

Re-imagined: The all new Lexus IS 300h EX

What do you look for in a car when making that all-important purchase? Obviously, it's all about horses for courses and with that comes different tastes. I look for a complete package and for the vehicle to be perfect in every way from colour to general aesthetics to driveability and more. Features also play an important role. So with all of this in mind, let me tell you more about the Lexus IS 300 EX.



The sports sedan delivers a new level of luxury as standard in addition to a core focus on evocative design, imaginative technology and leading driving dynamics. The first attention grabber was the fact that in these days of ever-increasing fuel prices, the hybrid of part electricity and part internal combustion, at just 5.2l (combined) per 100km appealed to me greatly. The hybrid market has shown immense growth on a global scale in the past five years and the shift from diesel to alternative-propulsion vehicles is expected to keep growing at a rapid rate.

Lexus: features packed

Features that become standard on the Lexus IS for the first time include 18-inch alloy wheels for the EX and SE (19-inch for the F Sport), an electric park brake - replacing foot-operated, new 10.3-inch touch-display with Apple CarPlay and Android Auto, a pre-collision system for the SE grade and F Sport featuring daytime/night-time pedestrian detection plus daytime cyclist detection, all-speed active cruise control, lane tracing assist, blind-spot monitor, rear cross-traffic

alert+brake, as well as a panoramic view monitor when reversing.

This is an addition to smart entry and start, heated-and power-adjustable front seats, dual-zone climate control, 10-speaker audio for the EX grade and 17-speaker Mark Levinson sound for SE and F Sport grades. The top-spec models also come standard with satellite navigation, voice control and LED headlamps with automatic high-beam.

Power and design

The models achieve a total system output of 164kW. The IS has a combined-cycle fuel consumption from as low as 5.2 litres per 100kms. The 0-100 sprint is dispatched in 8.7 seconds with a top speed of 200km/h. The IS boasts a petrol-hybrid 2.5 litre CVT engine that achieves a maximum power of 133kW at 6000rpm and maximum torque of 221Nm at 4200-5400rpm.

The IS F Sport is alluring and assertive - Lexus designers didn't hold back when giving the range-topper its coupe-like silhouette and dramatic rendition of the signature spindle grille that shows even greater intricacy in the design. The F Sport grille brings out the Lexus DNA in many ways. It is really a work of art and achieves the desired interaction with light. The front grille features the iconic mesh pattern that has been used on all F Sport models, complementing the brand's sporty image.



Image credit: Naresh Maharaj

The IS reimagines the sports sedan concept with a low and wide stance, the sleek proportions of a four-door coupe, slimmer headlights and a lower, sharper side character line that combine to express a centre of gravity closer to the ground. It sits low slung and has a fast and aggressive look.

F Sport exclusive items heighten the sporty driving image, which includes the F Sport emblem on the front fender, piano-black garnish on the front grille and lower bumper, as well as exclusive 19-inch Aluminium wheels - previously 18-inch - that feature a premium dark-metallic coating.

Is it a true driver's car?

The simple answer is an emphatic yes!

For the first time on an IS F Sport, 19-inch alloy wheels are standard, in addition to an F Sport body kit and spoiler, F Sport scuff plates and ornamentation, high-grade LED headlamps, five-mode Drive Select - Eco, Normal, Sport S, Sport S+ and Custom, Adaptive Variable Suspension (AVS), F Sport leather-accented trim, sports pedals and seats with driver memory settings.



Image credit: Naresh Maharaj

Intense focus on evocative design, imaginative technology and leading driving dynamics makes the Lexus stand out. And all the safety bells and whistles are there, as standard features.

The Lexus IS is offered in a palette of 10 exterior colours. Three of those colours - Solar Storm Red, Poseidon Blue and White Nova are exclusive to the F Sport. The EX and SE have an additional two exclusive colours – White Quartz and Morello Red.

Price

The Lexus IS models retail from R841,300 for the EX grade, R899,800 for the SE grade and R916,100 for the F Sport. The entire IS range boasts a best-in-class seven-year/105,000km warranty and full maintenance [lan. The vehicle service intervals are pegged at every 15,000km, alternatively once a year.

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