

The VW Karmann Ghia.
Is it really a sports car?



Sports cars have racy, hand-finished bodies. So does the Karmann Ghia.

If you want a racy, hand-finished body, you go to a racy, hand-finished body designer.

Which we did: the Ghia Studios of Turin, Italy.

The Ghia design was, as you can see, quite beautiful. And, like most quite beautiful designs, impractical.

With all its subtle curves and intricate lines, the Karmann Ghia couldn't be produced on a conventional mass production line.

So it's made instead on an unconventional, limited production line.

At the Karmann Coachworks in Osnabrück, Germany. Where, a century ago, artisans made coaches for European nobility. Before coaches had engines in them.

Here, at a maddeningly slow pace, Ghia's ideas take shape.

To make sure they take exactly the shape Ghia had in mind, Karmann employs 16 sculptors.

The sculptors' job is to create the graceful, sloping lines that machines can't. At the corners of the windshield, for example. Or the gentle curve of the rear.

Using molten pewter and a beechwood tool, the sculptors fidget with the body until it's right. (Which is one reason why, on a good day, only 120 Karmann Ghias leave the factory.)

When the sculptors aren't sculpting, Karmann's other coachmakers are coachmaking.

To create the intricate curves around the headlights, for example, they make each front fender in

two parts and then weld them together.

By hand.

Then they shape each fender. By hand.

Then they weld each fender to the body. By hand.

After the body is sculpted and formed, Karmann's coachmakers start to finish it.

The finish consists of five coats of anti-corrosives, primers and paint. With lots of rubbing and sanding in between.

But even after it's finished, it's still not finished.

To make *absolutely* sure everything went the way Ghia wanted, every body is inspected by Karmann's ingenious quality control system.

Fussy men with sensitive fingers.

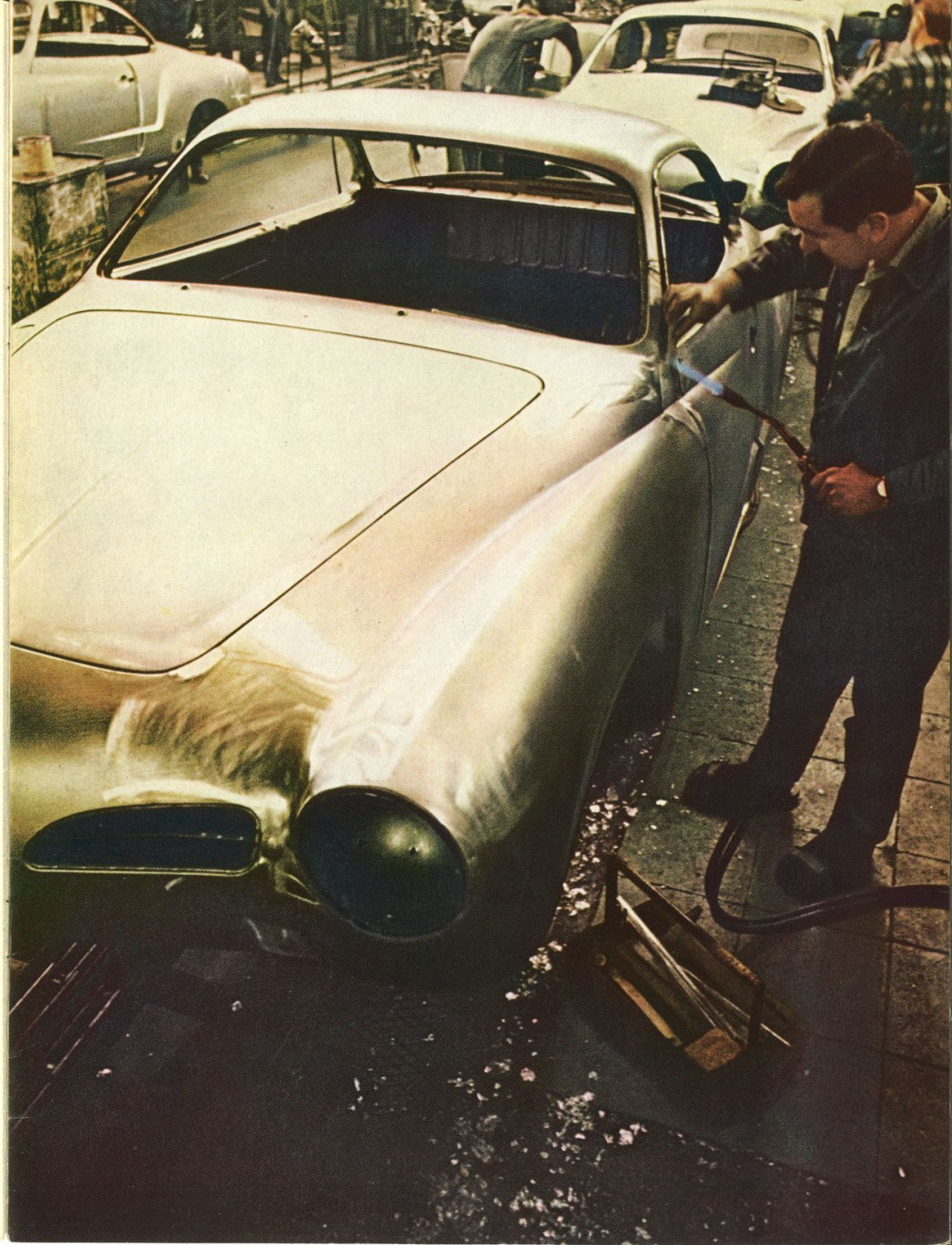
Karmann has 240 such inspectors, and their job is to nit-pick. Wearing mittens, they run their hands along the finished bodies. If there are any nits left, the inspectors will pick them.

And to make sure the 240 Karmann inspectors don't miss anything, Volkswagen keeps 16 of its own inspectors around. Their job: to inspect the Karmann inspectors.

That, in brief, is what a body has to go through before it gets racy and hand-finished enough for the Karmann Ghia.

With all the fussing and fidgeting, it has to be one of the worst ways imaginable to get rich quick in the automobile business.

But then, if it weren't for the fussing and fidgeting, it wouldn't be a Karmann Ghia.



Sports cars have bucket seats and 4-speed stick shifts. So does the Karmann Ghia.

Sports car interiors don't exactly look like Victorian parlors, and neither does the Karmann Ghia's.

What the Karmann Ghia gives you instead is a simple, unshowy passenger compartment—with more than its fair share of sports-car-type goodies.

The bucket seats, for example.

They're covered with leatherette, so they'll last. And they're firm, so you sit on them and not in them. (You don't get swallowed up by upholstery.)

Both seats have built-in headrests and seat belts as standard equipment. And, best of all, they adjust to 21 different positions. So if you want to sit far back in the cab, like a racing driver, you can.

Behind the bucket seats is a small, bench-type seat and more than enough room for the family dog.

When you fold the seat down, there's enough room for 3 or 4 suitcases. (To say nothing of the 3.7 cu. ft. trunk up front.)

In front of the bucket seats is the dashboard. Which, like everything else about the interior, is simple and unornate. It has all the instrumentation you need (odometer, speedometer, electric clock, and gas gauge). Plus foam padding and a leatherette cover.

Now, no sports car worthy of the name would be caught without a floor-mounted stick nearby.

Neither would the Karmann Ghia.

The Karmann Ghia's stick is short and stubby, like a sports car's. It's the visible part of an all-synchromesh, 4-speed transmission. Like a sports car's.

But if you're used to an automatic and would rather not shift now, you can always order the optional automatic stick shift instead.

Like most automatics, it has a Low, a Reverse, and no clutch pedal. Unlike most automatics, it has a stick (a short and stubby one). And two driving "ranges" (Drive 1 and Drive 2).

Drive 1 is for around-town driving (up to 55 mph), and you can drive around in it all day if you want. Drive 2 is what you shift into for the open road. It's designed for speeds over 55 mph and helps save gas.

And if you want to wind it up through the gears, like a sports car, you can do that too. (Our automatic stick shift is an automatic when you want it to be, and a stick shift when you don't.)

Of course, one good way to make the inside look even sportier is to let some of the outside in.

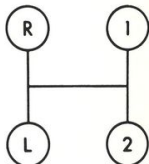
Which is why the Karmann Ghia also comes in a convertible.

The Karmann Ghia Convertible has something most convertibles don't: a top that doesn't look like an afterthought.

Its top is a full inch thick, with a vinyl outside, a leatherette inside, and plenty of padding in the middle. (Which is one reason why it takes two men four hours to make one. By hand.)

But no one can really describe the feeling of tooling along in our sporty convertible on a brisk, sunny day.

You'll just have to take one out on the road and open it up.



The VW automatic stick shift. It takes some of the work out of driving.



Sports cars have tight, road-holding suspensions. So does the Karmann Ghia.

The Karmann Ghia on the right is nipping and darting through a winding dirt road with all 4 wheels on the ground.

Without skidding, wallowing, or making the driver nervous.

How does it do it?

For one thing, the Karmann Ghia has 4-wheel independent torsion bar suspension. And a double-jointed rear axle. Like some expensive sports cars.

So when you take a hairpin turn, for example, the wheels stay where they belong: on the road. And so does the car.

For another thing, the Karmann Ghia has a light engine. Like many racing cars.

The engine is light because it's made of aluminum and magnesium. But all 250 lbs. of it are located where they do the most good: in the rear. Pressing down on the rear wheels for extra traction.

And that's why you can take a Karmann Ghia out during a snowstorm and still stand an excellent chance of not getting marooned somewhere.

Another reason why the Karmann Ghia is so ma-

neuverable is that the Karmann Ghia steering wheel is so maneuverable.

You can rotate it lock to lock in only 2.7 turns. So you can scurry around corners with short, quick turns of the wheel. Like a sports car.

Finally, the Karmann Ghia is maneuverable because of the shape it's in.

The body is compact and aerodynamically designed. Like a sports car's. So you can knife through wind the way large cars with big fronts can't.

Now, if you're worried about stopping, stop worrying.

We've equipped the Karmann Ghia with front-wheel disc brakes. The kind that many sports cars have.

But we didn't stop there.

Each Karmann Ghia has a dual brake system. So if one system should ever fail, the other will bring the car safely to a halt.

We think it's nice for a car to be able to go from 0 to 60 in record time.

But we're also interested in how well you go from 60 to 0.



Sports cars cost a lot of money. The Karmann Ghia doesn't.

The picture on the right shows 3 very expensive sports cars and 1 impostor.

The impostor, of course, is the Karmann Ghia.

The Porsche 911L (top left), the Maserati Mistral (top right), and the Mercedes-Benz 280SL (bottom left) cost anywhere from about \$7,000 to \$13,000-plus.

The Karmann Ghia (bottom right) is a Volkswagen. And you know what they cost.

Of course, a Karmann Ghia doesn't have everything that most expensive cars have.

For example, it doesn't have an engine that requires as much care and feeding as the average expensive car.

Instead it has an undemanding 4-cylinder engine that gets up to 28 miles per gallon without frequent or costly tune-ups. And takes about 5 pints (not quarts) of oil. And hardly ever takes oil between changes.

Among the many other things a Karmann Ghia doesn't have is a radiator. The engine is air-cooled. So you save on antifreeze.

And one of the many things a radiator-less engine doesn't have is water.

Which, since water has a way of freezing up and boiling over, can save you an awful lot of aggravation, too.

Now, for all the love people give them, sports cars still have to be serviced now and then.

Which can be a very rewarding experience. For the guy who services them.

Unless you own a Karmann Ghia.

You can get a Karmann Ghia serviced at over 1000 authorized VW dealers in the U.S. At VW-sized prices.

Servicing a Karmann Ghia is a very unexciting experience. Since it doesn't change much from year to year, it doesn't take much to fix it. For example, it only takes 75 minutes to remove and put back the whole engine. And 36 minutes to replace and adjust the carburetor.

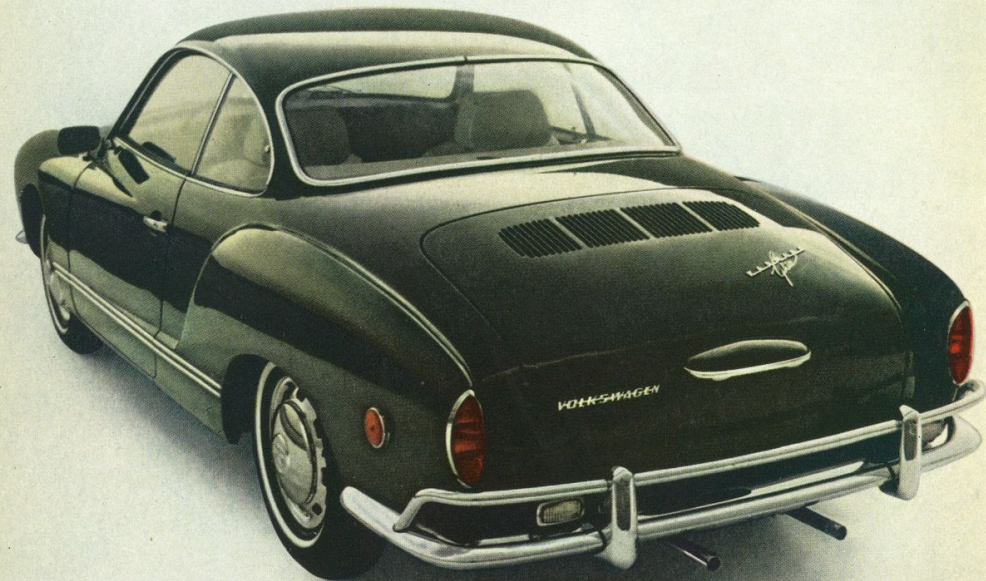
But if you have your heart set on a \$10,000 sports car with all the trimmings, look at it this way:

Buy our expensive-looking Karmann Ghia and you get the best kind of trimmings available at any price. Dollars.

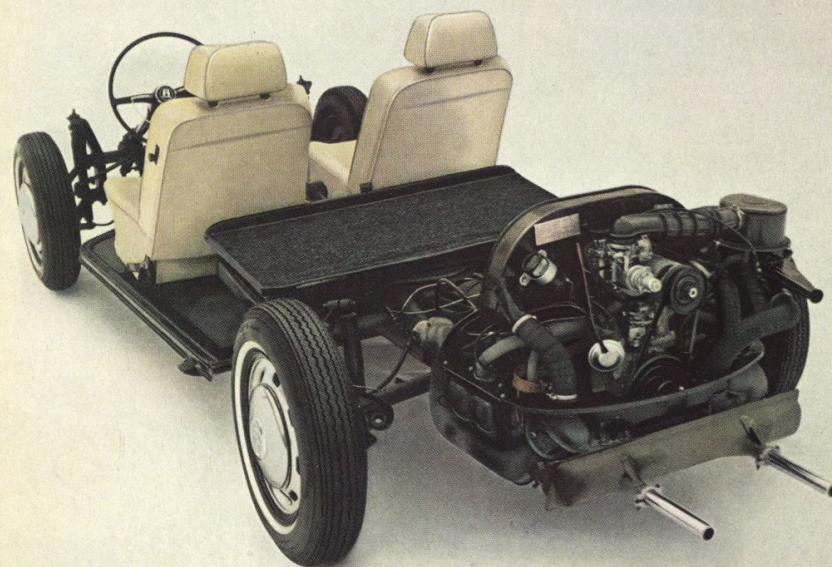
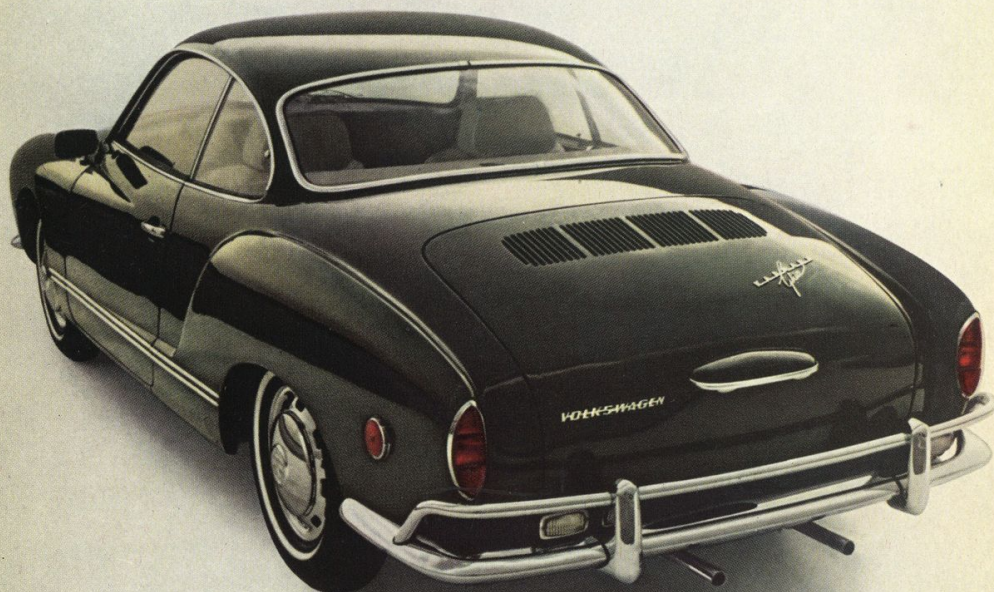
Thousands of them.



The VW Karmann Ghia.
Is it really a sports car?



That depends on how you look at it.



Surprise.
Beneath that flamboyant exterior is a sober, no-nonsense Volkswagen chassis.

Volkswagen engine, Volkswagen suspension system, Volkswagen everything.

Which means that, in a way, the Karmann Ghia gives you the best of both worlds:

The sporty feel of a sports car. (A hand-finished body, bucket seats, floor-mounted stick shift, inde-

pendent suspension, and so on.)

And the economy of a Volkswagen. (Up to 28 miles per gallon, an utterly reliable engine, a VW-sized price tag, and so on.)

So if someone in an Aston Martin pulls alongside and invites you to race, we recommend that you politely decline the offer.

A Karmann Ghia can't do 148 mph.

But then, you'd never know it to look at it.

SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE: 4-cylinder, 4-stroke rear engine. Cylinder arrangement: 2 pairs horizontally opposed. Valves: overhead type. Bore: 3.27 in. Stroke: 2.72 in. Displacement: 91.10 cubic inches (1493 cc). Compression ratio: 7.5:1. Maximum S.A.E. brake horsepower: 53 at 4200 RPM. Piston speed: 1811 ft./min. at 4000 RPM. Lubrication: pressure lubrication (gear-type pump) with oil cooler. Oil capacity: 5.3 U.S. pints. Fuel pump: diaphragm type, mechanically operated. Carburetor: Solex downdraft carburetor with automatic choke and exhaust emission control. Air cleaner: oil-bath type with thermostat-controlled preheating of intake air. Cooling system: air cooling by fan, flow thermostatically controlled. Dual exhaust muffler.

PERFORMANCE: With standard transmission: maximum and cruising speed 82 MPH. Fuel consumption: 27.5 MPG.* With optional transmission: maximum and cruising speed 80 MPH. Fuel consumption: 26.1 MPG.*

(* Measured consumption +10% with half payload at steady 3/4 of top speed on level roads.)

ELECTRICAL SYSTEM: Battery: 12-volt, 44 amp. hours. Generator: 360 watts—early cut-in.

STANDARD TRANSMISSION: 4 forward speeds, 1 reverse. Synchronesh on all 4 forward gears. Gear ratios: 1st-4th: 3.80:1, 2.06:1, 1.26:1, 0.89:1. Reverse: 3.61:1. Clutch: single disc, dry. Final drive gear ratio: 4.125:1. Oil capacity of transmission and final drive: 5.3 U.S. pints.

OPTIONAL TRANSMISSION: (Automatic stick shift) 3 forward speeds, 1 reverse. Hydraulic torque converter. Gear ratios: low 2.06:1, drive 1: 1.26:1, drive 2: 0.89:1, reverse 3.07:1. Maximum torque multiplication 2.1:1. Differential ratio: 4.375:1. Oil capacity of transmission and final drive: 6.3 U.S. pints. Torque converter oil capacity: 7.6 U.S. pints.

FINAL DRIVE (for each transmission): Power transmitted through ring and pinion and axle shafts, with 2 constant velocity joints each. Differential consists of 2 pairs of side and spider gears.

CHASSIS: Frame: tubular center section forked and welded on platform. Front axle: independent suspension by 2 trailing arms on each side and horizontal torsion bars. Double-acting hydraulic telescopic shock absorbers with progressive rubber stop to limit up or down movement. Stabilizer. Rear axle: independent suspension by trailing arms and diagonal links and rear axles, each with 2 constant velocity joints. Progressive rubber stops and double-acting telescopic shock absorbers. Steering: worm-and-roller type and maintenance-free tie rods. Hydraulic steering damper. Telescoping steering column. Deep-dish steering wheel. Turning circle: approx. 37 ft., 2.7 turns of steering wheel from lock to lock.

TIRES: 5.60 x 15, tubeless, plus safety wheel rims.

BRAKES: Dual hydraulic footbrake system operating on front and rear paired wheels, self-adjusting disc brakes on front wheels. Mechanical handbrake operating on rear wheels.

BODY: 2 doors, each 39.3 inches wide, can be locked and unlocked from inside and outside. Windows: toughened tempered safety glass. Windshield: double thick outer layer safety glass. Bucket seats: 2 in front, adjust back and forth in 7 positions. Backrests with built-in headrests, adjustable in 3 angles, lock automatically to prevent them from tilting forward.

HEATING/DEFROSTING SYSTEM: 5 outlets at the windshield, 2 openings at foot level in front, 2 in rear, 1 at rear window (coupe).

FRESH-AIR VENTILATION SYSTEM: 2 fresh-air vents at the windshield. Operating knobs on the dashboard.

STANDARD EQUIPMENT: Includes padded dash, armrests and sunvisors, 1 outside mirror, breakaway day/night inside rear-view mirror, safety belts for both front seats, dual braking system with dashboard warning light, combination headlight dimmer/turn signal fingertip control, non-repeat ignition/steering lock, 2-speed electric windshield wiper with pneumatic washer system, bucket seats with built-in headrests, 4-way emergency flashers, front seat passenger grab handle, large door pocket, leatherette upholstery, recessed door handles, electric clock, 2 back-up lights, courtesy light, front ashtray,

vinyl headlining, rubber floor mats, tool kit, fold-down rear seat, variable intensity instrument lighting, side jacking ports, glove compartment, coat hooks (coupe only), vanity mirror in right sunvisor, telescoping steering column.

DIMENSIONS IN INCHES: Wheelbase: 94.5. Track: front 51.6, rear 53.1. Length: 163.0. Width: 64.3. Height: 52.4.

FUEL TANK: Capacity: 10.6 U.S. gallons.

WEIGHTS IN POUNDS (Coupe & Convertible): shipping weight 1852, unladen weight 1918, Payload 728, gross vehicle weight 2646.

OPTIONAL EQUIPMENT AND ACCESSORIES (at extra cost): Automatic stick shift transmission, whitewall tires, radio and antenna, rear speaker, air conditioner, walnut gearshift knob, underdash parcel shelf, tonneau cover for convertible, cigarette lighter, vent shades, gravel guards, tissue dispenser, and more—ask your authorized VW dealer to show you his accessories line catalog.

COLORS:

COUPE AND CONVERTIBLE* BODY COLORS



Cherry Red



Cypress Green†



Oriole Yellow††



Black



Sunset



Chrome Blue



Toga White

LEATHERETTE UPHOLSTERY



Black



Light Sand



Khaki



Light Sand



Black



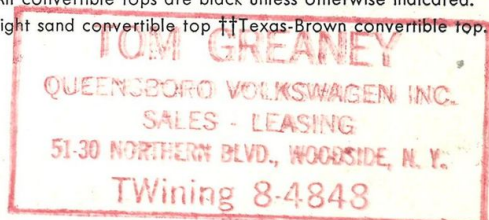
Black



Black

*All convertible tops are black unless otherwise indicated.

†Light sand convertible top ††Texas-Brown convertible top.



Your Authorized Volkswagen Dealer.