

Lexus Changes Character

RZ 550e F SPORT Electric Vehicle Trades Softness for Speed

By Derek Price

CARGAZING.COM

The strangest thing about the 2026 Lexus RZ is how little it feels like a traditional Lexus.

That's not a criticism.

Lexus built its reputation with soft-riding luxury cars that seemed determined to erase the road beneath them. The RZ, its electric crossover, takes nearly the opposite approach.

Its suspension is firmer. Its seats feel more supportive than plush, and its steering reacts quickly enough to make this electric crossover feel alert.

It feels like Lexus trading isolation for connection with the road.

The performance is phenomenal, at least in my F SPORT tester. Dual electric motors send 402 horsepower through an all-wheel-drive system, launching it from zero to 60 mph in 4.1 seconds. The acceleration is instant, smooth and effortless.

It is not lightweight on paper. The RZ weighs 4,663 pounds, but it feels light on its feet in a way few traditional Lexus models do. Body motions are tightly controlled, and the whole vehicle seems eager to change direction.

The trade-off is comfort. Rough pavement comes through more clearly, and the firm seats reinforce the sense that this version was



The 2026 Lexus RZ uses a low nose, tapered roofline and sculpted bodywork to give Lexus' electric crossover a sleek, athletic look.

tuned for response rather than relaxation. Buyers expecting the floating personality of an RX or LS may need to recalibrate.

Range is the other price of performance. The RZ 550e F SPORT is rated for 229 miles, well below the less powerful versions. That's enough for commuting and errands, especially when the car can recharge overnight in a garage, but it makes long-distance travel more complicated.

My week included one reminder of why.

The RZ has a native Tesla-style charging port and access to the Supercharger network. My first charging stop worked exactly as

expected. On the second visit, Tesla's phone app refused to activate a charger. I tried several stalls and restarted the process, but nothing worked. I returned later, and it charged without trouble.

I can't say whether the failure came from Tesla, my iPhone, the app or the Lexus. I can say it was frustrating.

That experience is not a special Lexus flaw. Public fast charging remains one of the weakest parts of EV ownership. It can be costly, unreliable and inconvenient compared with plugging in at home.

At least Lexus has substantially expanded the RZ's charging options. The

2026 model uses a native North American Charging System port, includes adapters for older charging standards, and offers access to more than 25,000 Tesla Supercharger plugs in North America.

Inside, the RZ still understands luxury. It is exceptionally quiet, although silence is less distinctive now that so many electric cars deliver it.

The most memorable detail was the illumination on the door panels. A light projects a shaped, textured pattern across the trim, creating an effect that reminded me of the artistic door panels in the much more expensive Lexus LC coupe.

Lexus is using light itself as a luxury material, not just leather, stitching or metal. It's thoughtful design.

The Lexus badge also brings something harder to measure: reassurance. The company's reputation, dealer network and battery coverage provide peace of mind for buyers nervous about long-term EV ownership.

Overall, I really like the RZ. It is fast, quiet, beautifully detailed and more engaging than a traditional Lexus. For buyers who can charge at home and live with the range, it makes an excellent daily driver.

It's a different kind of Lexus, and that's exactly what makes it interesting.

AT A GLANCE

WHAT WAS TESTED?

2026 Lexus RZ 550e F SPORT AWD (\$57,000). Options: Blue brake calipers (\$500), cold area package (\$200), luxury package (\$2,600), carpet cargo mat (\$140), wheel locks (\$99). Price as tested (including \$1,295 destination charge): \$61,834

BY THE NUMBERS

Wheelbase: 112.2 in.
Length: 189.2 in.
Width: 74.6 in.
Height: 64.4 in.
Power: Dual electric motors (402 horsepower)
Range: 229 miles
MPGe: 95 combined

RATINGS

Style: 9
Performance: 9
Price: 8
Handling: 8
Ride: 6
Comfort: 7
Quality: 9
Overall: 8

WHY BUY IT?

The RZ is for buyers who want Lexus quality and peace of mind in a quick, quiet EV and who can accept firm road manners and modest range.



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Range is the other price of performance.



Inside, the RZ combines a clean digital dashboard, wide touchscreen and thoughtful lighting effects in a quiet, modern cabin.

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A CLOSER LOOK



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FACTS, FIGURES AND RATINGS

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