

CLASSIC DRIVER

First (Shotgun) Ride in the New Jaguar F-type

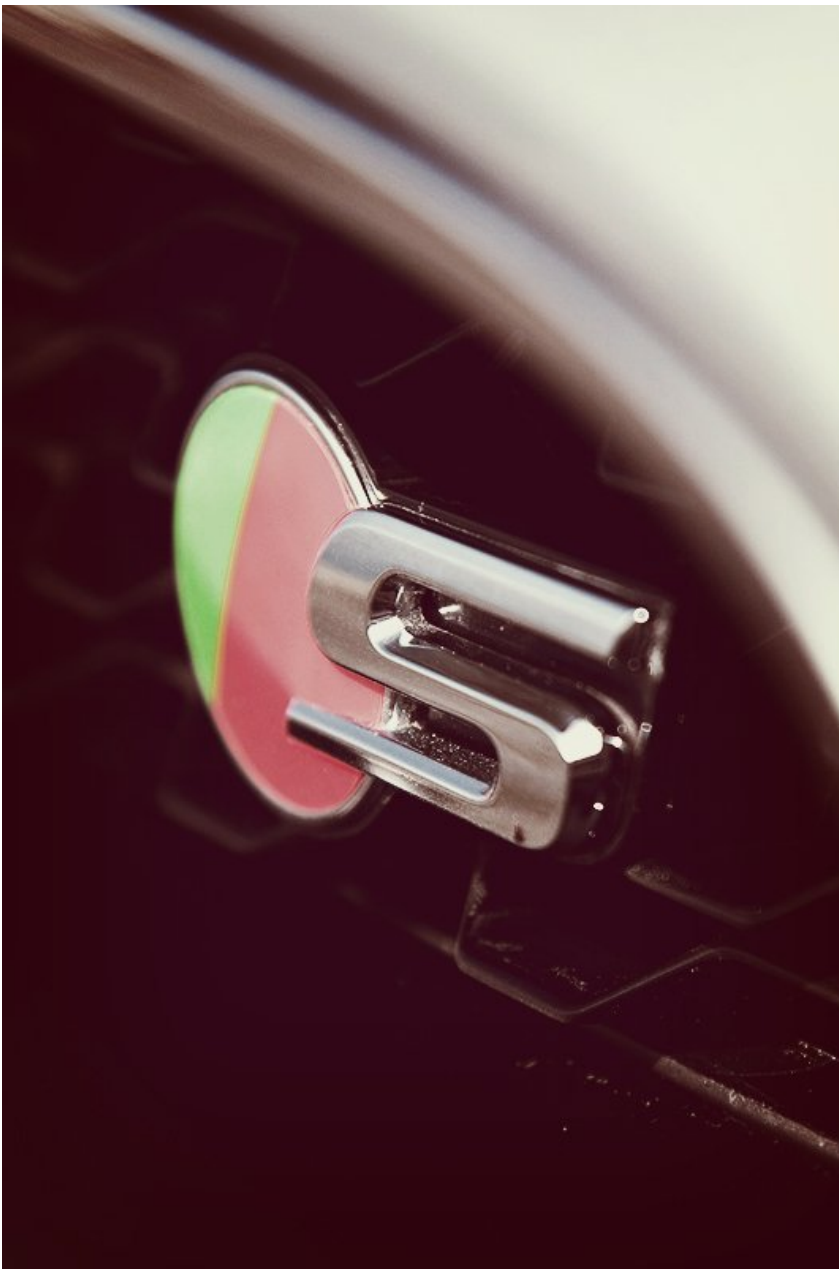
Lead

As it happens, we won't be allowed to get properly behind the wheel of the new Jaguar F-type until April, but we weren't about to turn down the opportunity to take a quick ride when Jaguar momentarily turned a blind eye at Geneva. So, here is a first-hand account of sorts.

We know that impressions from the passenger seat are not the real thing, not like grappling with a car with your own two hands; but this model is so important that we are happy to squeeze a first driving impression from the small chance we've been given. Since the world premiere of the new Jaguar F-type last year in Paris, we have been waiting with bated breath, but it was only recently that an invitation to the first official press trip to Spain arrived on the editorial table. The wait until mid-April is dragging by at a snail's pace – but at least a last-minute shotgun ride at the Geneva Motor Show helped the time to pass.







That Jaguar design chief Ian Callum has pulled off the styling challenge of the new F-type is undisputed. After several attempts, a compact, two-seater sports roadster has come to market that is worthy of its legendary ancestors – the C-type, D-type and E-type – with a well-proportioned body, sharp lines and a body tensed like a jungle cat. It's a tautly muscular and attractive piece of design. The interior is simple and functional, with all controls falling easily to hand, while the seats offer good support and grip, and enough space even for someone who is 6' 3" tall. Meanwhile, a grab-handle on the passenger side serves as a reminder of the power that can be unleashed at any moment.



The five-litre V8 in the top-of-the-range model develops an impressive 495 horsepower – true supercar territory. The sprint to 100km/h (62mph) takes just over four seconds, while top speed is limited to 300km/h

(186mph). A possible future 'R' variant will push this performance envelope further still. The first Jaguar E-type Roadster was presented to the press more than 50 years ago at the Parc des Eaux-Vives on the shores of Lake Geneva and now, here we are, shooting the legitimate successor to that illustrious pedigree. With the driver's right foot planted to the floor, the power levels feel immense. The real surprise, however, is the noise: that the V8 sounds good is expected, but how on earth did the engineers manage to give this high-tech unit such a vivid, aggressive, hot-blooded animal snarl?





It bubbles, coughs and roars, as if the new Jaguar were not made in the cold and frosty UK, but on the hot and passionate shores of Sicily. Our pilot engages the paddle to haul the eight-cylinder engine back through the gears in the corners – and the car offers mesmerising body control and commendable poise. We are ready, the countdown is on.

Text & Photos: [Jan Baedeker](#)

Gallery

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