

Electric cat

BY JOE SAGE

If you think “E” as in “electric,” the I-PACE name can throw you. E-PACE (they do prefer all caps) might seem more appropriate. But Jaguar already has an E-PACE (as well as an F-PACE). For these, think Jaguar sedans—XF is the bigger one, XE the smaller one; and the gasoline-powered F-PACE and E-PACE utilities (which already existed) follow suit. Along comes an EV in their utility lineup, and I-PACE it is, a meet-the-new-rules vehicle in name as well as in motivation technology.

In form, size and powertrain, I-PACE is a solid synthesis of current market directions—it’s a crossover, it’s a compact, and of course it’s an EV. And a very potent EV at that. With strong rear haunches and a near-fastback roofline, this Jaguar has big-cat-like posture and pose, and its electric powertrain has the chops to back up this lean, powerful image.

As always, there are a number of features we would implement differently. But none of those matter much when you do what matters most—turn onto a freeway ramp, apply the pedal, sweep up that lane with silent speed that feels like magic, and you’ll promptly be in love with this thing. The driving experience

of this EV is perfectly normal despite its alternative powertrain—normal, that is, for a potent performance vehicle, a utility with the soul and center of a high-end sport tourer.

Basically all EVs have “neck-snapping” (so to speak, in a good way) acceleration. In some vehicles, this isn’t very well controlled, providing more of their instant power than you want or need when you first step on the pedal. Jaguar has this nicely tamed in the I-PACE. We were able to get incredible performance without ever feeling we were past the edge of control, leaving only positive EV awareness in our drive experience.

Any EV is by its very nature basically silent (at least before pedestrian warning whirs are added back); the I-PACE provides an especially quiet and tranquil cabin experience.

We liked the I-PACE so well overall, we were a little surprised to look back at our many nitpicks we had had during our week: an odd storage space in the console, too small for our sunglasses case from the front, too tight for our hands from the sides; tastefully engraved notations on the shift lever base that are hard to see (and only light up

after you’ve hunted them down and shifted into one); a tight footwell, making it too easy for a bigfoot like us to hit the brake again en route to the accelerator pedal; oddly low seatbelt attachments if you’re tall; lack of a right-mirror dip in reverse, useful in a car with reduced over-the-shoulder visibility; what looks like two radio knobs, but if you go for the left one in search of on-off-volume you will hit the vehicle start-stop button; displays with very fine black lines against off-white, tastefully unreadable like iPhone apps that were soon abandoned a few years back; several specifics within the screens, as always with pretty much everything; and a number of other little details and operations.

We had this midwinter, but it was a warm stretch, and we found ourselves not achieving the cabin cooling we sought. EVs provide heating and cooling unconventionally, so we contemplated whether the system might put out less robustly in marginal temperatures but more so once it’s 50 or 60 degrees warmer here again. We’d like to give that a try.

But those are FYIs. All you have to do is run this thing up one freeway on-ramp, on fresh black asphalt between white dotted lines at night, give it the pedal, and you’re never going to want to let it go. ■

SPECIFICATIONS

VEHICLE TYPE	.....5-seat AWD premium midsize CUV
ELECTRIC MOTOR	....permanent magnet synchronous
LAYOUT	.....perm 4WD: one front EDU, one rear EDU
POWER OUTPUT	.....197 hp front EDU, 197 hp rear EDU
TOTAL HP/TORQUE	.....394 hp / 512 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION	.....automatic / single speed
BATTERY	.....lithium ion / NMC chem, 90 kWh gross, liquid-cooled, 388-volt, 432-cell, 320 kWh
OPTIMAL OPERATING TEMPERATURE	.....77-86° F
0-TO-60 / TOP SPEED	.....4.5 sec / 124 mph
SUSPENSION	.....F: double wishbone; R: integral link
F/R:	electronic air suspension w var ride height
STEERING	.....elec power assist rack & pinion
BRAKES	.....F: 13.78" / R: 12.8"
WHEELS/TIRES	.....(depending on trim) 18", 20", 22"
LENGTH/WHEELBASE	.....184.3 / 117.7 in
TURNING CIRCLE	.....39.3 ft
APPROACH / BRKOVER / DEPARTURE	.....16.0 / 12.0 / 19.0°
WADING / GROUND CLEARANCE	.....19.7 in / 5.6 in
HEADROOM (F/R)	.....39.9 / 38.1 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	.....40.9 / 35.0 in
CARGO VOL	.....25.3 / 51.0 cu.ft / "frunk" 0.95 cu.ft
WEIGHT	.....4784 lb
SUPPLIED CHARGING CABLES	.....Mode 2 Universal
CHARGE TIME (230V AC / 32A)	.....0-80%: 10.1 hr
	.....0-100%: 12.9 hr
DC CHARGER (TO 80%)	.....50kW: 85 min
	.....MAX: 40 min
MPGe	.....(equivalent) 80/72/76 (city/hwy/comb)
KW-HRS	.....44 kW-hrs per 100 miles
RANGE	.....234 miles
BASE PRICE	.....\$80,900
WHEELS: 22" 5-split-spoke diamond turned	.....1700
PAINT: Yulong White Metallic	.....710
PREMIUM INTERIOR PROTECTION PKG	.....549
CHROME WHEEL LOCK PKG	.....259
HEATED STEERING WHEEL	.....250
CONFIGURABLE AMBIENT INTERIOR LIGHTING	.....250
BASIC REAR SEAT CONVENIENCE PACK	.....229
PANORAMIC SUNSHADE PACK	.....199
FRONT FOG LIGHTS100
CAR CARE KIT55
DESTINATION CHARGE1025
TOTAL\$86,226



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