

# LONG LIVE THE KING

BY JOE SAGE

Range Rover heritage is long and storied—from products, badges and achievements to ownership, manufacture and geography. Now built in the Eastern, Western and Southern Hemispheres, the sun never sets on this empire, appropriate to its tight ties to British royalty throughout.

Always recognized for luxury and power, Range Rover is now adding alternative powertrains, with an increasing emphasis on mild hybrids (MHEVs) and PHEVs (plug-in hybrids) in the lineup. A new gen-five was introduced in 2022 as a 2023 model. With 2024 now in the mix, as well, the lineup has some evolutionary overlap (see info at right).

The consumer website says all 2024 PHEVs allocated to the US have already been reserved, suggesting you check with the dealer for any further availability. A full EV version is due in 2024.

Our sample is a 2023 in the base SE trim level, with the turbo-six, though upscaled with the more potent PHEV powertrain, bringing horsepower to

434, while providing a more-generous-than-typical 48-mile pure electric range, which they figure can handle about 75 of a typical person's needs.

The SE trim, suitable for routine royalty, had 104 pages describing materials, finishes and features in our comprehensive 128-page reference piece, before even getting to powertrains. SV trims from Special Vehicle Operations are hand-crafted in the best-of-the-best royal coachbuilding tradition and bring you toward the quarter-million-dollar mark. Autobiography builds for 2024 populate the otherwise wide open spaces between SE and SV.

All versions across the lineup include highly desirable all-wheel drive, all-wheel steering (which reduces the turning circle by 7.3 degrees) and electronic air suspension (which lowers the vehicle by 16mm at speeds above 65 mph while using weight sensing and eHorizon data to optimize the system for corners, bumps and even those height-reducing higher speed open stretches in advance).

Attention to detail abounds, as is appropriate for a royal. Our notes on its system setup were lengthy, but boil down to every feature or need being well accommodated, much of it more cleverly or at least distinctively than average, often using technology to new advantages, other times purely for show (as with a range of cabin lighting colors), occasionally perhaps to disadvantage (far-away glovebox latching could use a third hand). Door operation seems very regal, sort of a multi-stage electro-magnetic touch affair, patient and elegant, akin to a royal waiting for a subject to clear the way, though we would prefer they'd be quicker, e.g. if parked in a rough neighborhood. Our sample included an ISOFIX rear child seat system.

Power is ample for this six-cylinder Range Rover, even for its over 5,000-pound weight; proof is in the big beast's 5.7-second zero-to-60 time. Suspension exhibits what could be called classic characteristics, the sort of ride that you have not felt as often lately, though with benefits of adaptive air. The brakes can exhibit somewhat noticeable char-

acteristics, presumably hand-in-hand with their regenerative implementation.

We started in default drive mode. The shifter seemed uncooperative at first, but with the right effort forward and back and pressing the right options, we could verify it was in Drive, then move into Sport, the latter seeming to provide more stable steering and more power immediately on tap from a light. We did not have a chance to try for its stated 51 miles of pure-electric operation, and our casual readout of fuel mileage was in the 13s.

We logged a number of nitpicks, as we almost always do, though probably more than average. Of course many could be considered minor. Notes regarding powertrain response, ride, brakes, shifting and such seemed more significant, but often were mitigated in later notes as later adjustments or growing familiarity improved our perceptions.

We concluded that most such details will surely become somewhat transparent, with most owners probably summing up their experience either as "lovin' it" or at a minimum "(shrug) no complaints." We did our driving locally, though a distance trip may be its strong suit—a long beach trip, or a ski vacation north with proper tires, with

room for plenty of people and plenty of gear.

Some functions, such as a multi-step door lock or backup mirror sequence, seem purposely gracefully conceived. After all, the King could get anywhere more quickly if he just opened his own door to the castle and kept moving, but he would not be having the same overall regal treatment. All in all, the Range Rover treats you like royalty, something most people can easily get used to.

And as with royalty itself, some may find these vehicles too expensive, while for others they surely bear a gotta-have-it factor that proves irresistible. Brand loyalty for repeat owners (or lust, for new shoppers) reigns supreme.

Once you go ahead and get generally interested in the vehicle, head to the dealer for your own deep dive to absorb it all, especially as specific availabilities of different versions will be a factor.

If this is what you've had your heart set on, you will surely find yourself quite satisfied. If it's more of a random what-if, there is a lot you can look at for this kind of money or even quite a bit less. What that misses is the basic pride of brand and ownership you get with an aspirational vehicle such as this one surely is. ■

2023 brought PHEVs and a long wheelbase version of the PHEV SV (notably their first LWB five-passenger). Information for 2024 identifies MHEV, now has two LWB builds (two five-seat and three seven-seat versions). There are two engines in the US—standard a 523-hp 4.4L twin turbo V8 with 37 lb-ft more torque than the previous 5.0L supercharged V8, joined by a 355-hp 3.0L inline-six turbo.



## SPECIFICATIONS

ASSEMBLY .....	Solihull, UK
ENGINE/TRANSMISSION .....	UK / Germany
PARTS CONTENT .....	US/Canada 5, UK 54%, Germany 15%
ENGINE .....	3.0L turbo inline-6 gasoline w plug-in hybrid electric motor
HP/TORQUE .....	434 hp / 457 lb-ft
COMPRESSION RATIO .....	10.5:1
TRANSMISSION .....	8-spd auto / paddles
DRIVETRAIN .....	AWD w twin-spd transfer box; Terrain Response@2 system w drive & off-road modes
0-60 / TOP SPEED .....	5.7 sec / 140 mph
SUSPENSION .....	air susp, active dynamics
STEERING .....	all-wheel elec power assist
BRAKES .....	F: 380mm vented; R: 355mm vented
WHEELS .....	21-in alloy
TIRES .....	275/50R21
LENGTH / WHEELBASE .....	194.7 / 118.0 in
GROUND CLEARANCE .....	(PHEV) 8.23 in; / off-road (PHEV) 10.75 in
WADING DEPTH .....	35.43 in
APPR/RAMP/DEPART .....	std 26.1 / 19.1 / 24.9°; off-road 33.0 / 24.5 / 30.0°
TURNING CIRCLE .....	4-wheel steering 35.9 ft
HEADROOM (F/R) .....	39.3 / 38.7 in
LEGROOM (F/R) .....	40.3 / 33.9 in
CARGO CAPACITY .....	22.85 / 52.65 cu.ft
WEIGHT .....	5159 lb
TOW CAPACITY .....	unbraked 750 / max 3500 lb
ROOF LOAD .....	220.5 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY .....	prem unl rec'd / 23.8 gal
MPG .....	51 MPGe elec+gasoline (comb) / 21 MPG gasoline only (comb)
CHARGING TIME (PHEV) .....	50kW DC rapid charge: up to 80% in under an hour
RANGE (ELEC ONLY) .....	48 mi

BASE PRICE .....	<b>\$110,500</b>
SEATS: heated/cooled massage front, heated/cooled executive class rear .....	4200
HOT CLIMATE PACK .....	2200
TECHNOLOGY PACK .....	2000
ADDTL OPTIONS: gloss grand black veneer 1300, black contrast roof 1000, Shadow exterior pack 1000, pixel LED headlights w signature DRL 550, black brake calipers 550, 21-in full-size spare 450, ebony Morzine headliner 400, heated steering wheel 300, wheel protection pack 190, illuminated seat belt buckles 100, emergency pack 70, handover pack 25 .....	(totaling) 5935
DESTINATION CHARGE .....	1475
<b>TOTAL .....</b>	<b>\$126,310</b>

*(Many specifications stated as Euro per available information and may vary slightly in US version.)*

<b>2023 LINEUP</b> .....	SWB .....	LWB(5)
SE .....	\$104,900	
PHEV SE .....	110,500	
SV .....	186,850	
PHEV SV .....	193,100	228,300

*First Edition avail in first year of production.*

<b>2024 LINEUP</b> .....	SWB .....	LWB(5) .....	LWB(7)
SE P400 MHEV .....	\$107,400		\$113,400
SE P530 .....	130,400		136,400
Autobiography P550e .....	141,100		
Autobiography P550e PHEV .....	166,400	170,400	168,400
SV P615 .....	209,000		234,000

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