

2015 Lexus IS C Leads a Double Life

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Some find the choice between coupe and convertible difficult to make. The Lexus IS C eliminates that dilemma. Its retractable hardtop provides the snugness of a closed coupe when up, and, at the push of a button, lowers in just 20 seconds when you want the unique feeling of top-down driving.

Enhancements to the IS C for 2015 include a new, organ-type accelerator pedal and, expanding music options, upgrading to the Lexus App Suite with iHeartRadio 4.0 and adding Slacker.

The 2015 Lexus IS C comes in four flavors: IS 250 with a 204 hp 2.5-liter V6 engine; IS 250 F SPORT with track-tuned handling upgrades; IS 350 with the potent 306 hp 3.5-liter V6, and the IS 350 F SPORT. All come standard with a six-speed automatic transmission with steering-wheel-mounted paddle shifters.

The IS C also comes with a pedigree. More than 20 years ago, Lexus became the first brand to offer a retractable hardtop convertible in the premium-luxury segment, the SC 430. Lexus refined technology from that car for the IS C, bringing it to a more accessible segment.

Leave it to Lexus to ensure coupe-like quiet and comfort in a convertible. The IS C makes effective use of an acoustic glass windshield, along with special seals on the roof, door and window panels. The rear window is made from reinforced glass. The design looks sleek to the eye and is also slippery in the wind tunnel. An impressively low 0.29 coefficient of drag (Cd) helps to minimize wind buffeting in the cabin when the top is down.

The available F SPORT package brings out the IS C models' inner road athlete. The F SPORT grille and lip spoiler and aerodynamic body elements accentuate the car's already sporty stance. The sport-tuned suspension sharpens the car's moves without harshening the ride.

The Dark Superchrome finish on the 18-inch split-five-spoke alloy wheels gives the IS C F SPORT models an almost sinister look, and the wheels apply a trick from racing, called a "staggered" tire array. The front 18 x 8.0-in wheels have 225/40YR18 tires, and the wider 18 x 8.5-in rear wheels wear 255/40YR18 tires (choice of all-season or summer performance tires).

Inside, the F SPORT treats the driver and front passenger luxuriously with leather-appointed, heated and ventilated sport seats. Unique features include the F SPORT steering wheel and shift knob, Silver Metallic interior trim, aluminum sport pedals, and aluminum doorsill scuff plates.

High-Tech Roof With Many Talents

There's much more to the IS C's clever roof design than meets the eye. Behind the scenes, 13 electric motors and 33 sensors control the three-panel aluminum roof. When it's lowered, the roof hides beneath a locking panel that automatically closes. Unlike with a soft-top, there's no need to secure an awkward tonneau cover or hold-down snaps. With the top raised, the trunk is roomy enough to carry two golf bags, or one golf bag with the top lowered.

Lexus applied its penchant for quiet operation to the roof, using a lightweight aluminum four-link design and a roof-speed brake system that slows the roof as it approaches the end of the closing operation.

When the IS C is equipped with the available Intuitive Park Assist (IPA), roof operation will stop if an obstacle that might interfere is detected behind the car. The driver will get an audible warning, and a warning light illuminates in the instrument panel.

Four's Company

Lexus designed the IS C as a strictly four-seat car, with a high level of luxury as standard. The leather-trimmed 10-way power-adjustable front seats have power lumbar support. On the available heated/ventilated front seats,

the heating range includes the shoulder areas.

The two rear seats are positioned slightly inboard to maximize room and comfort, and Lexus ensured easy ingress/egress with a one-touch feature that automatically folds a front seat and moves it forward. The rear-seat console includes cup holders and storage.

Top-Down Intelligence

The Lexus IS C knows when it's a coupe, and when it's a convertible. When the top is lowered, the climate control system automatically adjusts the temperature and airflow to compensate. The system takes into account vehicle speed and even the amount of sunlight reaching the interior.

What good is a high-end sound system like the 14-speaker Mark Levinson® Premium Surround Sound Audio System available for the Lexus IS C if you can't hear its full potential when the top is down? Here, too, the IS C responds to its environment by automatically adjusting the sound equalization – particularly bass response — to compensate, and then changing back when the top is raised.

Well Connected

The Lexus IS C connects you to music, information and destinations, through onboard systems and your smartphone. Standard equipment includes a SiriusXM® Satellite Radio receiver (complimentary 90-day trial subscription included), Bluetooth® hands free phone capability with automatic phonebook download, Bluetooth music streaming, and USB/iPod® connectivity.

The available hard disc drive (HDD) navigation system also comes with Lexus Enform Destination Services, which includes Destination Assist, eDestination and the subscription-free Lexus Enform App Suite. Its voice-enabled apps let you search the Internet through Bing™, make restaurant reservations through OpenTable®, get movie tickets via MovieTickets.com™, listen to Pandora®, iHeartRadio™ and, new for 2015, Slacker. You can also search business reviews on Yelp®, and check in on Facebook Places™.

Lexus Enform Safety Connect is standard on all vehicles, while Lexus Enform Destination Services is on all vehicles equipped with the optional Navigation system and includes a complimentary one-year trial subscription. The Lexus Enform response centers operate 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

The optional Pre-Collision System (PCS) is packaged with Dynamic Radar Cruise Control, which uses millimeter-wave radar to measure and help maintain a pre-set following distance from a vehicle traveling ahead.

What's New for 2014

- Redesigned organ-type accelerator pedal.
- Lexus Enform App Suite adds Slacker and upgrades to iHeartRadio 4.0.

Engine/Transmission/Drivetrain/Performance

- The IS 250C's 2.5-liter V6 engine delivers 204 horsepower at 6,400 rpm and 185 lb.-ft. of peak torque at 4,800 rpm.
- The IS 350C's 3.5-liter V6 offers 306 horsepower at 6,400 rpm and 277 lb.-ft. of torque at 4,800 rpm.
- The 3.5-liter V6 augments direct fuel injection with port fuel injectors. In light- and medium-load conditions, these additional injectors help produce a precise burn, optimizing power and efficiency.
- A dual exhaust system reduces backpressure.

Chassis/Body/Suspension/Tires/Brakes

- The body structure has excellent rigidity and strength, achieved by effective structural changes and additions to the rocker area, A and B pillar under structure, side collision crossmember, and upper and rear-floor crossmembers; underfloor braces were added in the front and rear.
- High-rigidity damping materials and asphalt sheets help minimize vibration effects.
- The IS C features standard 10-spoke 17-inch wheels with a clean liquid-graphite finish and optional split five-spoke or five-spoke 18-inch wheels with a liquid-graphite finish and all-season tires.
- Standard Vehicle Dynamics Integrated Management System (VDIM) interfaces with the electronic throttle control system and governs all of the vehicle's dynamic handling systems – the Anti-lock Braking System (ABS), Brake Assist (BA), Vehicle Stability Control (VSC) and Traction Control (TRAC) – employing them collectively and seamlessly to make corrections while helping provide higher dynamic capability.

Safety and Security Features

- Seatbelt pre-tensioners and force limiters are used for the front seats, while the rear seats adopt emergency locking retractor seatbelts.
- The Lexus Supplemental Restraint System (SRS) includes dual-front airbags, front-seat-mounted side curtain and torso side airbags, and knee airbags for both the driver and the front passenger.

Luxury/Comfort/Convenience

- Two convenient fold-forward lock-release levers on both sides of the front seats make operation easier from any seat. In addition, the passenger seat features a power slide button on the top of the seatback to ease rear seat ingress/egress.
- An available automatic one-touch, easy-entry power-seat mechanism provides even easier egress and ingress through quick-acting, front-seat fold-and-slide activation.
- The doors feature three open-stopping positions (rather than the normal two) to add convenience in various parking situations.
- The standard SmartAccess keyless entry and push-button-start/stop allows the driver to keep the access key fob in a pocket or purse.
- Standard Hill-start Assist Control (HAC) helps prevent the vehicle from moving backward when the driver's foot moves from the brake pedal to the accelerator.

Luxury Options

- The available Hard-Disk Drive (HDD) Navigation System has a seven-inch VGA touch-screen, back-up camera, Voice Command casual-language voice recognition system, Bluetooth automatic phonebook download and music streaming, HD Radio™ with iTunes tagging.
- Available in conjunction with the optional navigation system is a 12-speaker Mark Levinson Premium Surround Sound Audio system that features discrete 5.1 multi-channel playback, nine amplifier channels providing 270 watts total output at 0.1 percent total harmonic distortion (THD).
- Bi-Xenon HID headlamps with LED daytime running lamps (DRLs) are available.
- The optional Intuitive Park Assist (IPA) system uses ultrasonic sensors to detect objects close to the car's front and rear bumpers, alerting the driver and showing distance to objects in the multi-information display within the speedometer.

Warranty

- 48-month/50,000-mile basic limited warranty with roadside assistance for 48 months/unlimited miles.
- 72 months/70,000 miles powertrain and restraint system coverage.
- 72 months corrosion perforation protection coverage, regardless of mileage.