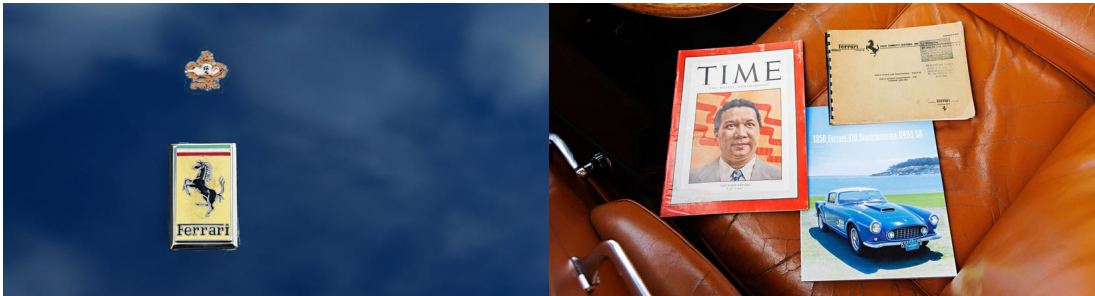


# CLASSIC DRIVER

## Vietnam's last emperor bought this Ferrari as the ultimate pick-me-up

**Lead**  
In 1955, Bao Dai, the last Emperor of Vietnam, was exiled and fled to France, where he bought this stunning Ferrari 410 Superamerica. Now it could be yours at Gooding's Pebble beach sale.



Bao Dai, the 13th and final reigning Emperor of Vietnam, would not have called 1955 his year. It was at this time that Prime Minister Ngo Dinh Diem declared himself the head of the new Republic of Vietnam, exiling Bao Dai and forcing him to flee to France. We can imagine that this must have been quite the bummer, but if there's one thing that is guaranteed to cheer anyone up, it's a new Ferrari, and so the ex-Emperor purchased this unbelievably stunning 1956 Ferrari Superamerica to accompany his 375 MM Spider.





One of only 12 Series I Ferrari Superamerica coupés built by Pininfarina, chassis 0493 SA was ordered by Bao Dai in this bewitching shade of bright blue with a contrasting ivory roof and natural leather upholstery. After Bao Dai's ownership, this Superamerica passed between a few French collections before being acquired by Italian car collector Fabrizio Violati, who displayed it in his famous Maranello Rosso museum among some of the finest Ferrari and Abarth competition cars.



After 0493 SA was bought by the current custodian, it was subject to a full mechanical restoration, and they certainly didn't leave anything on the table. Over the course of almost a decade, respected early Ferrari specialists Patrick Ottis and Bill Attaway worked tirelessly to restore this incredible Superamerica, rebuilding the engine and overhauling the suspension, driveline, and braking system. It was all worth it, though, because last year this Superamerica seamlessly completed the 50-mile Tour d'Elegance at Pebble Beach and promptly secured the prestigious FIVA Award for the best-preserved postwar vehicle. Today 0493 SA remains in stellar condition and proudly bears Bao Dai's royal crest, while the original interior retains a wonderful level of patina. If you're on the hunt for a prancing horse that's fit for a king, don't miss out on [Gooding's Pebble Beach sale on August 16th](#), where this Superamerica will go under the hammer.

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