



### X300, XJ Classic in The Making

Although only produced for a few years, the XJ X300 has since become one of the most respected cars in Jaguar's history.

The XJ6 was launched in 1968 and 26 years later the world was introduced to the 5th edition of this model. This sleek limousine was built from the end of 1994 to the end of 1997 with over 90,000 built.

### Design

Although the XJ40 was technically advanced, it never aroused the same emotions as the previous three generations of the XJ saloon. What the company needed was a car that would appeal to both the traditional Jaguar buyer, many of whom had been alienated by the XJ40, while still appealing to the younger, more sporting driver. The X300 did all this and more, achieving that rare feat of a facelift proving more cohesive and elegant than the original design. With good proportions, proven underpinnings and near bulletproof engines, the basic idea

was stunningly simple; re-skin the XJ40 in the style similar to that of the Series 3 XJ6, refine the powertrain even further and, for the younger market, provide a sporting variant with real performance. In practice a huge amount of work was needed to get the detailing right and ensure that the new car developed an identity and character of its own rather than becoming a mere caricature of the past.

Below the curvaceous new lines lay a largely unmodified late XJ40 body structure. The biggest changes were at the front and rear to accept the new lamp housings. One small but important difference is the smooth transition from the rear pillar to the top of the rear wing (instead of the awkward plastic trim piece needed on the XJ40 – a clear example of the advances in manufacturing processes between 1986 and 1994). Other new features were the use of colour matched oval door handles in place of the earlier square edged chrome type. The door

mirrors too were more flowing, with painted or chrome covers according to model, while the leak prone recess between the rear lamps for the number plates was replaced with a shallow depression in the boot lid and a much simpler plinth. The roof, door structures, floorpan, sills and glass, all expensive to redesign remain essentially unchanged from the XJ40.

### Exterior

The mostly flat bonnet of the XJ40 was replaced with a fluted, curvaceous design that accentuated the four separate round headlamps. Rear wings were reshaped to accommodate the new wrap-around rear light clusters. Also, the separate black-rubber bumper bar of the XJ40 is gone and replaced with a fully integrated body-coloured bumper.

The Jaguar "leaper" hood mascot was installed only on cars for non-European markets.

*(continued page 14)*



*The late Geoff Lawson in 1994 with an XJ12 X300 after the model was crowned 'The Most Beautiful Luxury Car in The World' by Italian Judges assembled in Milan for the 'L' Automobile più Bella del Mondo awards. The body lines chosen by Design Director Geoff Lawson and Stylist Keith Helfet strongly resemble the architecture of the predecessor (XJ40), but the new car looked more conservative with its low and long streamlined body and curvaceous new lines. (Geoff Lawson won numerous awards for his designs at Jaguar). Photo: Jaguar Cars.*



## Engine – AJ16

Both the 3.2 and 4.0 AJ6 engines used in the XJ40 were substantially revised for the XJ X300 saloon. Designated the “AJ16”, both featuring a revised fuel injection system, coil-on-plug distributorless ignition, new engine management systems, revised piston design (that eliminated some vibration) and an almost completely redesigned head featuring a stiffer casting, thinner, lighter valves, new camshafts and a lightweight magnesium cam cover. The engine was overall more efficient and quieter together with a rise in power and torque.

Although the more powerful 4.0 litre engine produced 250bhp, the 3.2 litre was no slouch with a credible 220bhp, ensuring a top speed of around 225kmh (140mph).

The big news however was the Eaton supercharged 4.0-litre engine fitted to the XJR, now a mainstream model and with the emphasis firmly on performance rather than classic luxury. The XJR boasted enough performance to eclipse even the mighty V12. The 4.0 litre XJR was tuned more for low down torque than outright power but its 6.6 second 0-60 acceleration time was still only one tenth of a second behind the hand built TWR XJR-S of only a few years before.



*1995 XJR supercharged AJ16 engine producing 326 hp (243 kW; 331 PS) and 378 lb-ft (512 N-m) with the use of an Eaton M90 supercharger and an air-water intercooler.*

The AJ16 engines have proved overtime to be almost bullet proof and easily handle the extra load incurred by the supercharger. With proper maintenance, they easily run 400 to 500,000 km.

## Engine – V12 6.0 Litre

The V12 cars did continue though for those customers who preferred near silent acceleration to the turbine like whine of a supercharger and could afford the increased running costs.

The V12 engine was also updated with a revised cylinder head and distributorless electronic engine management system. The top aluminium cover in the engine's

valley was redesigned to house two packs of three coils each, with each coil having two high-tension terminals for a total of twelve. These coil-packs were driven by two Denso ignition modules. The crankshaft in the V12 was switched from a forging to a chill casting.

A visibly significant chromed pipe connecting the left and the right banks of the V12 in the XJ40 platform (intended to vent and route the crankcase blow-by gas to the intake plenum) was changed to an almost invisible design at the top centre of the engine underneath a plastic cover that also hides fuel rails and coil-packs.



*This Carnival Red XJ Sports rolled off the line on July 2nd 1997 and is the very last X300 built. It was immediately transferred to the Jaguar Daimler Heritage Trust. In 2020 the UK “Classic Jaguar” magazine took the car for a test drive to see what an almost new (1,039km) X300 felt like. Although a 3.2 litre model, they commented that it was no slouch and was capable of 140mph (220kmh). Photo “Classic Jaguar”.*



## Transmission

The six-cylinder X300 cars used either a ZF four-speed automatic gearbox (4HP-22 on the 3.2 L and 4HP-24 on the 4.0 L), or a Getrag 290 five-speed manual. The 4HP-22 automatic is mechanically controlled while the 4HP-24 is electronically controlled, allowing 4.0-litre models to offer 'normal' and 'sport' modes on a switch by the gear lever.

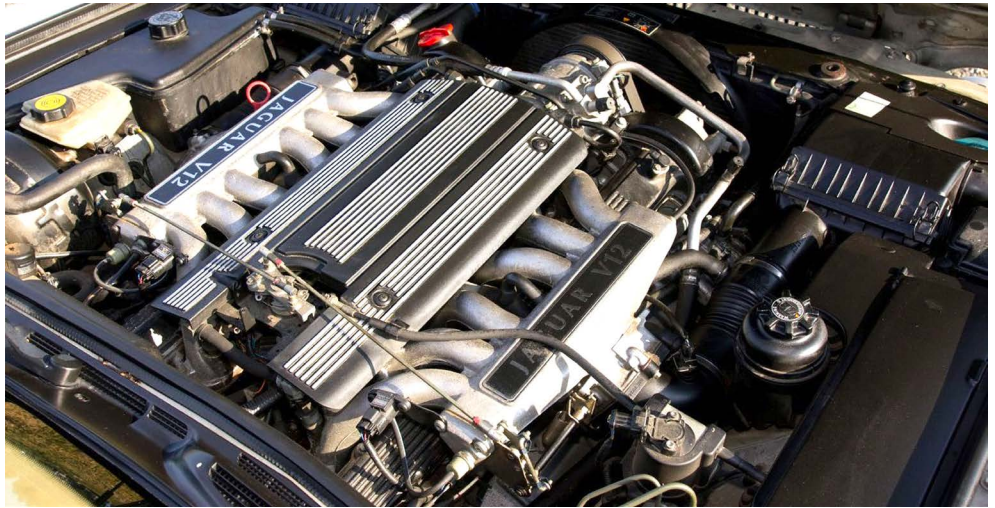
All V12-equipped cars were built with the GM 4L80-E automatic.

Although the Getrag manual gearbox was standard on the supercharged six-cylinder, almost all XJRs were built with the optional GM 4L80-E four-speed automatic transmission.

## Suspension and Brakes.

Underneath, the suspension layout remained basically unchanged, given that the new cast iron rear wishbones were introduced on the last XJ40's.

Self-levelling rear suspension was no longer available, but there were new bespoke Bilstein dampers for the sporting models. Brakes reverted to vacuum boosting, and while the calipers remained ATE, the rear discs became ventilated with larger discs fitted to the front of V12 and supercharged cars.



*The 6.0L V12 engine was updated for the X300 and fitted with distributorless electronic engine management systems. Between 1971-1997 the V12 engine bay became progressively 'tidier'.*

A new traction control system, fitted to the XJR and V12 cars used the ABS system to brake a slipping wheel while an electric motor simultaneously pulled back on the accelerator cable to reduce throttle.

## Interior

A good deal of late XJ40 structure remained, with similar seats, only slightly modified door trims and standardisation of the Daimler dash casing with its deeper wood panelling. The seats were updated to have a more rounded profile, wood trim was updated with bevelled edges, and the steering wheel was redesigned.

The centre console was however completely redesigned to house the digital controls for the new Nippondenso climate control system, while, for trip computer operation, the keypad alongside the steering wheel disappeared in favour of a much simpler push button on the end of the indicator stalk.

The X300 was the first Jaguar saloon to include an industry standard OBD2 (on board diagnostics) connector beneath the dashboard, a full six years before they became mandatory.

*(continued page 16)*



*P60-SOV was the very last V12 engined car built (17 April 1997). From 1971 a total of 161,583 V12-engined cars were made. For many years, Jaguar was the only company in the world to offer a four-door saloon car with a V12 engine. (Photo from "Jaguar World" Spring 2019).*



### Long Wheel Base (X330)

While in its later years a stretched XJ40 had become available to special order, for the X300 the longer wheelbase became a regular option in mid-1995, with the cars built on the main production line and available with every engine except the supercharged 4.0 litre, with many 3.2 litre LWBs built for the chauffeur trade.

The LWB added an extra 6 inches (150 mm) for rear seat occupants and an extra inch (25mm) of headroom. There were two X330 variants, one with five seats and one with four, which featured a raised centre console between the two adjustable rear seats.

### Safety Equipment

Standard safety equipment for the XJ range included dual front airbags and ABS, while the XJR model was further equipped with traction control.

### 1997 - XJ upgrades

From February 1997, the XJ range was fitted with a security system which included an engine immobiliser, remote control alarm, glass breaking and odometer sensor, battery tamper protection and security shielded locks. Inside, the rear seat bench was restyled and the centre rear seat gained a three-point, inertia reel seatbelt.



*Early X300 cars were built without a front passenger glove-box and pockets on the front of the seats, due to space constraints caused by the introduction of a front-passenger airbag.*

### Models

#### ◇ XJ6

The base model in the range was the XJ6, which featured the 3.2 litre version of the AJ16 with steel wheels and hub caps.

The model came with electric window, mirrors and antennas, glass heating, windshield and front headlights, audio system with eight speakers, central lock, remote control of the boot and fuel lid, driver's seat with electrical adjustments, velour salon (with leather sidewall seats), finished with wood.

Alloy wheels, leather upholstery and air conditioning were all extra-cost options. Later, the 4.0 L version of the AJ16 was offered in the XJ6.

Externally, the XJ6 can be distinguished by a combination of chrome edging windows and black racks.

#### ◇ Sovereign

The Sovereign model also used the AJ16 engine (in either capacity) and came equipped with luxury features as per the XJ6 - plus alloy wheels, cruise control, Nippon Denso air conditioning,



*This particular car was built as a one off to demonstrate a possible successor to the outgoing Daimler DS 420 limo. The car was stretched by eight inches in the front doors, and five inches in the rear doors, with the roof being approximately two inches higher in the crown area, to maintain the proportions of the car. Mechanically, the car was identical to the standard 4.0L Daimler Six. It got as far as a fully road-going prototype and used frequently by Chief Executive of Jaguar, Nick Scheele until shelved as it was too big to be assembled efficiently.*



leather cabin, front seats with electric adjustments, with memory in three positions for seats and for external mirrors, electric steering column and heated mirrors.

The Sovereign came with chromed trim in various locations: on the radiator grille, rear light cluster surrounds, windscreen and rear window surrounds, rain gutters, window frames and boot-lid plinth.

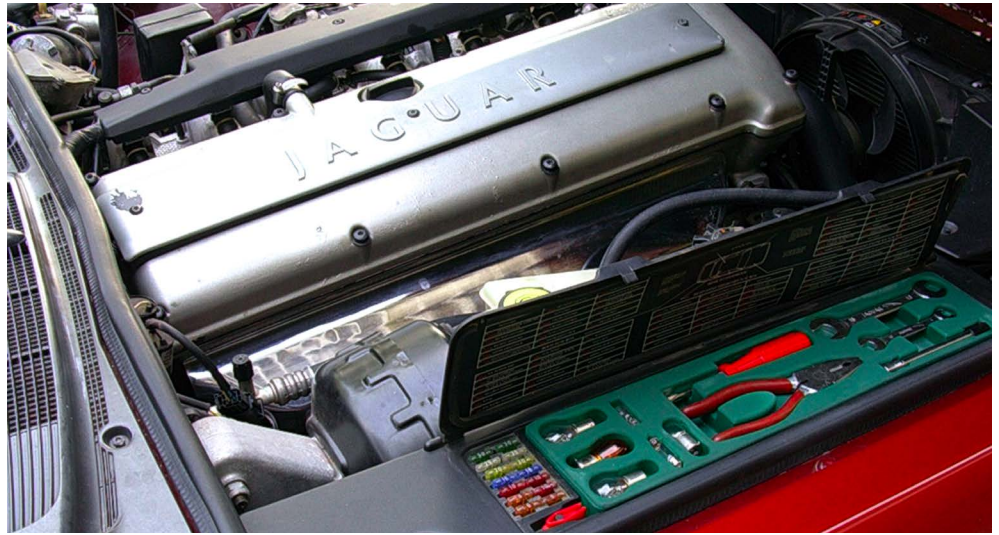
### ◇ Sport

To attract younger buyers, Jaguar offered a "Sport" model with wider 8-inch 'Dimple' alloy wheels, revised seats, and stiffer suspension. The Sport kept the matte-black window surrounds from the base model, and is identified by "Sport" badges on the B-pillars and "XJ Sport" badging on the rear. It was offered with either the 3.2 litre or 4.0 litre engine.

The sports suspension and wider wheels were also available as an option on the XJ6 and Sovereign SWB/LWB models.

### ◇ Executive

Aimed at a younger market segment, the Executive model was introduced for the 1997 model year and featured leather trim, a wood/leather steering wheel, wide wheels (similar to the "Sport" model), and air conditioning. It was treated as a run-out specification for the XJ6.



*4.0 litre AJ16 engine with 10% more power than its AJ6 predecessor. Also showing is the built in toolkit - the first since the 1951 Mark V. Photo: Club Member Andrew Byles.*

### ◇ XJR (X306)

The XJR was introduced as a high-performance sport model, and it was Jaguar's first-ever supercharged road car.

Compared to the XJ6, the XJR was distinguished by its 17-inch alloy wheels, firmer suspension, climate control air conditioning, leather upholstery, front fog lights, driver's seat memory settings and alarm. The XJR was also fitted with a limited slip rear differential.

Cosmetically, the XJR differed from the standard cars with a body-coloured grille surround, mesh grille insert, body-

coloured boot-lid plinth, larger exhaust outlets, special five-spoke "Sport" alloy wheels, and "XJR" badging. Rain gutters and window surrounds were matte black.

### ◇ XJ12 and Daimler Double Six

The XJ12 model featured the same trim level of the Sovereign with leather upholstery and front fog lights. It was visually differentiated by the rear boot-lid "XJ12" badge, a "V12" badge on the passenger-side dashboard wood trim, a "V12" badge on each B-pillar, and a gold-coloured Jaguar crest at the top of the radiator grille surround.

*(continued page 18)*



*This one-off Daimler Corsica convertible, named after a 1931 Daimler drophead coupe, was built in 1996 to commemorate the Centenary of the Daimler motor car in 1996. It was as based on the SWB Daimler Double-Six saloon and seats four. The Daimler Corsica prototype is owned by the Jaguar Daimler Heritage Trust, who commissioned it to operate as a fully functional road-legal car.*



## Feature - XJ (X300/XJR) 1994-1997

While the similar Daimler Double Six came with 225/60-16 tyres on 7-inch wheels and comfort suspension as standard, the XJ12 came with 225/55-16 tyres on 8-inch-wide wheels and sports suspension, which explains the height difference between the two models.

### ◇ Daimler Century

In 1996, the Century model was introduced to commemorate the centennial of the Daimler name. The Century was equipped with all features and upgrades available on the X300 cars, plus chromed wheels, special exterior paint, and electrically adjustable rear seats. Only a 100 of each were built (Century Six & Century Double Six).

### X300 Review - *Auto Express*

Verdict - If looks alone influence your car buying decisions, the XJ's curves will have already seduced you. It's a stunner. Inside, there's still a fight between traditional and modern, but leg and headroom are improved - although both are cramped for a car of this size, as is the boot. But on the road, the X300 is

a delight. The steering has more weight and precision than before, while the ride is unsurpassed. What's more, the handling is much improved. In terms of value for money, you can't beat it. You'll get a lot of car for the money.

### Sales Price (New)

The X300 was keenly priced when new. In the UK, in the final year of sale the range started just shy of £30,000 - a sum that would have bought an entry level XJ6 back in 1968. The XJR topped the Jaguar badged model at £47,500 while the Daimlers ranged from £52,000 for the Six to a staggering £66,500 for the long-wheelbase Double-Six, more than twice the cost of the entry level Jaguar!.

In Australia the XJR sold for \$165,000.

### Collectability

These days the X300 is revered by many enthusiasts as one of today's top modern-classic buys, renowned for its value for money as well as being one of the most durable Jaguars of the last

thirty years. However, there is still a need to buy carefully - high mileage isn't necessarily a problem, but a service history is a must. Low-mileage cars do come onto the market and inevitably command a premium, especially the XJR and Daimler models.

### Sales & Production

The X300 sold readily with new and returning customers flocking to get their hands on what BBC's *Top Gear* had described as, "Probably the best car in the World" - praise that led to more than 92,038 examples being built, despite such a short career, as by 1997 the aesthetically similar XJ8 was waiting in the wings, bringing eight-cylinder power to the XJ line-up for the first time ever.

If you own an XJ X300, or thinking of buying one, spare the time and watch the following 7-minute video: [Jaguar XJ \(X300\) Promo Video 1995](#). ■

*Editor- Thank you to club members for providing photographs for this feature.*



*Jaguar's Browns Lane production line. Here a Daimler Double-Six XJ X300 is receiving its final check prior to distribution.*



## Feature - XJ (X300/XJR) 1994-1997



*Allan Dunsford, 1996 Platinum 4.0 litre XJ X300 Auto. The car was a one owner vehicle and purchased from Barbagello Jaguar in Perth. (The car is fitted with XK8 10 spoke alloy wheels).*



*Andrew Byles, 4.0 litre XJ X300. The car is finished in the spectacular Morocco Red.*



*Andrew Byles, 1994 Maroon 4.0 litre XJ X300 early model (without a glovebox). The car has been fitted with XJR 5 Slot alloy wheels.*





## The new Jaguar XJ6 Sport. 95% luxury car, 5% racing car.

There are perhaps a handful of cars that are worth rising early in the morning for, just for the fun of driving them.

As a rule, they tend to be cramped two seaters, with noisy engines.

But now, you can add the new XJ6 Sport to the list.

A refined, elegant saloon, with a power unit that whispers rather than wails.

However, this is one luxury car that's

just as enjoyable to drive on winding roads as it is on the freeway.

The credit for the Sport's race-bred handling goes, not surprisingly, to a team of racing car engineers.

The Jaguar Sport engineers responsible for the Jaguars that won the 1991 World Sport Car Championship.

Consequently, the Sport boasts updated springs and dampers, a stronger front anti-

roll bar, with recalibrated power steering that provides more road 'feel'

Standard equipment also includes attractive Jaguar Sport forged alloy wheels and low profile, 225/55ZR16 tyres.

Finally, there's a distinctly business-like matt black grille, four headlights, Jaguar Sport steering wheel and gear knob.

If you really enjoy driving, we suggest you take the new XJ6 Sport for a test drive. Preferably, as early in the morning as possible.

Jaguar. One of the world's great motoring experiences.

