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## Land Rover stops producing but continues selling Defender model

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*Land Rover Defender*

By FORREST CARDAMENIS

British automaker Land Rover is discontinuing its Defender, but the vehicle will live on in new forms.

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After 68 years, the Defender, formerly known as the Series Land Rover, has ceased production, marked by a celebratory event. However, a "Defender Journeys" online hub and a new Heritage Restoration Program will ensure that the iconic vehicle remains firmly embedded within the brand's narrative.

"The Series Land Rover, now Defender, is the origin of our legendary capability, a vehicle that makes the world a better place, often in some of the most extreme circumstances," said Dr Ralf Speth, CEO of Jaguar Land Rover. "There will always be a special place in our hearts for Defender, among all our employees, but this is not the end. We have a glorious past to champion, and a wonderful future to look forward to."

### Out of production

To mark the final vehicle, a Defender 90 Heritage Soft Top, rolling off the assembly line, Land Rover invited more than 700 current and former employees involved in the production of the model to examine and drive some of the brand's most important automobiles.



*Land Rover Defender celebration event*

The Defender, then known as the Series Land Rover, was first produced in April of 1948, with more than 2 million

vehicles being made in the 68 years since. Despite production ceasing, however, Land Rover will continue to put Defender's and Series Land Rover's on the road via its new Heritage Restoration Program.

Land Rover will acquire the vehicles from around the globe and restore them through the program. Appropriately, the program is based on the same grounds as the production line and long-standing Defender employees will lead the restoration.

The first restored vehicles, early Series Land Rovers, will hit the market this coming July.

"Tim Hannig, heritage director at Jaguar Land Rover said in a statement, "Land Rover Heritage will be offering cars, services, parts and experiences for all owners and fans around the world. Our new restoration service and the sale of expertly restored Series I vehicles is just the start of making sure that classic Land Rovers are not only part of our past but part of our future."



*Land Rover Defender production line tour*

Enthusiasts interested in touring the Defender production line can do so now at [defendertour.landrover.com](https://defendertour.landrover.com). The site includes a 360 navigation of the production line, including the body build, front seat box, rear tub assembly, welding robot cell, wings and door, final checks and painting.

Viewers can jump among the different sections, or follow arrows that will journey through the process. Each section also has its own video showing the production workers in action.

This behind-the-scenes site will immortalize aspects of Land Rover's history that would otherwise not be accessible, demonstrating the importance of brand legacy and also appeasing enthusiasts who want to learn and witness the manufacturing process.



*Land Rover Defender*

Additionally, the Defender Journeys digital scrapbook, which will be launched in the near future, lets Defender and Series Land Rover owners upload details of their journeys. Land Rover hopes to plot every journey on a single map to preserve the generations.

Such initiatives show that although production is over, both the vehicle and its drivers are still important to Land Rover. Giving consumers a chance to participate in the vehicle's heritage will likely be met with great enthusiasm among loyalists.

#### Moving parts

Land Rover has been preparing for production to end for some time, with a variety of themed initiatives having taken place in recent months.

For example, in December the automaker prepared to bid farewell to the Defender model with a London takeover and charity auction.

On Dec. 16, Land Rover auctioned off its Defender 2,000,000, a one-off model created for the occasion. Proceeds from the auction benefited Land Rover's humanitarian and conservation partners, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the Born Free Foundation ([see story](#)).

The continued employment of Defender manufacturers for the new initiatives demonstrates Land Rover's loyalty to its employees.

Further demonstrating the commitment, Jaguar Land Rover recently took its apprenticeship and graduate programs to the next level by launching a lifelong learning academy for its workforce.

The program is the first of its kind and is being operated in conjunction with the University of Warwick's Warwick Manufacturing Group (WMG) and the participation of other leading universities. The academy will help Land Rover bridge its business and training needs and ensure its employees possess a constantly-growing skill set that will help the company succeed, while employees will receive an education and develop new skills to advance their careers, emphasizing the brand's commitment to craftsmanship and to its workforce ([see story](#)).

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