

STEER LUXURY

A NEW CAR STUDIO IN BATTERSEA POWER STATION LOOKS MORE LIKE AN ART GALLERY AND OFFERS SERVICE AKIN TO A FIVE-STAR HOTEL. IT’S ALL PART OF THE GENESIS DIFFERENCE, SAYS JENNIFER HAHN

GOOD HOSPITALITY HOLDS such a central part in South Korean culture, it manifests itself in almost every part of daily life. At a restaurant, for example, you never pour your own drink but always pour for others, and you don’t start eating before the eldest person at the table.

In conversation, this courtesy is communicated by adding the suffix “nim” to names and titles. So the term “son-nim” doesn’t just mean guest, but honoured guest. And the term isn’t just used to address guests, but also customers, who are treated with much the same level of regard.

This concept of son-nim is the driving force behind South Korea’s latest and greatest export – premium car maker Genesis. The brand has pioneered what can essentially be described as a concierge ownership service for cars.

So, instead of being bounced around between different salespeople, every customer (or son-nim, as the case may be) is assigned a Genesis Personal Assistant who will remain your point of contact for as long as you own the vehicle.

This assistant will manage the entire buying process, personally deliver the new car to your home – wherever that is – and walk you through its features. They will arrange to pick up and drop off the car for its scheduled servicing, which is included in Genesis’s five-year care plan, and provide you with a temporary courtesy car in the meantime. Naturally, roadside assistance throughout Europe is also included, so you can cruise around the Amalfi Coast with confidence.

These Genesis Personal Assistants aren’t your regular car dealers, but seasoned professionals poached from the luxury hotel and retail sector, explains assistant London studio manager Joseph Premto. “I first started working in the front-of-house team at a five-star luxury resort in Greece,” he recalls. “At Genesis, we are trying to recreate that feel and comfort for our customers by putting them and their time at the centre of everything we do.”

Because, in the end, time is more valuable than money. Or, in the words of American entrepreneur Jim Rohn: “You can get more money, but you cannot get more time.” This focus on service is also embodied in the brand’s “Studios” – especially the latest Genesis

outpost, inside the iconic grade II* listed turbine halls of Battersea Power Station, which opened recently.

Here, a pared-back interior creates the impression of being in a gallery rather than a traditional car dealership: solid wood flooring and corten steel planters are cleverly deployed alongside concrete panelling to recreate the kind of conceptual white space usually reserved for art museums and the like.

“It’s all about the purity of design, the reduction of elements,” says Genesis chief creative officer Luc Donckerwolke. This keeps the focus on the customer and the cars – from the traditional petrol and diesel G70 Shooting Brake to the pure electric GV60, with sports car-level acceleration via its steering wheel boost button.

Unlike most luxury cars, all the Genesis vehicles can be purchased online, with the same transparent pricing that you can find in store. “We are there to relieve the pressure of purchasing a car, provide all the required information and support the customer throughout the buying and ownership journey,” Premto explains. “Most of our customers feel that this is what is missing from the automotive industry: a personal approach detached from the normal pressures of sales.”

For those who have changeable schedules (or even just commitment issues), there’s even a no-strings subscription hire programme called Genesis Flexibility enabling you to alter the duration of your subscription to suit your changing needs. Who said choice always has to be agony?

Personal service

The Genesis Studio at Battersea Power Station is now open. To come and experience the Genesis Difference for yourself, or request a test drive, visit [genesis.com](https://www.genesis.com)



PHOTOGRAPH: LUKE KIRWAN

The Genesis G70 Shooting Brake photographed at the Genesis Studio, Battersea, London