

Purr-fect.....



Ian Lamming drives the best of British in the new Jaguar XF

BADGES mean nothing to me, really! It makes no odds what the label says on the tin, honestly.

A car is a piece of engineering, to be judged on merit, right? Nah, who am I kidding? Of course it makes a difference and hang the engineering.

As I scrunched up my gravel drive to the hall in the Jaguar XF do you think I felt moved by the experience? Certainly did; you would have to be dead inside not to.

It has to be said, so I will say it, the big cat fitted in with the surroundings beautifully looking just the part outside the 600-year-old monolith I call home.

Walking towards the tradesman's entrance – the grand front door the size of No10's is for visitors only and even then only the poshest – I just couldn't help pausing, turning, glancing and smirking. That's the effect a big Jag has on you I'm afraid.

If you are a bit clever at design and have penned the glorious F-Type, then you are going to want to share that look right across the range, aren't you?

So XF, already a striking looking car, gets the F-Type makeover, with bolder grille and sportier looking lights front and aft. What remains is the sleek profile and beautiful proportions you come to expect from Jaguar.

Expectations are equally met, if not exceeded, inside with another peerless interior. It's lovely, being somehow stately and opulent but contemporary and hi-tech at the same time.

Light coloured leather and metal-finished dash set the mood for touch-screen infotainment centre, air vents that are revealed on ignition and a gear-knob that emerges from the transmission tunnel like a missile from the silo.

A high feel-good factor influences the way it drives, putting another smirk on your face.

This XF is powered by a strong and refined diesel.

The 180PS it contains gives it more than enough shunt to satisfy even the most demanding performance junkies. It will also munch miles with aplomb and is wonderfully relaxed on long journeys.

Cross-country the XF is a dynamic drive handling the bumps, twists and turns in its stride and the economy of 50mpg plus is more than welcome.

XF is a big old boy, its size masked by superb lines. This translates into a more than useful amount of interior space for burgeoning frames and a whopping boot for the designer shopping bags or luggage.

Overall, the Jaguar is a quality ride offering stunning looks, opulent specification and levels of build and a badge that makes you proud. Badges? Important? Certainly are on this occasion.

Fact File

- Jaguar XF 2.0D
- Engine: 2.0 diesel
- Power: 180PS
- 0-60mph: 7.7 secs
- Top speed: 142mph
- Combined MPG: 65.7
- Transmission: Eight speed automatic
- CO2 g/km: 114