Rust in Peace: Soviet-era Cars Fill Russian Mechanic's Field

By [Reuters](#)

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In the remote village of Chernousovo, retired mechanic Mikhail Krasinets tends to more than 300 ramshackle, Soviet-era cars, remnants of a once vibrant auto industry that crumbled with the fall of the Soviet Union.

His open-air museum, some 260 km (161 miles) south of Moscow, draws a handful of car lovers and nostalgia seekers in the summer but few make the trip to the isolated location, which some say resembles an automotive graveyard.

Krasinets purchased his first car in 1981 when he worked atthe AZLK factory in Moscow which produced the popular Moskvitch model, its name meaning a native of Moscow.

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Over time, his hobby began taking up more and more space and eventually Krasinets was forced to relocate his beloved vintage cars, which included Moskvitch, Volga and other models.

"In Moscow I had trouble storing my equipment," he said. "I consulted with my wife. We needed to leave and come here to our dacha."

Most of the cars in his collection are rusty and dented and parts are strewn among the maze of vehicles on the property.

But to Krasinets, they are invaluable relics of the past.

"I'd rather go hungry than sell anything," he said.

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