

Auto Watch

# Ready To Wear

Off-road match: Land Rover Range Rover Sport HSE Luxury & Ralph Lauren's Safari RL-67 Chronograph

By Jan Tegler



Land Rover Range Rover Sport HSE Luxury

The RL-67 features the trademark RL Roman numeral script on a black dial and a rugged but refined-looking galvanized steel, gunmetal case available in two sizes - 39 mm and 45 mm.



*At one time or another, most of us have yearned for an object that simplifies life - a piece of “go-to” gear versatile enough to suit a wide range of occasions.*

**IT'S AN APPEALING YET ELUSIVE IDEA.** That's why we often have several variants of the same item.

Still, there's something confidence inspiring about having one article that does it all. In this Auto-Watch column we've paired a car and a timepiece that we think nail that notion. Land Rover's marvelously multipurpose 2012 Range Rover Sport HSE Luxury and Ralph Lauren's elegantly adaptable Safari RL-67 Chronograph could be the only two examples of their kind you'd ever need, appropriate for Broadway, the boardroom or the bush.

**NOT FORMAL**  
**FOR THE FIRST TIME, WE'RE** coupling two brands

that have no formal partnership. But bringing these two together makes sense from a number of perspectives. Since 1948, Land Rover has been identified with rugged off-road wonders, renowned for their capability and strength. In 1970, the brand launched the original Range Rover, and with it helped create a new segment - the luxurious on-road/off-road utility vehicle.

At about the same time Ralph Lauren launched himself and his brand to stardom with his eponymous collection of men's ties - Polo Ralph Lauren. As the first Range Rovers hit the roads in the U.S., Lauren released his first women's apparel col-

lection and began a 40-year expansion of the Ralph Lauren brand that has made it a fashion industry icon today.

Over the same four decades, the Land Rover line expanded to include a range of go-anywhere vehicles, from the hardcore Defender 90 and Defender 110 to the increasingly opulent Discovery and the Range Rover itself. By the time the Range Rover Sport debuted in 2005, the brand had bur-nished its image, known as much for luxury and stylish cache' as its off-road credentials.

The 2012 edition of the Range Rover Sport hasn't departed much from the original. The rakish four-seater was a hit for the brand upon its introduction, keeping enough of the size and character of the up-

right Range Rover to please Rover acolytes while improving on the road-going dynamics of its larger sibling.

We've always liked modern Land Rovers and the Indus Silver 2012 model we wheeled is no exception. There are changes for the 2013 model but they're few, including new paint options, new interior and trim options, and a new choice of alloy wheels. Hence, this review pertains to both model years.

#### THE SPECS

**MOTIVATED BY A 5.0 LITER V8** producing 375 hp and 375 pound-feet of torque, the nearly 5,500-pound Sport HSE moves forward enthusiastically. Sprints to 60 mph take 7.2 seconds. It's not the fastest SUV around but the Sport HSE never feels flat-footed. Dig into the throttle and a creamy wave of torque propels you forward abetted by a six-speed automatic transmission that snaps off shifts with such refinement you'll barely notice them. For those with a greater need-for-speed, the 510 hp Sport Supercharged reels



*“ For those with a greater need-for-speed, the 510-hp Sport Supercharged reels in 60 mph in just under six seconds.”*



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None of the Sport models are fuel-sippers but Land Rover's clientele know what they're getting into. Help is on the way, however. The recently announced 2013 Range Rover has undergone a significant redesign, shedding nearly 700 pounds, resulting in significantly improved consumption. Stay tuned for similar measures for the Sport.

Ride and handling dynamics are equally well honed. The Sport HSE soaks up pavement irregularities with aplomb and corners well for its size and weight, feeling composed in high-speed sweepers and nimble tight quarters. Big ventilated disc brakes inside the 19-inch alloy wheels on our test car kept the Sport's mass in check, providing consistently strong stopping power.

On-road maneuvering is aided by one of the attributes that makes every Land Rover so capable off-road. The Sport HSE's tall, upright seating position is not only comfortable, it provides a commanding view out the large greenhouse surrounding the luxury SUV's cockpit. Every corner of the



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The Ralph Lauren Safari  
RL67 Chronograph

functioned well, as did our tester's 825-watt Premium Logic7 Audio package.

With only modest changes over its life span, the Range Rover Sport still boasts appealing styling. Like the capabilities built into it, the Sport's look easily transitions from dirt to dinner. Hose it off and hit the town. Or, like we did, run to the beach with an eleven-foot stand-up paddleboard in the afternoon then head out for hot date in the evening.

#### ON SAFARI

**IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE THREE** years have passed since the launch of the initial collection of Ralph Lauren timepieces at the SIHH 2009.

The Safari RL-67 Chronograph is one of the latest, most popular fruits of the RL/Richemont partnership. Introduced early this year at SIHH (and profiled in the October iW) as part of the brand's "sporting collection," the RL-67 was a hit. It features the trademark RL Roman numeral script on a black dial and a rugged but refined-looking galvanized steel, gunmetal

case available in two sizes - 39 mm and 45 mm. Dial details include hours, minutes, seconds, date, tachymeter and an eye-catching orange chronograph hand.

Outfitted with an olive-colored canvas strap, the two RL-67 editions are powered by self-winding Jaeger-LeCoultre automatic movements produced specially for Ralph Lauren, the RL751A (39 mm) and RL750 (45 mm).

Both pieces look right at home in a Land Rover. That's not surprising given that Ralph Lauren himself, one of the world's foremost collectors of classic automobiles, has two Land Rovers in his collection - tan and green Defender 110s. What's more, shortly after its debut in 2005, the new 2006 the Range Rover Sport made quite a splash in the window of the Ralph Lauren Sport store at 888 Madison Avenue in New York City.

Though the two brands have no partnership currently, the Range Rover Sport HSE Luxury and the RL-67 Safari Chronograph are always ready to wear. ☺

## Car

2012 Range Rover Sport HSE Luxury

BASE PRICE: \$60,045

ENGINE: 375 hp 5.0-liter V8

TRANSMISSION: 4WD and six-speed automatic

CURB WEIGHT: 5,540 lbs

FUEL ECONOMY: 13 city/18 highway

## Watch

Ralph Lauren RL-67 Safari Chronograph

PRICE: \$8,850 (39 mm) | \$9,850 (45 mm)

MOVEMENT: (39 mm) RL751A/1 automatic, self-winding,  
(45 mm) RL750 automatic, self-winding

DIAL: Black with hours, minutes, seconds,  
chronograph, date and tachymeter

CASE: 38.7 mm/44.8 mm with stainless steel brushed  
and gunmetal finish

STRAP/BRACELET: Olive canvas strap with pin buckle



*“The Land Rover Sport can do astonishing things off-road.”*

vehicle can be judged from the driver's seat.

That visibility is critical when traversing challenging terrain. And from personal experience - at the Land Rover Experience off-road school on the grand Biltmore Estate in North Carolina - I can attest that the Land Rover Sport can do astonishing things off-road.

The truck's Terrain Response System, actuated by a series of buttons on the console between the front seats, features six modes that allow the Sport to tackle almost any condition, from grass and snow to mud-ruts and rock crawling. High and Lo four-wheel-drive ranges combine with the vehicle's automatically adjustable Four Corner Electronic Air Suspension, giving it the grip and clearance to cope with inclines and flat ground alike.

On pavement or off, the Sport HSE's interior is a nice place to be. Our example



paired Ivory/Ocean Alcantara shades on the seats and dash with Anigre Wood trim. Front seat comfort is excellent though rear seat room is not quite as generous. Climate and navigation controls are presented clearly on the center dash console. We found a glitch in the navigation system's destination input logic but otherwise it



The Sport's look easily transitions from dirt to dinner.