

Pretty much everyone knows the station wagon used to be widespread in America, though they have long since largely disappeared. But for decades, almost any sedan—long the dominant lifeform—begat a long-roofed alternative.

Today they linger, mostly in Europe, though few make it to our shores. But Volvo still comes through.

Volvo's lineup has included more familiar SUVs, XC-numeric models, some leaning toward tall wagons or lower crossovers with off-pavement skills. But anyone seeking a more traditional station wagon will discover the V-numeric models.

While we've seen the "V" explained as standing for such things as "versatile," in Swedish, wagon is "vagn," which makes more sense, as XC models share the propensity for versatility.

While Volvo's versatile vagns have variously

come in V40, V60, V70 and V90 sizes over time and place, in the US there are currently two sizes, V60 and V90, with Cross Country models of both—or CC, to avoid (or create) confusion with the taller XC models. A key characteristic of a V Cross Country is raised ground clearance, along with mild body cladding. (There is also a non-CC "Polestar Engineered" plug-in hybrid variant of the V60.)

Ground clearance aside, the three are differentiated by their powertrains. For the V60 Cross Country, as driven here, that's the 247-hp four-cylinder turbocharged B5, while for the V90 Cross Country, it's a 295-hp B6 version of the same, but with supercharging added. Both also have a mild hybrid system good for another 13 horses. Both are quite quick, with zero-to-60 times in the sixes. But mostly, the V90 CC is larger—and not that much prici-

er—and this is where most decisions will lie.

The V60 photographs long and lean, but is actually quite small. The rear doors are wide, though rear legroom not particularly generous—altogether, a mixture of balance and paradox. To a tall person, a hallmark of a smaller car is hitting one's head upon ingress or egress, but we realized at the end of the week that this had not been the case. Only one thing felt small to us, and that was the seat—back bolsters are adjustable, but not the seat cushion, and it is tight.

The engine is notable for its acoustics, quite satisfying under acceleration, occasionally unexpectedly dominant. We would be interested in driving the V60's B5 and the V90's B6 powertrains back-to-back, to get a solid comparison between the absence or presence of the supercharger. In the B5,

acceleration and cornering felt a bit uneven at times. We felt some uncertain steering at steady speed, too (in any drive mode), so maybe it's not the engine. Then again, maybe it is, as we noted a lack of punch in some open highway lane maneuvers, even in Polestar Engineered mode.

As the week went on, our drive experience was increasingly positive. Turning from a stop, 90 degrees onto an uphill freeway ramp, there's a brief pause, but then it's a bullet, pretty satisfying all in all. Exiting onto an uphill ramp, when already in motion, presented no such lag—a nice response, an authentic and healthy growl, with a perfect note, well above average for a 4-cylinder.

Other notes on features were many. The crystal shift knob has uncomfortably abrupt edges, and the shift itself has a pattern you need to develop a feel for. Controls are quite screen-dependent—not uncommon currently, but a few particularly confounding, such as needing both physical controls

and a screen dive to adjust seat ergonomics. Lane control was very invasive, but (also not uncommon) not safely accessible to change while in motion.

You expect a Swedish car—a vehicle from a small manufacturer in a small country—to be a little different. It may even be why you choose it. It can be a mixed bag, not so much between good and bad but between normal and unusual—a plus when it's simply neutral. Your moments of thrill or delight may sometimes interweave with small annoyances. Ultimately, it's a mainstream experience within the car's size, shape, style and power.

The Volvo V60 Cross Country B5 is a solid urban-slash-off-pavement combination—a strong turbo, AWD, 31 mpg highway, ample ground clearance, decent cargo volume and a bit of utility towing. Check it out in person. As always, block out distractions and work on your typical favorite settings and functions. And if it feels small for you, there's always the V90, for not that much more. ■

When you Wish for a Wagon

An idiosyncratic rarity

by Joe Sage



Our V60 Cross Country's Bright Dusk paint could appear as a rather unexciting beige in some light, but then take on a gorgeous, deep satin-silvery look in other—all in all, a nice choice.

SPECIFICATIONS

Note: manufacturer's specs are limited. Many specs here are from reputable third-party sources (noted as 3rd party or 3p); however, some 3rd party info differs from known info the manufacturer does supply, suggesting other variances may be in play. Other information comes from vehicle Monroney sticker, consumer build site, manufacturer parts sites or direct observation. Some information, e.g. complete brake info, was not available via any of the above. We spent hours cross-referencing; suggest you dig deeper if buying.

| | |
|--------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ASSEMBLY |Ghent, Belgium |
| ENGINE/TRANS BUILD |Sweden / Japan |
| PARTS CONTENT |Sweden 25% / Belgium 20% / US/Canada 0% |
| ENGINE |2.0L turbo-4 dir inj DOHC, VVT |
| HP/TORQUE |247 hp / 258 lb-ft |
| MILD HYBRID |48V mild hybrid system w regen braking & integrated starter generator w 13 hp |
| COMPRESSION RATIO |na |
| TRANSMISSION |8-spd Geartronic auto |
| DRIVETRAIN |AWD |
| 0-TO-60 MPH |(per mfr) 6.4 sec |
| | (note: consumer site states 6.6 sec) |
| SUSPENSION |(3p) 4-whl indep, stblzr bars |
| STEERING |elec power steering |
| BRAKES |(per mfr parts) F: 18-in disc; R: 17-in disc |
| WHEELS |(opt) 20-in 7-spoke w A/S tires (std) 19-in diamond-cut alloy |
| TIRES |Pirelli P Zero all-season 245/40R20 |
| LENGTH / WHEELBASE |(3p) 188.5 / 113.2 in |
| HEADROOM (F/R) |(3p) 37.4 / 38.1 in |
| LEGROOM (F/R) |(3p) 42.3 / 35.2 in |
| GROUND CLEARANCE |(per mfr) 8.1 in |
| | (note: 3rd party source states 7.8 in) |
| APPR / DEPART |(3rd party) 17.0 / 22.4° |
| TURNING CIRCLE |(3rd party) 37.1 ft |
| CARGO CAPACITY |(3p) 25.5 / 60.5 cu.ft |
| TOW CAPACITY |2000 lb |
| WEIGHT |4082 lb |
| FUEL / CAPACITY |(3p) prem rec / 15.9 gal |
| MPG |(Monroney) 24/31/27 (city/hwy/comb) |

| | |
|--------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| BASE PRICE |\$55,400 |
| ULTRA FEATURES: | Harman Kardon Premium audio, vented front seats, front passenger seat memory, power cushion extension & side support front seats, tailored dashboard, 4-zone auto climate, crystal geartronic gearshift, graphical heads-up display.....incl |
| AUDIO: | Bowers & Wilkins Premium.....3200 |
| WHEELS/TIRES: | 20-in 7-spoke wheel kit with all-season tires.....3200 |
| CLIMATE PKG |750 |
| LUGGAGE COVER |390 |
| DESTINATION CHARGE |1195 |
| TOTAL |\$64,135 |

2025 VOLVO V (WAGON) LINEUP

| | |
|-------------------------------|---------------|
| VOLVO V60 CROSS COUNTRY | |
| V60 CC B5 AWD, Plus |50,300 |
| V60 CC B5 AWD, Ultimate |▼ 55,400 |
| VOLVO V60 Polestar Engineered | |
| T8 eAWD plug-in hybrid |71,250 |
| VOLVO V90 CROSS COUNTRY | |
| V90 CC B6 AWD, Plus |59,800 |
| V90 CC B6 AWD, Ultimate |64,800 |