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Carving Japan's waves and rush hour traffic in a Nissan Gloria Wagon

Lead

Japan's weird and wonderful array of cars never fails to keep us smiling, and after stumbling upon photographer and passionate surfer Fuki Asada and his modified Nissan Gloria Wagon, we found ourselves desperate to own one too!



Let's face it, Japan does car culture better than just about anywhere else on the planet. A true melting pot of style, quirkiness, and rarity, where a pristine Ferrari F40 can be seen parked between a battle-scarred Nissan Silvia drift car and an ex-NYPD Ford Crown Victoria. Japanese car owners love their machines deeper than anyone, which is certainly the case when it comes to Fuki Asada and his Nissan Gloria Wagon.

The Gloria lineage dates back to 1959, where it was initially known as the Prince Gloria, and served as the ideal people hauler for busy families. The styling, even from the first generation, mimicked popular appearances found in North America, with eleven generations spanning nearly 65 years. The Gloria name is regarded as one of the most important in Nissan's vast history, and has amassed a cult following of collectors and enthusiasts around the world, including Fuki and his Y30, or seventh-generation example.



Fuki explains why he chose the Gloria as the ultimate do-it-all wagon, "I fell in love with it at first sight, and I love to load up the car with all my surf gear and head out to the waves." Indeed, with plenty of space in the rear it's certainly the ideal machine for cruising along the coastline, or steaming through the neon-signs of Japan's iconic nightlife.



Customisation is the ultimate form of expression, and Japan’s car culture is all about bringing personality to even the simplest of machines. We asked Fuki what he’d done to his Gloria during the time he’s owned it, “The car was treated to a lower suspension setup, not crazy but just enough to give it a smooth ride and cool stance. It now sits on T&T Forged split wheels in bright silver, which complement all of the chrome around the car. The paint always gets people talking, as it’s finished in one of Porsche’s greens, and I think suits the car perfectly.” We couldn’t agree more, with the Gloria boasting tiny but ultra-cool details throughout, from its wooden Nardi steering wheel, to the subtle line of stickers along the rear windscreen.



With a definite nod to American station wagons from the 1980s, the Y30-generation of Glorias brought an entirely new boxy look to Japanese wagons, drawing much inspiration from Buicks, Lincolns and Fords of the same era. Somehow, though, even after over 40 years, the Japanese variants have aged with far more grace than their US-based rivals, and for us located in Europe, this only adds to the charm and immense desirability of these cooler-than-cool family estates. If you’re lucky enough to find one outside of Japan, keep hold of it and enjoy it as much as Fuki enjoys his!

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