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Gillie's Auto Lounge serves a community driven by a love of classic cars

The new auto storage membership club in the Midway District was started by Michael Olguin, who comes from a family line of car enthusiasts



Step into Gillie's Auto Lounge and you won't see the stereotypical man-cave-style decor of oil and gas signs, gas pumps or a pool table.

Instead, owner Michael Olguin has created an inviting, unexpected auto storage membership club in the Midway District for owners of classic and exotic cars, featuring speakeasy vibes and plenty of spaces to hang out and connect.

The new lounge is deeply personal to Olguin. It honors his father, Gillie, who died in 2001, as well as his brother Gary, who died in 2020.

Olguin said Gillie's aims to provide not only top-of-the line care for the vehicles stored there but also to foster a sense of community among the car lovers who share the space.

Olguin grew up in Barstow with seven brothers and sisters. For entertainment, he said, his dad would take his four sons walking through car lots after hours.

Gillie, a truck driver and lifelong car and motorcycle enthusiast, passed his passion for vehicles to Michael and his brothers, Gary, Ruben and John.



“Back then, all the cars were so different, from the headlights to the skirts,” Michael said. “He taught us about them and we were captivated by it. We learned the differences between the makes, models and years. We’ve all loved cars our whole lives.”

Each of the Olguin brothers became a car collector.

Michael said Gary, the eldest, was into “bubble” cars and owned a 1949 Plymouth in mint condition.

His second-oldest brother, Ruben, is into classic cars, while his younger brother, John, runs marketing and sponsorship for an Indy Car racing team.

Michael said the idea of a car lounge began to grow after his retirement in 2023 following three decades with Havas Formula, a global public relations agency he founded in San Diego in 1992.

One of his brothers suggested he start an auto storage shop as a new business venture.

Before his retirement, Michael was living in New York and said he would consider the idea if he could find the right space when he moved back to San Diego.



He discovered what he was looking for at 3341 Hancock St.

He bought the 17,000 square-foot-property in April 2025, including the 5,000-square-foot lounge area, a neighboring 7,000-square-foot space and a 5,000-square-foot parking lot across the street.

“I started doing work on it in July, while serious construction began in August and lasted 10 months,” Michael said.

To become a member, one must store a car at the facility. About a third of its 30 spaces have been filled so far, Michael said.

The \$600 monthly fee gives members climate-controlled vehicle storage, round-the-clock security and fire protection.

Every car receives ongoing care, including battery charging, tire pressure checks and weekly wipe-downs, Michael said.

Service coordination with local shops, remote car access, airport shuttles and help with DMV needs also are provided.

Michael said he wasn’t looking for a traditional man-cave feel for the lounge.

“I wanted it to feel like a speakeasy and designed it that way, with leather couches, an exotic bar and a lot of family mementos,” he said.

Members have access to the luxury lounge area; the bar, which features cold drinks, beer and wine; big-screen TVs; and an outdoor deck with a fire pit.





Gary's collection of diecast cars lines a mantel and some storage lockers, while a collection of vintage Jim Beam bourbon bottles — a gift from one of Michael's sisters — is showcased on shelves at the bar.

One wall features black-and-white photographs of various car hood ornaments that Michael has taken in the past 12 years.

Michael also found a 1949 Harley-Davidson that he describes as “flawless” and “a mirror image of the one my dad had.”

He considers the motorcycle to be an art piece and said “it's the coolest part of the space.”

Members can participate in events including organized drives, poker runs, watch parties and “cars and coffee” breakfast get-togethers.

The space also is available for private gatherings.

Gillie “would shake his head in awe,” Michael said.

Michael already is planning a possible second location for the auto lounge once the current space reaches 75% capacity.

When he's not busy with the lounge, Michael enjoys traveling internationally for running adventures. He has been with his wife, Sarah, for 13 years and has two children, daughter Sophia, 25, and son Eli, 23.

For more information about Gillie's Auto Lounge, call (619) 310-5723 or visit gilliesautolounge.com.

