

Lotus Evora S Sports Racer

first impressions



EVERY LITTLE BOY goes through a stage of liking cars and some, like me, simply don't grow out of it.

Much of my automotive addiction could be down to growing up in Norwich, only a few miles from the Lotus HQ in Hethel where THE Bond car of the seventies – the Lotus Esprit S1 was made.

The nearest I ever got to seeing my 'The Spy Who Loved Me' dream motor was on a sponsored cycle ride around the Lotus test track for the cubs. That seemed enough for me at the time, and I soaked up the atmosphere of that windswept former airfield as though I was somehow connected to Roger Moore and his 1977 Bond car with its 'underwater' gadgetry.

I was still giddy from excitement a few years later when the new Turbo Esprit featured in the 1981 film, 'For Your Eyes Only'. Yes, looking back, that's definitely where my addiction to four wheels came from.

So, you can imagine my reaction when, after months of pestering, Lotus finally agreed to let me drive the latest Evora S Sports Racer 2+2 Coupe. To say I was excited would be an understatement. I was off to Norfolk in a flash.

After being shown around the Lotus factory and witnessing Evoras being skilfully and lovingly put together by local people rather than robots, I was more than itching to get my hands on my demo model. I was hooked from the moment I set eyes upon it.

Once inside the Lotus Evora 2+2 you soon realise that the world's only mid-engined four-seater is just as dramatic as its gratifyingly styled exterior. The front leather seats are very comfortable, and touch sensitive switchgear abound. You'd struggle to get all but the tiniest baby seats to fit the miniscule rear seats, but, fair play to



Lotus, the rear bench is a useful storage area and is trimmed in black leather with red stitching and piping as standard, which gives the illusion that the car is only a two-seater. The boot is even civilized enough to fit in two sets of golf clubs. Brilliant!

On the road, the first thing I noticed about the Coupe is how well it rides. The supercharged 3.5-litre V6 lump is tame in town, but it's hard to mask the rich throaty burble of the muscle waiting to be flexed. Hit the open road and the energy the Toyota-sourced powerplant unleashes is tangible. The 4.4-second 0-60mph time blows you away, yet the Lotus still feels cool, calm and collected. Its brakes took me by surprise – they scrub off speed in a blink of an eye. There is no detectable instability either, even with the emergency anchors on.



As well as the ability to turn heads and its sheer driving pleasure the 2+2's combined cycle fuel economy figure of almost 30 mpg is also something to be admired.

The British based company has done an amazing job on this car. It's utterly electrifying to drive; it draws admiring glances wherever it goes; it feels safe and it is an extraordinarily competent all-rounder. All in all, Group Lotus fulfilled my boyhood dreams by letting me become the guardian of this beautiful work of art for a few days. It's something I won't forget for a long time and nor will anyone else who gets behind the wheel of the stunning Evora S Sports Racer.

Tim Barnes-Clay, Motoring Journalist



FAST FACTS

Max speed: 178 mph
 0-60 mph 4.4 seconds
 Combined mpg: 28.7
 Engine layout: Mid-mounted, supercharged V6 petrol, 3456 cc
 Power: 345 bhp @ 7000 rpm
 Torque: 295 lb-ft @ 4500 rpm
 CO2: 229 g/km
 Price: £66,800 on the road

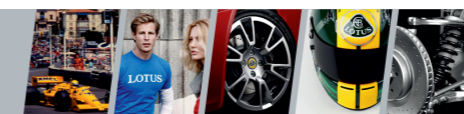


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Official fuel consumption for the Lotus range in mpg (l/100km): Urban 19.4-34.0 (14.6-8.3), Extra Urban 37.2-56.0 (7.6-5.0), Combined 27.7-45.0 (10.2-6.3). CO2 emissions: 239-149 g/km.