

PRESENTING

## THE PERFORMANCE PATH

THE LEXUS RC F IS MORE THAN A POWER MACHINE—  
IT'S THE VANGUARD OF A YEARS-LONG PERFORMANCE-DESIGN SURGE

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The new RC F (01) is the latest expression of Lexus's ongoing performance-design direction, carrying the F series logo introduced by Chief Engineer Yaguchi (02). Conceptually, the RC F, like its non-F-series RC cousin, comes from the Lexus LF-CC (03), although the RC F's back end (04) will offer an active rear spoiler that draws from the Lexus LFA supercar.

Two months after the Lexus RC coupe's debut at the Tokyo Motor Show, Lexus introduced the latest addition to its F performance line, the RC F, a distinctive high-octane version of the vehicle. It's a car, in the words of its chief engineer, "that's made for the track."

Despite its implied adrenaline-charging sensibilities, though, the Lexus RC F isn't simply a super-powered version of the RC coupe. Rather, it's a significant milestone in the ongoing Lexus design language—the latest thrust of Lexus's ongoing commitment to premium performance design. It's also a story years in the making, and it begins, in part, with a secret project that began 10 years ago.

Back in 2004, after a career spent working on the first and second Lexus LS, and the first Lexus GS, Chief Engineer Yukihiko Yaguchi

had set his sights on a new challenge: create a high-performance Lexus sports sedan that could *compete*.

With a small team and a limited budget, Yaguchi-san set to work modifying the existing IS sports sedan into something much more potent, replacing the powertrain and reworking the body until it breathed fire.

To set the model apart from the rest of the lineup, Lexus created the F series, a special designation that emphasized performance above all else. Lexus gave the F series its own logo, stylized to resemble one of the corners at the world-famous Fuji Speedway in Japan, and Lexus named this new sedan the IS F—Lexus's first high-performance production vehicle.

From that point, and on a separate performance-design track, Lexus unveiled some-

thing different altogether that, like the IS F, would eventually lead to the new RC F: the LFA supercar, itself the product of 10 years of intensive performance research. By the end of the LFA's production run in 2012, Lexus had banked some serious performance credibility, and began applying supercar attributes to new concepts and models.

Enter the LF-CC, or Lexus Future Concept Coupe, in 2012, a vehicle whose flavor directly hinted at the two new vehicle designs that would become the RC and RC F.

By this time, a new Lexus design movement was in full swing, with nearly every model adopting more expressive styling and a spindle grille that debuted with the launch of the fourth-generation GS in 2012. Even so, there was something different about the LF-CC. The design was bolder, and the interior

showcased high-tech design enhancements, such as an enormous touchpad center console. Not surprisingly, Lexus Chief of Design Takeshi Tanabe indicated that the LF-CC represented a "new era" of Lexus design. More than that, though, the concept was shaped with the confidence that comes with experience—it almost screamed that something new was coming to the production line, which arrived first in the form of the Lexus RC.

When the RC F arrived soon after, though, it was clear that Chief Engineer Yaguchi—the very same mind that brought us the first IS F 10 years ago—had taken both the best of Lexus's IS F performance thinking (the RC F draws from his previous creation with its bulging hood and swooping fender vents) and the forward-thinking LF-CC aerodynamics. Like the LF-CC, the RC F sports enormous air intakes,

along with the sleekness of a two-door body and the LF-CC's protruding spindle grille; it also holds the distinction of being the first completely new production model to come with the spindle grille.

And there are, of course, signs of the LFA as well—the RC F will be offered with carbon fiber parts built using a similar process, and the single-dial instrument panel and active rear spoiler (which helps hold the vehicle to the ground at speeds above 50 mph) also pay homage to the Lexus supercar.

Although the Lexus IS F, LFA and LF-CC all form part of the RC F's DNA, Yaguchi designed the RC F to stand on its own and influence future models. It's the future of Lexus performance, the purest form of the new Lexus design language and the next chapter in Lexus's ongoing reinvention. //



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