

The New Lexus IS300h F Sport on Test

Time and time again people say to me, why car manufacturers can not produce an electric or hybrid car that looks good. I can see their point and of course there are exceptions.

Recently I had the opportunity to put the Lexus IS300h F Sport through its paces, a real eye catcher with sporting elements inside and out.

This is one to challenge the German premium brands and is the third generation model.

Of course what puts the finishing touches to this car is the F Sport pack and it available for both IS 250 and IS 300h; the other trim levels are SE, Luxury and Premium.



The new IS abounds with technology with powerful multimedia systems, multiple connectivity options and access to Lexus Connected services. Advanced safety systems including Blind Spot Monitor, Rear Cross Traffic Alert and Tyre Pressure Warning System, this car has it all and more.

While the exterior is striking, the same can be said of the interior with a cockpit inspired by the LFA. At last the interior environment is not only a focus for the driver but also for all whom travel in this new Lexus.

In bringing this new model to market Lexus carried out extensive testing,

some 1.6 million kilometres including extensive testing on the famous Nurburgring in Germany. This famous circuit for many years has been a firm favourite for the German carmakers and Lexus is clearly bringing the game to them.

A number of goals were in mind, quality, economy and performance and for me my score sheet is a high one.

The Lexus designers and engineers could have produced a car which majored on performance; yes they have succeeded in delivering performance aplenty, but the other goals; luxury the best in class in my opinion and very important economy.

An emission figure as low as 99g/km has been achieved for one of the IS300h models, no other car in this class has scored that goal and the emphasis on hybrid and no diesel availability speaks volumes.

The combination of a four cylinder 2.5 litre petrol engine and an electric motor provide the power and the system drives the rear wheels via an electronically controlled continuously variable transmission. Total system output is 220bhp/164kW, enabling rest to 62mph in 8.3 seconds and a 125mph top speed.

Okay performance may not be earth shattering, but for such a car it is good and the bonus is looks with economy.

Combined cycle fuel consumption is 60.1mpg with class-leading CO₂ emissions of 109g/km for the version tested.

I had the IS300h F Sport for a week and with a great variety of driving conditions I

managed just short of 40mpg.

The transmission can be switched to a sequential shiftmatic mode, operated using paddle shifts on the steering wheel and the transmission has been tuned to more closely match increases in engine speed with increases in vehicle speed, to give a more engaging driving experience.

Then there is Active Sound Control, which compliments the sound of the engine with an audio feed through a dedicated speaker in the cabin. Some people may not like this while others certainly will.

Summing a very elegant car and now to cost my test car had a number of options bringing the final sum to £37,500.

For many it will be a welcome change from Mercedes, BMW and Audi.

Ian Lynas

