

Armor-plated

MEET THE SEXY LEXUS *by Joe Sage*

With the distinct mission of demonstrating that “sexy Lexus” is not—necessarily—an oxymoron, Lexus brings us the RC F, a \$62,805 steroid enhanced version of the \$39,995 Lexus RC. Long devoted to buyers of relatively stodgy sedans and SUVs, Lexus now has its own sexy high-performance sports coupe. Things are not as stodgy as they used to be. Witness the brand’s increasingly radical spindle grilles. Witness the F models, going from rumors in 2001 to the IS F reveal in 2007. Witness the GS F-Sport, uncharacteristically introduced on track in 2011. Witness our Nebula Gray Pearl RC F (below), but in Molten Pearl orange (at right, part of a \$4,400 package).

There is definitely something red hot afoot. The orange RC F looks as though it could set a track on fire, from its 467-hp V8 to its retracting carbon fiber rear deck spoiler. In grey, our sample is part Star Trek and part medieval suit of armor. Either way, the style and performance elements of contemporary Lexus lock together firmly in the RC F.

The RC F’s two tons of armor are noticeable in routine driving. Rear drive power delivery is optimized through a torque vectoring Torsen limited slip differential, engineered for straight straight-aways and smooth sweepers. You’ll want to apply

the Sport Direct Shift (via paddles or manumatic) for results that meet appearances. In full automatic, there were times all 467 horses felt lazy. On the plus side, we drove rural highways with an adult rear seat passenger, who reported not feeling one bump, unusual in a performance coupe.

We had skirmishes with a touchy touchpad, difficult audio interface, ill-positioned stop/start and parking brake pedal and such. As always, time and familiarity may mitigate these things.

The RC F overall is one very sleek battle wagon. If you showed up on a medieval battlefield in this, jaws would drop. At a minimum, the RC F is sure to turn a few heads in this millennium. ■

SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE	5.0L direct+port inj DOHC 32v V8
DRIVETRAIN	RWD w Torsen differential
HP/TORQUE	467 hp / 389 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION ...	8-spd direct-shift, F-spec paddles
BRAKES	15.0" 6-piston front, 13.6" 4-piston rear, opposed aluminum calipers, high-friction pads
STEERING.....	elec PS, speed-sensing coax rack&pin
WHEELS.....	19-inch forged alloy
CARGO CAPACITY	10.1 cu ft
TURNING CIRCLE	35.4 ft
0-TO-60 / TOP SPEED.....	4.4 sec / 170 mph
WEIGHT	3958 lb
MPG.....	16/25/19 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE	\$62,805
19" SPLIT 10-SPOKE FORGED ALLOY WHEELS	850
PREMIUM TRIPLE BEAM HEADLAMPS	1160
LEATHER TRIMMED INTERIOR.....	800
NAV / BACKUP CAM / MARK LEVINSON AUDIO.....	2610
PERFORMANCE PACKAGE: Carbon fiber roof, carbon rear wing, torque vectoring rear diff	5500
PREMIUM PACKAGE: Heat/vent seats, carbon fiber interior trim, blind spot & rear cross alerts, park assist, rain-sense wipers, steering memory.....	3240
DESTINATION CHARGE:	940
TOTAL	\$77,905

