

## ROAD TEST

# Lexus turns up the heat with RC 350 coupe

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Metroland Media

I've often said two doors are more fetching than four, and as one who generally drives solo, I find little use for a vehicle's back row.

Sure, my occupation demands attention to rear head and leg-room, HVAC controls, seat heating and other amenities, but in practice, this space provides little more than a shelf for my computer case and gym bag.

You guessed it – my wife drives the family hauler.

So while she's playing the responsible parent, I can – in theory – thumb my nose at the sedan. Well, at least some of them.

Consider that the Civic Coupe is light years more attractive than its four-door sibling (same goes for the Accord), and moving up in price I'd choose the BMW 4 Series over the 3. And Audi's A5 and S5 Coupes are a treat for the eyes.

Lexus now has a two-door that can stand toe-to-toe with the Europeans, and unlike most of their lineup, the new RC 350 and the high-performance RC F have strayed from the company statute against too much visual stimulation.

LFA aside, the RC 350's exterior

is downright racy for a Lexus. As you'd expect in a sports coupe, the vehicle has a low profile and broad stance with classic proportions: compact cabin, long bonnet, and short yet wide rear deck.

First impressions are dominated by a set of aggressively squinty LED headlamps and L-motif LED running lights flanking the bold Lexus spindle grille.

From the side, protruding fender flares nicely accommodate its 19-inch alloy wheels; deep sculpting and muscular shoulders accentuate the athletic stance. Not everybody will appreciate the RC's plastic fins behind the rear wheels, but the view is still pleasing with its L-shaped taillights, upswept trunklid and large rhomboidal exhaust finishers.

My tester also received the company's F Sport treatment, which includes black mesh grille pattern, unique F Sport alloys and some less visible upgrades like adaptive variable suspension (AVS) with tighter damping, and a suite of driver aids.

The RC comes in two models: the RC 350 AWD that starts at \$54,600 and the RC 350 RWD at \$57,650. Indeed, the rear driver is more expensive, as it comes standard in F Sport Series 1 trim, which

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The 2015 Lexus RC 350 AWD, in F Sport trim, makes a bold first impression with its signature spindle grille flanked by aggressively cut headlamps and deeply sculpted sides. The large wheel openings are filled by 19-inch F Sport alloys.

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