

citroen cx s

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Introduction

When the 1970s rolled into the 1980s, the automotive landscape was undergoing a radical shift. European manufacturers were pushing the boundaries of design, technology, and engineering, and France's Citroën was at the forefront of that movement. Among its most celebrated creations was the Citroën CX, a flagship model that blended avant garde styling with pioneering technology. Within the CX family, the **Citroën CX Strim** emerged as a distinctive offering, catering to drivers who sought a refined blend of performance, comfort, and understated luxury. This article explores the history, design, engineering, and legacy of the Citroën CX S, providing a comprehensive guide for enthusiasts, collectors, and anyone intrigued by this iconic French automobile.

The Birth of the Citroën CX

Citroën first unveiled the CX concept in 1975, a bold departure from the company's traditional lineup. The name "CX" was short for "Citroën X," a reference to the company's ambition to create a new class of executive cars. By 1978, the production model hit the roads, and it quickly became a symbol of French innovation. The CX was notable for its:

- All new front wheel drive layout, a first for Citroën's front engined cars.
- Advanced hydropneumatic suspension, delivering a smooth, car like ride.
- Aerodynamic bodywork that reduced drag and improved fuel economy.
- High quality interior materials, reflecting a luxury aesthetic uncommon in its segment.

Throughout its production run, which lasted until 1991, the CX evolved through several facelifts and powertrain updates. The **Citroën CX Strim**, introduced in the early 1980s, represented a mid range offering that balanced affordability with premium features.

What Is the Citroën CX S?

The "S" in the Citroën CX S designation stands for "Sport" or "Standard," depending on the market. In most European countries, the CX S was positioned as the entry level model in the CX lineup, featuring:

- A 2.0 liter inline four engine, typically producing around 100 horsepower.
- Front wheel drive with a 4 speed manual gearbox.
- Standard suspension with the hydropneumatic system, but with fewer luxury options than higher trims.
- Basic interior amenities, such as vinyl upholstery and manual climate control.

Despite its modest specifications, the CX S retained the hallmark Citroën traits: smooth handling, excellent ride comfort, and a distinctive design language that set it apart from competitors.

Design and Styling

Exterior Aesthetics

The Citroën CX S showcased the brand's signature aerodynamic styling. Key design elements included:

- Curved roofline that tapered into a gently sloping rear, reducing aerodynamic drag.

- Integrated front and rear bumpers with a subtle grille, creating a streamlined silhouette.
- Large, round headlights that were both functional and emblematic of Citroën's futuristic approach.
- Optional alloy wheels, giving the CX S a more upscale appearance.

These design choices not only enhanced the vehicle's visual appeal but also contributed to its efficient performance, making the CX S a standout in the mid size segment.

Interior Comfort

Inside, the CX S offered a cabin that prioritized passenger comfort. Highlights included:

- Soft, supportive seats with ample lumbar support.
- High quality materials, such as leather trimmed steering wheel and dashboard accents.
- Dual zone climate control, allowing front and rear passengers to adjust temperature independently.
- Quiet cabin environment, thanks to the hydropneumatic suspension's shock absorbing capabilities.

While the CX S lacked some of the high tech features found in later CX models, its interior still felt refined, making it a popular choice among discerning buyers.

Technical Specifications

Engine and Performance

The standard engine for the Citroën CX S was a 2.0 liter inline four, producing approximately 100 horsepower and 120 lb-ft of torque. This powertrain delivered:

- 0–60 mph acceleration in roughly 12 seconds.
- Top speed of around 110 mph.
- Fuel economy of 25–28 miles per gallon, depending on driving conditions.

Although not a performance vehicle, the engine's smooth operation complemented the CX S's reputation for effortless driving.

Transmission

The CX S came standard with a 4 speed manual gearbox, providing drivers with direct control over gear selection. For those seeking a smoother experience, a 4 speed automatic was available as an option in select markets.

Suspension and Handling

One of the most celebrated features of the CX S was its hydropneumatic suspension system. This innovative setup offered:

- Self leveling capabilities, maintaining a consistent ride height regardless of load.
- Exceptional ride comfort, absorbing bumps and road imperfections with ease.
- Improved handling, thanks to the system's ability to adjust damping in real time.

Combined with front wheel drive, the CX S delivered a balanced, predictable driving experience that appealed to both city commuters and long distance travelers.

Technology and Features

Standard Features

Key features available on the Citroën CX S included:

- Power steering, enhancing maneuverability.

- Central locking system.
- Electric windows for front passengers.
- Manual climate control with separate temperature settings.

Optional Upgrades

For those willing to invest a bit more, optional upgrades were available, such as:

- Automatic transmission.
- Alloy wheels.
- Leather upholstery.
- Rear view camera (introduced in later models).

These options allowed buyers to tailor the CX S to their preferences, enhancing both comfort and convenience.

Safety Features

Safety was a priority for Citroën, and the CX S incorporated several features to protect occupants:

- Dual front airbags, standard on most trims.
- Anti locking braking system (ABS) in later years.
- Seat belts with pre tensioners for enhanced restraint.
- Reinforced passenger compartment for improved crash protection.

While safety technology has evolved since the CX S's era, the vehicle's design still offers respectable protection by modern standards.

Driving Experience

Owners and reviewers often describe the Citroën CX S as a “driver's car” that balances comfort and control. Key aspects of the driving experience include:

- A quiet, car like ride that masks road imperfections.
- Predictable steering response, thanks to the front wheel drive layout.
- Balanced handling that remains stable at higher speeds.
- Smooth gear transitions, especially when paired with the optional automatic transmission.

Whether navigating city streets or cruising on the highway, the CX S offers a consistently pleasant driving experience.

Maintenance and Reliability

Common Issues

Like all classic vehicles, the Citroën CX S has its share of maintenance concerns. Common issues include:

- Hydropneumatic suspension wear, requiring periodic replacement of components such as the suspension pump.
- Corrosion on the chassis and body, especially in regions with harsh winter conditions.
- Electrical system glitches, including issues with the central locking and power windows.
- Engine oil consumption, a characteristic of many older Citroën engines.

Reliability Statistics

Despite these challenges, the CX S is generally considered reliable when properly maintained. Regular oil

changes, timely suspension servicing, and diligent rust prevention can extend the vehicle's lifespan well beyond 200,000 miles.

Market Position and Legacy

During its production run, the Citroën CX S carved out a niche in the European mid size segment. It competed against models such as the BMW 5 Series, Mercedes Benz E Class, and Audi 80. While the CX S did not match the performance of these German rivals, it offered a unique blend of French design flair, innovative suspension technology, and affordable luxury.

Today, the CX S is celebrated as a classic, with a dedicated community of collectors and restorers. Its distinctive appearance and smooth ride make it a sought after vehicle at classic car shows and auctions.

Comparison with Competitors

Below is a quick comparison between the Citroën CX S and two contemporary competitors:

1. BMW 5 Series (E28)

Powerful V6 engine options.

2. Rear wheel drive layout.

3. Higher price point.

4. Less advanced suspension compared to the CX S.

- Robust inline 6 engine.
- Rear wheel drive with optional all wheel drive.
- Focus on safety and luxury.
- More expensive but with a stronger resale value.

In contrast, the CX S offered a unique front wheel drive layout and hydropneumatic suspension that set it apart in terms of ride comfort and handling dynamics.

Pros and Cons

Pros

- Exceptional ride quality due to hydropneumatic suspension.
- Distinctive French styling that stands out on the road.
- Affordable entry point into the Citroën CX family.
- Strong community support for restoration and maintenance.

Cons

- Limited power output compared to rivals.
- Potential for corrosion, requiring diligent upkeep.
- Outdated safety features by modern standards.
- Parts availability can be a challenge for older models.

Buying Tips for the Citroën CX S

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