

In Pursuit of the Perfect Pitch

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In a new commercial, Lexus puts the LFA supercar to the “glass test”

TORRANCE, Calif. (June 2, 2010)—It’s a dramatic moment. In an ultra-modern audio studio, a Pearl White Lexus LFA supercar faces its challenger: a lone crystal champagne flute on a pedestal alongside a sleek amplifier. The vehicle’s keyless ignition is engaged, and its rear wheels start spinning on a dynamometer. The engine roars louder and louder, the speedometer clicks past 150, 160, 170 mph. That’s when the glass quivers and shimmies until – kshhh! – the flute shatters in gorgeous slow motion.

In this latest commercial from Lexus, which begins airing today, the LFA’s signature engine sound achieves a feat reserved for virtuoso performers. The unique sound of 552-horsepower engine, which helps the vehicle reach top speeds in excess of 200 mph, shatters the glass without the use of CGI or camera tricks.

“The glass is actually broken by the precision sound of the vehicle,” said Dave Nordstrom, vice president of marketing for Lexus. “We wanted to show just how deep our pursuit of perfection and commitment to innovation goes. The LFA was designed to deliver its own unique exhaust note, and this illustrates that beautifully.”

The Signature Sound

Lexus worked with a team of engineers to enhance the acoustics of the LFA’s 4.8L engine by meticulously tuning its multi-stage exhaust system. From the elegant, yet understated idle rumble to the goosebump-worthy wail of the high-revving V10 engine, the LFA was deliberately engineered to deliver a sound unlike that of any other road car.

After studying the unmistakable soundtrack generated by Formula 1 cars at maximum revs, the team created the signature LFA sound beginning by emphasizing the secondary combustion frequency of the engine and then introducing primary, secondary and tertiary firing harmonics.

The note is so unique that Lexus has even created an LFA ringtone that can be downloaded for free at <http://www.lexus-lfa.com> (click “Digital Premium”).

The Glass Test

For the commercial titled “Pitch,” Lexus employed a renowned physicist from a leading university to help determine which type of champagne glasses have the same frequency as the LFA’s revving engine. (The pitch of the glass needed to precisely match the pitch of the engine in order for the flute to shatter.) Lexus racecar driver Scott Pruett then “drove” on the dynamometer until the engine revved to 7,000-9,000 rpm—creating just the right frequency of vibration to break the glass. And, yes, the entire crew wore earplugs during filming.

It’s not the first time Lexus has used champagne glasses in an ad. Now an almost iconic expression of the brand’s pursuit of perfection and pioneering innovation, they were originally used in the brand’s launch commercial in 1989. In one of the most memorable TV spots in history, the new LS sedan revved to high RPMs as a pyramid of champagne glasses was carefully stacked on the car’s hood. As the speedometer approached top speeds, champagne was poured into the top glass and elegantly flowed into the glasses below—without spilling a drop or razing the pyramid.

Most recently, in a 2006 commercial, the ground-breaking park assist feature on the LS 460 was engaged to dramatically and precisely parallel park the vehicle between two giant pyramids of champagne glasses—without touching a glass.

“Pitch” can be viewed at YouTube.com/lexusvehicles. It will air primarily on cable television and during sporting events such as the 2010 Major League Baseball All-Star Game and the USGA U.S. Open Championship. A 3-D version of the spot will play in theaters beginning July 2 to coincide with the debut of a 3-D summer blockbuster.

About Lexus

Lexus is the leading luxury automaker in the United States. With its reputation for high-quality products and exemplary customer service from its 228 dealers, Lexus has been the top-selling luxury automaker for ten years in a row. In addition, Lexus is the luxury hybrid leader, now offering four hybrids that provide the best in innovative technology and first-class luxury. When Lexus was established in 1989, it offered two models of vehicles. Now, more than 20 years later, Lexus offers variations of 11 vehicles, from the entry-level IS 250 to its first V10 supercar, the LFA.

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CONTACTS:

Daphne Adair

(310) 615-2109

daphne.adair@teamone-usa.com

Alyssa Jones

(310) 615-2179

alyssa.jones@teamone-usa.com