

VOLVO XC90 2.0D INSCRIPTION

By Jim Mc Cauley



Think large and think Range Rover; think luxury and think Audi Q7. Combine both and think Volvo XC90. Volvo launched their XC90 at the end of 2014 to compete in the top luxury end of the SUV market where above all, quality counts and when it comes to counting quality, it is fair to say that Volvo is above all.

Getting into the vehicle presents you with a cabin so luxurious that you feel under-dressed for the occasion and even if you are wearing your best, it would still not be good enough to complement the sheer luxury and quality finish of the interior.

For Volvo, the model is more than their largest and most luxurious ever. It also launches new powertrain technologies as well as world leading safety features.

Test model was the twin-turbo 2.0 litre diesel version which may seem small in a vehicle of this size, but its 225bhp takes it from rest to 60mph in 7.4 seconds with the potential to top 137mph. And along the line, there is no hesitation from the 8-speed automatic transmission with a massive 470Nm of torque on call from 1750 to 2500rpm. With multiple ratios, power delivery is super smooth to all four wheels and ride is well cushioned to complement the ambience of the cabin, even on the test vehicle's upgraded 21-inch wheels. In the interests of economy, power delivery is biased towards the front wheels, but as conditions demand, torque is also proportioned to the rear wheels.

Steering is light to the touch but with an ever accurate response which adds confidence in manoeuvring a vehicle of this size. Despite the comfortable ride, there is enough cornering support for the XC90 to maintain its composure and it does not take long to appreciate the



excellence of the vehicle.



Inside, and there is generous seating for seven occupants with the fold and slide mid row seats allowing reasonably easy access to the rear. Obviously with the rear seats in use, luggage space is reduced, but there remains room for several approved cabin-size cases. Dual colour upholstery extends to the steering wheel while stop/start is operated by a central console twist knob.

The interior continues the attention to detail of the exterior with clean presentation of the main instrument binnacle and central 9-inch touch screen. The touch screen interface 'Sensus' is

the most modern control system on the market which also features voice control in addition to the accepted tablet touch functions. This gives easy access to a wide selection of cloud based applications including internet radio, connected navigation, finding and paying for parking and the ability to mirror and use Apple and Android devices in the touch screen display.

Standard equipment across the range starts at a high level with satellite navigation, LED headlights, automatic tailgate operation and power adjustment on the driver's seat on all models as well as industry leading safety provision. This includes 'City Safety' with pedestrian and cyclist detection as well as front collision warning supported by full automatic braking.

Standard equipment also includes 'Run-off Road Protection', a technology that automatically tightens the front seat belts to increase occupant protection as the vehicle's electronics detect what is happening.

The XC90 is also the first vehicle from any manufacturer to feature automatic braking if the driver turns in front of an oncoming car. In addition to the standard provision, the 'Inscription' model tested comes with Drive Mode settings, Hill Start Assist and Adaptive Cruise Control with Distance Alert and Queue Assist. Rain sensing wipers and Rear Park Assist are also standard on this trim level as well as interior upgrades.

Optional packs are also available on the XC90 and these include the Winter Pack with Head-up Display, a £1,175 option fitted to the test vehicle. This pack includes not only the head-up display but also heated front seats and steering wheel as well as heated washer nozzles. Also fitted to the test vehicle was the 'Intellisafe Pro' pack which features Blind Spot Information, Lane Keeping Aid, Queue Assist and adaptive cruise control





adding a further £1,500 to the purchase price. A retractable towbar with 13 pin wiring is available at £995 and the vehicle has a braked towing weight of 2,400kg.

On the economy and environmental fronts, the reasoning behind the 2.0 litre power units becomes clear. The test vehicle has an official combined fuel consumption of 48.7mpg and with a CO2 emissions of 152 gms/km is in Band G for annual car tax of £180. The model tested in 'Inscription' trim is listed at £50,185 and is covered by the company's comprehensive 3-year / 60,000 mile warranty.

(Driven May 2016)