Because every Ferrari leaving the gates of Maranello is born of passion,” Simon adds. “Passion inherited from its founder, passion earned on race tracks around the world, passion that lives in the hearts of the workers who create these magnificent machines.”

**Daytona to Maranello**

Kramer’s collection is maintained by two top independent Ferrari technicians, Andy Falbo, FMS Motorsports LLC, Fountain Hills, and Steve Mraovic, Exclusive Motor Cars of Arizona, Paradise Valley.

Here’s an all-too-speedy look at six of Kramer’s nine Ferraris in his Italian-inspired green, red and white-striped garage:

- 1972 365 GTB/4 “Daytona” — This Pininfarina-styled classic, celebrating Ferrari’s phenomenal 1-2-3 finish at Daytona in February 1967, sits below a car rack without its V-12-cylinder carbureted engine as part of a restoration Kramer expects to complete by May 2018. He had the livery changed to Fly Yellow from the original blue because he thought it had a bit more purple than he wanted.

Only 1,284 coupes were built from 1968 through 1973 and only 122 true spiders, as many coupes have been chopped. “To me,” he says, “this is the ultimate European muscle sports car.”

- 1984 512 BBi (Berlinetta ‘Boxer’) — “This is one of my dream cars, and knew I wanted one as soon as I saw it,” Kramer recalls of his purchase in 1997. He changed the color to two-tone silver over black, because he didn’t want another black car in Phoenix, as he already owned the 1985 308 GTS QV, noted below.

Unveiled at the 1973 Paris Motor Show, the carbureted mid-engine flat-12 car was the first for Ferrari. That 365 BB had a production figure of 387 through 1981. In 1976, 512 BB production began with a carbureted version, of which 929 were built. Through 1984, the 512 BBi had fuel-injection, with a production run of 1,007 cars.

He’s now beginning a complete engine overhaul.

- 1985 308 GTS QV — The *quattrovalvole*, four valves per cylinder, upped horsepower to a reported 240 and a top speed of around 155 mph. The 308s were carbureted from 1976 to 1979 and injected from 1980 to 1985.

He bought this spider (3,042 were produced in three years),



MCFast, MCFaster, MCFastest: Delicious at any speed

with the removable roof panel (hence the “S”) from Harley Cluxton, the original Valley Ferrari dealer. It was he who suggested a look at the 288 GTO, too, but Kramer wanted top-down optionality.

•1995 F512 M — introduced at the 1994 Paris Auto Show, this is the last iteration of the great Testarossa, which itself recalled the earlier V-12 racing great, the Testa Rossa. The flat-12-cylinder mid-mounted car carried the “M” for modificata.

His black-on-tan is #44 of the 75 built for North America out of 501 worldwide, and its 4.9-liter, four-valve per-cylinder engine makes 440 horses at 6,750 rpm and is good for sub-13-second quarter miles and 196 mph.

“I love to drive the Ferraris with the gated shifters,” he says, referring to the car’s five-gear box. “You are driving the car; the car is not driving you.”

•1999 550 and 2003 575 Maranello — In 1996, the front-

mounted 12-cylinder Maranello, designed by Pininfarina and celebrating the home city of Ferrari and its racing team, replaced the already legendary Testarossa.

Kramer’s silver-on-black 550 coupé, with its all-aluminum block, outputs about 485 horses and the yellow-on-tan 575, with somewhat higher displacement, another 40 horses.

“To me, these are refined Daytonas,” he says. “They’re fast, great daily drivers, the power steering really helps with city driving, and the six-speed shifts great.”

“All I wanted is one Ferrari, that magical mystical Prancing Stallion, ‘Cavallino Rampante,’” Kramer says, peering at legendary Camelback Mountain from his garage on a sunlit fall afternoon. “Now I have nine. McDonald’s and life have been good to me.”

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