



BRIGHT BLUE STAR

Volvo enters the revered performance luxury sedan arena with the all-new S60 Polestar. What's it got?

Crackles and pops on overrun, 0-100kmph in 4.7 seconds, 367PS Doesn't sound like a Volvo does it? Well, you'd be wrong because the we're talking about here is the S60 Polestar. What? You haven't heard about Polestar? Simply put, Polestar is to Volvo what RS is to Audi, M is to BMW and AMG is to Mercedes. It might look like a regular S60 but it is so much more. What's different you ask?

JUST LOOK AT IT! It isn't red, but with that body work and 'Rebel' blue shade, the S60 Polestar looks super-hot. We've had this colour on the S60 for a couple of years now, but with an oil burner under the hood that car never had the go to match the hue's show. The Polestar of course gets front splitters and rear diffusers that not only look sporty but also keep it down and planted. Then there's the rear spoiler, twin exhausts, black ORVMs, large, 20-

inch alloys with fat, 245/35 tyres and Polestar badges everywhere to complete the deal. There are no Thor's hammers here though, and the design is uncannily similar to that of the regular S60. But that's exactly what makes it special.

INSIDE

All-black interiors, acres of Nubuck leather, contrast stitching in blue, sports seats are all oh-so-nice. The centre console though is still cluttered with the same old buttons and rotary knobs. Bummed? Polestar drive selector lever and real carbon fibre inlays on the centre console will cheer you up. Clocks are the same, all-digital with switchable themes but the pedals are sporty looking aluminium units. And creature comforts stay intact, including the sunroof.

WHAT'S THE REAL DEAL?

The souped-up Drive-E

engine from Volvo. It's a 2.0-litre, four-pot motor with a bigger turbo, likely not happy with the result, the engineers slapped on a supercharger and replaced the internals with lighter components. The result is a max power output of 367PS and 470Nm of peak torque. It has been married to an eight-speed automatic transmission and power is sent to all four wheels via a Borg-Warner four-wheel drive system.

TELL ME MORE...

The chassis is the same, but the suspension isn't. There are adjustable Ohlins dampers all-round. While the springs on the dampers are 80 percent stiffer than the stock car, the ride is no less pliant. Even at the bumpy Kari circuit, the blue brute portrayed a healthy appetite for bumps.

'Braking' news are the bigger, 371mm, ventilated and slotted, floating Brembo discs upfront, gripped by 6-piston Brembo calipers. In conjunction with the 302mm rear discs helped shed speeds well, but some more bite would have been welcome.

TECH-FEST?

Of course. There's anti-collision warning, auto-braking, blind spot detection and cross-traffic alerts for intersections. Effectively, the S60 Polestar is safer than the stock S60. Wait, we're not done, it also gets adaptive cruise control, lane departure warning and park assist.

Inevitably we come to the Sport mode which is activated when you move the drive selector lever to

the left. But there's also a hidden Sport Plus mode which offers launch control along with quicker shifts and crisper throttle response. But to get to Sport Plus, you need to come to a halt, shift transmission into Sport, keep the lever pushed forward with your hand and simultaneously tug the downshift paddle on the steering wheel twice. An orange 'S' will blink. It opens the exhaust valves a bit more and does not let revs fall below 4000rpm and the car always stays in the powerband, always.

DRIVE

That's all you want to do in the S60 Polestar. It's a hoot to launch, taking off cleanly and smoothly with power going down to all fours. There was barely any drama in the way the Polestar went around corners.

The steering could've offered some more feedback as it felt weighted but dull. The car stayed planted, while all-wheel drive ensured it was quick to exit corners too. Down the 900m main start/finish straight at Kari I managed to see 180kmph on the clocks before having to brake for the first corner among the crackles and autoblips emitting from the tailpipes. The top speed though has been limited to 250kmph.

A handful of laps were far from enough to make any definitive judgements but the S60 Polestar felt extremely engaging. The twin-chrged engine despite its 2.0-litre capacity has ample power at all

times. There is no dearth of bottom-end grunt for slower corners, particularly in sport mode. Plus, it stays poised and composed under hard braking and is always ready to attack corners. That's where the learnings from Volvo's WTCC program shined for me, as the performance and handling made the car fun to drive.

TOO HARDCORE?

Not really. Despite its sporty handling and thrilling performance, the Polestar never felt too stiff or overtly powerful. These virtues hint at it being reasonably comfortable as a road and family car, not to mention, a fun car be it in the hills or on track. Plus Volvo hasn't skipped on the features either and it walks the thin line between performance and luxury rather well. Not every car can offer you more power than the Porsche 718, yet have four doors, a cavernous boot and still be priced at just a nudge over Rs 50 lakh, ex-showroom of course.

Abhay Verma



The interior feels sporty and luxurious. The seats feel comfortable, grip you well and it's easy to find that perfect driving position.



The Polestar gear lever is smile inducing and comes paired with paddle shifters on the steering.

SPECIFICATIONS	
VOLVO S60 POLESTAR	
ENGINE:	1969cc 4-cylinder twin-charged petrol
POWER:	367PS
TORQUE:	470Nm
TRANSMISSION:	8-speed Automatic AWD
KERB WEIGHT:	NA
FUEL EFFICIENCY:	NA
PRICE:	₹ 54.22 lakh (ex-showroom, Mumbai)



The Aluminium pedals add to the overall sporty appeal of the car.



It sits on 20-inch alloys and also features adjustable Ohlins dampers all-round.



Polestar, for the uninitiated is the tuning house owned by Volvo which is responsible for making race cars for the carmaker.

