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Jaguar E-Pace – Road Test

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JAGUAR'S E-PACE - THE CUB MODEL OF THE BRAND'S SUV RANGE.

By David Miles (Miles Better News Agency).

Now you might logically think that the E-Pace is the new all-electric model in the Jaguar Pace family of SUVs, but it isn't - that's the just released I-Pace. There is also the F Pace launched in 2016 sitting between the E-Pace and I-Pace.

Could E then stand for Elegant, but in my eyes definitely not? It's a compact five door five seater sports SUV which carries the muscular and brash steroid styling introduced a while



ago by Jaguar with their macho F-Type sports car.

Although Jaguar does continue with its long serving sleek and elegant styling heritage with the XE, XF and XJ passenger cars, the E-Pace and F Pace models in particular are brutish macho models, big, bold and in your face but the I-Pace is even more odd with wide haunches but with much lower roof and bonnet levels, making it look as though it's been squashed from above, definitely not classy styling which we used to associate with the Jaguar brand.

The E-Pace has numerous premium brand competitors such as the Audi Q3, BMW X1/X2/X3 or the Volvo XC40, Lexus UX, Porsche Macan and of course the new Range Rover Evoque, and it uses components of the Land Rover Discovery Sport. It might use aluminium construction but the E-Pace is a weighty model ranging from just under 1.8 to close to 1.9 tonnes. It is currently built outside the traditional UK home of Jaguar, at Magna Steyr in Graz Austria, alongside the new I-Pace all-electric model range. In addition E-Pace models are built for the Chinese market in Changshu.

The UK's range of models and specification options is huge; I counted up to 55 main derivatives with prices ranging from £29,080 up to £47,785. The E-Pace comes in two core design layouts, E-Pace and the more sporting R-Dynamic and these are both available with S, SE and HSE spec levels.

There is the choice of five EU 6.2 C and D Temp compliant powertrains, with three diesel and two petrol engines. The 2.0 litre four-cylinder Ingenium diesel powerplant is available in 150 hp, 180 hp and 240 hp outputs, while the pair of 2.0 litre four-cylinder Ingenium petrol turbo units delivers 249 hp or 300 hp. Most have nine speed automatic gearboxes with manual mode and all wheel drive but the 2.0 litre diesel is available with 2WD and a six speed manual gearbox.

The compact E-Pace SUV is 4,411 mm (14.47 ft) long with short front and rear overhangs of 882 mm (2.89 ft) and 832 mm (2.73 ft) respectively. Its 2,681 mm (8.80 ft) wheelbase seats



five with reasonable rear legroom of 892 mm (2.93 ft) while the luggage capacity of 577 litres (20.38 cu.ft) is made possible by the vehicle's Integral Link rear suspension architecture, similar in design to that of the F-Type sports car.





The exterior front has a huge bold face with large Jaguar grille, again with design heritage cues back to the F-Type, flanked by very pronounced front wheelarches. The side profile is a coupé silhouette with a rising waistline and with an upwards kink to the tiny C-pillar windows. At the rear it has a chubby rounded appearance, but with massive wide wheelarch haunches – giving it an unmistakable macho sports appearance which is far away from traditional Jaguar’s sophisticated styling cues. There is a steeply forward slanting wide lightweight tailgate (some models have ‘gesture control’ opening), with a roof spoiler above it. The visibility through the tailgate window, due to its steep angle and rounded corners, is quite limited and although it has a rear view camera, during reversing I found not having premium class automatically dipping door mounted rear view mirrors to be a hindrance.



Inside the E-Pace has a low level but deep dashboard with a sweeping line leading to a nicely shaped instrument binnacle cowl. There is a centrally-positioned new generation large touchscreen and beneath that are a logically laid out line of heating and ventilation controls. Generally all other controls come to hand and are well placed part from the start button which is hidden behind the steering wheel. There is a mixture of leather, faux leather and plastic trim materials, some look ok but the areas of bland plastic around the steering column area would in the past have classic Jaguar wood veneer finishes – seemingly not anymore.

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I could easily fill this review with a breakdown of all the inclusive specification and all-

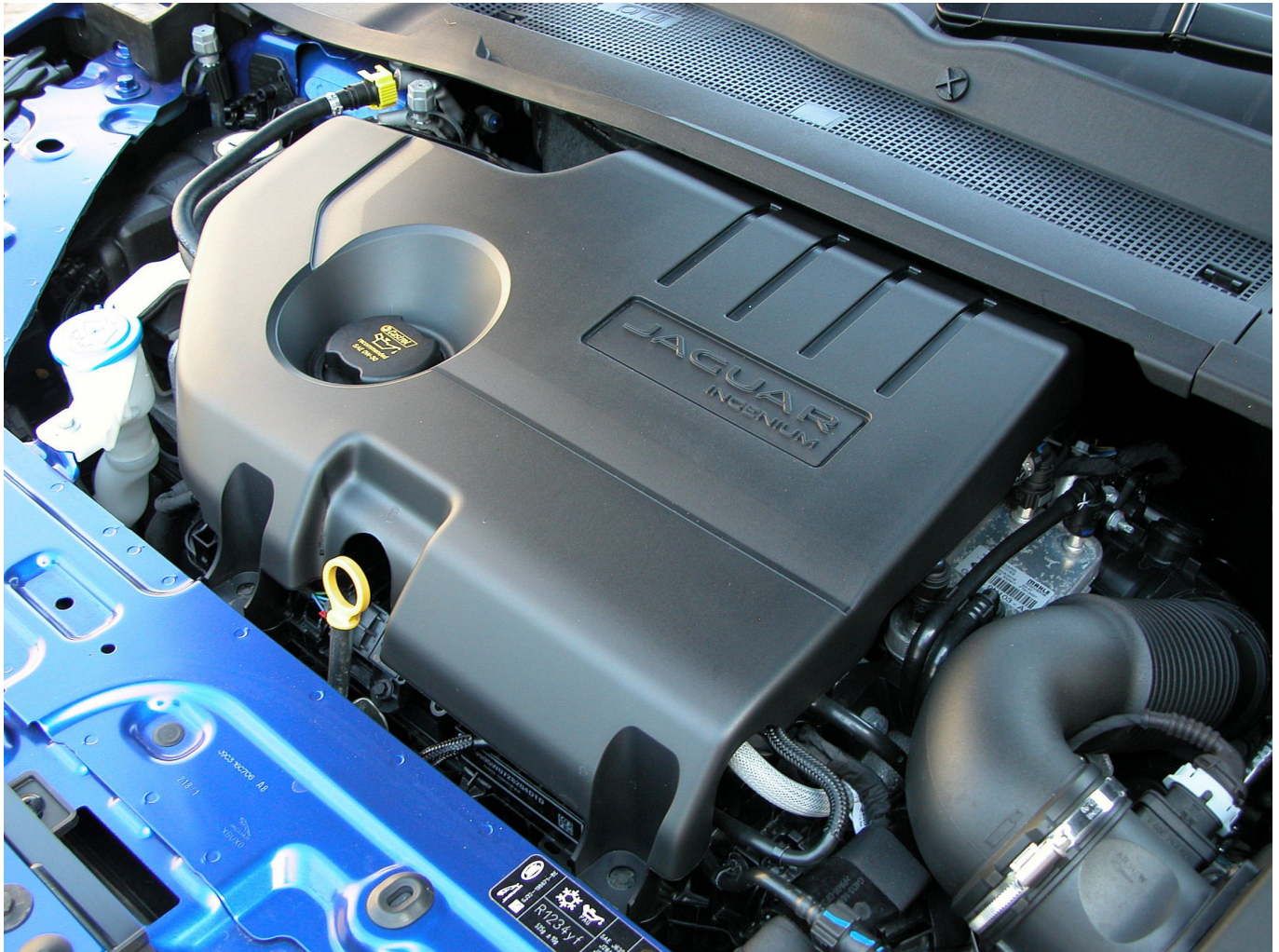


encompassing technologies that the E-Pace has. Safe to say spec is high, technology is everything we expect from a high performance premium brand.

My test model was the E-Pace 180 hp auto AWD diesel with R-Dynamic S specification, priced at £37,870, which fortunately doesn't push it through the £40k higher Standard Rate £145 plus five years annual £310 supplement road tax barrier. However there were numerous extra cost options added to my test vehicle. Some of these were... the £205 premium carpet mats, the £190 heated steering wheel, Adaptive Dynamic at £820, 20-inch spoked alloy wheels at £1,550, Keyless Entry at £510, powered 'gesture' tailgate operation at £615 and Head-Up display at £930.

The R-Dynamics spec additions over the standard E-Pace models add LED headlights, larger alloy wheels, auto dimming mirrors, auto dimming folding and heated door mirrors, 10-way electric front seats, grained leather upholstery with contrast stitching, Navigation Pro, Connect Pro with Pro Services connectivity functions, Wi-Fi hotspot, InControl Apps, Traffic Sign Recognition and Adaptive Speed Limiter and front metal doorsill plates with R-Dynamic branding. It would appear from the complicated pricing structure on Jaguar's website that R-Dynamic spec for the 180 hp S model costs an extra £1,550.

Under the bonnet is one of Jaguar Land Rover's new generation Ingenium petrol and diesel 2.0 litre four cylinder engines, all now compliant with the latest EU 6.2 C and D Temp requirements. On this occasion it's the 180 hp turbodiesel unit which provides 430 Nm (317 lb.ft) of torque from 1,750 rpm. This unit seems well installed and well insulated from the cabin, so noise intrusion is low even at start-up. Power delivery is linear and is well suited to the nine speed automatic gearbox ratios, and the transmission also has a manual gearchange mode if that is preferred. The gearchanges can be on the slow side at times; more of a cruiser than sports SUV.



Top speed is only a respectable 127 mph and the zero to 60 mph acceleration time is 8.6 seconds. The Combined Cycle fuel economy is 47.1 mpg and my week of test driving returned 42.1 mpg, most of it done in ECO mode - which didn't detract from the performance due to the high torque available. The CO2 emissions are 162 g/km so VED First Year diesel road tax is £855 before the Standard rate of £145 is applied. Go over the £40K price and add a further £310 to the Standard rate figure for five years. Company car drivers will pay the maximum Benefit-in-Kind tax of 37%. Insurance is Group 30E and Warranty three years/unlimited mileage.

There is 'JaguarDrive Control' with four driving modes selected by using buttons on the centre console. These are Comfort, Dynamic, ECO and Rain/Ice/Snow, all self explanatory.



The permanent all wheel drive system for AWD versions distributes torque between the front and rear axles for handling stability and on slippery surfaces the system will send almost all driving torque to the rear wheels if the front wheels lose traction. In normal driving conditions there is still a torque bias towards the rear wheels to retain somewhat sports handling - all computer controlled of course.

VERDICT

Overall it felt and handled like a competent tall-riding SUV with a reasonably compliant ride but there is nothing to set it apart from any other sports SUV on the market today - which somewhat fails what the Jaguar brand stands for, or perhaps more accurately used to stand for.

For: Wide range of models over a huge price scale to select from, high technical and driving support specification, comfortable seating, long mileage warranty, like or loathe styling, Jaguar name branding.

Against: No signs of traditional Jaguar classic sleek classy styling, too contrived aggressive road stance with a brash image, sluggish auto gearchanges, lacks classy traditional Jaguar interior trim finishes, no dipping door mirror function when reversing, limited visibility through the tailgate window, not a benchmark premium brand sports SUV model.



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Milestones and Wheels-Alive Tech. Spec. in Brief:

Jaguar E-Pace 180 hp Diesel R-Dynamic S, compact sports SUV.

Price: £37,870.

Engine/transmission: Ingenium 2.0 litre, four cylinder, EU 6.2d C and D Temp compliant turbodiesel, 180 hp, 430 Nm (317 ft.lb) of torque from 1,750 rpm, nine speed automatic with manual mode, AWD.

Performance: 127 mph, 0-60 mph 8.6 seconds.



Combined Cycle: 47.1 mpg (42.1 mpg on test).

Emissions and taxation: CO2 162 g/km, First Year diesel rate VED road tax £855 then £145 Standard rate, BiK company car tax 37%.

Insurance Group: 30E.

Warranty: Three years unlimited mileage.

Dimensions/capacities: L 4,411 mm (14.47 ft), W 1,900 mm (6.23 ft), H 1,649 mm (5.41 ft), wheelbase 2,681 mm (8.80 ft), kerb weight 1,843 kg (4.063 lb), boot/load space 577 to 1,234 litres (20.38 to 43.58 cu.ft), braked towing weight 1,800 kg (3,968 lb), five doors/five seats.