

Lexus IS Models Pull Major Upset in Sport Sedan Segment

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Delighting enthusiast drivers and luxury connoisseurs alike, the third-generation Lexus IS models continue to upset the balance of power among sport sedans for 2015, their sophomore season.

The IS 250 and IS 350 models convey an aggressive yet elegant presence with the brand's unmistakable spindle grille, L-theme LED daytime running lights and dynamic bodylines. The all-V6 lineup includes the choice of 204-hp and 306-hp powertrains, with rear-wheel drive or all-weather drive. In both, silken power delivery combines with multi-link rear suspension and finely tuned electronic power steering derived from the Lexus GS sedan to deliver a rousing driving experience.

At the same time, the brand's hallmark luxury and sumptuous appointments remains intact, bolstered by cutting-edge multi-media.

The Lexus IS features a host of upgrades for 2015, including new LED fog lights and numerous cabin enhancements. Reflecting the popularity of the all-weather drive (AWD) system in colder climates, a heated steering wheel is available for AWD models. The F SPORT package now includes heated/ventilated front seats and F SPORT AWD models also get the heated steering wheel.

The standard backup monitor adds dynamic gridlines for 2015, helping to make parking maneuvers easier and safe.

Keeping drivers connected, all IS models gain the in-demand Siri® Eyes Free mode, with technology licensed from Apple®. Compatible with the iPhone® 4S and iPhone 5 models forward, Siri responds to verbal requests to play music from iTunes®, get turn-by-turn navigation, and much more. Keep your eyes on the road and hands on the wheel while Siri reads notifications and calendar information and lets you to add reminders, appointments and notes.

In addition, the Lexus IS models add the advanced Lexus Enform Remote (one-year trial subscription included), which allows the owner to remotely view and control certain vehicle features using a mobile app for iOS and Android devices.

Key features include remote door lock/unlock; remote stop/start for the engine and climate control; vehicle finder, guest driver monitor and more. The Lexus Enform App Suite, meanwhile, upgrades to include iHeartRadio 4.0 and Slacker.

The IS 350 delivers scintillating performance from a 3.5-liter V6 that produces 306 hp and 277 lb.-ft. of peak torque. Its eight-speed, Sport Direct Shift (SPDS) automatic transmission integrates advanced G-force Artificial Intelligence (G-AI) system to choose gears intuitively. Or, shift yourself with the paddle shifters. The IS 250 model uses a 204-hp 2.5-liter V6 matched to a six-speed automatic.

The available electronically controlled all-weather drive system available for both IS models is designed to help enhance traction and grip under all driving conditions by automatically varying front-to-rear torque balance from 50:50 to as much as 30:70.

A Drive Mode Select system features up to five driving modes to tailor the car's combination of economy, comfort, performance and handling characteristics. The IS 250 and IS 350 feature ECO, NORMAL, and SPORT modes. Equipping the IS 350 with the F SPORT package also nets Adaptive Variable Suspension (AVS), controlled with SPORT S and SPORT S+ modes. In addition, AWD models also feature a SNOW mode.

Available for IS 250 and IS 350 models, the F SPORT package sharpens handling acuity with unique 18-inch wheels and special suspension tuning, while sharpening the design with unique interior and exterior trim. The finishing touch on the F SPORT experience is an intake sound generator that creates a more sporting engine note.

A touch-screen display audio system equips the IS models with an eight-inch screen, backup monitor, HD Radio™, Bluetooth® audio, automatic phone book transfer, a vehicle information display and complimentary traffic and weather data provided via HD Radio. The multimedia system also incorporates cache radio which has the ability to pause live radio. It automatically records the previous 15 minutes for convenient replay.

Luxuries abound in the 2015 Lexus IS models. A high-efficiency dual-zone climate control system uses touch-sensitive electrostatic temperature switches. The IS offers two multimedia systems: a standard high-resolution Lexus Display Audio (LDA) with controller or the optional Lexus navigation system.

The navigation system puts a world of capability at the driver's fingertips via the second-generation Lexus Remote Touch Interface (RTI) multi-function control device. The RTI also allows control of the climate, audio, phone controls and more. Lend your ears to the available Mark Levinson® Premium Surround System and enjoy strikingly life-like sound reproduction, with 835 watts powering 15 speakers.

The next-generation IS models exemplify the brand's mastery of advanced passive and active safety technology. Ten Supplemental Restraint System (SRS) airbags are standard, and the IS models employ the innovative Vehicle Dynamics Integrated Management (VDIM) system, which integrates: Anti-Lock Brakes (ABS), Electronic Brake-force Distribution (EBD), Traction Control (TRAC) and Vehicle Stability Control (VSC) active safety systems with the Electronic Power Steering (EPS) or, where fitted (for IS 350 F SPORT), Variable Gear Ratio Steering (VGRS).

The 2015 IS models can also be equipped with the available pre-emptive Pre-Collision System (PCS), which incorporates Adaptive Cruise Control. The model range offers several advanced active safety features, including an Automatic High Beam (AHB) headlamp system, a Lane Departure Alert (LDA) system, a Blind Spot Monitor (BSM) with Rear Cross Traffic Alert (RCTA) system and a standard Auto Location Tire Pressure Warning System (AL-TPWS).

What's New for 2015

- LED fog lamps
- Siri Eyes Free technology from Apple; compatible with iPhone 4S and iPhone 5 models
- Heated/ventilated front seats added to F SPORT (F SPORT AWD also gets heated steering wheel)
- Revised interior trim, including piano black on window switches and instrument panel
- New Stratus Gray interior replaces Light Gray
- Backup monitor adds dynamic grid lines to aid parking maneuvers
- Available Lexus Enform Remote

Chassis/Body/Suspension/Brakes/Tires

- Advanced construction techniques include laser screw welding and adhesive body bonding that help provide enhanced overall body rigidity.
- Rear sub frame and cowl side braces help to further enhance handling control and steering response.
- Electric Power Steering System for a smoother more accurate feel with greater feedback.
- One 17-inch wheel design and three 18-inch wheel designs.

Safety/Security

- High- and ultra-high-tensile steel body structure help provide excellent occupant protection.
- Pre-Collision System (PCS) with Adaptive Cruise Control; PCS enables deceleration when the driver applies the brakes automatically activating Brake Assist (BA) which can increase the braking force under certain conditions.
- Ten SRS airbags; two-stage dual SRS front airbags, driver and front passenger SRS knee airbags, front and rear (new) SRS side airbags, as well as full length SRS side curtain airbags.

Luxury/Comfort/Convenience

- Interior design with LFA-inspired, driver-focused cockpit and enhanced rear seat roominess and luggage capacity.
- Quilted driver's seat offers greater comfort and better lateral support.
- Dual-zone automatic climate control with new, touch-sensitive electrostatic switches.
- Lexus Display Audio (LDA) with display audio controller.
- Available Lexus navigation system with Remote Touch Interface (RTI) and Enform App Suite.
- 4.2-inch full color multi-information display including audio, trip, navigation, phone, ambient temperature.

Luxury Options

- Mark Levinson® Premium Surround System with new, Unity, Wide Dispersion and Inverted Motor Structure loudspeaker technology with 15 speakers and 835-watts.
- The new Clari-Fi technology on the available Mark Levinson system automatically analyzes compression in the signal of digital tracks (CD, iPod, etc.) and determines how much amplification is needed, and where, to correct it.
- Luxury Package with rain-sensing wipers, electrochromic side mirrors with reverse tilt-down and memory, leather-trimmed interior, power tilt/telescoping steering wheel, seat heater/ventilation, and more.

Exterior Design

- Compared to previous generation, the wheelbase is increased by nearly three inches and width by nearly half an inch, for an aggressive stance.
- A further evolution of the spindle grille features a more three-dimensional design with a chrome-plated frame and darker gray insert from top to bottom.
- Standard HID low/high beam headlamps with LED DRLs and available twin projector LED low/ high beam headlamps.
- Eight exterior colors: Starfire Pearl, Ultra White Metallic (exclusive to F SPORT), Nebula Gray Pearl, Silver Lining Metallic, Atomic Silver, Obsidian, Matador Red Mica, and Deep Sea Mica.

Interior Design

- Driver-oriented cockpit design inspired by Lexus LFA supercar.
- Dashboard is divided into two distinct zones, a display zone and an operation zone, offering drivers more comfortable, ergonomically ideal interaction with the vehicle's control systems.
- Combination of longer wheelbase and a special front seat design increases rear seat legroom by 1.6 inches
- Standard 60:40 split-folding rear seats.
- Five interior colors: Black, Light Gray, Parchment, Flaxen and Rioja Red (exclusive to F SPORT)
- Soft touch finishes throughout, including padding on the center console sides.
- Silver metallic trim analog clock with surface-emitting illumination.

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.

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