

AvtoVAZ Bids Farewell to Boxy Classic

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Maxim Stulov

The time has come to stop producing the Lada 2107, the anachronistic boxy classic known colloquially as the "semyorka," carmaker AvtoVAZ said.

"Demand for the 'classic' has dropped a lot. It is time to say goodbye," company spokesman Igor Burenkov said, RBK reported.

Production of the vehicle will cease next week, the paper said.

The vehicle, which has become a mainstay of Russian roads, has been produced virtually unchanged since its introduction in 1982, when it was already outdated by international standards. The model was first developed under an agreement with Italy and is based on the Fiat 124, first produced in 1966.

The model is known for its frequent breakdowns, but spare parts and widespread familiarity with the vehicle means repairs are relatively easy.

The model long remained popular due to its low price, starting from just under \$7,000.

During a cash for clunkers program two years ago, sales of the classic 2107 reached 17,000 per month. But already last year, sales began to drop sharply.

Data from the Association of European Businesses in Russia shows that sales from the company were down by 15 percent in the first quarter, outpaced by 50 percent gains by its second and third-place competitors, Nissan and Hyundai.

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