

Jaguar Saloon Cars

A monthly series - Part 12

XJ6, XJ8, Sovereign and XJR (X350 Series) (2003-2010)

In 2003, Jaguar introduced the seventh series of XJ saloons in the form of the X350. This car broke new ground in car manufacturing with the bodies produced in a new rivet bonded process similar to that used in aviation industry construction methods.

New engines were introduced with the V8 now being offered in 3.5 or 4.2 litres and the re-introduction of the XJ6 now powered by the successful 3 litre V6. With the lighter weight offered by the aluminium body, the 3 litre XJ6 was a lively performer and very economical. The X350 was a much larger car than the previous X308 and provided greater interior and boot space. Whilst the overall style was unmistakably XJ Jaguar, the dimensions of the new car were more akin to the earlier Mark 10 /420G saloons of the 1960s than earlier XJ series. The X350 also saw the introduction of an all new air suspension system giving a superb ride. Offered with other options were TV screens fitted to the back of the front head rests. The X350 XJ6 and XJ8 reverted to the same cross hatch grille style which featured on the Series 1 and Series 2 XJ saloons which was not to all tastes especially as all other Jaguar saloons, other than the XJR, featuring traditional vertical grille bars up to the time of the release of the X350.

The Sporting XJR saloons have all featured mesh insets; being synonymous with their sporting performance. As with previous XJRs, bright-work was given a matt black finish. In 2005, the side rubbing strips were deleted on all variants and in 2008 a series update was released with the X358 featuring a revised front-end treatment which created a more aggressive style improving the overall appearance considerably.



Daimler Super Eight (X350 Series) (2005-2007)

After an absence of two years, the Daimler name was re-introduced for 2005. Featuring all the benefits of the X350 range, the Daimler came fully optioned and was only built in limited numbers.

The familiar fluted grille adorned the more traditional vertical grille bars which created a much neater frontal appearance than the Jaguar XJ6 or XJ8.

As in previous Jaguar-derived Daimlers, the X350 version offered a similar overall appearance to the XJ range but the Daimler model was offered to provide luxury to a much higher level.

Daimlers have traditionally been used by Heads of State, Royalty or the gentry who desired luxury limousine comfort and the opulence offered in the X350 version certainly lived up to previous cars that bore the fluted grille. The Daimler X350 series was only offered in very limited numbers.



XJ Saloon (X351 Series) (2010 - 2019)

In July 2009, the newly styled XJ was unveiled. In keeping with Ian Callum's new design direction for Jaguar, the all-new exterior design is a break from the XJ series mould carried over on all previous generations. It is a longer, wider car that looks much bigger than its predecessor. The front has clear links with the XF, although with slimmer, sleeker lights and a larger, squarer grille giving a more aggressive appearance.

The rear design like nothing Jaguar has shown before. The upright, swooping taillights, nicknamed 'cat's claws', and black roof panels each side of the rear screen, designed to hide the XJ's width, are the most striking aspects. There is also a standard full-length sunroof which extends all the way back with just a single body-coloured roof panel. The new XJ features an innovative, all-LCD dashboard and console displays. Like several of its predecessors, the X351 is available with both standard and long wheelbase as well as many special editions.

Engines are modern units, already seen in other Jaguars; the 5-litre petrol V8 either normally aspirated or supercharged, or a twin-turbo 3-litre diesel that is predicted to account for most of the sales.

For 2013 a 3-litre supercharged V6 was introduced to the line-up, primarily as an alternative to the diesel unit for improved fuel economy. Production was initially carried out only at the Castle Bromwich Assembly plant in Birmingham, England. From 2014, assembly from complete knockdown kits (CKD) of the XJ commenced at Jaguar Land Rover's facility in Pune, India. An interesting version of the XJ saloon was that on 11 May 2010, then British Prime Minister, David Cameron, took delivery of the dark grey (car No. 10) of Jaguar XJ Sentinel as his official transport.

In 2011, David Cameron took the delivery of another XJ Sentinel featuring "bomb proof" doors, bullet proof glass and armoured plating beneath the floor of the car, respectively replacing the previous XJ Sentinel. The car is in use by the current British Prime Minister Boris Johnson. Jaguar announced it would discontinue the current XJ in July 2019, partly to make way for a new flagship electric XJ to be built at Castle Bromwich.

