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BRITAIN'S SAFEST CAR GETS V12 ENGINE

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The most eagerly awaited event in British motoring took place today when British Leyland announced its new 12-cylinder version of the famous XJ6 sedan.

Rumours of a V12 version of the XJ6 have been circulating ever since the new Jaguar sedans swept to world-wide popularity following their introduction in October 1968.

As predicted by motoring journalists, the new version will be called the XJ12.

The Sales Director of Leyland Australia, Mr. John Kay, said the new model does not replace the XJ6, which will continue unchanged from its present successful format.

Deliveries of the XJ12 will start next month in Britain and releases in export markets are expected progressively with introduction in Australia scheduled for early 1973.

Leyland Australia is not in a position to announce Australian prices of the XJ12, but in Britain it will sell for £650 (\$Aust 1430) more than the 4.2 litre XJ6 automatic.

The addition of the V12 engine to the Jaguar XJ bodyshell places it among the most exotic cars ever made. It is the only 12-cylinder four-door car in production in the world today.

The engine is the 5.3 litre light alloy overhead camshaft 60-degree V12 introduced in the E-Type Jaguar Series Three only 16 months ago.

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This develops an effortless 309 BHP and 349 lb/ft of torque and is mated with the latest Borg-Warner Model 12 automatic transmission as standard equipment.

The design features which won the Don Safety Trophy, Britain's premier award for automotive engineering safety, for the XJ6 and that car's outstanding handling, roadholding and ride capabilities are retained in the XJ12.

Braking efficiency has been increased with the addition of ventilated front disc brakes. Ventilating wheels, an optional extra on the six cylinder car, are standard on the XJ12, giving even greater cooling efficiency for the brakes.

Tyres have been updated, with a wider section (the latest 205/70 VR15 Dunlop SP Sport) to ensure the highest possible safety margin in relation to the car's high speed potential.

Countering the small increase in engine weight (about 80 lb), front spring rate and length have been increased slightly.

Changes have been made to the engine's fuel, oil and cooling systems but basic specification is unchanged.

Although only a few V12 E-Type sportscars have reached Australia, the tractability of the new V12 engine is legendary. With a manual gearbox it is easily capable of pulling away smoothly from between 5 and 10 mph in TOP gear.

Apart from the engine, there are a number of identifying features on the XJ12 sedan.

The radiator grille is completely new, vertically slatted and surmounted by a "V-Twelve" symbol. At the rear an XJ12 motif is fitted to the right of the number plate housing.

Inside, ventilation has been improved by the installation of fresh air ducts leading from intakes hidden in the outer headlamp surrounds to the front footwells, where baffles dissipate the fresh air.

This supplements the dash-mounted spherical air intakes. Rapid changes of air are effected by a neat extractor system.

In the XJ12 the finish on the centre console is matt-black (replacing polished metal), new door-pulls are fitted above the front door pockets and protective carpeting is fitted to the inner leading edge of the front doors to prevent scuffing.

Highest quality leather is used in the seat facings. The standard U.K. front seat belts are the one-hand-operation inertia-reel type.

Production of the XJ sedans will be increased progressively to meet the undoubted demand for the XJ12 and to maintain the present high level of output of the XJ6 model.