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Jaguar Land Rover – Latest Vehicles News and First Impressions Test Drives

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Jaguar set an embargo date and time last week of one minute past midnight on Wednesday 11th December to announce their special edition Jaguar XE Reims model with just 200 units for sale solely in the UK.

By 0.945am the same day I was sat behind the wheel of the car giving it a very brief test drive around the winding but traffic-busy Warwickshire country roads at the annual Jaguar Land Rover pre-Christmas media driving day.

The XE Reims (pronounced Reams in English and a throaty Raas in French) marks the return of their French Racing Blue body colour to the brand's range. It was previously only used on their extreme models such as the XKR-S and XFR-S models and named in honour of the famous Reims-Geux circuit in Northern France. It was at this circuit the Jaguar D-Type



took its maiden victory in 1954 at the 12-hours of Reims race, covering over 2,000 km at an average speed of 105 mph.

Apart from the heritage bespoke colour the special edition model, priced at £38,295, also includes a number of additional features including a black contrast roof, black mirror caps plus black sill inserts, and it's fitted with 19-inch, five split-spoke gloss black alloys.

Options that have been standardised include privacy glass, exterior Black Pack that includes gloss black grille with gloss black surround, gloss black side window surrounds and gloss black side vents, badge deletion, heated seats and Cold Climate pack that includes heated windscreen, heated steering wheel, and headlight washers.



All 200 of the limited run XE Reims Editions will have the latest upgrades to specification for all 2020 model year XE saloons. These include a more luxurious interior, more comfort,



quality and connectivity and advanced technologies as standard. These include all-LED headlights, Apple CarPlay, a rear parking camera and front rear parking aids.

The XE Reims Edition will be the first of a series of 'Jaguar Factory Specials'; limited production run vehicles with bespoke features and details overlaid on the current award-winning vehicle range.

The XE Reims is only available with the JLR 2.0 litre Ingenium petrol (P250) engine in R-Dynamic S guise. It provides 250 hp with 365 Nm (269 lb.ft) of torque from just 1,350 rpm and drive to the rear wheels is through an eight speed automatic gearbox. Top speed is 155 mph and the zero to 62 mph acceleration time is 6.5 seconds. The WLTP Combined Cycle fuel consumption is officially 33.3 to 36.2 mpg but my less than swift short blast behind the wheel returned 28.8 mpg. The official CO2 rating is 159 g/km so VED First Year road tax costs £530 before the Standard rate of £145 is applied. Company car drivers will pay 35% Benefit-in-Kind tax. Insurance is likely to be Group 31E and warranty is three years/unlimited miles.

VERDICT

I'm not in the habit of test driving colours but on this occasion it was an opportunity to try the Reims version to get an overview of the latest XE upgrades. The interior design has certainly improved and the quality looks more refined as well. The ride quality was excellent and the car feels really well balanced. It still has the usual complaint of lack of rear seat legroom but other than that it deserves consideration against its toughest competitor the BMW 3 Series.

The engine is strong thanks to the significant amount of torque from relatively low rpm speeds so it felt punchy for overtaking slower traffic, but it was still docile and quiet at slower dawdling speeds. With its famous heritage bodywork colour this XE Reims model is certainly special.



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Jaguar I-Pace



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Also at the media driving day was the Jaguar I-Pace and as public charging points are scarce in my area I took the opportunity for a brief drive in this highly rated and increasingly more often seen on our roads model.

The Jaguar I-Pace with its EV400 label is the brand's plug-in pure electric SUV although its sleek coupé side profile dilutes its SUV image somewhat. What it is – is a luxury five door, five-seater coupé styled crossover, blending a premium quality hatchback with a nod to a higher riding muscular road stance with significant kerb appeal.



It's 4,682 mm (15.36 ft) long, 1,895 mm (6.22 ft) wide and 1,565 mm (5.13 ft) high with a plush lined boot of 577 litres (20.38 cu.ft) which expands to 1,453 litres (51.31 cu.ft) with the rear seat backs folded down, so it's practical as well as premium plush.

Its power output is 400 hp with 696 Nm (513 lb.ft) of torque, using two electric motors giving all wheel drive. It currently has a driving range of 292 miles between charge-ups of the 90kWh battery and of course no CO2 emissions. So VED road tax is zero cost and company car drivers pay 16% Benefit-in-Kind tax - but that might be lower for all-electric cars bought from April next year if the Government sticks to the planned £0 BiK duty for pure electric cars. The I-Pace is also eligible for the £3,500 Plug-in Grant which will reduce the price list figures of £64,495 to £74,995 through the three S, SE and HSE specification levels. All versions use the same power output twin electric motor system. My brief test drive version was the HSE spec priced at £71,495 after the Plug-In Grant has been applied.



The top speed is 124 mph and the zero to 62 mph acceleration time is 4.8 seconds but as with powerful electric motors and a massive 696 Nm (513 lb.ft) of torque the acceleration is immediate so it feels instantly quick whether from standstill or overtaking slower traffic.

For start up its just push a start button, push another button for Drive or Reverse - and there is one for Neutral - and it's off you go almost silently with just a whistle from the electric motors. On start up the first thing that shows itself on the instrument binnacle is the driving range available and the percentage of battery life left. On this occasion it was showing 241 miles with 91%. After a 20 mile country road route done in Eco mode, which didn't detract from the performance at all, the figure was 230 miles with 85% battery



charge still available. These types of figures will be more common to us all as we get used to driving pure-electric cars.

News just in from Jaguar shows a complimentary soft-ware upgrade for the I-Pace which will increase its driving range by around 12 miles. This has come about from technical knowledge gained from the I-Pace eTrophy race series. The update also adds enhanced Software-Over-The-Air functionality in line with the similar Tesla Wi-Fi upgrade technology.

The I-Pace traction and handling is well balanced as it needs to be with a vehicle of this size and so much torque on tap. The ride comfort was really excellent and even during enthusiastic cornering, when I was trying to test the agility of the I-Pace, the grip was surefooted and the handling precise although the steering weight felt too light.

VERDICT

[Yes my I-Pace experience was short-lived but very interesting.](#)

Land Rover Discovery Sport D180 AWD



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The Land Rover Discovery Sport has recently received a number of minor styling changes for the 2020 model year but more significant improvements in terms of connectivity functions and a general upgrading of the interior both in terms of instrumentation and seating configuration. It also sees the addition of the new D180 Ingenium 180 hp turbodiesel engine now introduced to the Range Rover Evoque and Velar SUVs as well.

The 2020 Discovery Sport line up includes five and seven seat models with, depending on the engine chosen, Standard, S, SE and HSE spec levels plus R-Dynamic versions. Prices range from £31,575 to almost £50k. Engine choices are all 2.0 litre Ingenium units comprising of the D150 front wheel drive manual, D150 AWD auto, the new D180 AWD auto



and the D240 AWD auto. Petrol units are the P200 AWD auto and P250 AWD Auto. All units use a 48v mild-hybrid system to reduce emissions and a three cylinder petrol PHEV plug-in hybrid power unit is due soon.

My test drive model was the new D180 AWD with the S R-Dynamic specification with 5+2 seating and now the latest changes include a 40/20/40 split middle row of seats providing 24 possible seating configurations. Boot space ranges from 963 to 1,794 litres (34.01 to 63.35 cu.ft) depending upon the seat layout chosen.

Of course AWD versions still maintain their impressive off-road abilities, thanks to their easy to use Terrain Response 2 system. Other new technology includes ClearSight Ground View which allows the driver, via a series of cameras, to see through the bonnet for off-roading and the cameras provide all-round vision for on-road and parking uses. For connectivity there is Touch Pro infotainment with Apple CarPlay and Android Auto, wireless charging and 4G Wi-Fi hotspot.

That's just a flavour of what the 2020 model year Discovery Sport offers and even with its past spec levels has recorded 100,000 sales in the UK, making its Land Rovers core selling model.

The new D180 four cylinder 180 hp Ingenium turbodiesel engine neatly fills a noticeable gap in the engine line-up sitting between the D150 and D240 units. With its mild-hybrid system there is a healthy 430 Nm (317 lb.ft) of torque from just 1,500 rpm, so whether its off-roading or on-road travel this is a strong unit, very smooth and quiet. Top speed is 125 mph and zero to 60 mph takes 9.4 seconds. The Combined Cycle WLTP fuel consumption is 37.2 mpg to 39.6 mpg and on my short on-road test drive the figure was 33.8 mpg - but that should improve on a longer run. The CO2 emissions are 150 g/km so VED First Year road tax costs £530 followed by the Standard rate of £145 but as it costs over £40k an annual £310 supplement has to be added to that figure for five years. Company car drivers will pay a hefty top rate 37% Benefit-in-Kind tax as it carries that extra 4% diesel levy.



VERDICT

Overall the new Discovery Sport's styling looks well proportioned, thoroughly modern with an aerodynamic front end and a nicely shaped rear end, much better than the ugly bulbous design of its larger Discovery stablemate. Inside there has been a significant improvement in layout, usability and quality so the 2020 models take the Disco Sport to a higher level of customer appeal.



Range Rover P400 MHEV Vogue



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The Range Rover is the flagship of the brand and in its very latest form gets the use of JLR's own new 3.0 litre straight-six cylinder petrol engine with Mild Hybrid Vehicle powertrain which also includes a regenerative braking charging function. It has debuted in the Range Rover and Range Rover Sport and will be added to other JLR models. Drive to all four wheels is via an eight speed automatic gearbox and all the usual on/off road driving modes are included.

This is the latest Ingenium engine (until now, four cylinder units), and it's the latest step that ensures JLR offers an electrified option for all new models from 2020.



This new engine combines an electric supercharger for immediate boost before the twin-scroll turbocharger activates, eliminating turbo lag. With 400 hp and 550 Nm (406 lb.ft) of torque from 2,000 rpm, for me this made the new engine feel comparable with a much larger capacity V8 unit in terms of smoothness and overall refinement. Sadly it misses a burbling multi-cylinder exhaust note which doesn't matter for a Range Rover but might when it gets used for a Jaguar.



Top speed in the Range Rover P400 Vogue is 140 mph with the zero to 62 mph acceleration time being 6.3 seconds, not bad for this huge 4×4 flagship. The official WLTP Combined Cycle fuel consumption figures range from 25.1 to 26.7 mpg and on my brief test drive the overall figure was 24 mpg.

The CO2 figure is 212 g/km so tax costs are high at £1,280 First Year rate and then £145 Standard rate plus the £310 annual supplement for five years as it costs over £40k. The company car tax rate is the maximum 37% and insurance is Group 50E. The price of my test car, the P400 Vogue version, was £90,010 on-the-road. Other non-hybrid versions are priced from just under £84k to over £171k with a variety of petrol and diesel engines and a wide



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range of spec levels.

VERDICT

Impressive.

As 2019 end what's coming soon from JLR in 2020

Jaguar F-Type



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At last week's JLR media driving day the company had on static display the latest incarnation of the Jaguar F-Type Convertible two-seater sports car. On sale now with Coupé and Convertible body styles, prices start from £54,060, with deliveries to customers beginning next year.



The petrol power units will be 2.0 litre 300hp auto rear wheel drive, 5.0 litre V8 450 hp auto AWD and the F-Type R AWD versions have a 575 hp version of the 5.0 litre V8 unit.

A quick look around the version on show revealed a less harsh and aggressive bodywork design, more refined and graceful and perhaps more in keeping with the Jaguar classic design language than its predecessor which divided opinions.



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Land Rover Defender



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Also on display was a pre-production version of the long awaited all-new Land Rover Defender. This hard-core 4x4 will become available in the Spring of 2020 in the UK, the 72nd anniversary of the British Land Rover brand.

There will be various body lengths and body styles. Initially it will be 110 inch wheelbase models followed by the 90 inch, with a pair of commercial models following later next year

Power units revealed so far are 2.0 litre SD4 D200 hp diesel, SD4 D240 hp diesel, 2.0 litre Si4 300 hp petrol and 3.0 litre i6 400 hp petrol mild hybrid.



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Prices for 110 models start from £45,240 and rise to a massive £78,800 for the 400 hp petrol model. Prices for the 90 versions are expected to start from around £40k with the commercial versions from around £35k plus VAT.

