



Sharing the Love

Want a garage full of exotic cars? Join the club. *By Jeff Cockrell*

You might not have noticed — what with that big lake in the distance and all — but we're in the middle of a desert here, people. Hop onto the Edens or the Kennedys and you'll see what we're talking about: Four-door sedans and navy-blue SUVs as far as the eye can see. A veritable Sahara, bone-dry of any automotive imagination.

Granted, it's for good reason. This ain't exactly California, after all, and we've never seen a Ferrari with snow tires. Even the folks who have the means to drop \$150,000 on their car still may hardly get to drive it. But George Kiebala thinks he has a solution.

Six and a half years ago, Kiebala started Palatine-based Exotic Car Share (648 E. Northwest Highway, 888/358-7522), a club that enables its members to "borrow" from a stable of dream cars for specified periods of time. The collection currently includes 12–15 cars, including four Ferraris, three Corvettes and an assortment of historical classics — and the membership rolls have grown to over 700.

"Owning a Ferrari, long-term, is not all it's cracked up to be," Kiebala says, pointing out that even in good weather drivers have to worry about the car getting scratched, hitting a pot hole or befalling some other year-round peril. "But to drive it for a week or two and get it out of your system is really cool. And then it's like, OK, did that. Let me drive this Porsche for a while."

Members pay a \$250 membership fee every five years; in return, they get free access to the various automotive events the club hosts each year and the right to reserve any car in the collection. Actually borrowing a car generally costs an extra \$330/day for a three-day weekend or \$214/day for a week, though the fees go up for a Ferrari.

In return, however, members get the chance to experience the car of their



fantasies — or get a taste of a variety of premium wheels — without any of the hassles or chores that come with ownership. No insurance. No maintenance. A pre-paid I-PASS. Each member gets an extensive orientation on the car they're borrowing before they take it, and there's even indoor storage for members' regular cars while they've got part of the club's collection checked out.

For those who can't let go of the pride of ownership, Kiebala has put together Curvy Road, a fractional-ownership company that offers clients a one-fifth or one-tenth stake in a Lamborghini, Rolls-Royce, Ferrari or another dream machine. Under Curvy

Road, owners are guaranteed either four or eight weeks per year with their car and can even choose to buy equity in the vehicle.

Of course, Italian sports cars and superluxury models aren't the only way to break our local roadway monotony, and — wouldn't you know it? — Kiebala has got you covered there, too: He recently became Chicagoland's only agent for Smart Cars, the singularly diminutive little autos you may have seen darting around Europe. The tiny 61-horsepower machines may not seem to have much in common with the other cars he deals with, but "We're all about unique, interesting, innovative, different cars," Kiebala says, "and the Smart Car is all of that."