

Press Release

For immediate release



THIRD GENERATION NIVA OFFERS IMPROVED REFINEMENT & CONVENIENCE

January 4 1996

Lada's third generation Niva 4x4 follows on the tradition for a tough, dependable off-roader, but for 1996 with a host of improvements that will win it even more friends in the cut and thrust of day-to-day driving.

For the 1996 model year the base Niva is renamed the Niva Hussar in the UK and retains all the benefits of the proven monocoque design, the same suspension, beefy brakes and 5-speed high/low ratio transmission with differential lock. For 1996, it also benefits from a more efficient 1.7 litre engine (fuel injected for the first time), completely revamped interior, including new high-back bucket-style seats and a rear hatchback door opening down to bumper height.



At the heart of the changes is the increased capacity 1.7 litre engine which is a slight overbore of the previous 1.6 unit from 79 to 82mm; topping this engine is a General Motors designed single-point fuel-injection system. Overall power is virtually the same at 79bhp as opposed to 78bhp at 5400rpm, but torque is 10lb ft up, to 98lb ft at 3600 from 88lb ft at 3000rpm. The net increases may not sound great, but the instant throttle response and improved acceleration throughout the rev range have given the Niva a decidedly sporty feel. Top speed is marginally up from 82 to 86mph.

A further refinement of the new Niva is the improved alignment of the driveline components. Modifications introduced by Lada UK operations in 1993 have now been incorporated at the factory in Russia to help reduce noise vibration and harshness.

The fitment of a larger capacity engine in a vehicle of similar size and weight does not necessarily mean increased fuel consumption. Indeed the 12.7 litre unit with its more precise fuel metering is significantly better off with an urban figure of 26.2mpg against the previous 1.6 litre carburettored engine's 24.4mpg.

Improved convenience

While there are significant changes hidden under the Niva's bonnet, more obvious are the changes inside the cabin. Niva devotees will appreciate the new bucket style seats with full height backrests that have a tilt and slide facility to aid access to the rear. Previously, the seats did not tip and lift on a forward hinge.

The more thoughtfully laid out interior continues with a new dashboard design and instrumentation, while the heating and ventilation system benefits from new controls and dedicated demisting vents. New door trim panels, a centre console and foot well carpet mats are included in the base Niva Hussar.

The increased convenience of the Niva continues behind the rear seats with the inclusion of a one-piece hatchback door opened by a remote lever inside the cabin that rises on gas struts to allow loading from bumper height. Luggage capacity is 0.5 cubic metres with the back seat raised and 1.5 cubic metres with it folded. A parcel shelf is also included to keep valuables away from prying eyes.

COSSACK Mk 3

Ladas' upmarket cousin to the Niva Hussar, the Cossack, has been developed to appeal to those owners who require a more stylish and compact 4x4 for predominately road use, yet the Cossack has lost none of its off-road ability. Former Lotus designer Colin Spooner was called to handle the distinctive exterior/interior packaging. Wheel arch spats, a soft finish bull bar, sculptured side sills, vents and scoops, plus bumper and door handle cappings all comprise to make the Cossack Mk 3 even more distinctive than its predecessor. Smoothly contoured five spoke light alloy wheels shod with Bridgestone on/off road tyres complete the exterior transformation.

Cossack interior specification is every bit as distinctive and eye catching as the exterior. A multi-colour velour cloth panel is stitched into the seat base and backrest, as well as the headrests and door panel inserts. These are set against an overall seat material in contrasting blue. Interior trim panels and deep pile carpeting, which continues through into the luggage area, are in a matching shade of grey. A sports steering wheel, Blaupunkt stereo radio/cassette player with four speakers, remote control central locking and additional soundproofing complete the Cossack specification.



Lada Owners Club of Great Britain

Overall, the re-packaging of the Niva has enhanced an already proven design. However, and perhaps even more importantly, the changes have not eroded the Niva and Cossack's tremendous price advantage over their rivals.

The Niva Hussar costs just £700 more than its predecessor and can still be put on the road for under £8000, while the Cossack's drive away price is under £10,000. List prices are £7595 and £9595 respectively. Lada's recent warranty changes now include a full three year/60,000 warranty package couple to a six year anti-perforation guarantee and a year's free membership of Green Flag roadside recovery service on all Niva models