

den treatment all its life.

Or possibly it's the ride that wins us over. This car creams over the streets without a flutter, yet the suspension is disciplined. A few staffers felt mildly inhibited on the tearing-around roads, not quite sure they had enough feedback—particularly from the steering—to proceed with the usual abandon. But they came around after a bit. The Goodyear Eagle GA tires were developed with ride quality as a high priority, but they man-

age, in concert with the suspension, to produce a highly predictable steering feel on the curves.

Our test Lexus was equipped with nearly every option in the book. Leather is \$1400 extra; we highly recommend it. The air suspension, at \$1500, may be more a matter of gilding the lily. For sure, the load-leveling feature is a good idea if you carry heavy loads. The Sport damping position on the console switch seems to be more of a personal decision.

Some of our drivers never switched out of it on the twisty road, others never bothered to engage it. Even in the Sport setting, ride quality is quite reasonable.

Easily the most controversial part of the Lexus is the grille. It doesn't look original. For a car that seems to break new ground in all of its executions, such an ambivalent face is troubling.

Not too troubling, though.

A luxury sedan is more than speed,

interior sound level, dBA				fuel economy, mpg		
idle	full throttle	70-mph cruising	70-mph coasting	EPA city	EPA highway	C/D 600-mile trip
46	76	68	68	14	18	15
51	76	66	65	15	19	16
47	74	68	68	16	25	14
43	73	66	67	16	22	16
48	75	69	69	17	22	18
39	74	67	67	18	23	16
43	74	67	67	15	18	15



curb weight, lb	weight distribution, % F/R	fuel tank, gal	interior volume, cu ft			suspension		brakes, F/R	tires
			front	rear	trunk	front	rear		
4040	60.4/39.6	21.1	52	42	17	ind, strut located by a lateral link and an anti-roll bar, coil springs	ind, unequal-length control arms, coil springs	vented disc/vented disc; anti-lock control	Pirelli P600, 215/60ZR-15
3800	49.0/51.0	21.5	54	46	13	ind, strut located by 1 leading link and 1 lateral link, coil springs, anti-roll bar	ind, semi-trailing arm, coil springs, load-leveling shocks, anti-roll bar	vented disc/disc; anti-lock control	Pirelli P600, 225/60ZR-15
3540	63.8/36.2	18.8	52	44	14	ind, strut located by a control arm, coil springs, anti-roll bar	ind, strut located by a control arm, transverse leaf spring, load-leveling shocks, anti-roll bar	vented disc/disc; anti-lock control	Goodyear Eagle GT+4 M+S, P215/60R-16
4020	57.2/42.8	22.5	57	39	15	ind, unequal-length control arms with a two-piece hub, coil springs, anti-roll bar	ind; 1 diagonal link, 2 lateral links, and 1 control arm per side; coil springs; anti-roll bar	vented disc/disc; anti-lock control	Michelin Sport XGT V, P215/65VR-15
3920	53.1/46.9	23.2	51	40	15	ind, unequal-length control arms, coil springs, anti-roll bar	ind, 1 control arm and 1 fixed-length half-shaft per side, coil springs, load-leveling shocks	vented disc/disc; anti-lock control	Pirelli P5 Cinturato, 205/70VR-15
3940	52.8/47.2	22.5	56	41	14	ind, unequal-length control arms, air springs, anti-roll bar	ind; 1 trailing link, 2 lateral links, and 1 control arm per side; air springs; anti-roll bar	vented disc/vented disc; anti-lock control	Goodyear Eagle GA, 205/65VR-15
3900	53.3/46.7	23.8	51	47	15	ind, unequal-length control arms, coil springs, anti-roll bar	ind, semi-trailing arm, coil springs, anti-roll bar	vented disc/disc; anti-lock control	Michelin MXV, 205/65VR-15