

High-spec Lexus

BY JOE SAGE

If you didn't already know, you might never take the Lexus RC for a coupe version of the compact IS sedan, but that's what it is. Rather than follow the convention that brings an LC coupe on the LS sedan platform, Lexus departs in the IS lineup and uses RC (for radical coupe)—for whatever reason. What you might mistake the RC for, however, is the half-million-dollar LFA supercar, especially when bearing the full "F" treatment of our sample here.

So well equipped is this car, it's not hard to see why they differentiate RC from IS. It also may help soften the impact of the near-\$80,000 price tag on a sample like ours—as a semi-freestanding nameplate, it avoids any "that's a lot for an IS" talk.

The car is incredibly well equipped even before options—as an F model will always be—though each add-on is compelling. The Premium Package at \$3420 is a great place to start, as that (exclusively) brings you this Flare Yellow paint job. We had driven a gray RC F a year or two back, and whereas it was a great car, we noted then that it begged for brighter paint. On the other hand, we had an RC F Sport in Flare Yellow last spring, and

whereas we typically point out that an F Sport is not an F, in that case we fell for the F Sport, with the slightly lighter weight and balance it may offer—but really it was surely partly for the paint.

RC F's 467-hp 5.0L V8 only adds 210 pounds, though, and changes front/rear weight distribution by only one percentage point (to 55/45), hugely significant to an engineer, but really just the difference between bringing a friend along or not.

Key components are built specifically for Lexus, from model-specific brakes by Brembo and wheels by BBS, to either Bridgestone Potenza or Michelin Pilot Sport PS2 tires engineered just for the RC F. No corners are cut on in-house engineering, either, as a skim of the specs at right will verify.

Audio quality is excellent, though as always we don't like the jumpy touchpad, a remote screen controller that replaces the prior (worse) wiggly joystick. We turned off incessant boops and beeps and adjusted tactile feedback, but the key to happiness remains the same: learn to ignore a whole wide range of extra doodads, concentrate on the driving, and you'll find it far more enjoyable.

A roundtrip to Payson on the Beeline Highway confirmed just that, while the car's bold presence always put a smile on our face when parked. ■

SPECIFICATIONS

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| ENGINE | 5.0L 32v DOHC intelligent VVT V8 |
| DRIVETRAIN | RWD, Torsen limited slip rear diff |
| HP/TORQUE | 467 hp / 389 lb-ft |
| COMPRESSION RATIO | 12.3:1 |
| TRANSMISSION | 8-spd direct shift auto w/paddles |
| 0-60 / TOP / 1/4-MILE | 4.4 sec / 170 mph / 12.5 sec |
| SUSPENSION | F: adaptive variable; double wishbone w high-mount upper arms; high-rate coils w bound stopper; ZF SACHS chocks; large diameter hollow stblzr bar; R: adaptive variable; multi-link w low-mount upper arms; high-rate coils w bound stopper; ZF SACHS shocks, large diameter stblzr bar |
| STEERING | speed-dep elect rack & pinion, sport mode |
| BRAKES | Brembo mfg for Lexus: F: 15.0" vented w 6-piston opposed alum calipers, high-friction pads R: 13.6" vented w 4-piston opp alum cal; high-frict pads |
| WHEELS | BBS for Lexus F: 19x9 / R: 19x10 forged alloy |
| TIRES | F: 255/35R19 93Y / R: 275/35R19 96Y |
| LENGTH / WHEELBASE | 185.5 / 107.5 in |
| TURNING CIRCLE | 35.4 ft |
| GROUND CLEARANCE | 5.1 in |
| DRAG COEFFICIENT (Cd) | 0.33 |
| SEATING / CARGO CAPACITY | four / 10.1 cu.ft |
| HEADROOM F/R | 36.5 / 34.6 in |
| LEGROOM F/R | 45.4 / 27.3 in |
| WEIGHT | 3958 lb |
| FUEL / CAPACITY | 91 oct premium / 17.4 gal |
| MPG | 16/25/19 (city/hwy/comb) |

BASE PRICE \$64,750

PREMIUM PACKAGE: exclusive Flare Yellow paint, black NuLuxe w black carbon fiber trim; heated/vented front seats w memory, electrochromatic mirrors, carbon fiber trim, rain-sense wipers, advanced blind spot monitor w rear cross traffic alert, intuitive parking assist3420

PERFORMANCE PACKAGE: carbon fiber roof, carbon fiber speed-activated rear wing, torque vectoring diff5500

ORANGE BREMBO BRAKES300

LEATHER INTERIOR TRIM800

WHEELS: 19" BBS hand-polished 20-spoke forged alloy1500

TRIPLE-BEAM LED HEADLAMPS1160

ILLUMINATED DOOR SILLS449

REAR BUMPER APPLIQUÉ79

DESTINATION CHARGE995

TOTAL * \$78,953

**(This vehicle was delivered with no Monroney; build listed above includes obvious items; there may be a few more!)*

