

## Lotus Entertain You **Test driving the 2005 Lotus Elise**

By Brice Cooper For questions or suggestions, email [driven@soakmag.com](mailto:driven@soakmag.com)

I recently had the opportunity to shake down the new 2005 Lotus Elise during a real world road test on the streets of Chicago. A "real world road test", because from day one, the Elise has been hailed by auto journalists everywhere as one of the best sports cars on the current market. Most of these tests have centered on the Elise's nimble handling, good looks and the ability to be a great weekend track car, all for under \$50k. One problem though, streets aren't always filled with curvaceous opportunities, and traffic and soccer moms still adhere to the speed limits because there's a "baby on board"

The Elise has awe-inspiring looks that leave you slack jawed, murmuring *daaaaaang!* under your breath. This car is sexy. The hood by itself peaked my interest with its aggressive stance,

reminding me of Ford's GT40, a car that's almost \$100k the Lotus' senior in price. Lotus did something so right with the styling of this car. The doors sit high on the extruded aluminum frame rails for safety. Although this causes a bit of a nuisance when entering and exiting the vehicle, it sure looks cool. As you slide into the cockpit, you'll notice that the interior

least. The use of aluminum trim and firm seating makes you feel like you're behind the wheel of something more than a grocery getter. The standard soft top even has some trick engineering behind it that enables it to stow completely away in the rear hatch. I felt quite at home in the Elise, but be warned that I'm 6' and all others taller need not apply. The steering wheel is

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fixed, the drivers' seat has minimal adjustment and the passenger side has none. Then again your Russian supermodel co-pilot probably won't complain...at least not in English!

So how does the Elise take to the mean

