

ROAD TEST

JAGUAR I-PACE

CAN AN ALL-ELECTRIC JAGUAR BE JAG ENOUGH?

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Location courtesy: Ajmera indiKarting



Type Dual electric motor, 90kWh battery



Max power 400PS



Max torque 696Nm



Charging time 3.5 hours to 80% (25kW DC)



Suspension (f/r) Double wishbone/integral link



Range 470km (WLTP)



LxWxH (mm) 4,682x2,139x1,558



0-100kmph 5.0s (tested)



Price ₹1.12 crore (ex-showroom)



OD Rating



Ride and handling, immediacy of response, electric soundtrack



Some controls via central touchscreen fiddly

Change can be a scary thing, even more so when you consider the future of IC-engined cars from established manufacturers with rich legacies to uphold. Take Jaguar's announcement that its cars will all be powered by electric motors and batteries — all of them — by 2025. That's means going forward, there's not going to be any grumbly V8s, sonorous V6s, or anything that really defined the Jaguar experience as we knew it. But with the I-Pace, the British brand's first-ever pure electric model, Jaguar is taking a bold step into the future. For us here in India, it's our best preview of Jags to come. And the question still remains — can

an all-electric Jaguar give you the same feeling of driving something special, with sportiness built right in, that Jags typically do?

Styling

Going by the styling, you'd certainly think so. The I-Pace has that unmistakably Jaguar face and curves, even if its proportions suggest a jacked up crossover rather than all-out SUV. With no packaging constraints for an IC-powertrain, the wheels are pushed right out to the four corners, and overhangs are hatchback-like short. Quite uniquely, the I-Pace manages to pack a 2,990mm long wheelbase (marginally longer than even the Jaguar F-Pace, and only just shorter than the Audi e-tron) into a body



that's much, much shorter, even when compared to the Mercedes-Benz EQC, its chief rival in India, alongside the to-be launched Audi e-tron. The I-Pace is wide, though. Very, very wide. It measures in at 2,139mm in width with the mirrors extended, and 2,011mm with the mirrors folded — the width of the full-size, 7-seater Land Rover Defender.

The stubby hood may not be very Jaguar-like, but it's got curves in all the right places, and the functional aero elements (the scalloped hood, roof spoiler, flush door handles) don't look too technical — they actually add to the car's aesthetics. Despite all that and the fully flat underbody, its 0.29 coefficient of drag doesn't quite compare to something like the Tesla Model X's 0.25Cd. Perhaps it's that the I-Pace does appear to ride quite high on its suspension, with the car's off-road drive mode taking ground clearance up to a total of 230mm when needed.

Still, sat on 19-inch wheels and 235/60 section tyres, the Jaguar I-Pace definitely looks a lot less monstrous than something like a Model X. It takes seeing the gorgeous I-Pace in the metal to really appreciate it, parts like the squared off tail look a lot less abrupt in person. All said, it definitely looks like nothing else on the road — stylish and sporty all at the same time.

Interiors, practicality and features

It's more good news inside. The cabin doesn't immediately scream 2030 at you in the same way that some other EVs

do, with touchscreens dominating the entire experience. Instead, in the I-Pace what's dominating the cabin is the fact that the dashboard itself stretches out ahead of you to meet the sharply raked windscreen. And while there are screens aplenty — three of them — they're reasonably sized and are mounted low out of your line of vision. There's the all-digital instrumentation, Touch Pro Duo infotainment, and a climate control screen that thankfully still has rotary dials for temperature, blower speed, and to set the front heated/ventilated front seats that come as standard on the top-end I-Pace HSE.

And while other vehicle functions are easily accessible via a line of buttons on the strakes on the centre console, others like setting the brake regeneration level are buried deep in vehicle setting's menus. Adding to the list of minor annoyances — the 360-deg cameras also need a few button presses if you don't want to wait for them to spring into



IT'S GOT CURVES IN ALL THE RIGHT PLACES, AND THE FUNCTIONAL AERO ELEMENTS DON'T LOOK TOO TECHNICAL — THEY ACTUALLY ADD TO THE CAR'S AESTHETICS

action themselves — and rear visibility is a little hampered through the tiny rear windscreen. Also, the standard fixed panoramic sunroof isn't offered with a sun-blind except as part of an accessories list, and despite its infrared absorbing laminate construction does let you feel the sun on a sunny day, which means the climate control has to work overtime, eating into precious range. Though, like most modern EVs you can precondition the car before you drive off, which also warms up the battery for use, so the overall negative effect on range isn't too harsh.

Back to the good stuff, sound insulation is pretty good inside the cabin given the I-Pace's near-silent operation, while the optional 825-watt Meridian 3D surround audio sounds great. The seats are large and comfortable, and even hold you in place well. That near-3m long wheelbase does translate into great space at the rear, and you're sat quite

comfortably without needing to scrunch your knees up to fit — the flat floor also means a third passenger can be fit, but it isn't the most comfortable spot. The boot's pretty large too, at 656-litres expandable to 1,453-litres, and the front trunk, or frunk serves as the best storage for charging cables so that you don't have to clear out your boot to get to the underfloor storage with your cables when you need to charge up.

Safety features

Six airbags aside, the I-Pace also has a deployable pedestrian safety airbag, active brake assist, adaptive cruise control, 360-deg cameras, an optional ClearSight inner rear view mirror camera, and motor drag control that varies the level of regen braking on slippery surfaces to prevent wheel lock ups. It also makes cool electric motor sounds outside the vehicle at speeds up to 20kmph to warn pedestrians.

Powertrain and performance

Getting the specs out of the way, the Jaguar I-Pace has a total of two permanent magnet electric motors, with one on each axle, for all-wheel drive performance with torque vectoring coming via the brakes, and a combined 400PS and 696Nm of torque. The 90kWh battery pack is sandwiched in the floorpan, and driving range is a claimed 470km according to the WLTP cycle, but we'll get to what that means in the real world.

Setting off in the Comfort drive mode, it immediately feels like you're piloting a sporty Jag, albeit one that's eerily silent. The throttle feels perfectly calibrated, and with the brake regen set to its more aggressive of two settings, it feels as natural as engine braking would, further requiring you to get on the brakes at speeds around 8kmph to further come to a halt. Of course, without any paddle shifters repurposed to set regen braking



levels, you do have to dive into the menu each time you want to set it, though I'd suggest leaving it in its aggressive mode — coasting a Jag doesn't always feel right. Fortunately, acceleration is intense, as is usually the case with electric cars, and in the I-Pace there's a healthy dose of pushing you into your seat to really get your blood flowing. There's really *zero* hesitation from the powertrain when you plant your foot. As for the sound the I-Pace makes, it's a fairly futuristic electric motor sound that builds in volume when you press down deep on the throttle — something not many other EVs do as convincingly.

Of course, the I-Pace gets a lot closer to the typical Jag excitement when you cycle it into its Dynamic drive mode — red themed instrumentation and all. The sound gets a little louder, and mixes in quite a convincing rendition of a warbly V8 with the electric motor's whine — it sounds a lot like something from the Jetsons — but wow, it actually builds in crescendo to keep the excitement alive, and make you feel like you're accelerating towards an imaginary redline. Acceleration really is relentless, well into high triple digit speeds, and it's of course quite addictive, and makes overtakes a reason to celebrate. Every. Single. Time. However, the power is metered out very well when the surface is wet, and negates wheelspin if you get carried away, but you don't really feel the safety system's intervention — the hallmark of well-calibrated traction control and ESP system.



Traditional Jag interiors with an extra dose of functionality. It's all good news will you realise they've gone and buried vital brake regen and camera controls deep within menus. Well, you can't have it all...



In our testing, we managed a 0-100kmph run in 5 seconds flat, and our roll-on performance figures at 0.9s make the I-Pace a couple of tenths of a second quicker in the 30-50, 50-70kmph metric than some 600PS performance SUVs we've tested in the past, which of course is down to all that electric torque coming in with no lag, and no downshifts needed.

Ride and handling

With the optional air suspension, the I-Pace manages to gloss over just about any road surface exceptionally well, with just a hint of firmness noticeable over sharper ruts, though that's more a trait of air suspension systems in general. At a price of just Rs 1.5 lakh or thereabouts, the air suspension should be a no-brainer, especially since it can be specced on any variant in the line-up. The high-profile tyres also bring some extra compliance to the table, but largely give you the peace of mind against sidewall cuts that an SUV should afford you.

Surprisingly, given the compliancy of the suspension and tyres, the I-Pace handles its 2.2-tonnes of kerb weight superbly, with tight body control. It settles very quickly in quick transitions, and though it does pick itself up when you're accelerating, the movement doesn't unsettle the car, which means you can pick up the throttle early in a corner and the I-Pace doesn't feel unfazed by it. Dynamic tightens things up a little more, and the real class act has to be the steering which feels just like a sporty, IC-engined Jaguar should, letting you place the large Jag accurately, while giving you a good sense of when it's about to push wide, and when it's about to tuck in. The brake torque vectoring works pretty well — to a point. There's only so much physics you can bend, but you notice it only on tighter corners as we found when we took a trip to the Ajmera indiKarting track in Wadala for a bit of fun. Even the brake pedal feels firm and reassuring, even when regen is

set to high. What Jaguar's achieved, with their first-ever electric car, based on a new platform really is astounding, and the feel of a Jag is alive and well with the I-Pace.

Real-world range and charging

In the short time we had the I-Pace we managed a round 265km trip filled with highway runs, testing, shooting, sitting around with the climate control running, and some fun at a kart track, with about 15 per cent charge left to spare. Going by our mixed highway-city test conducted separately, we estimate most people will comfortably get over 350km to a single charge, going up to just over 400km if driven sensibly.

As for charging, Jaguar will install a 7.4kW charger for you at home or at your office, which'll fully charge the I-Pace up in 14 hours. Public charging from 0-80 per cent at a 25kW DC charger will take about 3.5 hours, which gets cut down to 1.5 hours using a 50kW DC charger.

We're told Tata Power, the charging partners for Jaguar, will install more of these soon. In a pinch, the supplied domestic plug charger fully charges the I-Pace in 48 hours, so it's best used as a top-up option.

Verdict

At an ex-showroom price just over Rs 1.06 crore (Rs 1.12 crore for the HSE, all prices ex-showroom), the I-Pace drives sporty enough to warrant the badge, and is comfortable and practical enough with a long-ish 350km plus range to be a genuine daily drivable luxury car. While we really, really hope Jaguar still makes V8s for their sportscars, going by the I-Pace's capabilities, an electric everyday Jaguar that's sporty could be the dawn of a whole new era for the iconic marque. And from our short drive in it, the I-Pace has its own character to it to set it apart from other luxury EVs. Exactly like any conventional Jaguar worth its salt does so convincingly.

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OD Rating



SPECIFICATION



DRIVETRAIN

Type	Dual permanent magnet electric motors, AWD with brake vectoring
Battery	90kWh
Max power	400PS
Max torque	696Nm
Suspension (F/R)	Double wishbone/integral link
Brakes (F/R)	Vented discs
Wheels & Tyres (F/R)	235/60 R19
LxWxH (mm)	4,682x2,139x1,558
Wheelbase	2,990mm



PERFORMANCE

0-100kmph	5.0s
30-50kmph	0.9s
50-70kmph	0.9s
60-80kmph	1.1s



BRAKING

100-0kmph	51.2m/3.4s (wet)
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EFFICIENCY

Overall 350-420km estimated as per mixed city/highway testing



PRICE

₹1.12 crore (Ex-showroom)

Take note of the separate button to disengage the charger from the car once you're done charging - definitely pays to know that before you try charging it!



RIVALS

MERCEDES-BENZ EQC

AUDI E-TRON