

Driving Down Memory Lane: Lexus Employees Share Their Favorite Memories of the Luxury Brand

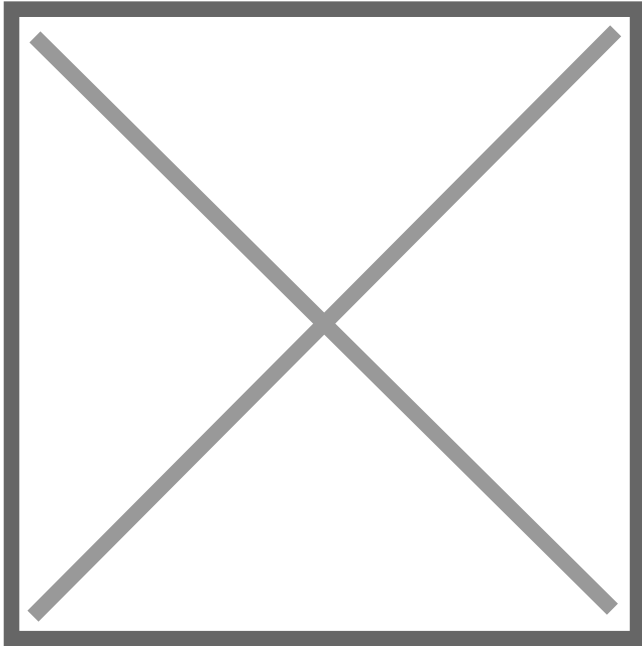
December 04, 2024

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When it comes to vehicles, Lexus symbolizes the evolution of luxury. Since its grand debut 35 years ago, Lexus has stopped consumers in their tracks, offering something exciting and fresh to the luxury landscape: style, imaginative technology and performance.

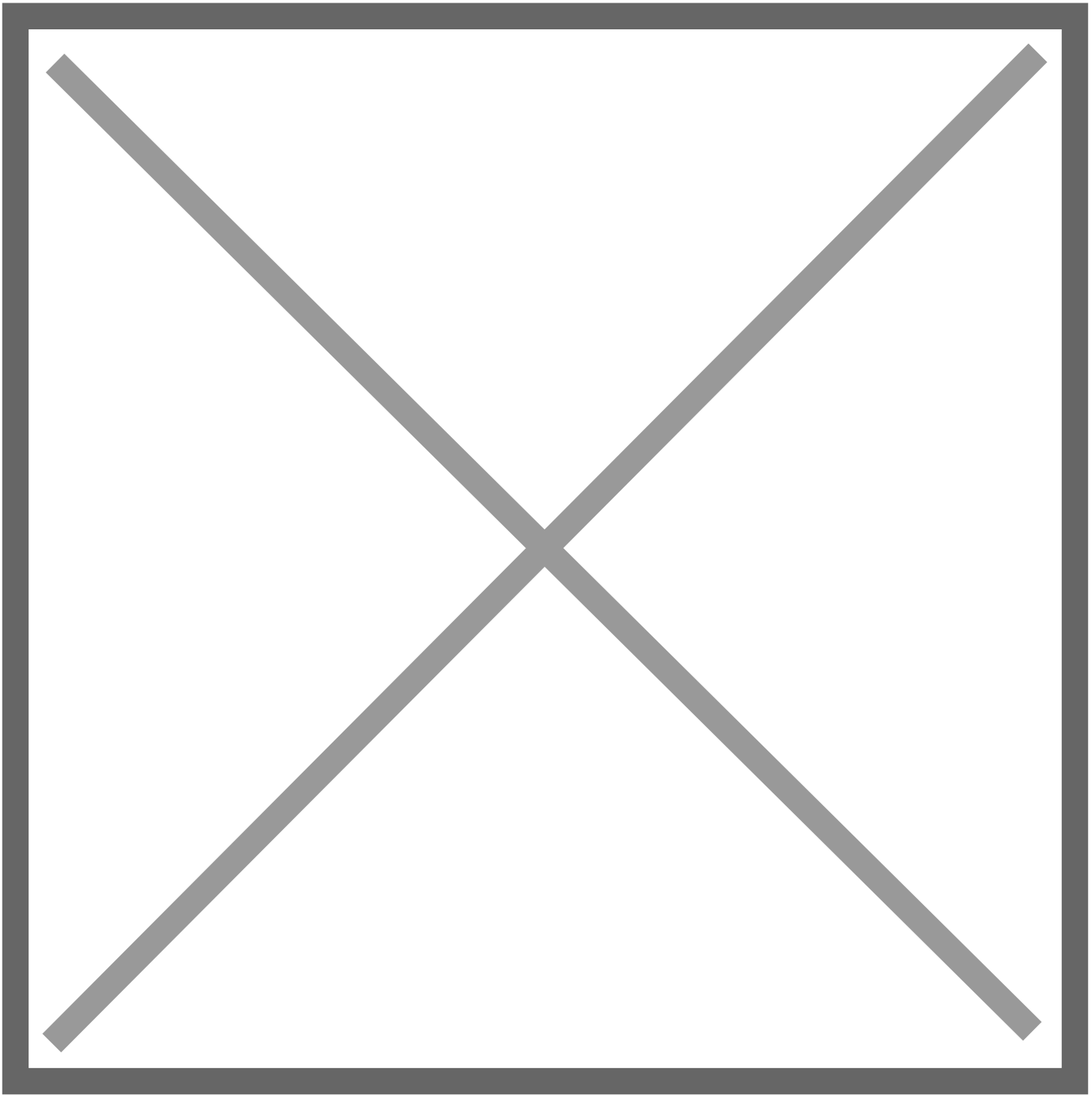
In celebration of its 35th anniversary, Lexus employees share what drives their enthusiasm for the luxury brand.



Where Memories Are Made

When you've been at a company since the beginning, it yields special moments that are hard to forget. At least that's been the case for Greg Kitzens, general manager of Lexus Marketing, who has spent more than three decades at Lexus.

"I started with Lexus in April of 1988, and one of my most memorable experiences was being lucky enough to have had the rare opportunity to help launch an all-new luxury brand into the marketplace," says Kitzens. "We differentiated Lexus right from the start by our revolutionary products, but also by focusing on the guest experience and treating every customer like a guest in our home."



Billy Rangee, a senior manager at Lexus International, recalls a time when he was nervous yet excited to drive one of Lexus' unreleased models.

"I got to drive one of the first prototypes of [Lexus] LFA while working the sales job at Lexus Western Area," he says. "It became a scary moment as I was chased by cars and folks who had mobile phones back then trying to take videos and following too close to me. It was amazing to see the excitement, but I did not want to be that guy who got the only prototype damaged."

A Family Affair

Fond memories are common for some Lexus employees who feel like working at the company is like being part

of a family.

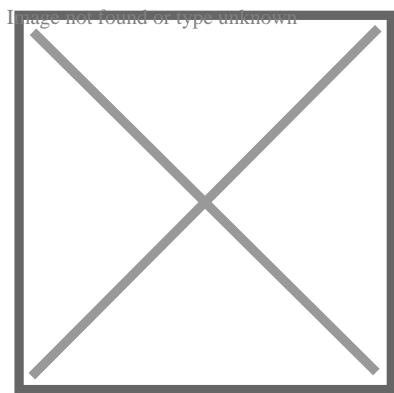
For Kitzens, the familial bonds created within the Lexus ecosystem are one of the greatest joys of his career.

“My favorite aspect of working for Lexus is the people,” he says. “I have had the honor and pleasure to work with the finest people in the industry, from our headquarters and field organization to our dealers and business partners. The working relationships and friendships that I have enjoyed over the past 36 years are what I will cherish most.”

Rangee shares those sentiments when it comes to describing the welcoming and supportive culture at Lexus. Ultimately, they all share a common goal.

“It’s hard to explain, but there is a sense of community and a willingness to go the extra mile to ensure that we create unique and amazing experiences for all,” says Rangee, who has worked at Lexus for 21 years of the 33 years he’s been at Toyota Motor North America (TMNA).

“It does not matter whether it’s a customer or employees at headquarters, areas or dealers. Working on the global side, I can say that it is like this across the globe — I get to visit markets and dealers and I feel the sentiment is the same.”



Richard Hollingsworth, a product marketing senior analyst at Lexus, also credits the company for cultivating a harmonious work environment. He cherishes the connections he’s made during 23 years at Lexus, part of his 26-year tenure at TMNA.

“I have loved working for Lexus because of all the relationships I have developed and the specialness that comes with the uniqueness of this luxury brand,” he says

“Those relationships (both personal and professional) are part of the DNA foundation of the Lexus Covenant.”

The Lexus Covenant is a pledge to value the customer (the Lexus “guest”) and exceed expectations. It continues to guide decisions made, all delivered in the Japanese spirit of hospitality known as “omotenashi”. This guest-focused mentality encompasses the Lexus experience by anticipating needs and elevating lifestyles. It begins the moment a guest considers a Lexus, continues once they purchase a vehicle at a dealership, and remains steadfast throughout ownership.



Driving Excellence

Throughout its 35-year history, Lexus has created and manufactured award-winning luxury vehicles that have left lasting impressions on guests and employees alike. Being a part of offering guests quality products is something that Lexus employees don't take for granted.

“One of my favorite experiences with Lexus was working with the field team and dealers of the Lexus Eastern Area,” Kitzens says. “It was one of the most rewarding times of my career as we partnered with our dealers to drive business results. Listening to our dealers and their customers was the key to help align our goals and

achieve our mutual objectives. I loved working in the field because we could see the results of our efforts immediately.”

Rangee recalls a time when he also experienced a fulfilling opportunity while working with the marketing and public relations teams on the launch of the Lexus Yacht LY650 — charting new territory for the luxury brand.

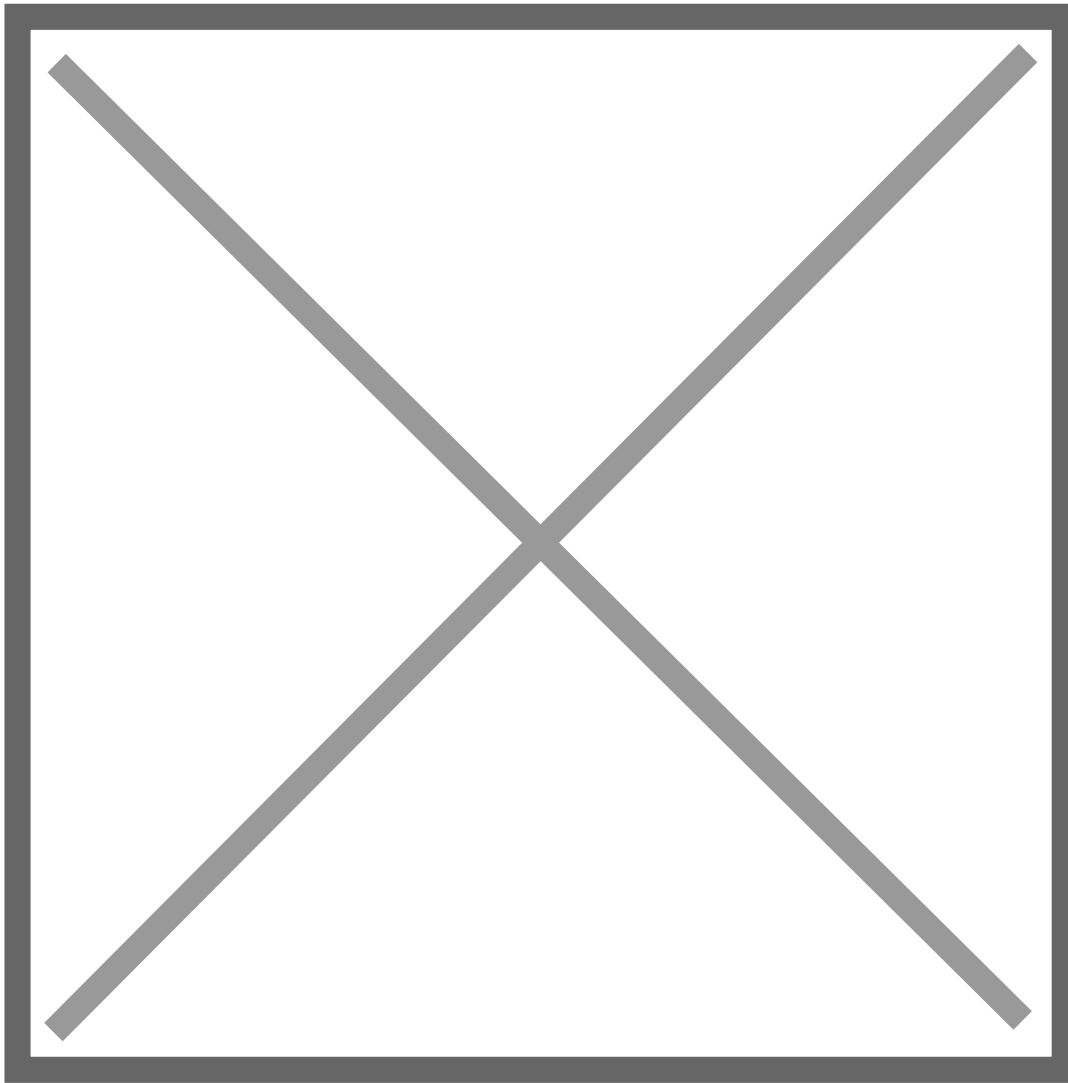
“This was such a unique opportunity to work with a boat builder and guide them on what Lexus is all about,” he says. “My team also spent a day with their major dealers to familiarize them with the Lexus Covenant and brand values.”

Along for the Ride

Over the years, Lexus has made groundbreaking sedans, coupes and SUVs that have transformed the industry. From the Lexus LS 400 to the Lexus TX, the brand has developed iconic vehicles that have garnered praise from guests and employees alike.

“I believe the original LS 400 will always be recognized as the vehicle that started the brand, because if it was not successful then we would not be here today,” says Hollingsworth. “We all remember the champagne glasses and ball bearing commercials. That being said, I would be remiss if I did not mention the original 1999 RX. It created a brand-new segment and has been the vehicle that has taken Lexus to the next levels of sales and new customers.”

While some of the pioneering vehicles will always be a part of the brand’s foundation, there are others that are also noteworthy.



For some, being behind the wheel of a Lexus comes with a bit of cache.

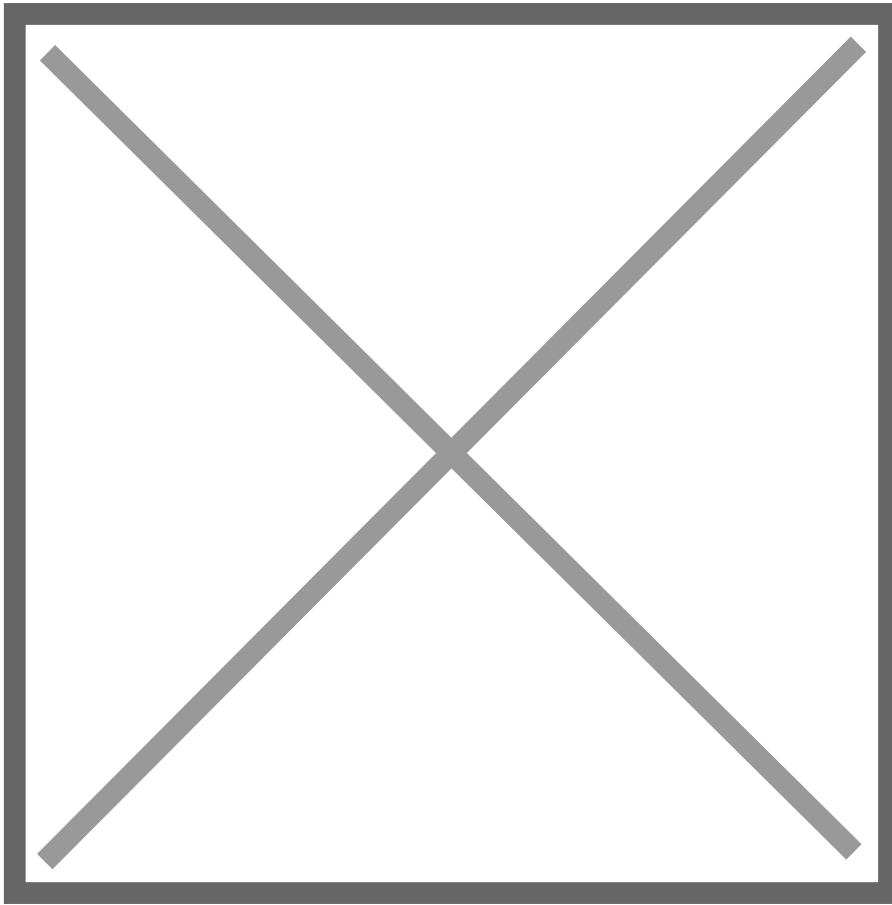
“It’s a household name – LEXUS!” says Catherine Lee, sales operations manager for Lexus. “I believe Lexus is known for exceptional vehicle quality and guest experience.”

In addition to luxury, Lee said quality is synonymous with the brand and that Lexus vehicles boast eye-catching details and workmanship.

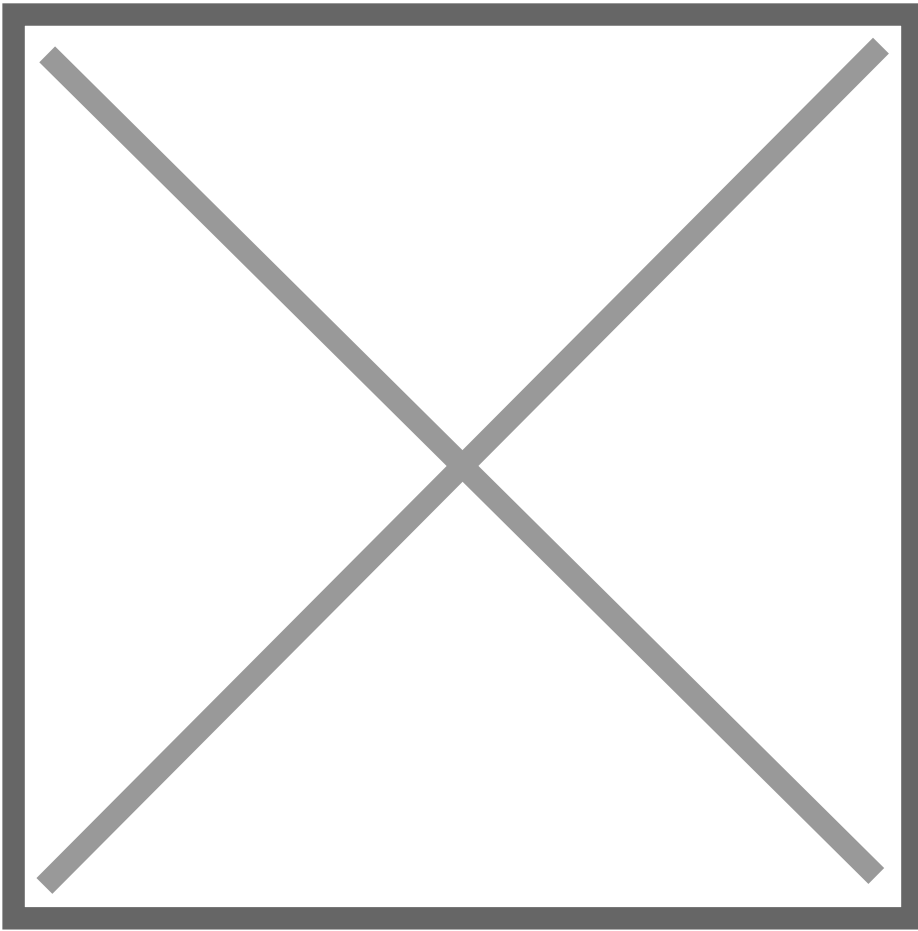
“I have driven all the models in the Lexus lineup and that’s special to me,” says Lee who’s worked in the Lexus division for 22 years. “By far my favorite model is the LS. Driving the LS brings out a passionate, moving experience with impeccable craftsmanship.”

Putting Guests First

For Lexus, guest satisfaction is part of the brand’s values.

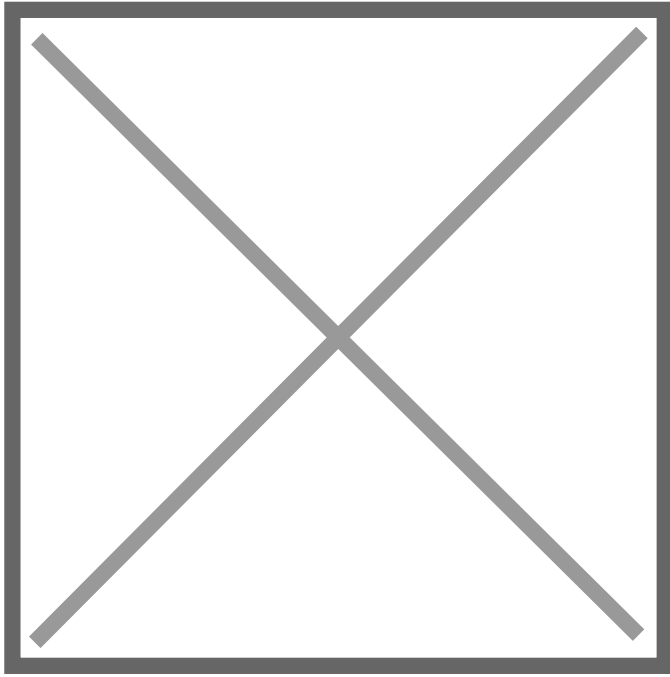


“Our dedication to the guest, their needs and their expectations will help us to deliver great products and experiences,” says Joseph Moses, vice president of Lexus Guest Experience. “I believe being able to continue to evolve the guest experience with the changing guest expectations will help separate the Lexus brand and create advocates for life.”



Cynthia Tenhouse, vice president of Lexus Marketing, shares the same perspective.

“Lexus has stayed true to the Lexus Covenant and prioritized the guest experience over 35 years,” says Tenhouse. “Lexus has always put the guest at the center of all that we do, and as our guests have evolved, we have evolved with them. We remain focused on finding new white space within the guest experience. When you focus on the guest by anticipating their every need, a lot of good things happen along the way.”



A Bright Future

Shawn Domeracki, vice president of Lexus Sales and Dealer Development, believes one of the keys to the brand's longevity is its employees.

"There are some employees that have served on the Lexus team for all 35 years," he says. "They have been the keepers of the brand story and traditions. They have ensured that the brand has stayed true to its purpose of taking care of guests. For that, we are forever thankful and promise to keep the brand strong for the next 35 years."

Domeracki also believes the upward trajectory will continue for Lexus.

"Our current product lineup is strong and our commitment to taking care of the guest has never been greater. I'm optimistic that the next 35 years and beyond will be even better," he says.



“Lexus has established itself over the past 35 years as a brand that is safe, reliable and dependable,” says Dejuan Ross, group vice president and general manager at Lexus. “We offer vehicles that our guests build great memories with and then pass down to their children and grandchildren— the people they care about the most. When you think of brands that you can’t live without, we want Lexus to come to mind the same way people think about products that impact their everyday lives.”