

FLAGSHIP ROAD YACHT – LEXUS LS500



The Lexus LS has been the flagship model of the upstart luxury carmaker for over two decades, playing a huge part in making Toyota's premium brand a household name. In the beginning they used innovation and a back-to-basics approach, combining it with the list of consumer behaviour questions that only the Japanese carmakers seemed to be asking back in the 90s – taking on, and winning against, the German competition. The

design and packed full of tech that would make an old person's head explode. They're trying to be more hip and modern and almost pulling it off with fantastic cars like the LFA, RC-F and LC-500 breaking new ground for the brand.

The new LS500 is perhaps the biggest direction change for Lexus in recent years. They've perfected the family face with that gaping front grille dominating the view, with

ated by conservative designs. Is it pretty? Not in the traditional sense, no – the LS has perfect proportions and a unique approach to being classy by scrapping it altogether in favour of style. Like a pair of neon-green Air Jordans, it's expensive, loud and will stick out at a fancy dinner party, and Lexus is okay with it. As they should be.

The LS500 F-sport in particular is a remarkable sight. Gloriously messy, the F-sport comes with a 3.5 litre, 415 HP and 442 lb-ft torque V6 paired to a 10-speed transmission. It also benefits from Lexus' advanced chassis management system, Vehicle Dynamics Integrated Management (VDIM), along with massive 6-piston front and 4-piston rear brakes. Lexus claims a 4.5 second sprint to 100 km/h, incredible considering it's a full-size luxury sedan. Since the 2018 LS is based on an extended LC500 chassis, you can expect it to handle well as well.

Whether this self-image re-imagining works for Lexus commercially is up for debate, but we're definitely glad that they're trying to take things in a bold new direction at a time when carmakers seem to be happy to rely on brand name and long-standing reputations to sell cars instead of actually innovating.

creases and slashes in the strangest of places elsewhere on the body. Previous models might have been popular for being handsomely restrained, but Lexus clearly feels that this change will attract a younger crowd. The post-millennial mind will definitely find it cool, but there is no denying that the LS500 will be a disruptive force in a market domi-



original LS400 made it easy to love a sort-of-dull but extremely capable luxu barge, but the tone was set – Lexus became the sellers of understated, composed cars that stood really well with an older crowd which meant they were instantly branded as "boring". Post-2010, Lexus had a sort of self-image crisis, rolling out progressively bolder cars with divisive

Four generations of defining progressive luxury



The original LS400 was used to debut Toyota's Lexus luxury brand in North America and Europe. Powered by a creamy 4 litre V8 and one of the best suspension setups ever fitted to a luxury vehicle.



The 430 got more rounded styling and brand new tech – radar cruise control, parking sensors, water repellent windshields, voice-control navigation.



Fourth-gen LS460 went all-out with the tech – automated parallel parking, lane departure warning, pre-collision system as well as infrared night-vision.



First few years of the fourth-gen LS460 had more streamlined noses, before the new "X" faces started taking over. It was opinion dividing, but the latest generation seems to have perfected it.

WANT TO OWN AN LS?

Who wouldn't? But it'd be pretty difficult here in Bangladesh, considering we only got a few imported into the country over the years in JDM Toyota Celsior form. If you do find one, the price is likely to be astronomically high for an old luxury car, but current owners place them in high regard. So we asked one of them what it's like to own one, and why anyone would want to.

AKBAR SATTAR //



The ride quality is unparalleled – it's extremely soft but not too mushy. If you have the UCF30 model, the 3UZ is an awesome engine – has great power and torque and makes the huge ship of a car move a lot faster than anyone would expect. Amazing amount of gadgets and features that are way ahead of its time. My car is 2000-2002 shape and it has soft close doors, swing AC, 4 zone climate, cool box, massage seats and reclining seats with heating and ventilation. However, it's expensive to maintain if you don't do it right – air suspension failure can happen and is very expensive to fix, car guzzles huge amounts of gasoline, it's so packed with electronics that there are bound to be a couple failures here and there. For the UCF30, since there are so few around, coming by parts can be difficult.

It's reliable if you take care of it, it's a sensible luxury sedan compared to its competitors (BMW 7 series, Mercedes S class) but like with any car in that price range, maintenance, parts and complexity of the car itself can make it an expensive car to own. //



PRE-FACELIFT FOURTH GENERATION XF40 LEXUS LS. NOT MANY AROUND IN BANGLADESH BUT LOOKS SO COOL IN PURPLE.

IMAGE: SHAER REAZ ILLUSTRATION: E.R. RONNY

Audi Dhaka graced by Commerce Minister's presence

Progress Motors Imports Limited, authorised distributor of Audi vehicles in Bangladesh, held a second event to mark their official launching in the country on the 27th of September, 2017. Tofael Ahmed, MP and Honourable Minister of Commerce and Industry of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, presided over the event as the Chief Guest. Ambassador Dr. Thomas Prinz of the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany, Dhaka was present as the Special Guest. Joining them was Michael Schultheiss, Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany, Dhaka.

The event was followed by a second unveiling of the launch models, the A4, A6 and Q7 models being unveiled in front of prospective customers, well-wishers and family members of the Audi Dhaka team. Previously, Progress Motors Imports held an official Meet the Press event where the cars were unveiled to the general public on 24th September, 2017 at their Tejaon showroom.



AUTO NEWS Cool Swede - Volvo XC40



Hot on the heels of the fantastic XC90 and XC60 SUVs, Volvo recently pulled the wraps on a gorgeous baby SUV joining the ranks – the XC40. Designed to be a competitor to the Audi Q3 and BMW X3, the XC40 takes Swedish design to new heights with a delectable mix of handsome, square edges and soothing, sweeping curves. SUVs should not be this good looking, but Volvo has repeatedly laid down some of the best designs to hit the market over the past couple of years.

The XC40 comes equipped with either a 4-cylinder T5 petrol or D4 diesel motor, with hybrid and pure electric versions coming later. It might also be equipped with Volvo's first 3-cylinder motor, which promises great balance between performance and

fuel efficiency.

Safety and driver assistance include Volvo's Pilot Assist system, City Safety, Run-off Road protection, Cross Traffic alert with brake support and 360-degree cameras that help drivers maneuver their car in tight spaces.

The XC40 is likely to come to our shores via Eurocars Limited, authorised representatives of Volvo vehicles in Bangladesh. If it does, it'll surely heat up the competition against the traditional German luxury brands like BMW, Mercedes Benz and Audi – but it won't be as easy to choose as it used to be. Volvo is certainly making their mark on the global luxury car market.



Car spotting: Nissans

A handful of special Nissans offer a good break from the usual eyesore of Toyotas. They come in all shapes, sizes and colors - from bright red Patrols, to super-fast GTRs, occasionally even in the form of classics, such as the Nissan President.



PHOTOS: SHADMAN AL SAMEE