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# Stolen 1965 Volkswagen van recovered after 35 years

By **Alan Duke**, CNN  
**STORY HIGHLIGHTS**

- Van stolen in Spokane found in Los Angeles shipping container
- Customs checks VIN, finds van was stolen from an auto shop in 1974
- Van now worth about \$27,000; insurance company is owner

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**LOS ANGELES, California (CNN)** -- A 1965 Volkswagen van stolen 35 years ago in Spokane, Washington, was found by customs agents in a shipping container in the Los Angeles port last month, a U.S. Customs and Border Protection official said.

The blue van, in pristine condition, was bound for Germany along with several vintage Volkswagens, Customs and Border Protection Port Director Todd Hoffman said.

The Arizona company that was shipping the van had no idea the vehicle was stolen from a Spokane auto shop in 1974, Hoffman said.

[Customs and Border Protection](#) agents routinely run vehicle identification numbers through the National Insurance Crime Bureau database for all vehicles being loaded on ships for export, he said. They recover stolen vehicles about once a week, but they usually are high-end late-model luxury cars, he said.

While it was likely worth just a few hundred dollars when it was stolen, the [VW](#) is now valued at about \$27,000, he said.

Allstate Insurance Company, which paid the original owner for the loss decades ago, now owns the van, according to Allstate spokeswoman Megan Brunet.

The insurance company has not decided if it will sell the van at auction -- which is the routine -- or put it to other use because of its history, she said.

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