



# STILL





# MOTORING

## ROBERT ESCALANTE'S CUSTOM AUTO SERVICE KEEPS THE PACKARD MARQUE ROLLING ALONG

For decades, the Packard Motor Car Co. marketed some of America's most prestigious cars under the slogan "Ask the man who owns one."

Today, though, if you want to find out about Packards, all you need to do is ask Robert Escalante. Escalante owns Custom Auto Service, a Santa Ana shop that is known throughout the country for Packard restoration and maintenance.

A walk through the establishment - housed in a building that was home to an electric car dealership early in the last century and later a truck dealer - is a step back in time to delight any car buff. Though the last cars to bear the Packard name were built in 1958, the marque is alive and well here. In the showroom, amid much memorabilia, are two impressively restored examples: Escalante's own 1939 Super Eight Convertible Sedan and a 1938 Twelve Convertible Sedan owned by Mark



**LEFT:** ROBERT ESCALANTE AND HIS 1939 SUPER EIGHT CONVERTIBLE SEDAN. **ABOVE:** MIKE HARRAH'S 1929 MURPHY-BODIED CONVERTIBLE SEDAN GRACES ESCALANTE'S SHOWROOM FLOOR.





**TOP:** STEPPING INTO CUSTOM AUTO SERVICE IS LIKE TAKING A TRIP BACK IN TIME WHEN PACKARDS REIGNED SUPREME AS THE LUXURY CAR OF CHOICE. THIS HOOD ORNAMENT FROM A 1939 PACKARD EPITOMIZES THE CLASS AND ELEGANCE REPRESENTED BY THE PACKARD NAME. WHILE THE LAST PACKARD WAS BUILT IN 1958, THE MARQUE'S LEGACY IS ALIVE AND WELL AT CUSTOM AUTO SERVICE IN SANTA ANA. **TO THE RIGHT:** FAMILY AFFAIR: ESCALANTE AND HIS TEAM OF MASTER PACKARD MECHANICS. FRONT ROW: ALFRED ESCALANTE (ROBERT'S FATHER) AND SANDY ESCALANTE (ROBERT'S BROTHER). MIDDLE: DAVID ESCALANTE (ROBERT'S BROTHER) AND ROBERT ESCALANTE. BACK: TOBY DELEON (ROBERT'S COUSIN) AND CAL SOEST (MASTER MECHANIC WHO HAS BEEN WITH THE BUSINESS SINCE IT OPENED)

