

Driving the Lexus UX 250 Hybrid Luxury Compact Crossover

 By [Naresh Maharaj](#)

13 Aug 2020

Silent is the night and silent is the day too. All thanks to the 2020 Lexus UX 250 hybrid Luxury Compact Crossover. No, this is not a 'bona-fide' electric vehicle.

First, we have to understand the meaning of the word 'hybrid'. In essence, this means the combination of two different elements. In this case, I'm referring to 'a car with a petrol engine and an electric motor, each of which can propel it'.

Impressive from the start

I sat in the cockpit, strapped myself in and pressed the start button. I waited to hear the roar of the engine firing up, but no, complete silence is all there is. So, I pressed the start button again. And then the penny dropped...

The Lexus UX Hybrid was already waiting for my next command and that was to engage a gear. It was surreal as I reversed out of my driveway ever so silently, selected 'D' and was ready to hit the road. There's no worry in having to find the nearest charging port as the Lexus Hybrid system is self-charging and that is the beauty of it all.



Image supplied by Naresh Maharaj

I've driven many fully electric cars but the Hybrid system of the Lexus ticks all the boxes. Let me tell you why...

The battery harnesses power downhill and will switch on the engine when only necessary. This in effect means that you will get so much more kilometres from a full tank as both petrol and 'electricity' is being used. So from a fuel economy point of view, it's fantastic and will not burn a hole in your pocket.

Smooth operator

The drive on tarred roads was just that, smooth. The design from bumper to bumper was 'exquisite' to say the least. The Lexus Hybrid was not big, yet not small either.

A perfect size for families looking for that urban and non-urban drives. The acceleration was quiet and responsive. Under the bonnet is a 2.0-litre petrol engine that delivers 107kW of power at maximum RPM and 180Nm of torque at 4400rpm. This roughly equates to 0-100km/h sprint time of 8.5 seconds.

The fuel economy is just impressive. I obtained 4.5-litres/100km hybrid combined. Now that is really economical in these times of ever- increasing fuel prices.

Performance-wise, I could not find a fault with its 135Kw system output. It hugs the road and you feel completely safe. Power when you need it for overtaking etc., and stopping power when you need to come to a halt very quickly.



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Normal, ECO or Sport Mode!

The choice is yours really and dependent on your driving style. In most instances, I used all three modes, just to test fuel consumption, responsiveness and the like. Drive Mode Select, which allows the driver to tailor the driving experience by selecting from three different drive modes viz Normal, ECO and Sport, all at the touch of a button.

The Lexus Hybrid comes standard with features such as park distance control with a reverse camera (without panoramic view), two rear USB charging ports (ideal for passengers), a navigation system and a hands-free rear boot. In addition, other standard features include Normal Cruise Control, Heated Power Retractable Side Mirrors as well as Day and Night Mirrors.

Cabin Fever?

Not really, but it's easy to love what's inside so much so that you will spend time in the driver's seat when not driving the hybrid and just enjoying the craftsmanship and the speaker system.

The Lexus 8-Speaker Premium Sound System which uses bamboo charcoal speaker diaphragms to reduce mass and deliver natural-sounding voices and improved mid-range sound. As a music and sound aficionado, I thoroughly enjoyed the sound at high levels, without disturbing the neighbours.

The Lexus Hybrid is available with five standard Nulux, simulated leather, interior options, viz Black, White Ash, Rich Cream, and Cobalt. The Lexus Remote Touch Interface (RTI) with haptic sound feedback. It takes getting used to, but once you get the hang of it, it's quite simple and easy to use.



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Verdict

All things considered, I thoroughly enjoyed my time with this Hybrid vehicle which I expect to be the norm as we move away from fossil fuels. Let's face it, we are not really in the 'electric era' as yet in this country as infrastructure is not quite there. So in the meantime, a hybrid vehicle like the Lexus UX 250 Compact Crossover ticks all the boxes.

The drive is ever so smooth, silent and pleasing. The interior is plush. There are so many standard features that makes the price below justifiable. I honestly gave back the keys grudgingly, hoping to drive it again soon. The Hybrid era is here. Silent as ever.

Cost

The Lexus UX 250h EX retails for R690,300. The entry-level petrol UX 200 EX retails for R654,700, the UX 250h SE model retails for R756,200 and the F Sport for R785,400.

The EX Hybrid model joins the rest of the Lexus models with a standard and best-in-class 7-year/105,000km warranty and full maintenance plan. Vehicle service intervals are set at every 15,000km, alternatively once a year.

ABOUT NARESH MAHARAJ

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