

Photographer: *Armin Scherz*
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Volvo XC40

The Swedish manufacturer's first ever attempt at a not-so-large SUV is all set to spice up the increasingly competitive premium compact SUV segment

THE JENSENS COULDN'T HAVE aimed better with their first ever attempt at a compact SUV. BMW's new X1 is due to change from the previous car and Audi is all set to introduce the Q1, which is completely different from the Q3. The Range Rover Evoque is already different from every thing else around it and offers a wonderful alternative to those looking for a premium compact SUV. In fact, the only premium compact SUV that is not due for changes is the Mercedes-Benz GLA Class. Quite frankly, the premium compact SUV end of the today's automotive market has never been more dynamic. And this changing scenario will soon come for the new XC40.

About eight years ago, Volvo once again as a manufacturer only interested in safety cars, reentered the SUV. But it didn't shake away from its core competence of making the safest vehicles on the road, but it did add other things into the equation: Style, Dynamics, Flexibility, Capacity, durability. And then, the Swedish brand's first SUV with the introduction of the all-new XC90 about three years ago.

From design to driving dynamics, the new XC40 ticks both. Not just in size and drive with renewed vigor. The upward movement of the durability scale is marked by the big SUV continued with the introduction of the new XC40. The entire SUV Architecture provides the wings for its latest SUV, a Volvo's first ever premium compact SUV, the XC40.

What's new?

Everything. However, Volvo has never had a premium compact SUV in its portfolio before. This is also the first time in the history of the Swedish manufacturer that it will offer a choice of three SUVs to customers worldwide. The XC40 is the first of the vehicles to be built

on Volvo's new modular vehicle architecture, which the company calls CMA Compact Modular Architecture and has been co-developed with partner company Geely. This is a big move towards greater flexibility of development and scale of production since a modular architecture will allow Volvo, Geely and Leac & Co - a Geely co-invested joint venture between itself and VW - to use the same modules to produce different vehicles. In fact, all future Geely vehicles including fully electric ones will have the CMA as their underpinnings.

What else?

The XC40 gets two engine options for now. The petrol version is powered by Volvo's 2.0 four-cylinder turbocharged B51B unit while the diesel gets the D4 2.0 five-cylinder unit. In both cases, transmission is an 8-speed automatic. The XC40 also benefits from the new design of the interior. One of them in fact - Eco Control, Dynamic Drive and wheel hub.

In terms of suspension, the front gets a McPherson strut while the rear gets a multi-link axle. The front and rear axles can be tuned for dynamic driving. This is the XC40's standard setting. The optional Sport tuning ensures more controlled body movements by using stiffer springs, dampers and anti-roll bars. The top of the line Four-Corner, also optional uses electronically controlled dampers.

Steering is assisted by electric power steering and that's also available with Volvo's first of its kind system, including white lines of course, although a corner speed limiter when it comes to the steering system can be selected. In all, individual driving preferences, the standard speed-dependent system ensures eyes of steering both right parking assist as well as on extra open highways.





Specifications

Model	Transmission	Power	0-100	Engine	MPG (City)	MPG (Highway)	MPG (Combined)
2.0 T5 AWD	8-Speed Automatic	252 hp	6.3 sec	2.0L Turbo Diesel	24	32	27
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Takeaway

Strongly through the Swedish team to sprouting German three dies for the new XC40 looks like a younger brother of the new XC60 which in turn looks like the younger brother of the mainstream XC90 with its Thor's hammer headlight design, flat large grille and oval proportions and muscularities. Kudos about it, the Swedes are quite with their reputation. Family face, design language and so on job up the XC40 on a street in your town. We've seen it before, several times. And yet, Volvo has managed to create subtle differences between the faces of its three SUV siblings. Not enough to make the XC40 seem like more youthful and playful in its dimension. As a result, the XC40 does not look identical to its brother. It merely resembles its bigger brother. Strongly, but it's still only a resemblance and not a case of plagiarism. In any case, the XC40 cuts a new style silhouette and looks good.

On the road again, the XC40 is packed with nearly much all the goodies you'd find in the bigger Volvo SUVs – the XC60 and the new XC90. The cabin feels nice and dry and it overall is lovely place to be in. Dashboard layout and that huge tab for control panel feel familiar and Swedish design elements like the sculpted three-button and power windows

feel like exactly that dies in the XC60. XC40 and the XC90 look like it's pretty spacious too. So you can easily fit in five adults without too much of a squeeze. And the seats are super comfortable too. Something that seems to have become a habit that since the new XC40.

On the go
 Navigating through the Swedish traffic, the XC40's compact dimensions (it's just over six feet long and 2m wide) make it easy to manoeuvre through tight gaps in narrow lanes. That speed-dependent steering feels light and easy to use as we slither through gaps in traffic at European roundabouts, when a gap in traffic allows for the left-hand lane right of way in the street and out of the way. Out on the highway, it weighs up roads in tandem with the sports D3 course, like all road steering units infused with electric powersteering. It's not the richest in feedback but it's not really accurate.

Once out on the Swedish highways the engine, both petrol and diesel, reveal themselves as willing companions to a driver for quick driving. This is largely due to the torque that has been spread out evenly over the engine's rev range. While in the case of the diesel engine, when the peak torque of 400Nm hits in at 750rpm and stays till 2200, this is expected, the petrol engine's torque

specifies what is promising. 200Nm of torque comes in as early as 800rpm and stays with you all the way through to 4000. The torque ratios of the engine means that even passing at the speeds or runs between traffic lights are accomplished without much effort. The petrol however is spicier to use and if you're interested in sport driving, feel more rewarding with its snappy response to the right foot.

Even out on the twists and turns of the mountains, the engine are more than willing to keep up with one's antics. It is here however that the transmission, again both dies, begins to show itself. QUATX units take a moment longer than dies. This is somewhat cured by clicking the thing in manual mode but even then it's nowhere near as quick as the diesel clutch box of one's German motor.

Also, thanks to the SUV's focus on comfort, and it is extremely comfortable at all sorts of speed even at ends of roads, drivers do take a hit. It's not as if the XC40 is incapable of taking a turn but there's healthy understeer when you want to come at a fast clip. This is in SUV and there's a good bit of body roll too. Nothing uncomfortable but enough to remind you that you aren't driving a sports. Thanks to the dampers work very well to reduce the body roll or meeting the vehicle from swaying.

- 1. Engines are normally well-tuned, so to change gears after long drives.
- 2. Use the tabs. It's easy to use and with a high level of precision.
- 3. Dampers design. Each of the perfect in their latest design.

Conclusion

The Volvo XC40 will bring in a whole host of safety features. So expect things like City Safety package that will ensure maximum safety for occupants, pedestrians, cyclists and large animal detection. Expect technologies that will not get into a case of being faced with oncoming traffic in your lane – an all too frequent occurrence in our country. Besides it gets Volvo's unique semi-autonomous technologies that allows the vehicle at speeds up to 130km/h when the vehicle senses no input from the driver (don't think this will come in handy in instances if you can't buy it).

It will also get 19-inch wheels, that 19-inch entertainment bar, a 2.5-inch TV colour



The petrol is quicker to rev and if you're interested in spirited driving, feels more rewarding

entertainment panel and more. There is also an innovative cover for the foot pedal that can be folded up to create a convenient storage for the foot that will help better organise things. It's always comfortable compared SUV that will transport a family of four or five from anywhere to anywhere with a high degree of pleasure for it and that's very good.

Volvo's launch plan for today aren't it most sport but it was made clear that both the petrol and the diesel will arrive. And it will probably be the launch of the vehicle will be with the single-topping vehicle with all bells and whistles. Knowing Volvo, it will probably come an aggressive pricing strategy to offer great value to you, its customer.

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