

Being Cruel to

MotorMadness



Be Kind

Ian Lamming assesses the sporty nature of the Lexus IS range

THERE is an inherent cruelty among many luxury car designers.

They love to taunt, tantalise and torture us with tastes of technology that humble mortals could never hope to enjoy, save on the pages of glossy car magazines or automotive internet sites.

At a glance, Lexus was as guilty as any when it produced the LFA, a car so gloriously sculpted and advanced it was only ever going to be owned by the rich and famous.

But no, Lexus would not do that to the world and consequently the stunning styling cues and class leading know-how is not simply filtering down but is pouring through the range.

We may be humble but it doesn't stop drivers wanting the best and now they can get their fill with the IS range, a stunning looking saloon with a cockpit inspired by a supercar.

Whether it is the eerily quiet and refined IS300h or the even sportier 200 turbo, discerning drivers will enjoy the ride.

The latest addition to the range sports a 2.0 litre turbocharged petrol motor whacking out 241hp through an eight speed automatic transmission.

It is rapid with a top speed of 143mph and 0-62mph sprint time of seven seconds without losing any of the Lexus refinement or

economy – expect about 40mpg.

Fast throttle response, instantaneous torque, minimal turbo lag and strong fuel economy can't fail to delight.

For a less frenetic approach, the 300h features the incredible hybrid set up, a powerful electric motor that works seamlessly with a 2.5 four cylinder petrol.

The combination is incredible with the 300h floating through towns silently on battery or working in tandem to maximise performance.

On the road they get peerless handling, grip and dynamics. The lengths Lexus has gone to develop a suspension suitable for our rough roads is staggering and the result is superb.

There's even a G-force sensor that works with the gearbox.

So when you brake before a bend it knows to shift down the gearbox and it holds the ratio to ensure maximum control.

Both get a cockpit inspired by the LFA making driver and passengers feel part of something special helped along the way by magnificent build quality and high specification.

So thank you Lexus; thank you for developing the LFA and for sharing its good bits with us mere mortals.

Fact File

- Lexus IS300h/IS200t
- Engine: 2.5 litre petrol plus electric/2.0 petrol turbo
- Power: 223hp combined/241hp
- 0-62mph: 8.4/7 secs
- Top speed: 124/143mph
- Transmission: CVT/eight speed auto
- Combined MPG: 61.4/40.4
- CO2 g/km: 107/167