



# The LOUNGE by Lexus at Brussels Airport

25 April 2018

LOUNGE by Lexus at Brussels Airport is an innovative space that is more than simply a place for travellers to unwind. It also provides an engaging showcase for Lexus's wide-ranging activities and achievements as a global luxury lifestyle brand, while offering hospitality in the finest Japanese traditions of *omotenashi*.

Rich in contemporary Lexus design, offering innovative, leading edge spa and well-being facilities and even equipped with a state-of-the-art listening room for Mark Levinson premium audio equipment, it reflects Lexus's commitment to the highest standards of customer service.

## DESIGN AND CRAFTSMANSHIP

LOUNGE by Lexus covers an area of 700 m<sup>2</sup> and has seating for 175 guests. It is located within THE LOFT, the Brussels Airlines Business Lounge. It is divided into a central lounge, bar area, an upper lounge with a more relaxing environment and a quieter breakout space with work stations.

There is also a brand space where guests can find out more about Lexus design, *takumi* craftsmanship, performance while browsing "storytelling" cabinets that contain exhibits and information that illustrate its growing range of brand activities and innovations.

The layout includes an extensive spa (detailed in the *omotenashi* chapter), with sleep pods, personal shower and washrooms and a massage room, and a listening suite where guests can enjoy finest quality audio from Mark Levinson.

Ceiling height, lighting and furnishing materials and colours vary according to the area and its function to create different ambiances.

## Applying the principles of Lexus L-finesse design

The overall look of LOUNGE by Lexus is inspired by Lexus's L-finesse design principles, successfully embracing and adapting a styling philosophy that reflects the brand's commitment to design, technology and precision craftsmanship.

L-finesse has three core values:

- Seamless Anticipation

True to the concept of *omotenashi* – the Japanese spirit of hospitality – we do more than simply meet our customers’ needs and desires. We anticipate them, seamlessly, to give them an amazing experience.

- Incisive Simplicity

Everything we create must be an intuitive pleasure to use and behold. Any excessive complexity must be stripped away so we can provoke honest, undiluted emotion in the experience.

- Intriguing Elegance

Lexus design has the power not just to catch the eye and turn heads, but also to capture and hold attention. The more you look, the more you’re drawn in. This is what Lexus designers mean when they talk about “visual journeys”.

In the context of LOUNGE by Lexus, L-finesse is expressed in qualities that are also seen in the designs for Lexus’s European retailers. They generate a visual journey with broad expanses that flow into intriguing details, creating a change of pace. The result is a bold visual expression, achieved with an elegant composure.

Examples of L-finesse design include the custom-made central bar units. Finished with a matt white marble surface with concealed lighting and gloss white body section, they are styled with an intriguing mixture of rounded corners and sharp angles. The lounge tables are similar in look, with white glass tops and anodised aluminium bases. Services and cabling are all concealed from view to preserve a pure silhouette.

### **Signature grille facade**

The façade of LOUNGE by Lexus features a subtle yet striking interpretation of the spindle grille that has become a signature design feature of Lexus vehicles. It is rendered in a richly coloured perforated bamboo that is also used in the interiors of Lexus models.

The spindle grille has been a feature of Lexus models since first appearing on the GS saloon in 2012. Its shape has been interpreted to reflect the character of different models, from strong SUVs and crossovers, such as the RX and NX to performance coupes such as the LC and RC F and luxury saloons, like the IS and LS. The upper and lower sections can be changed in size and made more prominent, adjusting the central pinch-point, and the mesh can be formed in different patterns, creating new visual tensions. The choice of materials and colours for the frame and mesh also generates a different look to suit the vehicle’s specific character.

The grille is a concrete example of how Lexus design has evolved from focusing on elegance to becoming sharper, edgier and more distinctive, with details that are instantly recognisable as “Lexus”.

### **Take a Line for a Walk chairs by Alfredo Häberli**

The furnishings in LOUNGE by Lexus have been chosen for their combination of comfort and design excellence. One of the key pieces is the Take a Line for a Walk chair, designed by

Alfredo Häberli and manufactured by luxury Italian furniture maker Moroso.

The chair takes its name and inspiration from a quote from the 20<sup>th</sup> century artist Paul Klee: "Drawing is like taking a line for a walk."

The Swiss-Argentinian designer Häberli explained: "The modelling method of rapid prototyping served as the starting point for this design. At the time, I was reading a book about Paul Klee in which he said that when he was drawing, it was like taking the line for a walk. This expression gave me the final theme: to design a lightweight structure for a lounge chair with enormous wings."

Take a Line for a Walk is a modern, extremely comfortable bergère-style chair with a slim and masculine shape. The armchair and footrest are in cold-foamed polyurethane with inner steel frame. The base is coated steel and the foot pads are made of PVC.

### **Lexus storytelling cabinets**

As part of the Lexus Lounge brand experience, two storytelling cabinets bring together items, pictures and books that draw on different aspects of Lexus, from high technology to motorsports success.

There are two open cabinets, located in the upper lounge, themed on Design and Takumi Craftsmanship and Technology and Performance.

The Takumi and Design cabinet includes design drawings, items from the Lexus Design Awards and even an origami cat – the folding challenge Lexus's craftsmen have to master, working against the clock and using their non-dominant hand. Further context is provided by a selection of books on art, lifestyle and travel.

The Technology and Performance cabinet illustrates diverse Lexus projects such as the LFA supercar, Hoverboard, Sport Yacht concept and the Skyjet, designed for the sci-fi movie *Valerian and the City of 1,000 Planets*, plus the company's international racing activities. Again, there is a range of books to browse on technology, sports, space exploration and related subjects.

### **The Lexus Parts Wall**

The Parts Wall is a striking feature created entirely from parts used in Lexus vehicles, brought together in an artistic arrangement and finished in a uniform white.

The idea for the wall was originally brought to life at the INTERSECT by Lexus luxury brand space in Tokyo by Masamichi Katayama, principal of the interior design company Wonderwall Inc.

Katayama explained: "I wanted to transform the simple act of relaxing in a lounge into a chance to experience the excitement of the Lexus brand."

The installation comprises dozens individual parts and components – among them bodywork, grilles, exhaust systems and wheels – together weighing more than a tonne. Their arrangement in a single installation creates a fusion of art and engineering that pays tribute to

the craftsmanship and advanced technologies applied to Lexus vehicles.

### **Innovation, inspiration and ingenuity from the Lexus Design Awards**

Lexus believes design has the power to make the world a better place, and LOUNGE by Lexus provides a showcase for some of the most innovative and effective entries contributed to the annual Lexus Design Award, an international initiative to encourage and support emerging global design talent.

Each year, designers are challenged to produce ideas which capture a central theme, linked to Lexus's own design principles. An international panel of design expert judges selects 12 finalists from among hundreds of entries from around the world. The finalists' work is shown as part of Lexus's presence at the annual Milan Design Week. From this group, four submissions are given financial help and the support of leading design professionals as mentors to develop their concepts to prototype stage. An ultimate Grand Prix winner is then chosen from this quartet.

Among the works on display is **Agar Plasticity**, the Grand Prix winner in 2016, created by AMAM, a design group formed by Kosuke Araki, Noriaki Maetani and Akira Muraoka. Their product explores how agar, a substance obtained from marine algae, can be treated to make natural and environmentally friendly packaging materials that can be used as alternatives to oil-based plastics.

**Instamp** is a series of silicon stamps representing the western A to Z alphabet in a simple typeface. Instead of producing a uniform image, the stamps create a different effect depending on the position, pressure and stress applied. The resulting effect is similar to the brushwork used in east Asian calligraphy. Created by Japanese designer Yuzo Azu, Instamp was a finalist in the 2015 Lexus Design Award.

The wide range of inspiration among the award's thousands of entries is witnessed in **Dada**, a toy comprising blocks, pegs and bands made from natural products, which children can use to explore their creative imagination. Designed by Myungsik Jang from Korea, Dada was a finalist in the 2016 Lexus Design Award.

Kuniko Maeda (2017 Lexus Design Award finalist), takes disposable paper and upcycles it to create intricately patterned 3D structures, coating and cutting the material to give it a completely new appearance. The process for this **Landscape of Paper** transforms what would be waste for recycling into a new material combining both traditional craft techniques and digital technology.

**Origami Porcelain**, developed by Hitomi Igarashi for the 2013 award, is created using a new casting technique with paper, allowing for thinner ceramic pieces and more free-form shapes to be achieved.

The **World Clock** (2012, Masafumi Ishikawa and Hitomi Ishikawa, USA) is a simple concept that tells you the time in 12 different world cities. The frame is a dodecagon, with each side representing a different location. As you rotate the clock, the single hour hand remains in place, so the local time can be seen at-a-glance.

### **Iris lights**

The cluster of translucent lights suspended above the lounge's bar area comprises a series of Iris crystal ball lamps, created by Sebastian Scherer and featured in the 2014 Lexus Design Award. Scherer, from Berlin, drew his inspiration from children blowing soap bubbles, and sought to capture the intriguing qualities of these shimmering, floating spheres.

Two years after starting his development work, he made contact with a German company that specialises in dichroic colour coating of glass. They were given the challenge of applying their techniques to a spherical form to create something completely new.

The result is the Iris lamp. Each globe is made from handblown crystal, which is dipped in an alcohol solution before being fired. The resulting finish shimmers in a different colour from every angle. An OLED provides the light source and fixture for each lamp, its extremely thin framework ensuring the design is not compromised.

### **Inaho Lights**

The floor-standing light installation in the centre of the lounge is by Hideki Yoshimoto and Yoshinaka Ono of Japan's Tangent Studios and was a leading finalist in the 2013 Lexus Design Award. Called Inaho, these freestanding lamps have bulbs shaped like ears of rice (*inaho* in Japanese).

Mirroring the swaying movement of rice plants, the lights glow with a golden light and lean towards people as they approach. The stems contain artificial muscle fibres controlled by electricity. As you draw near to the light, sensors trigger a micro-controller which causes the muscle fibres to shrink slightly with a certain rhythm, creating the swaying effect. As the stems are made of an elastic carbon fibre tube, these small stimuli can be amplified into a dramatic motion.

### **Kiriko glass: traditional craftsmanship adapted for modern luxury**

Traditional Japanese aesthetics, culture and artforms have a strong influence on contemporary Lexus design. As an example, fine *kiriko* cut glass has been reinterpreted for use as an exclusive and innovative ornamentation feature in the new Lexus LS flagship saloon.

Lounge guests can admire examples of the hand-faceted glass and see how it has been adapted for use in the LS where it forms an eye-catching element in the interior door panels, changing in appearance according to the angle and intensity of light. Its shape and pattern echo the look of the car's spindle grille.

Although the exquisite glasswork, produced by Studio Kobin, looks beautiful and delicate, it is in fact remarkably strong, thanks to advanced glass reinforcement technology.

### **LOUNGE by Lexus design partner**

LOUNGE by Lexus has been designed by the retail and brand consultancy FITCH.

FITCH produced a retail concept for Lexus's European retailer network and some of the successful ideas from this experience have been developed in its vision for the new lounge at Brussels Airport.

## **OMOTENASHI – COMFORT, RELAXATION AND WELL-BEING**

Lexus has an industry-leading reputation for the highest levels of customer service, a quality that has its roots in *omotenashi* – the finest traditions of Japanese hospitality. Customers are treated with the welcome and respect that would be given to a guest in the home.

*Omotenashi* goes further than just meeting an individual's needs; it is about anticipating them before they arise.

These qualities are central to LOUNGE by Lexus, where visitors can enjoy a welcoming, comfortable and relaxed environment, whether they need to rest, work, find entertainment, enjoy food and refreshments or revitalise during a long journey.

The design of the lounge, its furnishings and the facilities provided, all support aspects of *omotenashi*. This includes a spa area equipped with individual shower/washrooms by GROHE, restful b.Relaxed sleep pods by Brussels Airlines and the latest relaxing massage chairs from Panasonic.

### **Spa rooms by GROHE**

Spa rooms by GROHE are a key part of The LOFT by Brussels Airlines, a place where guests can enjoy peace, tranquillity and pampering in a calm and peaceful environment. The relaxing ambience, in complete contrast to the familiar, frantic pace of airport life, has been created through careful selection of materials, furnishings, lighting and equipment.

Visitors can make use of individual spa rooms equipped with the latest shower and shower toilet equipment from GROHE or take time for a refreshing nap in the restful environment of the Brussels Airlines b.Relaxed sleep pods.

Just as the driver and passengers in the Lexus LS flagship saloon can benefit from in-seat shiatsu massage functions, lounge visitors can de-stress in the comfort of Panasonic Relax Chairs, with sophisticated "Real Pro Hot Stone" programmes.

### **A personal spa experience**

Within the lounge's spa area, there is a suite of six individual rooms equipped by GROHE, the world's leading provider of sanitary fittings. Each has state-of-the-art washroom facilities, including an L-finesse design basin, a lavatory and walk-in shower space. Wireless speakers and dimmable lighting enhance the ambience.

In a perfect expression of utmost hospitality, the facilities give guests the chance to refresh themselves and de-stress in comfortable and beautifully designed surroundings. The fittings represent the latest technologies and designs developed by GROHE, including the AquaSymphony shower system and multi-function Sensia® Arena shower toilets.

AquaSymphony is a personal spa that is generous in size and has innovative features. A great variety of sprays can be selected, directing water in different shapes and forms while its AquaCurtain of water can be programmed with different coloured lighting effects.

The new GROHE Sensia® Arena is designed to create the best ever shower toilet experience,

with both hygiene and comfort at maximum levels. It has an automatic self-cleaning function and a sensor which detects a person approaching and raises the lid automatically.

Its dual shower arms clean the skin tenderly and thoroughly. The intensity of the spray, the temperature of the water and the positions of the shower arms can all be adjusted to suit personal preference.

### **b.Relaxed sleeping rooms by Brussels Airlines**

Truly relaxing rest and sleep can be hard to find for international travellers moving quickly through different time zones. LOUNGE by Lexus provides five b.Relaxed sleeping rooms by Brussels Airlines, designed to help visitors enjoy complete comfort, peace and quiet.

The individual bedrooms feature a completely flat bed beneath a ceiling lit like a starry night sky. The design was inspired by both the lounge's Belgian location and the Brussels Airlines long haul business class cabin.

Each room showcases a piece of art picturing Belgium somewhere in the world and is finished with soft, tactile materials and surfaces.

### **Panasonic Relax Chair: "Real Pro Hot Stone" wellness treatment**

True to the guiding principles of *omotenashi*, the spa has a room equipped with chairs designed to provide calming wellness treatments. The Panasonic Relax chair "Real Pro Hot Stone" helps passengers take a relaxing break while they wait, in a dedicated section of the spa.

Lexus offers similar comforts to passengers in its new LS flagship sedan, in which the front and rear seats provide a range of different massage functions, including shiatsu, designed in collaboration with expert Japanese practitioners.

The chair is a modern daybed which helps travellers relax with an array of warming massage heads. It is electrically adjustable for different lying positions and vibration patterns. It has an elegant design and is finished in a black or ivory leather-look material.

The Relax Chair is sponsored by Panasonic Automotive Europe, a leading supplier of in-vehicle electrical systems to the automotive industry and a strong business partner.

### **Food and drink service at all times**

Hot and cold dishes and light snacks are available at all times, with the menu changing according to the time of day. The choice will regularly include popular Japanese cuisine and special food and drink events will be hosted.

The bar area provides an extensive range of soft drinks, hot beverages, wines, spirits and cocktails. In addition to self-serve facilities, a bartender will also be on hand to pour and mix drinks.

## **TECHNOLOGY THAT CREATES AMAZING EXPERIENCES**

Lexus has a proud history of technology innovation, not least as having introduced the efficiency and environmental benefits of self-charging hybrid power to the luxury car market. There is much more to its technical vision than hybrid, however, as LOUNGE by Lexus illustrates with exhibits and information about ground-breaking projects

These include the fully functioning Lexus Hoverboard, the Lexus Sport Yacht concept, a lightweight sports bike made from advanced carbon fibre materials and the Lexus LFA supercar.

Mark Levinson, international leaders in audio technology, are well-established as an exclusive partner to Lexus in designing bespoke sound systems for its vehicles. The superb quality of Mark Levinson sound reproduction can be enjoyed in a state-of-the-art listening room.

### **The Lexus LFA – the ultimate Lexus supercar**

The Lexus LFA marked a turning point in the history of Lexus, a rare and thoroughbred ultra-high-performance supercar that fully embraced advanced technologies and engineering innovation. Just 500 examples were built, each one hand-finished by Lexus *takumi* craftsmen.

Lounge guests can discover more about the LFA's development, including a scale model.

Building the LFA was the greatest challenge Lexus had ever undertaken, a project that was 10 years in the making and which required new manufacturing and engineering solutions to be developed in order to meet its exacting goals.

Power was provided by a completely new V10 engine and a new carbon fibre reinforced plastic (CFRP) was developed for the bodywork, giving the car exceptional strength and light weight. New methods for forming this composite material were also developed.

### **The Lexus F SPORT Bike**

The Lexus F SPORT bike displayed in the lounge was created following the completion of the 500 LFA supercars and demonstrates how Lexus advanced technology and design can successfully be applied to other forms of transport.

The bike is made from the same strong and lightweight carbon fibre reinforced plastic composite material that was developed for use in the LFA's bodywork. Built by *takumi* craftsmen, it is fitted with a 22-speed electronic shift control system for fast and easy gear shifts. The geometry of the frame was determined to ensure comfort, with vibration damping also provided. The paint finish is to the same pristine standard as the LFA.

### **The Lexus Sport Yacht Concept**

LOUNGE by Lexus features a scale model of the Lexus Sport Yacht concept, a sleek and powerful, 42-foot ocean-going vessel that can accommodate up to eight people. Winner of a special award at the 2018 Japan International Boat Show, the concept was developed and designed by Lexus and manufactured by American boat-building specialists the

Marquis-Carver Yacht Group.

The yacht makes use of Lexus technologies, including CFRP (as used in the manufacture of the LFA supercar) which saves considerable weight compared to conventional fibreglass materials. A stepped hull design reduces drag and power is provided by twin engines based on the 5.0-litre V8 unit found in the Lexus LC and RC F coupes.

Lexus has confirmed that it will put a luxury yacht into production in 2019, a larger, 65-foot model that will build on the advanced nature of the concept while adding more comfort and space for up to 15 guests.

### **Lexus Hoverboard**

As the centrepiece of its Amazing in Motion campaign, Lexus successfully designed and produced a Hoverboard – a form of skateboard that floats silently above the ground and can be ridden by a full-grown adult. This one-off piece of technical wizardry is on public display in the LOUNGE by Lexus.

The project took 18 months of design and technology planning, followed by weeks of testing at a specially built “hoverpark” near Barcelona. The task of riding the hoverboard fell to Ross McGouran, an internationally acclaimed skateboard star. One of Ross’ pro-skateboards is also on show in the lounge.

Within the Lexus Hoverboard’s compact structure there are two reservoirs containing superconducting material, kept at -197 °C by liquid nitrogen. This allows the board to levitate above a track fitted with permanent magnets. Lexus worked with scientists from IFW Dresden and evico GmbH to achieve its ambitious aim, pushing the boundaries of technology, design and innovation to make the impossible possible.

### **Wireless device charging**

Wireless charging units for smartphones have become a popular and useful feature in many Lexus vehicles. The same convenience is offered to Lexus’s lounge guests, with cable-free charging units seamlessly integrated into many of the tables.

### **Mark Levinson Listening Room: enjoy the pinnacle of audio quality**

Founded in 1972, Mark Levinson is synonymous with audio purity and equipment of the highest quality and technical accomplishment. Since 2001, the brand has worked in an exclusive automotive partnership with Lexus, producing sound systems for its vehicles that are custom-designed and engineered for the internal architecture and acoustic quality of each model.

Mark Levinson systems for Lexus are tuned to provide the highest level of accuracy, reliability, and enjoyment. The hallmark of each system is an uncanny ability to reproduce subtleties and nuances that deliver pure musical reproduction, with nothing added or removed from the performance. You don’t just hear the sound, you experience the soul of the music in a 360-degree spatial environment.

The full and rich experience of Mark Levinson sound is provided to LOUNGE by Lexus guests in two areas: one system is installed in the central bar, another has been specifically designed for the Mark Levinson Listening Room.

The system in bar has a stereo connection, while the listening room system is connected to a Lexicon immersive sound processor, for multichannel audio films from the media player.

Three Mark Levinson components are featured in each set-up: an audio player, preamplifier and turntable.

Designed and manufactured in the United States, all Mark Levinson products are handcrafted and tuned, so that each product performs beyond expectations. Each piece is precisely placed for the ultimate sonic purity and visual composition; nothing is extraneous. This makes Mark Levinson products as much a feast for the eyes as for the ears.

The soundproofed listening room is designed to provide the ideal environment in which to appreciate the performance of the Mark Levinson system. The ambience is warm and welcoming with discreet luxury expressed in walnut cabinets with Lexus motif fretwork, black glass wall panel, grey-painted walls and a warm, dark grey rug.

### **Lexus Skyjet**

One of the most arresting features of LOUNGE by Lexus is a half-scale model of Skyjet, a futuristic spacecraft which Lexus helped design for the international blockbuster movie Valerian and the City of 1,000 Planets, directed by Luc Besson.

Lexus collaborated with the film's creative team to produce a single-seat pursuit craft that would be piloted by Valerian, the movie's hero, in a fantasy world set 700 years into the future. Its overall shape was influenced by sleek and fast marine creatures such as sharks, dolphins and orca, and the design of modern fighter jets and submersible marine vessels.

The team at Lexus's ED<sup>2</sup> design centre in the South of France were able to integrate recognisable Lexus styling cues, including a spindle grille and lights shaped like the triple-LED headlamps on the LC coupe. Referencing zero emission powertrain technology, Skyjet also featured a hydrogen fuel cell capsule.

ENDS